NARRATIVES OF NOVICE TEACHERS IN A PRIVATE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

BY

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EDGEWOOD CAMPUS

DURBAN

DATE   : DECEMBER 2014

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DECLARATION

I, **LEIGHANDRI PILLAY** declare that

1. The research reported in this thesis, except where otherwise indicated is my original work.

2. This thesis has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.

3. This thesis does not contain other persons' data, tables, pictures, graphs, or other information unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons.

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Signed **………………..…………………**

ETHICAL CLEARANCE

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INYUVESI YAKWAZULU-NATALI

17 October 2012

Ms Leighandri Pillay 205510504
School of Education
Edgewood Campus

Dear Ms Pillay

Protocol reference number: HSS/1045/012M
Project title: Narratives of Novice Teachers teaching in a Private Catholic School.

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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INSPIRING GREATNESS

SUPERVISORS' AUTHORISATION

This thesis is submitted with / without my approval.

…………………………………..

DR. DAISY PILLAY

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my late maternal grandmother, Muniamma Govender, who instilled in me the value of education.

There is no end to education. It is not that you read a book, pass an examination and finish with education. The whole of life, from the moment you are born to the moment you die, is a process of learning.

-Jiddu Krishnamurti

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To discover the beauty in living

means to see with more than my eyes

it's finding the paths that are hidden

and the blessings that come in disguise

it's climbing ahead and further

no matter how steep the hill seems

it's keeping my mind on the work to be done

and my heart firmly fixed on my dreams…

ABSTRACT

This thesis presents an understanding of the personal-professional selves of Novice Teachers (NTs) teaching in a Private Catholic School in Durban. This study documents the lived lives of NT's. By reconstructing the narratives of three NT participants, I was able to get glimpses into their meaning-making of selves, what they do, think, feel and act within the context of a Private Catholic School.

Looking at NTs meaning-making of self through an identity lens, I present an understanding of the negotiations that occur within the NTs' personal-professional lives. For each participant there are certain forces at play that push and pull the NT. This research study is located within the interpretative paradigm. Multiple methods were used to generate the data. I used the mediums of collage, artefact and unstructured interviews to obtain my data on the personal-professional lives of Kerusha, Sarah and Elizabeth. The process of gathering and interpreting the data went through various stages until I was able to reconstruct three narratives of the participants' lived lives.

One's personal-professional self within this distinctive educational environment is negotiated through critical relationships, routines, practices and the rigorous curriculum. NT's experience many challenges when they enter the profession. This study offers an in-depth experience of NT's negotiations. This unique contribution to the field of education, adds further understanding and impetus to the growing body of work, that seeks to explore NT selves and NT's teaching in Private Religious Schools in South Africa.

Within the broader, fixed religious schooling environment NT's cannot exercise agency. My study shows how Kerusha, Sarah and Elizabeth negotiate the challenges they experience within the classroom space by adopting certain practices to be powerful, agentic teachers. A unique, flexible self, creative, non-traditional self and activist, reflective self is how these NTs sustain themselves, through exercising agency in the classroom and with learners. In the absence of induction and mentoring, NT's in this study formed informal collective learning relationships and individual learning relationships to discuss, manage and cope with the everyday challenges. Through improvising and working spontaneously NTs are able to rethink and rework their meanings and are therefore able to reconstruct their identities.

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

BEd Hons	Bachelor of Education Honours
CIE	Catholic Institute of Education
CPTD	Continuing Professional Teacher Development
DoHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HoD	Head of Department
FET	Further Education and Training (Grades 10-12)
FP	Foundation Phase (Grades 1-3)
GET	General Education and Training (Grades 1-9)
IP	Intermediate Phase (Grades 4-6)
ISASA	Independent Schools Association of Southern Africa
NT	Novice Teacher
PE	Physical Education
PGCE	Post Graduate Certificate in Education
SA	South Africa
SAIRR	South African Institute of Race Relations
SASA	South African Schools Act
SIT	Social Identity Theory
TA	Teacher Assistant
UCT	University of Cape Town
UDW	University of Durban Westville
UKZN	University of KwaZulu-Natal (South Africa)

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CHAPTER ONE

LIVES OF NOVICE TEACHER'S IN A PRIVATE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Becoming a teacher

As a child I can still remember talking to the furniture and writing on the wall of my granny's verandah. Whenever I put on my red polka dot dress, I imagined myself as a teacher. That image became a reality when I decided to pursue a career in teaching. The excitement of having my own classroom with my own learners to steer was a thrilling and happy moment to look forward to. However, I was very nervous. As a new teacher I was anxious, vulnerable and scared about where I was going to teach. Being new to the profession, I never thought that I would be considered for the position at Holy Cross Convent[1], a Private Catholic School in Durban. I did not know what teaching in this type of school would be like. When I was offered the position, I did not know whether or not I was going to fit into the school's environment. The trepidation of being in a religious private school unnerved me. I was terrified because I did not know how the teachers and learners would react towards me, not only because I was a new teacher, but because I was not Catholic. I had to adapt to the religious routines of the school, as the day starts and ends with prayer, mass is held twice a term, and there are many religious days that the school observes with set religious practices. In this school, religion is a key feature of the school setting. For me, there is a continuous battle between the curriculum and Catholic teachings. University definitely did not prepare me for teaching in a religious school context.

~My journal entry from the Personal and Professional Identities of
Teachers in the Context of Change module – July 2011

Figure: 1
My memory drawing

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[1] All names of people and places in this study have been changed to ensure confidentiality.

This drawing is of me as a little girl writing on the wall of my granny's verandah, in "teacher mode": writing on the wall shows where my love for teaching began. I knew that I wanted to be a teacher someday. My mother played an instrumental role in my career choice because she is also a teacher. She has been teaching for thirty years and actually taught me when I was in primary school. I have always looked up to her.

The narrative excerpt was extracted from my journal used during the Honours programme in the Personal and Professional Identities of Teachers in the Context of Change module. I was registered for the Bachelor of Education Honours (BEd Hons) programme in 2011 at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal (UKZN), Edgewood Campus. This was the fourth lecture that I had attended, and part of the activity that my lecturer devised for us was to write or draw about, *"My first memory of wanting to be a teacher"*. Using this activity as a springboard, my lecturer then asked the class to write about *"What does it mean to be a teacher in your school"*. This activity prompted memories for me to think about myself as a teacher teaching in a Private Catholic School. Being the youngest teacher in the Honours class at the time, I was surrounded by many senior teachers and master teachers.

This module forced me to look deeper, to remember events and experiences and to link those to what I do as a teacher within this distinctive educational environment of a Private Catholic School setting. Teacher identities are "formed within cultural and institutional contexts" and it is for this reason that the Catholic school is a foregrounding force (White, 2009, p. 863). I remembered feeling like a stranger in my school as an Indian, female, Hindu NT. I continue to feel that I am being watched by the older, experienced teachers. Why do I continue to feel this way? Swart refers to a NT as an "individual who is a newly qualified teacher in the first, second or third year of her/his teaching career" (2013, p. 4). "The beginner teacher is a stranger who is often not familiar with the accepted norms and symbols in the school…[NTs] seem to resemble immigrants who leave a familiar culture and move into a strange one that is both attractive and repellent" (Sabar, 2004, p. 147). What about teaching in a school with a particular religious ethos? What does it mean for a NT?

I was terrified and nervous, shaking in my boots. No one told me what to do or how to approach this first day in the classroom. For me this first day determined whether or not I was cut out for being a teacher. University never teaches or prepares you for this day, in fact no one does.

                                                                    Journal entry (June 2011)

As a NT, there are critical moments that I remembered during the module which have assisted me in thinking about my work and what I do as a new teacher from a different perspective. There is a constant nervousness and anxiety about being in the classroom and within this religious school environment. Being a Hindu and teaching in a Catholic School, I have to follow the ethos of the school and teach in a way that is supported by the Catholic values, teachings and principles. As a teacher teaching in a Catholic school, my responsibilities are varied within the school context. They range from teaching in the classroom to having close relationships with each learner in my class in order to understand who they are and where they come from, delivering assemblies which are in line with the Catholic teachings, principles and values, extra and co-curricular activities and performing all other school related duties. I often struggle to negotiate who and what I am and do meaningfully as a teacher working in this social reality, attempting to make personal sense of "how it should be; whilst at the same time being subjected to the powerful socialising forces of the school culture" (Flores & Day, 2006, p. 220). Therefore, being a NT is fraught with many challenges and constraints that may cause immeasurable struggles for the new teacher. Literature refers to this as a 'reality shock' because the NT either "sinks or swims" (Hobson, Ashby, Malderez & Tomlinson, 2009, p. 207). Fantilli and McDougall, (2009, p. 814) refer to teaching as "the profession that eats its young".

In the Personal and Professional Identities of Teachers in the Context of Change module, I was able to introspect and reflect on myself as an individual through the various activities with which we engaged. The written assignments that we were given were around teacher identity and professional development, sparked my curiosity and form the basis of my Masters study around NTs. The topic for Assignment One was *"How can teacher inquiry into their personal and professional selves contribute to their teacher development?"* Assignment Two was based on a quote from an article by Beauchamp and Thomas (2009): *"Teacher identity is dynamic – shifts over time under the influence of a range of factors both internal to the individual such as emotion… and external such as job and life experiences in particular contexts"*.

Now, as a researcher, I want to know about other NTs and their lived experiences of teaching within a Private Catholic School. I want to know how NTs' meanings of "who I am" and "what I do" are being negotiated within the distinctive educational context of a Private Catholic School. I also want to know how these NTs are contributing to and/or shifting, redefining and/or transforming this distinctive educational context where they work. Hence I

will be foregrounding two key dimensions in this study, Private Catholic schooling and NTs' work. "The existence of Catholic schools is that they provide a distinct and necessary alternative to what is offered in public non-denominational schools" (Rymarz, 2010, p. 299). This is a critical dimension because within the walls of this school, three female NTs do, feel, act and think in ways that change this dimension and/or add to that dimension. Where does the drive and passion come from that makes them do what they do and want to stay in a profession that not many young people want to get into today?

For me, this is more than just a research study. This is a chance for me to get to explore who the NTs are that decide to stay in the profession and how they have come to be the embodiment of particular personal-professional selves. This is particularly important for NTs and their work in a Private Catholic schooling reality, as there are many forces that impact on their lived experiences. From a sociological perspective on Identity, I thus offer understandings of NTs' lived experiences within a Private Catholic school.

Professional Imperatives

Internationally, the retention rates for NTs during "the first three years of practice are precariously low" (Ewing, 2001 as cited in Long, 2009, p. 318). Ewing's research found that up to "40% of NTs leave the profession due to cited challenges that they experience, such as stress from work overload, inadequate tertiary preparation for the realities of schools and unrealistic demands from the school"(Ewing, 2001 as cited in Long, 2009, p. 318). NTs teaching in the 21st century have to negotiate the complexity of teaching, over and above teaching in a particular religious context, which adds another layer of complexity. NTs' challenges in their working lives are complex and often described as a "baptism of fire", as illustrated by Moreau, (2004, p.231). NTs are compounded by innumerable demands, unsupported and or limited support from and through the transition from being a student teacher to a NT (Thomas & Beauchamp, 2011). Some other challenges facing NTs are classroom management, learner discipline, large class sizes, isolation and loneliness, relationships with peers, classroom organisation, insufficient resources, curriculum planning and assessment, feelings of fear, conflict and tension, lack of support, and limited or no mentoring offered to them (Cohen, 2008; Fantilli & McDougall, 2009). These are just a few issues pertaining to NTs."New teachers spend a disproportionate amount of effort and time trying to keep their heads above water" as a result in complicated situations they frequently feel like failures (Fantilli & McDougall, 2009, p. 814).

In addition, NTs in a South African context have to fulfil the seven roles of educators which form a foundation: that of being a lifelong learner, assessor, mediator of learning, designer of learning programmes, administrator and leader, specialist teacher and fulfilling a pastoral role (DoHET, 2010). They also have to cope with large class sizes, language barriers and learners with learning disabilities or special needs, to name a few (DoHET, 2010).In addition to fulfilling what is set out by the DoE, many NTs have their own difficulties that they have to face, as mentioned earlier.

Policy Imperatives

South Africa (SA) has diverse formal schooling systems with a variety of Government, ex–Model C and Private schools catering for the various needs of learners. The diversity in SA allows for complex schooling systems to exist, especially religious schools. The diversity, size and socio-economic spread of the private schooling sector have changed considerably in the last decade (Hofmeyr & Lee, 2002). The ideal of "creating a non-racial and equitable school environment is embedded in the South African Constitution" (Thabane & Human-Vogel, 2010, p. 491). This ideal stems from the desire to overcome the divisions created by the apartheid past. When under the apartheid system, schools were de-segregated relating to race, gender, class and culture and this still manifests today (Jansen, 2004). These experiences are shaped by what theorists describe as dominant discourses and practices of race, class and gender (Bourdieu, 1990), that occur in government and private schools.

"The term 'independent' schooling is often referred to as 'private' schooling. Both terms refer to the same provision of schooling. The term 'independent' derives from the South African Schools Act (SASA) of 1996, which created two broad categories of schools, 'public' and 'independent'" (Kitaev, 1999, p. 43). All state-owned schools constitute public schools and all privately-owned schools constitute independent schools. Kitaev (1999, p. 43) provides a broad definition of private schools for developing countries: "Private schools include all formal schools that are not public and may be founded, owned, managed and financed by actors other than the state…". In SA, the continuous problem is that the general public do not know what the term 'independent' signifies and it is usually necessary to add the term "private to ensure understanding" (Hofmeyr & Lee, 2002, p.78). "Independent schools are rich and poor, religious and secular, urban and rural, big and small, traditional and alternative" (Hofmeyr & Lee, 2002, p.81).

Religious schools have experienced continuing popularity in the last decade. A Private school may be Christian, Jewish, Hindu or Muslim and the school incorporates and follows the teachings and principles of that religion (Hofmeyr & Lee, 2002). The roots of independent schooling in SA are strongly religious and go back to the earliest mission or church schools (Hofmeyr & Lee, 2002).

The Independent Schools Association of Southern Africa (ISASA) is the largest and most inclusive association in the region connected to most private schools. In a survey undertaken by Du Toit (2004) and Musker and Du Toit (2009), the largest category is community schools and religious schools. According to a South African survey published by the South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR) in January 2012, the growth in number of pupils at independent schools from 2000 to 2010 was 75 percent (Macgregor, 2012, p. 13). The SAIRR figures show that two in three learners in private schools are Black. There were 220 600 Black learners in private schools against 97 400 White learners countrywide in 2008 (Macgregor, 2012, p. 7). The demography is different in KwaZulu-Natal. There is a "lower proportion of Black pupils in Private schools, although they are still in the majority" (Macgregor, 2012, p. 7). The School Realities government report in September 2011 found that nearly 480 000 learners attend private schools (Macgregor, 2012, p. 13). Furthermore, in the past decade, the independent school sector has grown considerably. It has become far more diverse, catering for different races, cultures, languages, philosophies, educational approaches and religions (Hofmeyr & Lee, 2002).

The dominant public perception of private schools is that it is "white, affluent and exclusive" (Hofmeyr & McCay, 2010, p. 51). In the nineties, this perception was mostly true, "most of the learners were white and found in traditional, high-fee, religious schools" (Hofmeyr & Lee, 2002). Almost two decades later, this public perception persists but is far from the current reality. Learners attending Private institutions are racially diverse with a high demand from Black South Africans.

Some Private schools follow the Religion Policy set out by the school and/or by the Catholic Institute of Education (CIE). The ethos of religious schools displays the core beliefs of the school and is closely linked to its value system. The ethos of schools is reflected in the schools mission statement. The ethos is the lived experience for the whole school community and is realised by the daily interactions in the school, and promoted and understood in practical ways. Being a NT in a Religious Private School means that there are certain policy

and political specificities that the NT must work within. Against this professional, political and theoretical framework, NTs have to negotiate their own fears and struggles, their professional work and the context within which they teach.

Catholic Schooling

Catholic schools are seen as "inculcators of moral virtue" (O' Donoghue & Harford, 2014, p. 422). Teacher's in Catholic schools are required to "recognise and respond to children's spirituality in how they relate to one another, how they pray, how they integrate their Catholic beliefs and values with who they are and how they act" (Kennedy & Duncan, 2006, p. 290). "Great emphasis was placed on taking every opportunity to promote the Church's principles and ideals when teaching the various subjects on the secular curriculum, …extra-curricular activities were harnessed to great effect to create an all-pervasive religious atmosphere" (O'Donoghue & Harford, 2014, p. 412). The essential components of what makes a Catholic school in relation to other schools or schools with other faiths is that "they provide a climate in which children's spirituality is recognised and nurtured. This climate is built around shared beliefs and values of the school" (Kennedy & Duncan, 2006, p. 291)

According to Frabutt, Holter and Zuzzi (2013, p. 88), "the strong valuation of history and tradition, bodes well for the Catholic educational community as current educational leaders and policy makers in the private school sector grow in their understanding of the unique contributions that Catholic schools have made and continue to make in the educational landscape". Catholic schooling has turned its attention to "preserving unique elements of that tradition while adapting to new contexts that demand ongoing rigorous evaluation" (Frabutt *et al.,* 2013, p. 88). Catholic schools pride themselves on academic achievement and civic engagement, while remaining "inquisitive about the Catholic theological and tradition" (Frabutt *et al.,* 2013, p. 88).

In this study, the key aspects of Private and Catholic schooling play a fundamental role in understanding NTs. My intention is to examine NTs' lives and their work within this distinctive educational context. NTs' meanings of self are in relation to the Private Catholic School and this context plays a definitive role in shaping NTs' meaning-making.

Key Research Questions

1. What are novice teachers' constructions of self?

By answering this question, I will be able to establish particular meanings of self that the NT adopts in relation to the context of the school. The religious dimension of this Private Catholic School is vital to NTs' meaning-making because their personal-professional lives become interwoven and their meanings of self are reworked continuously. As explained in Chapter Three, I facilitate a collage and artefact activity with participants in order to gain their perspectives on this question.

2. How do novice teachers' negotiate their constructions of self in their practices in a Private Catholic school?

Exploring this question will allow me to understand the impact that NTs' lives have on their work. NTs' experiences are vital in understanding the negotiations they make within the Private Catholic School.

The critical research questions posed offer key threads to meaningfully understand the lived experiences of the NTs teaching at Holy Cross Convent.

The Social Identity Theory (SIT) as the theoretical framework (Tajfel 1978, Tajfel & Turner 1979) will assist me in understanding who NTs are, what constitutes how they negotiate their identities within the context of a Private Catholic School (see Chapter Two). This theory will assist me in researching the lived experiences of the NTs and the meanings and practices they adopt in making sense of who they are and how they make sense of the context in which they find themselves. This theoretical framework calls for a methodology that will be able to generate rich, thick data and narrative inquiry is best suited to produce stories of the participants' lived experiences.

For this study, I have selected a narrative inquiry approach (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) which is discussed in Chapter Three. Clandinin and Connelly (2000, p. 20), identify narrative inquiry as being a "very naturalistic approach which involves conversational dialogue and story-telling". They describe narrative inquiry as "a collaboration between researcher and participants, over time, in a place or series of places and in social interaction" (2000, p. 20). Therefore in this study, my participants and I have come together over a period of time to tell, relive and retell our stories and experiences of a personal-professional nature, in order to deepen our understanding of how these experiences have influence over our ever-changing

identities. "As human beings, we tend to recall our past lives by means of narrating and retelling our stories, thus helping others imagine, recall and live through our experiences with us while we begin to find meanings and make sense of our lives" (Clandinin, 2006, p. 45). According to Samuel (2003, p. 271), our identities have been "shaped by and shape the world within which we live. Through the act of telling stories, teachers are able to reveal what these forces are; they are able to critique them, to alter them and to modify their influence over them". Unstructured interviews, collage and artefact retrieval are the strategies employed to generate the data for this study.

This is a qualitative study located in the interpretivist paradigm. The study explores three NTs as the phenomenon at Holy Cross Convent. Nieuwenhuis (2010b, p. 51) defines qualitative research as "studying people or systems by interacting with and observing the participants in their natural environment (*in situ*) and focusing on their meanings and interpretations…. the emphasis is on the quality and depth of information". Qualitative research and stories are intricately connected. Qualitative research is about "persons' lives, lived experiences, behaviours, emotions and feelings as well as about social movements and cultural phenomena", and as a result, stories fit this research style (Skerrett, 2008, p. 143). A qualitative approach would assist me in obtaining an in-depth, rich understanding of NTs' daily, lived experiences in a Private Catholic School. Stories are important to qualitative researchers because stories "express a kind of knowledge that uniquely describes the human experience" (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 8). According to Zull (2002, p. 228), "stories come from our experiences, memories, our actions, and our feelings".

Organisation of this research study

In Chapter One, I explained the background and rationale that is the driving force of this study. I have outlined the focus and purpose of the study, which explores how NTs negotiate their personal-professional identities as teachers in a Private Catholic School. In addition, I have elaborated on the personal-professional imperatives of NTs. Furthermore, I have highlighted my two key research questions, including my methodological approach. I conclude this chapter by giving an overview of this thesis.

Chapter Two of this study focuses on the relevant literature relating to my research focus. The scholarly conversations generated key themes, debates and discussions that inform my study. This also allowed me to understand where my study is located as well as different theoretical perspectives that can be used to study teacher identity. This chapter also includes

the theoretical framing for my study. I want to understand NT lives and complexities around identity negotiation and its different facets.

In Chapter Three, I address the research methodology. Here I elaborate on narrative inquiry and the use of it within this study. In addition, I provide details on the setting of this study, selection of my participants and the data production methods and techniques employed within this study. Through generating the data and reconstructing the stories, I portray the multifaceted lives of the three NTs. The research strategies that I utilise in order to acquire data stem from unstructured interviews, collage and artefact activities as well as group discussions. Furthermore, I consider the limitations of the study, including trustworthiness and ethical issues. I will be using the Force Field Model (Samuel, 2008) as a starting point to understand the complexities of NTs' personal-professional selves. This methodology will allow me to see the different dimensions of the NTs' lived experiences which are the biographical, contextual, institutional setting and programmatic forces. I chose this model because it captures the dimensions required to understand the personal-professional selves of NTs.

Thereafter, in Chapter Four I present the textured, complex, lived experiences of NTs in the form of reconstructed stories. The narratives provide an insight into the lived experiences of the NTs. From the narratives, we get a glimpse of their personal-professional lives. This allows me to present the narrative analysis in a way that offers a complex understanding of the NTs' experiences as lived.

In Chapter Five, I address my first research question, which explores the personal-professional lives of the NTs' in the form of vignettes. The vignettes offer an understanding of the meanings of self that NTs adopt in constructing their meanings of self.

Chapter Six presents an understanding of NTs' enacted practices within a particular religious school setting. I draw on a thematic analysis to answer this question.

Finally, in Chapter Seven I conclude this study with recommendations for further research.

PRESENTING THE LANDSCAPE OF ESTABLISHED LITERATURE ON NOVICE TEACHERS

Introduction

In the preceding chapter, I described the focus and purpose of this thesis and the two research questions that gave rise to this study. The study explores the lived experiences of NTs teaching in a Private Catholic School. This chapter provides a synopsis of studies conducted by many international and local scholars related to NTs' daily lived experiences and their ongoing negotiations of who they are and what they do within a particular religious schooling context.

The purpose of this literature review is to clarify my understanding of what, in a broad sense, is meant by identity and how NTs negotiate change. Such findings are discussed in relation to NTs. The chapter also reviews studies conducted on the teaching experiences of NTs within the Private schooling context and in particular, schools with a cultural/religious ethos. Teachers' lives, constructions of their identities and careers have been aspects that have drawn much attention in the education sector. For the purpose of this study, I am adopting a sociological perspective, that NT selves are multiple (Ronfeldt & Grossman, 2008, White, 2009) and need to be understood within the Private Catholic School context.

This chapter is divided into three sections.

SECTION A: Novice Teacher Discourses clarifies understandings of what teacher identity is, who NTs are and the makings of their identities. I also review established literature on the experiences of NTs within schools as documented by various studies. I provide a critical review of what is known about NTs in the educational landscape.

SECTION B: Novice Teacher Work examines classroom practices and challenges experienced by NTs.

SECTION C: Theoretical Framework explains identity theories (Identity Theory and Social Identity Theory).

SECTION A
Novice Teacher Discourses

In this section, I look at literature on NTs and their lives in particular religious schooling realities relating to the identity formation of NTs. While most of the literature covers issues surrounding identity, personal identity and professional identity, certain gaps have been identified. Most of these articles refer to teachers in general and not just NTs on their own, and this is where my focus lies. Very few articles that I reviewed used narrative inquiry as a methodological vehicle. When the data were compared to other studies not using narrative inquiry, the outcome was the traditional, quantitative, textual interpretations of the data.

My primary search was on connecting NTs to teaching in Private Catholic schools and this search proved futile. I then generalised my search, collecting articles relating to religious education and NTs. I engaged in scholarly conversations to generate key debates around NTs' lives. This section is organised into themes in order to gain an overall understanding relating to the focus of this study, which is NTs' lived experiences in a Private Catholic School.

What is Identity?

The concept of identity has become a significant focus of interest in many countries and takes on various meanings. Teacher education highlights a common belief that identity is dynamic and shifts over time, as a result of many factors or forces (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009, Cohen, 2008, Ronfeldt & Grossman, 2008). Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) explain that identity is a fluid and on-going process. Adding to this view, Cohen (2008, p.80) suggests that identity is central to the "beliefs, values and practices that guide teachers commitment and actions in and out of the classroom". MacLure affirms that identity should not be seen as a "stable entity- something that people have - but as nuances that they use, to justify, to explain and make sense of themselves in relation to other people and the contexts in which they operate" (1993, p. 312). In addition, White (2009, p. 861) recognises that "teachers' identities are malleable rather than complete, and their identities are in constant tension, development and refinement". I concur with MacLure and White, as their meanings encompass a broader sense of what identity is. Woodward (2000) maintains that [novice] teachers as individuals are not powerless as they negotiate and interpret the roles they adopt and that it is possible to challenge the structures that constrain them.

Ramkelewan (2012) suggests that an individual's identity is linked to the role he/she has in society. These include the role of father, mother, teacher and so on. As a result, these identities are allocated to people. Some identities are deliberately attained through career choices like doctor, lecturer or teacher. A person's identity is also shaped by many factors such as the situation that the person finds herself in, as well as her character, personality, family dynamics and the social environment. Jacklin's (2001) understanding of identity is from a personal and context perspective. Similarly, White (2009, p. 861) concurs that identities are in "constant tension, development and refinement". She maintains that this is a creative process, hence identity construction is an ongoing process.

Individuals' multiple identities are open to change, according to the life situation in which one finds oneself in. As we continue to seek for the "stable sense of 'I', these identities may conflict or support each other" (White, 2009, p. 861). Professional identity deals with how teachers create and assemble their own perceptions of "'how to be', 'how to act' and 'how to understand'" their own work within the classroom, and their place in society (Sachs, as cited in Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009, p. 178).Therefore, a person's identity is in relation to society or context that he finds himself in. Pearce, (2011, p. 52) affirms that identity formation involves reflexive awareness of the self, and that individual identity is only meaningful in relation to the "social world of other people".

In the United Kingdom, research on teachers' professional identity demonstrates that "teachers' experiences are central to their practice and commitment as professionals", as indicated by Cohen (2010, p. 473). Teacher identities are viewed from a contextual and institutional perspective. Researchers in Australia, Canada and Norway have employed a "biographical analysis to better understand how teachers view themselves as professionals in the context of changing work situations, often driven by changes in the education policy" (Cohen, 2010, p. 473). These researchers understand teacher identities on another level by analysing identities through a biographical, context and institutional dimension. "A teachers' identity is shaped and reshaped in interaction with others in a professional context" (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009, p. 178).

Teacher identity

In the realm of teacher development, teacher identity has recently generated considerable interest to educational researchers. Jansen (2001, p. 242) provides a working definition of

teacher identity by suggesting that it deals with teachers' "sense of self as well as their knowledge and beliefs, dispositions, interests and orientation towards work and change". Personal-professional teacher identities cannot be viewed separately as they are intertwined. The development of personal-professional identities is an "ongoing process, and therefore the identities are dynamic rather than stable and involve both person and context", contributing to an evolving occurrence, as illustrated by Beauchamp and Thomas (2009, p. 177). In contrast, personal identity suggests a kind of person within a specific context over a period of time (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Soreide argues that the "negotiation between multiple identities is a necessary part of the construction of teacher identity" (2006, p. 527).

Teacher identity is comprised of "multiple dimensions, some stable and some unstable and [suggests], that agency may be involved in maintaining or further shaping these identities" (Day *et al.,* as cited in Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009, p. 184). Parallel to this, "teacher identity is something that is not fixed nor is it imposed; rather it is negotiated through experience" (Sachs, as cited in Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009, p. 178). Using this as a starting point I want to understand how NTs negotiate their identities and what are the experiences that allow for this negotiation to happen. Therefore, research on "teacher identities, their interests and biographies is urgently needed because we have little knowledge of how teachers' early experiences… [are] formative in developing a teacher's identity" (White, 2009, p. 860). Furthermore, McAnulty and Cuenca (2014, p. 36) argue that "we know very little about the development of the identities of new teachers".

My focus is on NTs within the context of Private religious schooling. I want to use these explanations in relation to NTs to illustrate the fluidity of their identities in this study. While there has been much research on teacher identity, there is a lack of research on NT identity. My study will therefore add to the literature on identity formation and negotiations of NTs in a particular religious schooling context.

Who is a novice teacher?

While Sarpy-Simpson (2005, p. 9) describes a NT as a "teacher who is new to the field of education with zero-two years of teaching experience", existing research "suggests that the state of being a novice…deserves special attention" (Orland-Barak & Maskit, 2011, p. 445). Novices' bring "one's own experience, attitudes, beliefs, individual capacity and knowledge about subject matter and other domains of teacher knowledge" into the classroom, as maintained by Merseth, Sommer and Dickstein (2008, p. 90). These attributes cannot be

overlooked, as NTs make use of them in order to grow and develop. In today's rapidly transforming global society, many NTs around the world are experimenting with their "roles and recreating their professional identities in relation to the context that surround them, contexts that are shifting, sometimes in unexpected ways", as argued by Thomas and Beauchamp (2011, p. 762). Ronfeldt and Grossman (2008) further suggest that NTs must negotiate the image they want to portray in the classroom. They refer to "the possible selves" (2008, p. 42) which mean different or multiple identities. The selves refer to the "selves we would like to become, the selves we could become and the selves we are afraid of becoming" (Ronfeldt & Grossman, 2008, p. 42). According to Gee as cited in Cohen, (2010, p. 474), the "process of constructing and negotiating personal and professional identity is an important way of patterning knowledge and behaviour in order to get recognised as a certain type of person", and in this way novices begin to construct their identities.

In Israel, Orland-Barak and Maskit (2011) held a national contest on NTs' story writing. The purpose was to find out what "novice teacher's professional world looks like and feels like" in the eyes and through the voices of the novices themselves (Orland-Barak & Muskit, 2011, p. 445). The findings from the NTs' stories "deliver a holistic and inclusive portrayal of what we might refer to as the 'black box' of teaching…issues of management, subject matter, and school level attending to educational values, struggles, myths and ideals that shape [NTs] and teaching" (Orland-Barak & Muskit, 2011, p. 446). NTs' stories "depicted the unique complexity of acting, feeling, and thinking" (Orland-Barak & Muskit, 2011, p. 446).

NTs are seen as unique individuals. From my understanding, NTs' experimenting with their roles in the classroom is a process of trial and error in order to cope or manage with what they do and how they do it. It is shown that through NT stories one can acquire a wealth of information. This study therefore uses NTs' stories to understand how their identities are constructed and negotiated in a Private religious school.

Novice Teachers in South Africa

Samuel and Van Wyk (2008, p. 4), advise that new teachers entering into the profession should be "better prepared to embrace the complex force field, recognising that there is not one single approach to teaching or professional practice". New teachers must understand teaching in a "diverse range of contexts" because teaching in SA is to be part of an engagement in a social, cultural, political and education enterprise (Samuel & Van Wyk, 2008, p. 4). Bertram, Appleton, Muthukrishna and Wedekind (2006, p. 6) maintain that new

teachers specifically "White and Indian primary teachers, are more likely to choose to teach abroad". Some of the reasons cited were a higher salary and the desire to travel. Some of the push factors for NTs leaving SA were the high unemployment rate, crime and bad working conditions (Bertram *et al.,* 2006). Findings from the study conducted by Bertram *et al.* (2006, p. 11) found that "newly qualified White teachers are more likely to teach abroad than African teachers, that newly qualified White teachers are more likely to find a teaching post than African teachers, and that this post is likely to be in a well-resourced 'privatised' (ex-Model C) government school".

White (2009, p. 861) states that "religion may be a component of a teacher's professional identity, if it is an aspect of a teachers' personal experience". She (2009) draws this understanding from a biographical (religious) and institutional (the religion of the context) perspective. Therefore the argument that I am making here is that the image that the NTs create for themselves is dependent upon the professional context they find themselves in and their lived experiences. Teachers need to understand "what it means to be a teacher within a particular school context" (Fraser, Kennedy, Reid & Mckinney 2007, p. 158). Clandinin and Connelly (2000, p. 26) assert that "context makes all the difference". In addition, the cultural curriculum gap can prove to be difficult for new teachers as they try to adapt the curriculum to "suit the cultural needs of their learners" (Hramiak, 2014, p. 159).

The shaping of a teacher's identity is strongly influenced by the context of practice. I want to relate this to the NTs in this study, so that I can establish how the context of a Private Catholic School impacts on the identity of the NT participants. This implies "the necessity to be aware of the effects that the context might have on the shifts and changes in a teacher's identity" (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009, p. 184). As White (2009, p. 859) mentions, "religion is an important aspect of teacher identity". The issue of how religion should impact learner's education is highlighted, but "how teachers use their own religious beliefs to navigate these decisions is silenced" (White, 2009, p. 859). Rymarz (2010, p. 299) explains that Catholic schools provide a "distinctive educational environment based on the religious beliefs and practices of, among others, the teachers who work in these schools". This, however, can only be possible with the support of colleagues and the school management. The religious identity of the Catholic school "primarily arises from the people who are associated with them" (Rymarz, 2010, p. 300). Religious experiences in relation to belief, prayer and practices and rituals, will affect how NTs view themselves as teachers (White, 2009). White (2009) draws

on these understandings from a personal, contextual and institutional perspective to show how they impact on a teacher's practice and identity.

NTs are not prepared for teaching in religious schooling contexts. Many new teachers entering the profession choose to leave SA for various reasons. In this study, I want to know what happens to the NTs who choose to stay in the profession. If the NT's religious identity is the same or different from the school's religious identity and ethos, what does this mean for the NT teaching in this context?

In this section, I included a brief description of what identity is and who NTs are. Teacher identities are multiple and in a continuous state of flux (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). NTs are experimenting with their multiple selves in order to fit in and be comfortable with who they are. I also examined the Catholic schooling context and how NTs negotiate this context.

The next section highlights NT work. I explain NT mismatch between university and schooling realities, challenges experienced by NTs and how NTs can be supported.

SECTION B
Novice Teacher Work

Novice Teacher mismatch between university and schooling realities

NTs are inclined to face a "brick wall of resistance" (Samuel, 2008, p. 10), as more veteran teachers ask the "new recruits to abandon what [they] learnt at university". This alone can make NTs feel uneasy and afraid. "Early career teachers often experience a mismatch or dissonance between idealism and reality" (Pearce, 2011, p.49). I agree with Pearce as this points to the struggles that many NTs experience at this stage. There is a disconnect between being a new teacher, remembering or abandoning what they learnt at university and the reality of the classroom. "The self-image of classroom performance, aligned with the values gained in their pre-service training, can crumble painfully when the inexperienced novice encounters the challenges of putting theory into practice" (Chubbuck, 2008, p. 309).

The process of "moving between communities of practice" for NTs, from being a student in university to teaching in a school proves to be quite a difficult transition (Wenger, as cited in Pearce, 2011, p.49). NTs battle a two-way-struggle, where they try to create their own social

reality by trying to "make their work match their personal vision of how it should be, whilst at the same time being subjected to the socialising forces of the school" (Flores & Day, 2006, p. 220). Pearce (2011) uses a programmatic perspective to understand how NTs negotiate the selves the want to portray. Pearce uses the university practice teaching programme to establish how NTs try to shape their new professional identity at school while at the same time wanting their personal identity to persist and remain coherent and fitting in with everyone else. Ewing's research deals with NTs challenges from a programmatic perspective because tertiary facilities inadequately prepare NTs for harsh schooling realities (Ewing, 2001 as cited in Long, 2009). These challenges are also documented by various researchers whose studies found similar challenges experienced by novices (Fantilli & McDougall, 2009; Parker, Ndoye & Imig, & Hobson *et al.,* 2009). Makhanya (2010) points out that the induction and mentoring of NTs is generally a weak one, therefore resulting in some of the challenges experienced.

Challenges experienced by Novice Teachers

Many NTs enter classrooms today with soaring expectations for themselves and their learners. NTs teaching in Private or Government, urban or rural schools, want the best for their learners. However, in the South African schooling contexts and internationally, there are many limitations and challenges that exist which inevitably impact considerably on the NT. There is limited literature on NTs in South African schooling contexts, especially in Private Catholic Schools. There has been very little research done on the independent school sector in SA (Hofmeyr & Lee, 2002) as well as Independent religious schools.

The cornerstone of NTs in the 21st century lies within their incessant changing sense of self, which determines their efficiency within the classroom, school context and their personal lives (Day, Kington, Stobart & Sammons, 2006). According to Day *et al.* (2006, p. 601), the "broader social conditions in which teachers live and work, and the personal and professional elements of teachers' lives, experiences, beliefs and practices, are integral to one another". NTs contend with many challenges that hinder their growth and development as effective teachers. These elements consist of teachers' routines, values, cultures, beliefs, race, class, ethnicity and practices. There are many tensions and struggles that new teachers face.

Classroom management pertains to everything a teacher does to "organise the time, the space and the learners in such a way that effective instructions can take place every day" (Howard as cited in Ozturk, 2008, p. 36). NTs and their development highlight classroom management

as a major concern of new teachers. Many perceive it as "the monster in first-year teachers' nightmares", as expressed by Ozturk (2008, p. 36). Many NTs often feel that an "inability to manage a class is a sign of weakness" as a result, they are afraid to ask for help from other teachers (Ozturk, 2008, p. 37). NTs explain that classroom management "negatively impacts on their developing identity as a teacher", causing them a lot of stress (Ozturk, 2008, p.37).

Isolation and loneliness for some NTs is a problem because they have just left an environment where they had friends and where frequent feedback was provided by university lectures, mentors and supervisors. Once these NTs are within the walls of a school, it becomes difficult to blend in and fit within a specific clique. NTs feel uneasy and anxious by the fact that "friendships and social groups are already formed and the cultural norms and the shared history of the school are unknown to them" (Ozturk, 2008, p.45). The NTs begin to feel like strangers as they are unfamiliar with the accepted Catholic "norms and symbols in the school or with the internal codes which exist among teachers and students" (Sabar, 2004, p.147). Being accepted by other teachers is probably at the top of the list at this stage in these NTs' careers. They come to school alone and are in search of a social network (Sabar, 2004).

NTs in difficult situations often feel like failures. The short-term retention of NTs at the outset of their teaching career is influenced by the quality and level of support they receive (Fantilli & McDougall, 2009). Many veteran teachers view NTs as a threat to the conventions and comfortable routines of the school (Sabar, 2004). "For this reason and to protect themselves from the NTs, the veteran teachers disregard them" (Sabar, 2004, p. 148). The lack of support also makes the NT feel isolated and alone. This results in the new teacher being unproductive and they may consequently leave the profession (Sabar, 2004).

Classroom management, isolation and loneliness and lack of support are just some of the challenges that NTs face. These challenges are important to address because they hinder the development of the NT. Adding a religious teaching context to this makes teaching more complex. There are various methods that can be put in place by Catholic schools and by the DoE in order to try to retain, assist and provide guidance for NTs. Some methods of support include but are not limited to novices attending professional development workshops, meetings, seminars, cluster meetings pertaining to specific subjects taught and induction and mentoring. NTs in Private Catholic Schools derive their meanings of who they want to become, who they can become and who they are afraid of becoming, by the experiences they

have and the people they surround themselves with in their personal-professional lives. Every experience they have informs their meaning-making of self. Most of the studies reviewed focus on induction and mentoring, as this method proved to be the most successful (Makanya, 2010, Ambrosetti & Dekkers, 2010, Hobson *et al.,* 2009, Ingersoll & Strong, 2011, Corbell, 2010, Robinson & McMillan, 2006.

Supporting the Novice Teacher

Makhanya (2010) claims that the stressful life experience of a NT can be remedied by proper induction and mentoring. Guide 3 for School Management Teams (DoE, 2002, p.31) clearly stipulates that "a good school should have a carefully planned induction and mentoring programme, which is run at the beginning of the year." It also sheds light on the fact that different schools will have different programmes and that parts of the process will be formal and informal. However, in most South African schools, this is non-existent. Therefore there lies a huge gap between the veteran and NT with regard to limited experience, content knowledge, teaching techniques, methods and skills. The induction of NTs is usually a "neglected issue that results in the lack of formal induction, and the induction of NTs is often haphazard and chaotic depending on the goodwill, time and effort of experienced colleagues (mentors)" (Velzen, 2010, p.63).

Most NTs have to find their own way and this can lead to a lonely and difficult introduction into their new profession. Hobson *et al.,* (2009) documents that mentoring for NTs is important because it reduces feelings of isolation, helps increase confidence and self-esteem and builds professional growth. On the one hand, the lack of support does not only harm the NT but also the profession in general, as it may have a negative impact on the quality of the NTs' performance and on the quality of education. On the other, hand there are some schools that take this aspect seriously and provide substantial support and guidance to the NTs by putting a proper induction and mentoring programme in place and implementing it stringently to benefit the NT and the institution (Hobson *et al.,* 2009). Lee (2006, p. 233) states that "mentoring is a nurturing process in which a skilled or more experienced person, serving as a role model, teaches, encourages, counsels a less skilled or less experienced person for the purpose of promoting the latter's professional and/or personal development."Ambrosetti and Dekkers (2010. p.43), further articulate that in order for this to occur, "the new recruit will need basic information about the school or college, the people in it and routines and

procedures. They will need to develop their skills and competencies in the job and they should grow in their understanding of the ethos and culture of the institution." "Without adequate support, only the strongest and most determined" will succeed (Fantilli & McDougall, 2009, p. 814). In this study, I want to know what NTs who are participants in the research do in order to survive and sustain themselves amidst the challenges in a Catholic schooling context.

Mentor and mentee relationships

Mentors play an imperative role with regard to the socialisation of the NTs by helping novices to adapt to the norms, standards and expectations associated with teaching in a particular school. According to Zerzan (2009, p.140), "a mentor is someone of advanced rank or experience who guides, teaches, and develops a novice." Steyn advises that a good mentor is "mature, trustworthy, understanding, a good listener, experienced, has interpersonal skills and is challenging and encouraging" (2004, p. 91). Thus the relationship between a NT and a mentor are vitally important. Even though a wide range of literature was reviewed in this study, there was insufficient literature that provided a suitable definition for mentee. The impact on mentoring has a considerable effect on the development of the capabilities of the NTs' behaviour in the classroom, classroom management skills and the ability to manage their time and workloads (Ambrosetti & Dekkers, 2010).

The key debates around NT work is important when understanding NT identity. The lived experiences of being a NT are complex and nuanced, driven by the need to shape ones identity. By taking into deliberation the different authors' views on the topic, it is evident from the plethora of literature that NTs do experience many challenges, as mentioned in this section. Research also points out that the impact on supporting the NT has a considerable effect on his/her development and capabilities. If providing support for the NT is done effectively and efficiently, then some of the challenges mentioned previously can be overcome. NTs are constantly reinventing themselves by explaining themselves and their teaching lives. Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) emphasize that novices also undergo change through a variety of contextual factors which impacts on themselves as well as their practice.

The key issues that I foreground in this literature review signal the need for a theoretical framework that considers the four dimensions of the biographical, institutional, contextual and programmatic forces. Therefore, I argue that the first few years of teaching are the most

crucial for NTs, especially in terms of the people they surround themselves with and the context of the school. In the next section, I explain the rationale and need for the theoretical framework that will inform this study.

SECTION C

Theoretical Framework

The argument that I am generating for my research is that the self is not an isolated being but interacts and works in relation to the broader social context of the NT, and that furthermore, this allows for multiple selves to exist. This section will cover two key approaches on identity theory research which will assist me in understanding NT's identities and the meanings and practices they adopt. In addition, the Force Field Model (Samuel, 2008) will be used as the analytical framework to inform this research.

Identity Theories

When researching identity, there are two common theories that are prevalent, Social Identity Theory (SIT) and Identity Theory. These two theories have similar perspectives on the construction on self, looking at individual behaviour and social structure. Identity Theory originates from psychology and SIT originates from the discipline of sociology. "Identity Theory may be more effective in dealing with chronic identities and with interpersonal social interaction, while [SIT] may be more useful in exploring intergroup dimensions and in specifying the socio-cognitive generative details of identity dynamics" (Hogg, Terry & White, 1995, p. 255). In this study, the social group will refer to NTs. Identity Theory "focuses on self-defining roles that people occupy in society…they do not acknowledge directly how structurally based attributes like gender, race and ethnicity impact on the self" (Pillay, 2003, p. 28). These dimensions are vital for my study in understanding NTs as they constantly negotiate their identities in relation to the context within which they find themselves. This was the rationale for the use of the SIT in understanding the NT participants in this study.

Social Identity Theory – In-group and Out-group understandings

SIT was introduced by Tajfel and defined as "individual knowledge that he belongs to a certain social group together with some emotional and value significance to him of his group

membership" (1978, p. 293). Stets and Burke observe that "a group is a set of individuals who hold a common social identification or view themselves as members of the same social category", (2000, p. 225). Through a "social comparison process persons who are similar to the self are categorised with the self and labelled the in-group; persons who differ from the self are categorised as the out-group" (Stets & Burke, 2000, p. 225). Individuals who hold similar viewpoints, share related or common characteristics, see things from the group's perspective, identify with each other, share similar attitudes, beliefs and values and behavioural norms are considered to be part of the in-group (Stets & Burke, 2000). Individuals who "differ from the self" are considered to be part of the out-group (Stets & Burke, 2000, p. 225).

The use of the SIT provides a framework to understand "who" and "what" – who the NTs are and what constitutes their identities. This will allow me to see how NTs negotiate who they are as teachers and individuals within a specific religious context. As a result, SIT provides me with a lens in researching the lived experiences of the NTs and the meanings and practices they adopt in making sense of who they are and of the world in which they live. The NTs will be able to do this by voicing their individual stories. This is where narrative inquiry as a methodology plays a pivotal part of this study. I will generate data that will assist me in voicing the NTs' individual stories of their lived experiences and I will thereby gain insight into who they are. This will assist me in illustrating that identity is fluid and in a state of flux (Pillay, 2003), and can change within different spaces and contexts. Particular lived experiences within the private religious schooling context can constrain or contribute to the NTs' experiences, which will determine how they construct themselves and negotiate the situations and circumstances in which they find themselves.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I examined literature regarding NTs' identities, paying close attention to religion and Private Catholic schooling. The stance that I am taking is from an identity perspective, where NT selves are seen as multiple. This is supported by many scholars (Beauchamp & Thomas 2009, Cohen, 2008, White, 2009, Jacklin, 2001 & Ronfeldt & Grossman, 2008). The literature states that NTs find teaching complex and challenging and adding a religious context to this makes it more complicated. The key debates prevalent around understanding NT identity focus on who the NT is. Most studies on NTs bring forth the sudden and sometimes dramatic experience of the switch from student to teacher.

Literature points to identities being understood through different dimensions. With all the challenges that NTs endure, adding a specific religious schooling context to the teaching experience makes teaching more complex. This highlights that NT's personal-professional self cannot be viewed separately but as one, and that religion forms a crucial part of the NTs' personal-professional life. How religion impacts the learner is highlighted but how NTs use their own religious beliefs and the religious context they find themselves in to negotiate their identities, is silenced. Literature highlights that teachers' religious identities are influenced by their professional practice but there is an absence when it comes to explaining that teachers are influenced by the social and institutional contexts in which they work. The studies I reviewed looked at literature only, providing case studies of teachers, structured and semi-structured interviews, group conversations, and theoretical analysis. None of the studies I reviewed looked at NTs' lived experiences. There was little or no information on NTs teaching experiences in Private Catholic Schools.

The next chapter outlines the research methodology, namely narrative inquiry, and the research design employed to answer the research questions. Trustworthiness, ethics, issues relating to analysis of the data and possible limitations of this study are presented.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I discussed the available literature on NTs as well as the theoretical framework underpinning this study. The aim of this study is to retell the lived lives of NTs within a Private Catholic schooling context, through examining their past and present experiences. I want to understand how these experiences generate particular meanings which inform the NT participants' multiple identities in this study. These multiple identities form the basis of NT meanings and practices in a specific religious schooling context.

In this chapter, I explain my research design and more specifically the research setting, my role as the researcher in narrative inquiry, the issue of voice and the reason for the selection of my participants. I had to ensure that the research methodology selected was appropriate in answering my two research questions. Imperative to the methodology of narrative inquiry is the data production methods and the strategies employed to generate the data for this study. I examine the process of data analysis and address data representation issues. This chapter is divided into three sections. Section A, Section B and Section C.

SECTION A:

In this section I discuss three aspects of the research design:

- o Narrative inquiry as the chosen methodology and how it relates to this study.

- o The research design plan and outline for understanding the complex lives of the NTs.

- o The selection of my research participants and the research context.

SECTION B:

In this section I discuss the research plan, including:

- o The data production methods and tools employed in this study. The NTs meaning-making was facilitated using unstructured interviews, collage and artefact retrieval. The unstructured interview was a fitting instrument as I was able to obtain rich, thick data about my participants' personal and professional lives. The

collage and artefact were stimulating activities were I was able to elicit data about my participants from different vantage points.

SECTION C:

In this section I discuss the analytical framing and production of the storied narratives:

- o The data analysis, coding and interpretation.

SECTION A

Why Narrative Inquiry?

Telling, retelling, writing and rewriting stories are fundamental parts of social life and its study (Witherell & Noddings, 1991). Narrative inquiry is an appropriate methodology for this study: by exploring our experiences, past and present, our shifts in our meaning-making and redefinition of who we are in the world and how we make sense of ourselves as teachers, are enabled (Clandinin & Connelly, 2006). By remembering and drawing on critical moments, we are forced, as individuals to think about what shapes, has shaped and is shaping our meanings and what we do as individuals. Narrative inquiry is the study of experience as story. It offers a way for researchers to think about and share experience (Hamiliton, Smith & Wothington, 2008). "Storytelling and writing can allow for voicing novices' initial struggles to mediate between personal beliefs and values, and the external commitments and requirements of teaching" (Orland-Barak & Maskit, 2011, p. 435)

Clandinin and Connelly (2006) propose three commonplaces of narrative inquiry namely temporality, sociality and place. Temporality acknowledges that people have a past, present and future. Sociality targets the importance of the participant-researcher relationship and place refers to settings and boundaries of place. These distinctive features of narrative inquiry will assist me as the researcher to gain access into the NTs' lives as they share their critical moments with me. By using narrative inquiry as a methodological approach, trustworthiness is established as they give very clear and detailed explanations of what data sources are used and how data are generated and analysed (Feldman, 2003; Mishler, 1990). Since I have adopted a narrative inquiry stance, this study cannot be regarded the same as scientific experiments with regards to reliability. In the same way, what I learn from this study cannot be seen as definitive.

Narrative inquiry as a research methodology allows my participants to voice their individual stories as contradictions of 'self' which are fluid, multiple and non-linear (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Leitch (2006) notes that a suitable way of capturing educational experiences, is through using narratives. It is argued that "teachers like all other human beings lead storied lives through which they assign meaning to their experiences" (Leitch, 2006, p. 549). Bell (2002) concurs, suggesting that teachers make sense of their experiences through story structures and that teachers' narratives shape and inform their practice. By focussing and listening to "the voice of teachers and hearing their stories", this can be achieved (Bell, 2002, p. 208). This is a critical aspect because it is through their stories that the NTs make meaning of their lives and lived experiences within the context in which they work and live. Therefore, I believe that using narrative inquiry will assist in shaping the representation of individuals' views of how they see themselves.

Varathiah eloquently states that as we "pass through life's journey there are significant moments in our life as we go through certain experiences" and these moments stay with us forever (2010, p. 9). Narrative inquiry involves working with people's "consciously told stories, recognising that these rest on deeper stories of which people are often unaware" (Bell, 2002, p. 209). All these stories rest on the "story structures that people hold and they provide a window into people's beliefs and experiences" (Bell, 2002, p. 209). My study therefore provides an opportunity for the NTs to voice their own stories. Elbaz (1991, p. 10) maintains that exercising 'voice' implies that one has the "language in which to give expression to one's authentic concern, that one is able to recognise those concerns, and further that there is an audience of significant others who will listen". In this study, I am the novice researcher who is the significant other who is going to listen to the NTs' voices.

What is Narrative Inquiry?

From my understanding, a narrative is, most simply put, a story. Telling stories is an astonishing thing. We are a species whose main purpose is to "tell each other about the expected and the surprises that upset the expected, and we do that through the stories we tell" (Bruner as cited in Clandinin, 2006, p. 44). I will use narrative inquiry as a methodological approach to understand NTs because teachers' stories is where I theorise my work. Narrative inquiry as a methodology "entails a view of the phenomenon" as mentioned by Clandinin and Huber (2010, p. 3). Narrative inquiry can be defined as

…"people shap[ing] their daily lives by stories of who they and others are and as they interpret their past in terms of these stories it [becomes] a portal through which a person enters the world and by which their experience of the world is interpreted and made personally meaningful. Viewed this way, narrative is the phenomenon studied in inquiry. Narrative inquiry, the study of experience as story, then, is first and foremost a way of thinking about experience" (Connelly & Clandinin as cited in Clandinin, Pushor and Orr, 2007, p. 22).

Narrative inquiry is the study of experience as story and it offers the researcher a way to think about the shared experiences (Hamiliton *et al.,* 2008). Clandinin and Connelly are pioneers in the field of narrative inquiry in educational studies and suggest that the term "names a fundamental structure and quality of experience both personal[ly] and social[ly] in understanding individuals (Leavy, 2009, p. 27). In this regard, narrative can be viewed as a frame through which people make sense of their lives. Narrative inquiry goes beyond just telling stories. Narrative describes our journey through life as a story. Ethical issues are of prime importance in narrative inquiry because people's experiences and stories are used. Narrative inquirers "understand that a person's lived and told stories are who they are and who they are becoming and that these stories sustain them. This understanding shapes the necessity of negotiating research texts that respectfully represent participants' lived and told stories", as maintained by Clandinin and Huber (2010, p. 15). Through my data collection, I have encouraged and motivated my participants to express their lived stories. Drawing on memory work to remember their critical experiences provides meaningful, retrievable and reliable information. Memory work allows participants to go back in time to think about their memories and the nuances that add to their rich lives. Memory work "is a group method, involving always the collective analysis of individual written memories" in the words of Onyx and Small (2001, p. 773). Beauchamp and Thomas (2009, p. 181) assert that "stories are a way to express identity".

Stories in Narrative Inquiry

Stories can join the world of thoughts and feelings, and they give special voice to the feminine side of human experience – to the power of emotion, intuition, and relationships in human lives" (Witherell & Noddings, 1991, p. 4). Narrative inquiry utilises research through "story-telling, life history, in-depth interviews or focus groups" (Letherby, 2003, p. 1) to name a few. Varathiah (2010, p. 8) advises that by "sharing stories about our lives, we can

examine our development, our position in our families, our choices to become a teacher, as well as the influence of other siblings, relatives, friends and other role models". Witherell and Noddings (1991, p. 1) mention that "stories and narrative, whether personal or fictional, provide meaning and belonging to our lives." To a certain extent, these stories can attach us to others and to our very own histories by "providing a tapestry rich with threads of time, place, character, and even advice on what we might do with our lives" (Witherell & Noddings, 1991, p.1). NTs' stories justify their character and how their interests change and develop due to their decisions, specific circumstances and experiences (Leitch, 2006). Teachers' "expression of multiple identities is possible through a teacher's narrative" (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009, p. 181). Noddings and Witherell (1991) affirm that through story-telling, we learn who we are and as a result, it can be a cathartic experience for the individual as our emotional scars can heal.

Stories not only help to make sense of experiences but they also help to build connections with prior knowledge and improve memory. Memories and stories of my participants will assist me in understanding who they are. By focusing on the NTs' changing, fluid and non-linear selves, I will be able to identify the negotiations with their professional work in the context of Private Catholic Schooling. Narrative inquiry attempts to collaboratively access the participants' life experiences to engage in a process of storying and re-storying in order to reveal multidimensional meanings and present an authentic, compelling and rendering of the data (Leavy, 2009). All our lives and stories have their good moments and bad moments. We learn from these moments and grow further to develop as they shape us and our identities into the individuals that are. We can learn from each others' stories and they can prove to be beneficial to teachers who are willing to share their experiences with others. Pithouse, Mitchel and Weber (2009) confirm that by opening up and sharing stories or experiences, we allow for engagement and healing which can improve the individual's development.

The Research Process

Qualitative Research Design

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2009) state that qualitative research design allows for a deeper, richer understanding of the event being explored, and the meanings and construction of reality attached by participants to situations. Creswell (2009) maintains that qualitative methods are more successful at providing a framework and background for identity construction. This therefore allows the participant to narrate themes of self in relation to

social and historical events. This qualitative form of research is designed to seek and explore teacher identities of NTs as the phenomenon at Holy Cross Convent. I am therefore arguing that the self is not an isolated being. The meaning-making of the self is in relation to the broader social, religious and cultural context. When focusing on NTs' meaning-making, I realise that the meanings of self are constructed and reconstructed by many forces such as their family dynamics, race, class, gender, linguistics and the various diverse experiences that they have encountered and continue to encounter. For this study, I am looking at the deeper meanings of social actions; how these are interpreted, understood and appreciated by individuals and groups and how they have been shaped over time by social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic and gender forces. Drawing on Mishler's (1990) idea of trustworthiness, I can clarify my research process such that it will have potential to serve as a credible resource that others interested with NT identities might use to generate new ideas and practices.

Research Paradigm

The research paradigm which underpins this study is the interpretivist paradigm. Nieuwenhuis (2012, p. 59) states that "interpretive studies generally attempt to understand phenomena through the meanings that people assign to them". In this study, the phenomenon is identity construction/reconstruction. Leitch (2006, p. 549) asserts that "narrative research methods are increasingly used in studies of educational practice within the qualitative or interpretive paradigm". The interpretive paradigm focuses mainly on "people's subjective experiences, on how people "construct" the social world by sharing meanings, and how they interact with or relate to each other" (Nieuwenhuis, 2012, 59). This study relates to how novice teachers at Holy Cross Convent construct their identities based on their various experiences. Thus, within the interpretive paradigm, my aim is not to predict what my participants will do, but rather to describe how my participants make sense of their worlds, and how they make meaning of their particular actions (Christiansen, 2010, p. 23).

Selection of Research Participants

This study is a small scale study focusing on understanding and interpreting the lived experience of a particular group of NTs. Narrative inquiry often relies on small sample sizes but produces rich data. Bertram (2003, p. 43) states that through purposive sampling, "the researcher makes specific choices about which people to include in the sample". The researcher "targets a specific group, knowing that the group does not represent the wider population, it simply represents itself". Purposive sampling also does not attempt to be

representative of the wider population. It is "deliberately and unashamedly selective and biased" and the findings are not generalised but the focus is to acquire in-depth information from knowledgeable people about the phenomenon being researched (Cohen *et al.,* 2009, p. 115). It is important to find participants "who are accessible and willing to provide information as well as those who can shed light on [the specific] issues being explored" (Creswell, 1998, p. 111).

There are only four NTs at Holy Cross Convent, Kerusha, Sarah, Elizabeth and myself. My NT participants included three primary school teachers who have less than five years of experience (Swart, 2013, Sarpy-Simpson, 2005). I decided to approach these individuals with whom I have a good relationship and with whom there is a high level of mutual respect as we represent the "young blood" on the staff and have much in common. Before approaching my potential participants, I had to obtain written permission from the school Principal as my research was conducted on the school premises. I then spoke to the prospective participants and they were willing to be a part of my study. I obtained written permission from all participants stating that they would be a part of my study. I also had to assure my participants that all information discussed between us would remain confidential and they would remain anonymous. Pseudonyms would be used to protect their identity. I allowed the participants to choose their own pseudonyms since there was a possibility that they could be recognised if their real names were used. I would continue to safeguard the anonymity of these participants throughout my study and any other work published from this research by not using any identifying information.

Two of my participants, Sarah and Elizabeth are white females in their late twenties. Sarah is a Grade three teacher in the Foundation Phase (FP) phase and Elizabeth is a Grade four teacher in the Intermediate Phase (IP). Finally, my third participant Kerusha is a first year teacher, teaching Grade one in the FP phase. She is an Indian female in her early twenties. Participants were reminded that their participation in this study was voluntary and they were free to withdraw at any stage during the research process. Clandinin (2006, p. 52) points out that we need to imagine ethics "as being about negotiation, respect, mutuality and openness to multiple voices" and that by following these points, we can gather valid data. My participants Sarah, Elizabeth and Kerusha have shown dedication and enthusiasm in participating in my study. All three are South African females teaching in the primary school of Holy Cross Convent. The perspectives offered in this study are hence that of female origin.

Elbaz (1991, p. 13) strongly suggests that teacher's voices must speak from "an embeddedness within the culture of the particular school, school system, and society in which the teacher lives and works".

Table 3.1:   Profile of Participants

Name of participant	Race	Gender	Religion	Age	First year of teaching	Years of teaching experience	Grade taught	Phase Teaching
Sarah	White	Female	Catholic	27	2010	3	3	Foundation
Elizabeth	White	Female	Christian	26	2011	2	4	Intermediate
Kerusha	Indian	Female	Hindu	21	2012	1	1	Foundation

The Research Setting

This research study is based at Holy Cross Convent, which is a Private Catholic School. The Sisters of Holy Cross came to Durban from Bordeaux, France in 1875, in response to a request from Bishop Jolivet, to establish a school for young ladies. The school began its life in Durdoc Centre in Smith Street and later moved to St Andrews Street. A few years later, Holy Cross Convent moved to its present site. This school is 147 years old and is situated in an historically middle class suburb in Durban. Holy Cross Convent has three other sister schools in the greater Durban area. Holy Cross Convent provides a value based education for the Catholic community as well as for those from the wider community who seek an education in harmony with the aims of the school.

When you walk into Holy Cross Convent, you get a feel about the school, the way the school looks, the way you are welcomed by the friendliness of the learners and teachers and the strong presence of God. The school has a strong value system based on Gospel/Biblical values, with Christ as the centre of the school. Through its general programme of education and especially its Religious Education classes and religious practices, Holy Cross Convent exercises the right to live and learn the values of Jesus Christ, as upheld by the Catholic Church. Catholic schools maintain a distinctive identity that distinguishes them from other schools (Rymarz, 2010). The faith fosters positive relationships among learners, teachers and parents. The religious atmosphere promotes the formation of the whole child. Worship and

prayer are integral and central to school life. This is the ethos of the school. All involved in Holy Cross Convent, teachers, support staff, sport coaches, parents and volunteers form part of the school community. Whether they are Catholic, Christian or of another faith, all stakeholders are expected to follow the ethos, religious practices and routines of the school.

Holy Cross Convent was initially an all-girls school run by the Sisters of the Convent serving predominantly the White elite from Grade 00 to Grade 12. As the years went by, the Sisters went back to run the Convent and they began to employ teachers. Eighteen years ago, the school became a co-educational school accepting boys and girls from all walks of life. Today, the school stands at 330 learners from Grade 00 to Grade 12, serving predominantly the Black elite. There is a significant Black enrolment in traditionally White Private Schools that are religious or community-based (Hofmeyr & Lee, 2002). The school has small class sizes which allows for individual attention for each learner. The learner-teacher ratio is approximately 11.2 learners to one teacher. This school is very well-resourced. Although most learners come from very wealthy backgrounds, many learners do not live with their parents for various reasons. Many of the learners' parents work overseas, some learners come from child-headed households, many learners live with their grandparents, and some come from single parent homes and broken homes. The school environment, nature of the learner population, the impact of the colleagues and of the school administrators are all influential in shaping a teacher's identity (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009), and this is evident at Holy Cross Convent.

At Holy Cross Convent, the NTs are inducted by the Chaplin of the School from a religious perspective. The Chaplin has a one-on-one interview with the NT to discuss religious issues, routines and responsibilities that the NT must fulfil at the school over and beyond their teaching duties. The Chaplin informs the NT of the prayers, masses and religious days that the school observes and the reason for these days being important and auspicious. From here, the Chaplin also gets an idea of the NT and how the religious ethos of the school will continue to be upheld. The Chaplin also discusses the NT's own religion and religious beliefs and makes clear that no religion is cast aside at the school although the Catholic ethos and religion must take priority.

The issue of place is essential to narrative inquiry because attention to detail in place accentuates the significance of the environment in which experiences take place (Clandinin *et al.,* 2007). When planning my study, I decided that I would collect data at Holy Cross

Convent but also at coffee shops or at any other location convenient to my participants. McMillian and Schumacher (2001) suggest that it is important that research sites are chosen depending on their suitability and feasibility. Since this study was conducted in the Catholic school I wanted to make certain that the School Psychologist, Religion teacher and Chaplin were aware of what I was doing. I knew that collecting data at school would be a challenge because my participants teach in the primary school and I teach in the high school, our times for the day are different and we also follow a different school calendar schedule. In order to engage in the collage and artefact activity as well as to conduct unstructured interviews and group discussions, I would need sufficient time. I could foresee many disruptions and I knew we would have to make time outside of school. My participants were very understanding and they unanimously preferred to have the unstructured interviews, discussions, collage and artefact activities done at school in my classroom. Kerusha's transport picked her up from school every day and on most days, Sarah and Elizabeth stayed late at school to complete their work. My participants felt very comfortable in the chosen venue.

Researcher: *I would like that every time we meet we change the venue so that we are not in the same space every time. What do you all think about that?*

Sarah: *Well, uhm, I actually like this room, it's quiet around here, there's no children making a noise and we can work here.*

Elizabeth: *Uh, I also prefer being here than somewhere else coz it's quiet here and we can get on with what we have to do… we won't be disturbed here…*

Kerusha: *I am fine being here; also, I get picked up from school so this is just so much easier for me.*   (Transcript, 22 November, 2012)

SECTION B

Data Production Methods

For this research study, unstructured interviews and arts-based methods were used to generate the data. These methods offered me a variety of options to generate my data. Cohen *et al.,* (2009, p. 47) suggest that research methods are a "range of approaches used in educational research to gather data which are used as a basis for inference and interpretation, for

explanation and prediction". Memory-work is a reflective process and relies on one's memories (Onyx & Small, 2001). Through the use of memory-work, a "range of emotions, both positive and negative" (Cole, 2011, p. 226) can be explored. As a result, memory-work becomes useful for examining teacher beliefs and teacher identity. Trustworthiness of the narrative research lies in the confirmation by the participants of their reported stories of experience as put forward by Webster and Mertova (2007, p. 99). It is also important to use multiple methods to gain a variety of different perspectives on what is being studied (Pinnegar & Hamilton, 2009).

Unstructured Interviews

Interviews are important because they allow knowledge to be generated between humans through conversations (Cohen *et al.,* 2001). No interview can truly be considered unstructured; however, some are relatively unstructured and are more or less equivalent to guided conversations (Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). According to Atkinson (2007, p. 225), unstructured interviews are "designed to help the storyteller, the listener, the reader, and the scholar to understand better how life stories serve four functions of bringing us into accord with ourselves (psychological), others (sociological), the mystery of life (spiritual) and the universe around us (philosophical)". As the researcher and the interviewer, I planned a list of topics to use as a guide for the conversation between myself and my participants (See Appendix 1).

A structured interview does not lend itself to narrative inquiry as rich, thick data is required. The unstructured interview allows for an "open situation, having greater flexibility and freedom" (Cohen *et al.,* 2001, p. 273), as participants will be able to explain their feelings and experiences. Denzin and Lincoln (2008) stress the importance of the use of the unstructured interview as it allows the researcher to find out about the participants' colourful experiences. They describe this as a gateway where issues of race, gender and authority come together, and a common platform is found for communication to take place (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). As an Indian with two of my participants being White, we were open to speaking to each other without any inhibitions. Essentially unstructured interviews require that there is a degree of trust between the interviewer and interviewee as the conversation can get very deep and it depends on the participant if they are willing to share that information. It also entails "establishing a safe and comfortable environment" for sharing the participant's personal experiences as they occurred (Bloom & Crabtree, 2006, p. 316). The unstructured

interviews were done after school hours when it suited my participants and it was quiet in my classroom, as decided by my participants. I set the desks opposite each other so that we could face each other.

It is important for the researcher to find participants who are "willing to speak and share ideas" (Creswell, 1998, p. 124). I made my participants feel that what they had to say was valued. When they spoke, I did not stop them or intervene until they stopped talking. That's when I asked a question or asked them to clarify something they said. Interviews help shape narrative experiences where participants can recall and retell their stories (Clandinin & Connelly, 1990). The process of narrative inquiry demands that the researcher pays attention to the fact that the participants are simultaneously telling and retelling their stories as they are living them in that moment (Clandinin & Connelly, 1990). In this way, the participants are engaged in unfolding the stories they share, stories that they "re-story or re-plot through their own reflective process and with the passing of time" (Leavy, 2009, p. 27). The participants are taken back to the time and place where a specific incident occurred. By remembering and drawing on memory work, it is important for me as the researcher to be aware of the emotional attachment to the memories and incidents that my participants wished to share. As a novice researcher, I was afraid that a participant might want to withdraw from my study during the research process due to emotional reasons, because through talking, traumatic memories and experiences may surface. Therefore being sympathetic, empathic and compassionate towards my participants was vital.

Collage Inquiry as a Research Strategy

Collage is defined as "the process of cutting and sticking found images and image fragments from popular print/magazines onto cardboard" (Butler-Kisber, 2008, p. 265); when interpreted, it tells a story. This method of data collection is used to acquire information on the lived experiences of NTs teaching in a Private Catholic School. Pinnegar and Hamilton (2009) maintain that words may not always capture all that the participants want to say. As a result, "changing feelings into images can be less threatening" (Ramkelewan, 2012). Leavy (2009, p. 1) believes that arts based methods like the creative composition of the collage are becoming more prevalent, where "passion and rigor boldly intersect". Butler-Kisber maintain the idea of learning through the use of the collage by mentioning that collages "help to mediate understanding in various ways" (2008, p. 265). The NTs involved in this study were assisted by using pictures to bring significant incidents to light. Collage allows for deep

embedded memories and incidents that may lie just below the surface of consciousness (Ramkelewan, 2012).

The collage activity was to be done collaboratively with all three participants together and myself the researcher. Each participant was then required to create a collage of their own around a specific topic (See Appendix 3), picking out words and pictures that they could use to describe their experiences. In my classroom I put two desks together to make the space big enough for my participants to create their collages. Participants were given many different magazines to choose from, scissors, glue and A3 paper to complete their works of art.

I personally have never worked with collages before. When I was in high school I used to cover my books with a plain white cover and then find pictures and words in magazines that I liked and that stood out for me, and stick them on my books to make my own book cover. At the time I just thought that my books would look different and original as opposed to the ready-made book covers. When my friends used to look at my books they were fascinated, they thought it was such a good idea and it seemed like fun, as they could relate some of the pictures and words I had chosen, given with the type of person that I am. Regardless, I was unaware that there was something called a collage and I was engaging in that practice.

Figure 3.1:   Collage cover of my Grade 10 notebook

Collage reflects the very way we "see the world with objects given meaning not from something themselves, but rather through the way we perceive they stand in relationship to one another", as outlined by Butler-Kisber (2008, p. 268). Through my experience of using the arts based method of collage in this study, the evocative impact of the art forms comes through powerfully. It provides a way of expressing the said and the unsaid, and allows for multiple possibilities of interpretation. Butler-Kisber reinforce that "images enable meaning to travel in ways that words cannot" (2008, p. 269). By using narrative inquiry, the reconstructed text is most important in the representation of the NTs storied lives. NTs' artefacts and collages will be used to enhance the believability of the reconstructed stories. As symbols of the multiple realities through which teachers make sense of who they are, they also invite the reader or viewer to make meaning of these realities outside of the researcher's interpretation. These techniques were to assist me in gaining a multifaceted perspective on this study. NT identity is the driving phenomenon for this study. The collages that the participants created symbolised who they are and what they represent. It is clear from the collages that all three NTs embrace diverse identities. Not only are they young NTs teaching in a Private Catholic School, but they also originate from diverse, multi-coloured backgrounds. The words and pictures chosen for each collage were those that impacted the NTs most in their personal-professional lives.

As time went by, I kept in contact with my participants to discuss dates to meet. Things kept coming up and my participants had to cancel. Only Sarah and Elizabeth were available for the collage activity; Kerusha was not. I was beginning to get very anxious and frustrated because I had provided dates in my research proposal for completion of the collage activity. Time was going on and I was now behind with my work. At the time, I was contemplating doing the activity with only Sarah and Elizabeth, but later on in the day Kerusha made herself available. I knew my participants would be hungry after a long day so I laid out the refreshments on the table and a few minutes later we began the activity. Elizabeth was surprised when she saw me cutting pictures saying, *"...are you also doing a collage with us, that's so cool"* (Transcript from collage activity, 16 April 2013).

As we were paging through the magazines, my participants started to discuss their lives even though I did not pose any question/s to them. I did not to stop them because as the researcher I know that it is important to let their voices be heard. During the research process, it is crucial that the researcher does not make the participants feel undermined but rather connected to one another and free to make their 'voices' heard. This is an important piece of

the story in narrative inquiry (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). This is when the person "brings past experiences to bear to make present actions meaningful" (Elbaz, 1991, p. 4). This is done so that the person feels completely satisfied that he/she has recounted and traced everything that he or she has undergone, in all that makes up the self. Butt *et al.,* as cited in Elbaz (1991, p.4), take this further to suggest that "what the teacher knows inside her head...unfettered and unshaped by others' questions, ideas and interpretations...the teacher's own unadulterated voice", is imperative to the research process. Group conversations can generate a wider range of responses and allow for conversations to develop and flourish with ease (Cohen *et al.,* 2001). That afternoon I let my participants take the collage home to complete and give them back to me the next day and we would then arrange a date for the discussion. The data allowed us to elicit the changes that occur within the NTs' personal-professional lives and the impact it has on their professional work as NTs in a Private Catholic School.

Artefact Retrieval as a Research Strategy

Artefacts are historical objects or sources that lead us to think about the past in a different way. Artefacts retrieval is an instrument that when used assists us in evoking memories about our past (See Appendix 2). When we look for artefacts we need to remember that many artefacts hold very emotional, sentimental and important significance to our lives and in doing so, we end up exposing and revealing a great deal about ourselves (Allender & Manke, 2004). Artefacts are "the social accessories of institutions and everyday life that are imbued with history and with meanings", as explained by Mitchell (2011, p. 36). They are historical objects or sources that lead us to relate to the past in a different way. Therefore, artefacts can also bring back memories which can be good or bad so when we reveal things about ourselves sometimes we may be happy and excited to do so or ashamed, embarrassed or hurt.

Many of us keep our old documents like report cards and certificates, photographs, cards and letters. Most of the time they are stored away at the back of the cupboard in dusty boxes. These artefacts actually hold so much value and significance that when we retrieve them, we revive and relive the memories that go with that specific artefact. Just as we store the boxes away at the back of the cupboard, we do the same with our memories and they begin to collect dust until we remember them. There are many critical moments that have happened in our lives; most of the time, we choose to remember or forget those moments. We remember these memories to enrich and deepen our experiences. Allender and Manke (2004) propose

that using artefact retrieval can assist us in making links with our selected artefact and the associated feelings and emotions, and that this can help us explain our identity.

Kerusha, Sarah and Elizabeth were beaming with pride and joy when each one shared their treasured piece with the group. Sarah proudly showed us her Pandora charm bracelet which she bought on one of her many trips overseas in Australia. Each charm is special to her. *"I don't wear this bracelet often or to school because I'm scared that I'll scratch it so it stays in a box in my cupboard at home"* said Sarah (Transcript from artefact activity, 17 May 2013). Kerusha felt privileged to share her artefact which was a Ganesha (Hindu) deity. This evidence enhanced the fact that Kerusha was extremely spiritual and religious. Elizabeth was quite emotional when she shared her artefact, her Memory notebook, as it brought back memories of her family far away on the farm.

Role of the research

As a member of the school management team, I acknowledge the asymmetrical power relations that are more present between myself as a researcher and the research participants who are teachers. The participants are level one NTs working in the primary school. For example, the methods that I had chosen to generate the data allowed me to negotiate my role with my participants as I would be actively involved in the various activities like collage making. Negotiating these relations is critical when working with qualitative research, more especially narrative inquiry, where I would have to ensure rigor in data generation, depth of analysis and reflexivity as important criteria. When working with the collage and artefacts, the voices of the participants come through powerfully because they were in control of what pictures they chose to cut and stick and the type of artefacts they chose.

My authorial role as the researcher would be reconfigured in creative ways to keep in check any unequal power relations (Bertram, 2003). Bertram (2003) affirms that the way in which the participants view the researcher is important. When working with my participants, I do not want to be viewed as a stranger or as the person in charge, as this might have a negative impact on my participants and therefore impact the data. Therefore when participants engaged with the collage and artefact activity, I would also be actively involved. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) argue that it is critical for researchers to be vigilant because the way in which they enact their roles could possibly influence the research process.

Connelly and Clandinin (1990) also maintain that it is imperative for us to understand the nature and value of the researcher-participant relationship that develops and grows with the use of narrative inquiry. As we enter into narrative inquiry relationships, we begin the "on-going negotiations that are part of engaging in narrative inquiry" (Connelly, 2006, p. 47). We constantly negotiate relationships, research purposes and, transitions as well as how we are going to be useful in those relationships, and these negotiations occur moment by moment within each encounter (Clandinin, 2006). It is vital that the relationship is balanced, where each person is seen as an equal, as well as sharing and caring for each one another. The methods that I have chosen would thus assist me in negotiating this relationship because through the collage and artefact activity, we would be sharing and discussing ideas and experiences that we have had and continue to have.

Table 3.2: Project Title-Narratives of Novice Teachers teaching in a Private Catholic School

Narrative Inquiry Research Design

Research Question	Narrative Inquiry Method	Context	Participants	Data Sources
1) What are novice teachers' personal-professional constructions of self?	• Memory-work	Catholic School	Three novice teachers	• Collage • Artefacts • Unstructured interviews (open-ended) • Group conversations
2) How do novice teachers' negotiate their personal-professional selves in their daily lives as teachers in a Private Catholic School?	• Memory-work	Catholic School	Three novice teachers	• Collage • Artefacts • Unstructured interviews (open-ended) • Group conversations

SECTION C

Coding and Interpretation

Narrative Analysis

The orally generated stories were transcribed and transformed into written texts. According to Van Maanen (1988), the stories have to be textualised for only in textualised form do data yield to analysis. In Chapter Four, the reconstructed stories of my participants are presented. The data from the unstructured interviews and a range of alternate strategies enhanced the construction of the narration. I crafted three stories about NTs' lives, each one unique, yet complex (Pillay, 2003). By extracting emerging themes from the fullness of the lived experiences presented in the data themselves, I configured stories, making a range of disconnected research elements coherent. In doing so, the story can appeal to the readers understanding and imagination (Leavy, 2009).

In order to supply legitimacy and authenticity to this study, NTs' reconstructed narratives were also given back to the participants for member checking, which adds to the credibility and the believability of the data. Member checking or respondent validation as elucidated by Cohen *et al.,* (2001, p. 108), is done to "correct factual errors, offer respondents the opportunity to add further information or to put information on record and to check adequacy of the analysis". After interviews and group sessions, I would always ask my participants what they thought and how they felt about the interpretations I was making about their lives. Narratives were constructed out of the data through a reflexive, participatory and aesthetic process. To ensure rigour in my study, I developed three levels of analysis, the first person narratives which would allow the reader to become more emotionally involved as they read the stories; the use of vignettes where my role as the researcher becomes obvious and finally, the use of themes. The theoretical tools helped me inform the development of the themes.

Analysis of Narratives

According to Polkinghorne (1995, p.13), "the paradigmatic analysis of narrative seeks to locate common themes or conceptual manifestations among the stories collected". By using analysis of narratives, stories are collected as data which include the characters, settings and the plot (Polkinghorne, 1995). Polkinghorne (1988) asserts that there are three levels of narrative: experience, telling and interpretation. But the purpose of the telling and interpreting is to enable the reader to experience the narrative as if they lived with the insight of the

interpretation. Therefore, narrative analysis focuses on how an individual person's life chronology has developed and the impact it has on their present state (Ramkelewan, 2012).

Vignettes

I used vignettes to make sense of the three NT's stories. As a sociological research tool vignettes are "collected situated data on group values, group beliefs and group norms of behaviour" as mentioned by Jenkins, Bloor, Fischer, Berney and Neale (2010, p. 176). Vignettes take the form of a "snapshot scenario or a story that unfolds through a series of stages" (Jenkins *et al.,* 2010, p. 176). The vignettes will assist me to foreground one of the NT's multiple identities that I have chosen from the data that was generated at a particular point in time. Pillay (2003, p. 81) advises that "the storied vignette offers a space for me to provide a critical perspective in the interpretation, through a process of excavating and making visible those subtle silences and muted experiences embedded in the life story, that have shaped, and continue to shape [novice] teachers' lives". Vignettes were used to focus on one of the NTs' multiple identities that I had chosen from the data that was generated at a specific point in time.

Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis was used to explain and interpret the three reconstructed novice teachers' narrative. According to Gibson (2006), thematic analysis is an approach that involves the application of codes to the data. The coding of data refers to the "grouping together of different data under a specific category" in which to classify and organise the data, as mentioned by Gibson (2006, p.1). Themes offer a means by which various experiences, opinions or ideas are linked together, and a way of contrasting and connecting different examples of the data (Gibson, 2006). Applying the thematical analysis allowed for the development of themes within the study and to determine how each theme related to others within the data. The themes of this paper were categorised according to the theoretical framework and in response to the two research questions, around personal-professional (what) and social dimensions (how).

Working with the Data

I started this when I knew my participants had free time on their hands and were not busy with anything else. This was towards the end of November 2012, when exams were over. I met my participants over coffee and muffins for an 'ice-breaker' meeting in my classroom

after they had read and signed the consent forms. The meeting was to inform them of what my study entailed and what I would need from them. From there, we arranged dates for when to meet next. I chose to do the unstructured interviews first as opposed to doing the arts based methods because I wanted to get as much data as I could from my participants. This gave me a better understanding of each participant. I also chose to start this stage of the data collection in advance because I knew it would take a lot of time to transcribe the audio-tapes verbatim. Transcribing is a time-consuming process. The data were generated from the different strategies that were used gave rise to and informed the narratives that were compiled. I initially thought that everything was important and I did not want to leave out any details, so I included everything into the story. However, through reading and analysing, I began to see links and grouped the similar data together.

It is vital to interpret and represent data carefully (Creswell, 1998). I must confess that I struggled with how to analyse and present these findings. I found every excuse during this time to do something else rather than just getting down to my work. I did not know where to begin, I was afraid of representing and interpreting the data incorrectly. Henning (2004) advises that data analysis is a continuous process and takes place throughout the research process. Being a novice researcher I felt uneasy as I did not want to draw on my own conclusions and explanations. I wanted the data to come alive and resonate with the reader. St. Pierre puts researchers at ease by suggesting that "there's no getting to the bottom of interpretation there's no final, true meaning, and the language, the words people use in interviews and the words we write down in field notes, and our representations of those words, are already interpretations" (2011, p. 3).

My struggle with creating the reconstructed story

I gained a sense of the kinds of stories these participants told about themselves and how they negotiated and constructed particular kinds of self through the telling of their stories. I had to come to terms with my own positioning on the issue of NTs teaching in a Private Catholic School and their experiences as I myself am a NT teaching in a Private Catholic School. I struggled with this because I assumed that we all experienced certain things in the same way. It was therefore impossible to steer clear of positioning myself in terms of my own teacher identity and categories. I could identify and relate to some of the experiences as recounted by the NTs. However, I endeavoured not to let my own experiences of being a NT influence the participants' stories of their experiences. I was able to do this by not verbalising any of my

own experiences as a NT. I bracketed myself and just responded to the data. After going back to the data, I picked up new things that I had initially left out. Even though NTs develop an individual professional identity, their development occurs within broader institutional settings and constraints, in this case, the Private Catholic School. The tensions that result from these individuals' meaning-making efforts, are unique to each NT and the forces that are beyond NTs control are the areas where identity is contested.

The Force Field Model as an analytical framework

The Force Field Model was developed by Samuel (1998). He recognises that there are "numerous forces of influence" (2003, p. 270) that impact on the evolving identities and practices of teachers. The model provides a lens for understanding the forces that influence the identity of student teachers during their teacher preparation programme. For this study, I am adapting the model to focus on the lives of NTs and not student teachers. The initial model consisted of the Inertial, Programmatic and Contextual forces only. Later in 2008, the Force Field Model was extended to include the Institutional Setting. Samuel (2008, p. 3) argues that "teacher professional growth can flourish when it is able to understand deeply the biographical, contextual, institutional, and programmatic forces that impinge on teacher identity".

The biographical force takes into account the personal aspect of the NTs' beliefs, values and attitudes as well as the past and present events that have occurred in the life of the participants which are imperative factors of the NT. Programmatic forces comprise educator forces. The programmatic force aims at linking theory and practice, and the institutional setting is the religious ethos of Holy Cross Convent which is based on Catholic values, teachings, beliefs, practices and rituals. This professional facet aims at linking theory and practice and the professional development of the NT. Finally, the contextual force is based on the context in which the NT is in and the relationships that are formed between individuals and groups within the specific Catholic school context. The four perspectives together allow for an all-inclusive and holistic examination of this research study on NT identity. Samuel (2008, p. 12) illustrates the Force Field Model of teacher identity using analogy, where it is understood best from a physics perspective. The teacher's identity is compared to an electron within a force field, the direction that the electron moves within the force field is influenced by the push and pull forces within the field as well as the stored energy that the electron has,

which is itself. There are also internal and external sources that enable or constrain the electrons movements or actions.

As an analytical lens, I used this model to understand how NTs' meanings of self are shaped within a Private Catholic School, through researching the lived experiences of the NTs, the meanings and practices they adopt in making sense of who they are and how they make sense of the world. I hope to accomplish this through NT's individual stories. The concept of identity is fluid, and can change within different spaces and contexts. Particular relations within the Holy Cross Convent schooling community might constrain or contribute to the NTs' experiences. The way in which NTs' construct themselves is determined by how they negotiate spaces, situations and circumstances within their different settings.

My artefact as a metaphor for the Force Field Model

At the end of 2009, during my first year of teaching, one of my learners gave me a pyramid ornament. She was a Black, Catholic learner. She thanked me for being her teacher. This was a significant moment for me because I was an Indian, Hindu teacher and I did not know how the learners would react and respond towards me as a non-Catholic. This gesture really touched me because this learner saw me as her teacher regardless of my race or religion.

Figure 3.2:   My artefact

I used my artefact as a metaphor for the Force Field Model which formed part of the analytical framing for this study. There are five parts to this pyramid. It has four sides and a statue in the middle. Each side of the pyramid represents one of the forces from the model, 1) Biographical forces-front glass, 2) Programmatic forces-back glass, 3) Contextual forces-left glass, 4) Institutional setting-right glass and 5) NT identity-statue in the middle.

Using the Force Field Model (Samuel, 2008) and my artefact as a lens, I would be able to analyse the self in relation to the various discourses that shaped and continue to shape who these NTs are. This model is appropriate for this study because I will be able to use the biographical, contextual, institutional and programmatic forces as a lens to understand the multiple selves of NTs. When focusing on the biographical force it is important that beliefs, values and attitudes be considered for each NT self. When looking at who the NTs are, I would also be considering their race, gender, class, linguistics, beliefs, values and attitudes that shape who the selves are. When dealing with the context and institutional forces, professional relevance within the Catholic school community is necessary for the NTs' development of self. For these NTs, their learning and teaching within the Catholic school contributes to their professional learning and development. I want to know what happens when the NTs' beliefs, values and practices are similar or different to the distinctive educational environment.

I want to find out how their experiences in and out of the classroom impacted on their meaning-making of the possible selves they could have. Analysing this would allow me as the researcher to understand why these NTs think and act the way they do, as well as identify what is enabling or constraining their meaning-making of self. As a result, these essential elements have a profound impact on the individual with regard to their changing selves. The context of the Private Catholic School is of utmost importance as the NTs have to constantly negotiate who and what they are within the religious school community at Holy Cross Convent. When focusing on this force, it is important to consider the relationships that exist between people. These relationships need to be nurtured. It is also vital to reflect on the context within which learning is to take place. The programmatic force is also important in understanding the construction of self because NTs' images of teaching and teachers develop from tertiary institutions and teaching practice.

Coding the Data

Credibility and rigour are imperative to qualitative research. I therefore followed a process of colour coding parts of the transcription in order to select the experiences that were relevant to this study. I selected different coloured highlighters to compartmentalise issues. For example I used the colour green to highlight the family aspects and the influence of family on my participants. I then used pink to indicate the experiences of my participants during their schooling years (preschool, primary and secondary schooling) and the teachers that had had

an impact on their lives and also their tertiary experiences (university/campus). Orange was used to highlight hobbies and other interests of the participants. Yellow was then used to show current teaching and school practices. Finally, blue was used to highlight issues of religion, faith, beliefs and values.
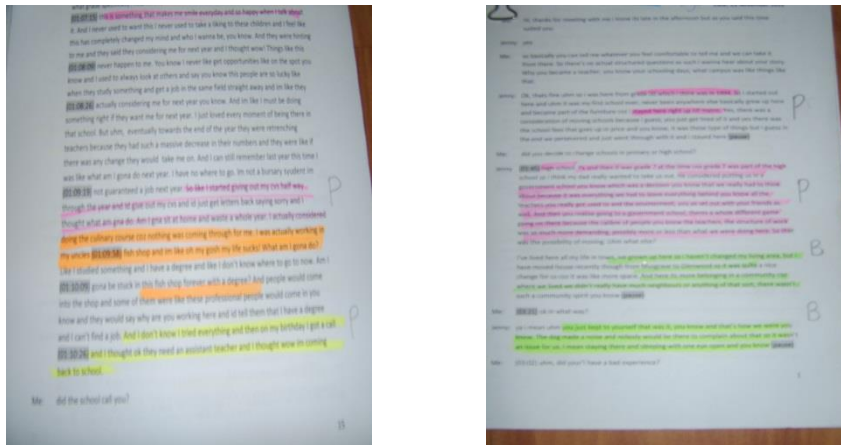
Figure 3.3:   Transcripts showing the colour coding process

In addition to this, I used the letters of the alphabet to code the dimensions of the Force Field Model Biography (B), Context (C), Institutional Setting (IS), Programmatic (P). As I went through each transcript and collage, I used upper case letters B, C, IS and P. B was for signifying a past or present experience and the people (family, friends, relatives) involved. C was used to symbolise feelings, desires, needs, aesthetic reactions and moral dispositions of the participants and others involved within a specific place. IS was used to draw on the participants' understandings and experiences with regard to the cultural and religious ethos of Holy Cross Convent and finally, P was used to highlight university and practice teaching experiences. It is important to note at this juncture that all these forces are inter-related and dependent on one another. They cannot be viewed separately, if one intends to try and understand the individual.

Upon completing the collage activity, each participant shared what they had included on their collage. After this, I had to make links and find patterns that materialised from the collage. When examining the collages, I used the same abbreviations to reinforce my data analysis. For example, B indicates photography which is this participant's hobby; she is also a

daughter, which falls within the biography force. Similarly, with this activity I found that the personal-professional self could not be separated.

Figure 3.4: **Collage showing the alphabet coding process**

Conclusion

In this chapter, I presented the research design and the instruments that were used to generate the data for this study. In addition, I provided an outline of the context within which this study takes place. I have also provided information on the participants who are involved in this study. Through the use of narrative inquiry I came to realise that our lives are continuously changing and we keep reinventing our-selves. Using the Force Field Model and the pyramid ornament would thus help me understand and analyse the multiple possible selves of the NTs, the selves they would like to become, could become and are afraid of becoming (Ronfeldt & Grossman, 2008). In the next chapter, the reconstructed stories of the NTs will be presented, using the pyramid ornament as a starting point for the first level of analysis. These stories are an interpretation of the way these NTs' perceive their lives. The NTs' lived experiences would assist me in understanding how their personal-professional selves are negotiated within a distinctive educational environment.

In the next chapter, I present the NTs' narratives.

OUR LIVES THE WAY WE ARE

Introduction

The methodology and research design that was used to generate data for this study was highlighted in the previous chapter. The purpose of this chapter is to explore the relationship between NTs' personal-professional experiences in the context of a Private Catholic School.

In this chapter, I represent the reconstructed stories of three NTs teaching in a Private Catholic school. The stories within this chapter were produced through a variety of methods (see Chapter Three). The stories told are experienced by the participants on a daily basis and highlight the critical moments and nuances in their lives that have a profound effect on their personal-professional selves. Through this I was able to gain insight into the opulent history as well as the present experiences of the participants through their stories. It must be noted that the participants had freedom of choice to highlight the experiences that have impacted on their lives and also to exclude experiences they wished to exclude. To safeguard my participant's anonymity, I used the pseudonyms Kerusha, Sarah and Elizabeth for the narratives.

In this first level of analysis, I will only be focussing on the NT in relation to the pyramid metaphor. The NT is the statue found inside the pyramid. The statue represents Kersuha, Sarah and Elizabeth.

NT identity

Kerusha, Sarah and Elizabeth

Figure 4.1:   My artefact

<p style="text-align: center">**KERUSHA'S STORY**</p>

<p style="text-align: center">**Seeking differences**</p>

Kerusha: I remember how busy I was that day. I had just left my class and gone up to the top floor to the photocopy room. My mind was preoccupied, not knowing whether or not I was going to have a job the next year. On the way I was met by one of my colleagues and we started chatting about her studies. She wanted me to be a part of it. I was a bit hesitant at first because my job for next year was uncertain. The thought of going back to my schooling days, reliving and remembering past experiences about myself sounded so tempting and exciting, that I had agreed enthusiastically. My name is Kerusha Reddy (pseudonym), and this is my story.

The beginning is the place to start

I was born and raised here in Durban, Kwa Zulu-Natal. My family and I have recently moved from Musgrave to Glenwood. Even though we still hide behind heavily guarded walls and fences, we do not have to sleep with one eye open anymore. At our old house there have been attempts to break into our home. However, living here now we have a feeling of assurance. It is much better now because we have so much more space and we feel like we belong, we are part of a community here. I had many White friends who I used to play with growing up. Their parents always come to my house to get recipes from my mother.

I'm an old girl of Holy Cross Convent. I'm a second year teacher teaching at the school I matriculated in. I was here from grade 00 to grade 12, so I'm basically part of the furniture. I know all the teachers, even the maintenance staff. My brother and a few cousins schooled with me here as well.

My brother- my rock

My brother is so 'big' in my life; he is a few years older than me. When we were little, people said we looked like twins. He schooled with me from preschool until high school so I had my brother here with me by my side. We do everything together. We bake together, cook together… we have so much fun together. We have an amazing relationship.

The flaming red pen

Grade 1was the worst ever. I had a humungous teacher and she was not the tender, loving teacher a tiny child expects to have at that age. It was horrifying. I can still remember the images of her so clearly. We used to write in jotter books at that time, the one with the fragile brown pages, remember those? And the one day she called me to her table to mark my book and she was fuming. She took the red pen and ripped my paper and threw my book out the window. She was so angry and I don't know what I did wrong until today. I can still remember her words echoing in my head "…you go get your book and you do your work!". I will never forget that day. I can still remember the salty tears streaming down my face and stinging my delicate skin. I hated going to school.

Being sentimental- that's just how I am

Grade 2 was the best. I started doing fun stuff and loving school. My teacher was so pretty, with brown hair, light curls falling down her back; she had manicured nails and was always smiling - just like how a primary school teacher should be. It was like Mrs Holly used to just waltz into the classroom and take us to a different world. Everything was so fun and colourful. I can remember these memories so clearly because when something is so good you don't just forget about it. I am a very sentimental person. I have a box at home where I keep all the notes, letters, cards and drawings that I receive from my learners and friends. I always put others before me in every aspect. I cannot bear to see someone hurt or upset. I love helping others.

Choices, Choices, Choices

After I matriculated there were many things that I wanted to do architecture, environmental science, housing and anything to do with Geography. My entire family is in the medical field and I was going in the complete opposite direction. I was set on doing architecture because I knew I was creative and I thought I could relate to that. When I filled out my application form, education was my last choice. I didn't get into architecture and my other options took very long to get back to me and education came through. I was disappointed that I didn't get into architecture. I did not know what to make of this. I remember the conversations my dad would have with me every other day to convince me to do teaching. I would get so angry because I did not like children.

Stigmas stuck to teaching- enjoying university

My family, excluding my dad, has this stereotype about teachers. They think you always have work to do, you deal with irritating children and that the pay is peanuts. My take on it was completely different. I thought to myself, I am a creative person I can put myself in a classroom and I can make it happen. So I chose to specialise in the foundation intermediate phase. One of my subjects was Technology. I thoroughly enjoyed it because I'm creative and I loved the drawing, folding and making things.

Chalk and Cheese

I love food. I love cooking. At school I excelled at Home Economics. I enjoyed every tasty moment of it. I was always called to help my teacher, Mrs Buttermilk bake the school's birthday cake. She put so much trust in me because she knew I could do it and she used to always say "My girl, your future is in cooking".

Figure 4.2:   Kerusha's Collage: Food, family and friendships

One year we had the school's birthday and the Cardinal graced us with his presence that day. I knew the Cardinal was an important person just like the Brahman is in my religion. We baked a huge spread of delicious pastries. I got the opportunity of serving tea for the Cardinal. I was scared to tell my parents that I wanted to become a Chef or study something in the Hospitality field. So for four years I studied teaching and regretted it. My mother was sad that I was studying something that I wasn't keen on and she kept saying that she would have supported my decision to study Hospitality. I had this image in my head that being a Chef was not a respected profession in society.

We are many people in one

My style of teaching is not a set out pattern. Some people are so passionate about this that they can see themselves doing this for the rest of their lives. I do not see myself going down that path. I could open up a home industry tomorrow, I have so many passions… but I'm so

excited to start here. I don't believe in us being one person only because there is always something else that we are destined to do. There is always another person in us waiting to come out at the right time. For me it's the baker, the artist and the teacher. I honestly do not see myself in this profession for a very long time due to my on-going love affair with food.

All religions teach the same thing

Growing up in a Hindu home and attending a Catholic school was normal for me. When you are young and in grade 00 you don't really know what Christianity or Hinduism is. When I was in the primary school, I can remember the teachers saying, "go and get a blessing from the priest", even though I could not receive the Holy Communion. There was no segregation. We (non-Christians/Catholics) were always made to feel part of the Mass by receiving a blessing. I knew being in a Catholic school we had to partake of certain rituals and I had no problem doing that. I partake of the rituals performed because I believe that all religions teach the same values in different ways. I attend Mass at school every alternate Friday which is for the primary school, conduct assemblies with my class, pray for my learners, participate in religious celebrations wherever I can, attend retreats and follow the religious routines of the school. I even teach learners things from my own religion because I believe we should all appreciate each other for who we are. My learners get fascinated when I wear a Punjabi to school.

I am very religious. I believe in God and I'm constantly talking to him. I pray every morning and evening. When I was at school, I knew so much about the Bible and why certain rituals were done. When it came time to doing our prayers (Hindu practices and rituals) and actually understanding the meaning of it, I was at a dead end. I did not know why we did or did not do certain things. I know so much about the Bible, I know stories in the Bible yet I do not understand some things from my own religion. By being in this school I was exposed to this new religion and I have so much but most importantly I have learnt that all religions are working towards achieving the same thing and that is to love one another and to do good.

My most sacred possession is a Ganesha deity which is associated with being the remover of obstacles. This was given to me by a girl in my class in grade 7. Not having much of relationship with God at that time in my life, being young and naïve, I accepted this gift. Since then my life has changed. My whole focus and outlook on life changed for the better.

I have kept my deity on my person ever since. If I do not have pockets I will find some way of keeping it on me. I have lost it so many times and it has always come back to me. While travelling in Transkei on holiday I jumped out the car to stretch my legs and when we drove off I couldn't find my deity. We eventually drove back to the place where we had stopped and it was lying on the pavement. This deity to me is like a safety blanket.

Figure 4.3:   Kerusha's Artefact: Ganesha Deity

Teaching practice

The first school I taught grade 6 at an under-resourced school. I felt as if I was drowning and learning nothing. The next year for teaching practice I was told to go to a Muslim school. This was a good school, not an under-resourced school. I did not know how the school would receive me since I was a non-Muslim. But when I got there I was completely besotted with what happened next. The teachers were all so wonderful and they accepted me. I ended up in a class with the junior primary HoD (Head of Department). I instantly fell in love with the small children. They were such incredible beings who kept the smile on my face the entire day. I felt like I was looking at the world through new eyes. To actually be in a class with little children and enjoy them was amazing.

The horrible thought of going back

After graduation I was working in a fish shop while trying to find a job. I found out that Holy Cross Convent was looking for a teacher assistant (TA). The thought of going back to my old school… made me feel uneasy. Then the horrible thought finally hit me, imagine me going back after four years, what are they going to say? And the honest truth of not going back was that when an ex- pupil tells their teachers who taught them that they are studying teaching, the teachers have a tendency to put a person off completely. But, surprisingly, when I got here on the Monday, the teachers were actually happy to see me.

How I experience teaching

I enjoy teaching. But sometimes when I had to teach my religion lessons I would sometimes get confused with certain proverbs and psalms from the Bible even though I knew some of them. I was struggling. I had to try and incorporate religion in my everyday teaching and I found it difficult. Thankfully the religion teacher was always there to assist me and offer me extra resources to benefit my learners. She never looked down upon me because I wasn't Catholic. I enjoy discussing and debating religious issues with her.

I was a bit intimidated by Mrs Rose (HoD). I voiced my opinions but I did not want to seem pushy because I was a first year teacher. Imagine me telling a teacher teaching for twenty-five years what to do, but for me it was all about the learning especially about how to include Catholic teachings in my lessons. I had many opportunities to teach, make mistakes and learn from them. I learnt so many things from her about structure and planning, especially the admin stuff that university never tells you about or prepares you for and I had to try and incorporate religion in my everyday teaching. But there were some things that we did not agree on or that I felt could have been done differently, but she was not interested in what I had to say. No one else understands this feeling better than Sarah and Elizabeth. We can vent with each other and we don't judge each other for it because we are experiencing the same things.

SARAH'S STORY

Canvassing creativity

Sarah: Getting to school on that morbid Monday morning was such a rush. I was already late for the morning briefing. I was greeted at the door by my colleague who had informed me that the briefing was cancelled. All that rush for nothing. So we sat down together for a quick morning coffee before we went our separate ways. I had asked her how she was coping with her studies and school at the same time and she was keen on telling me all about it. And then she asked me something important. I felt so privileged to be a part of her study. I was so thrilled to have to go back to my school days and varsity days even though they seemed so long ago. I was beaming with joy because those were the good times and going back to remember those experiences just brought so many memories flooding back. My name is Sarah Smith (pseudonym,) and I am going to tell you my story.

I'm the type of person who…

…loves happy people. I love photography, your clients are happy, they are in the moment and that's what life is about. I am an optimist. I believe in living your best life; in everything that you do, make it your best. It is important for us as individuals to find things in life that inspire us to be better.

Figure 4.4:   Sarah's Artefact: Pandora bracelet

My most treasured possession is a Pandora bracelet. If my house was burning down this would be the first thing I would grab. At the moment I have got six charms, each one very distinct as it represents a part of me. The first charm is the **Camera,** this shows my love for photography. I started with this bracelet in Australia when I was on holiday so I have a **Kangaroo**. The **Slops** show my love of shoes. I have half a **Butterfly** and my best friend Mary has the other half and the charm says "friends forever". The **Pandora charm** is special because my parents got this for me. The next charm I want to get is an **Aeroplane** since I love to travel.

My family - my lighthouse

I come from a family of four. I live with my mum, dad and brother. My brother is a few years older than I am. We have always lived in Westville although we have moved a few times. I am spoilt by both parents. They are always there to support me no matter what and offer me their best advice always. While I was growing up most of our weekends were spent playing tennis and cricket with my family. Sport has always been a part of my life. I played sports at school and I was the swimming captain in Grade 12. My parents played sport and my brother and I also played sport. I have always liked pictures with three generations of ladies in them the granny, the mum and the daughter. Somehow it seemed like the ideal bond to have with the most important women in your life. I love my brother, he's my hero and I would do anything for him. I wanted to do everything he did when I was younger. I was a tomboy. He always knew what he wanted to do from the time he was in school and that was to fly. He is now a pilot. I envy my brother, his salary and that he gets to travel. He loves what he does.

Even when he is not flying he is doing something that has to do with flying - building model planes, going for air-shows or researching new developments with aeroplanes. I want to find something like that in my life were I can feel alive and motivated.

Religion and Holy Cross Convent

I am Catholic and that is a big part of my life. I will get married in a church and my children will be brought up Catholic. That's just how it is. The values that this religion instils in an individual are beyond measure. It was my parents' choice to send me to a Catholic school. They just liked the feel of this school, its warmth when you walked through the corridors, the friendliness of the learners, the close-knit family bond that you could see with the teachers and learners and most importantly the values that were instilled in the girls who came through the doors of Holy Cross Convent. Everybody's girl came to this school at the time. I went to school here back when it was still an all-girls school. I'm an old girl. I was here from grade 1 to 12. I loved coming to school every day. I played sports and I had a lot of friends. The school eventually became co-educational, the behaviour of the learners got shoddier and the demographics of the school started changing considerably.

I don't know what to do

When I was little I wanted to be a doctor, then a paediatrician but then I realised I had to work with sick kids, I didn't like that. I also liked the idea of being a marine biologist and a physiotherapist. By the time I had finished school, I was tired of it and I just didn't want to study anymore. The next year everyone was going off to varsity and I didn't want to go. I didn't even have the slightest idea of what I wanted to study. I decided that since I wasn't going to study, I'm not going to stay at home and waste my time or my parents' money. I applied to au pair in America. I was in Minnesota for a year. It was such an amazing experience. It was something that I think I just needed at that time in my life. I am the type of person who loves being at home and spending time with my family. I became a part of a new family with my host mum Emma and her two boys Jason, 5 and Matt, 4. Emma was a single mum and fairly young. That's also one of the reasons I chose that family because I knew that she really needed me. I was basically the boys' maid. I had to make their breakfast in the mornings, take them to school, make sure they did their homework, dealt with their tantrums and they were little, so I also had to play with them.

Varsity life

I decided that I would study Sport Psychology when I got back from Minnesota. Sport has always been a part of my life. At the time when I wanted to study, UDW (University of Durban-Westville) was the only place that offered my course. My parents could not afford to send me to Stellenbosch and I did not have the marks to get a bursary or scholarship. I was happy to study Sport Science and do Sport Psychology as part of the same degree. So I started the three year degree and had a fantastic time doing that. I focused more on the Biokenetics. At the end I realised I could be a physical education (PE) teacher or work in a gym, but to me a PE teacher was not a proper profession.

Life after Varsity

My parents have always encouraged me to be the best I can be. My dad has always told me to study as far as I can. It was difficult finding a place to do my internship because not many places want to take us because interns are just extra work. I got a job in Cape Town and for the first time I was on my own and I had to look after myself. Earning R5000 every month, paying rent, cleaning the flat and buying groceries made me feel like I was professional person. I worked shifts, very early morning and late nights. When I was not busy with clients I was giving healthy eating classes at the gym. By the end of the internship, I had had enough. I came back home and I got a job again at a gym. Once more it was shifts, early mornings and late nights. But I had to stick it out because I had bills to pay. I could not see myself doing this for the rest of my life. This was not my passion. Something inside me just snapped. I needed to find something that I enjoyed doing. While working at the gym I really enjoyed working with the kids. And then my best friend Mary said that I should think of getting into teaching. In that moment, I really stopped to think about it.

The chalk finally dropped – practice teaching

I decided to do my PGCE (Post Graduate Certificate in Education) at UKZN, Edgewood Campus. I paid for my PGCE on my own. I specialised in the foundation phase. The more I thought about it, the more I could picture myself in a classroom making things happen. When you are on the opposite side of a classroom, it is really scary. Being in charge of a class and the learners that go with it was extremely frightening yet exciting. I enjoyed most of my practice teaching experiences. At varsity we had to go to one resourced school and one under-resourced school. I had no idea what an under-resourced school was nor had I ever been to

one up till that time. The shock and horror of realising what actually happens in most of these schools really bugged me. I was shocked and astonished with the under-resourced school experience. Having attended a private school all my life, I had no idea what was really going on in other schools. I was attached to a grade 1 teacher at Jack and Jill Primary. The kids would steal each other's pencils because they didn't have stationery; many of them still did not even know how to write their names. I felt sorry for the kids and I could see that the teacher was trying her best. I knew at that moment that I was going to teach in a good school, in a private school because what I experienced at Jack and Jill Primary was not something I wanted for myself.

My next school was a resourced school, a private school in Morningside, Cinderella All-Girls School. This is how I imagined junior primary teaching to be and this is also how I remembered it when I was at school… a big carpet on the floor, a reading corner, a fantasy play area, colourful posters on the walls, the children's artwork displayed and each child with their own desk and chair. I eventually completed my PGCE. But the posts that were available were the very same schools I did not want to go to. I kept receiving regret responses from the good schools.

Desperate for a job

It was the end of the year and I still did not have a job. Holy Cross Convent advertised a grade 6 post in the paper. I applied thinking that because I was an old girl and the Head Girl there, I might have a chance. I got called for an interview but I did make it known that I was a foundation phase teacher and not the senior phase teacher. I was offered the grade 6 position. I spoke to my parents and they advised me to go for it. I was going to gain new knowledge in teaching senior primary learners. I had to grab the opportunity. I had almost ten kids in my class but I found it challenging because I was out of my phase, I did not have experience teaching grade 6 and I realised that most of the things I learnt at varsity, I could not really apply in the classroom. I was quite frustrated and overwhelmed in the beginning, I felt like I wasted my time with the PGCE. I had to find my own way of doing things, it was like trial and error. I did not feel completely alone. Anne, the grade 5 teacher, was my lifesaver, she was so helpful to me. She was super-organised so she used to send me little notes all the time to remind me about the things that were happening for the week. I knew I could always go to her. She never made me feel stupid for asking questions. At the end of the term, the grade 3 teacher left the school and I knew there and then that I wanted that post. I was much happier

down with the grade 3 class. I felt like now I could fly because I knew exactly what I had to do. The little ones kept me energised because they are more excited about being at school and they really want to learn.

Looking at teaching through new eyes

I never thought of teaching as a profession until I started doing it. I never realised the struggle a teacher actually goes through every day. Being a teacher has really changed my opinion of teachers and how much of work really goes into this job. Now I know why they say that teaching is a calling and a noble profession. Some days I do not even teach because I am so busy dealing with my kids' issues about why your dad does not love you or why your mum is never home. At the same time, some kids are crying because they fell and hurt themselves so on that day I am actually not a teacher, I am their mothers, fathers, nurse, lawyer, psychologist… because I have to deal with the kids' anger issues that stem from home.

I am generally a 'yes person'. I was even more like that because it was my first year of teaching and I did not want to rock the boat with anyone. I kept saying 'yes' and then I took on too much and I could not cope. I said 'yes' because I did not want to make my HoD cross with me. I actually thought she would walk into my classroom and fire me there and then because I was not doing something the correct way. If I needed help I always went to the other teachers, I never went to her. Eventually, I spoke to Margaret, the grade 2 teacher. She was so good to me she's never made me feel intimidated. And I also feel a lot comfortable that Elizabeth is right next door to me and Kerusha is also close by. Having someone else there with me who is also experiencing some of the things I am in school, makes me feel like I am not alone. We both are young, we both are learning and making mistakes. It's nice to have someone to talk to about it who will not judge me. I like it when the Chaplin pops into my class during the day and he prays for my learners and I. He asks the learners what I taught them and then gives my learners some advice or relates what I teach to the Bible. The kids really enjoy that.

I see my life through a camera lens

Growing up we always had cameras around because dad enjoyed photography. My dad belongs to a photography club. I joined the club because it also gives us time to bond. And I enjoy spending time with my dad. Growing up we always had cameras around because dad enjoyed photography. He taught me how to take pictures.

I have always had a love for art, pictures and creative things, where I can just be free to be me on a piece of paper or canvas. I'm quite happy when the kids are colouring in to sit and colour in with them. Sometimes if you come in my class my chalk drawings and charcoal drawings are on the board because it is relaxing and it is something I enjoy doing.

Figure 4.5: Sarah's Collage: Snapshots of my life

The good thing about art is that you cannot do bad art, that's the beauty of it. Art is always magnificent. So photography for me is an extension of art. It is exciting to see the world from where I see it.

ELIZABETH'S STORY

Widening horizons

Elizabeth: It was a busy morning and I was looking forward to my break. I just needed some time to breathe after a difficult class. Upon getting to the staffroom I was met by my colleagues who were already around the table discussing the start of their terrible Tuesday morning. I was glad that I wasn't the only one having a bad morning. We each had our own complaints but it was nice to share our experiences because being a new teacher myself I was reassured by the fact that many of the seasoned teachers were experiencing the same problems as myself. My colleague was instrumental in informing us about novice teachers and the challenges they face in the 21st century. Then she dropped a bombshell on me. I didn't know if I was going to cope, being part of her study while at the same time focusing on my teaching. But at the back of my mind I kept thinking how exciting and thrilling it would be to go back and relive moments that have already happened in my life, memories that were good but some that were also quite painful. To revive those moments would be delightful. I didn't want to miss this incredible opportunity so I agreed on the spot. My name is Elizabeth Willards (pseudonym), and this is my life story.

Growing up on a farm

Growing up on the farm in Mpumulanga with my mum, dad and elder sister, I can still remember the smell of the clean, crisp, fresh air. Commondale is a very small, close knit community. Everyone knows everyone. It's a place where I feel safe because that's home for me. I love being around my family. My sister recently got married so our family is expanding. She now lives on a farm in Northern Natal with her husband. She is a Reflexologist. Dad runs our farm. Mum teaches in an English medium, rural school back home.

The farm kids

Mum had to learn IsiZulu because many of the kids cannot speak English. Her biggest class last year was a class of seventy learners. Both my parents can speak fluent IsiZulu because they both grew up on farms with their parents. Back in the day when my parents were growing up, they played with the little farm kids and that's how they learned to speak the language. My grandparents would just let them go off and play and for the whole day they would be gone. My sister and I did not pick up the language because when we were growing up my parents were very paranoid to just let us go out and play. Crime was getting bad. We would still play with the farm kids but not as much and we didn't just run off with them. It is easier to pick up new languages when you're still small and my sister and I had missed that. My parents' first language is German and IsiZulu is their second language. Only later on did they learn to speak Afrikaans and English. I was just unfortunate to not have picked up the language with the clicks!

Boarding school – away from home

I went to German primary school in Vryheid which was about forty five minutes away from where I lived. I stayed in a hostel since grade 1. At the time I did not think it was anything bad because everyone in the area sent their kids there and we lived in the middle of nowhere. We had a great time there because you got a chance to be with your friends 24/7. It was fun to be at school rather than home. At the same time, we also got all our homework and assignments done because the teachers were staying there as well and they would help us after school. I can speak German, English, Afrikaans and a little bit of IsiZulu.

I had to settle for teaching

I was never one of those people who knew what they wanted to do. When I was little I think a lot of kids wanted to be teachers because when you're young you tend to look up to your teachers and my mum was a teacher. But, I did not want to be a teacher because I could see the stress that my mum was often under. Then I also wanted to be a game ranger because of the farm life that we had growing up. I went to Stellenbosch straight after school. It was far away from home and I just wanted to experience something new. I have been in Natal my whole life so I wanted to see what the Cape was like. I prefer the small community, small town feel and close knit relationships. I spent four years in Stellenbosch. I studied towards a Bachelor in Humanities, majoring in Psychology and English for three years and the fourth year I did my PGCE in teaching. During varsity, whilst completing my degree, I did not work towards the goal of becoming a teacher. By the end of my degree, I realised that it was going to be hard getting a job majoring in English and Psychology only. So that year my whole friendship group decided to do the PGCE because we figured we would always be able to get a job in teaching. When I started the PGCE I was not very enthusiastic, but I knew that this would be something I could do. Eventually, towards the end I was getting excited about teaching.

The new teacher always gets the worst class

During teaching practice I got the naughty, rebellious class that no one wanted to teach. All the teachers kept telling me how bad this class was and how no teacher liked teaching them so I went into that class with that preconception. But I kept remembering what I had learnt at varsity during our psychology lectures. The lecturers used to always tell us to try and go into a new class with no stereotypes or preconceptions in mind. Always give the learners a chance. So often teachers are so stuck in what they think, that some learners cannot do this or that and then the kids get labelled and they start to believe all the negative things that are said about them.

An amazing mentor

I became very close to the teacher who was the register teacher of the rebellious, naughty class. She gave me sound advice that I still use today and her words of encouragement meant the world to me. She said that she could never see me as one of those disciplinarian, strict, shouting teachers. And to a certain extent, for me it goes beyond that due to my psychology

background. She also let me teach A Midsummer Night's Dream to grade eight learners. My mentor just let me go with it. I felt free and in control of what I was doing. It was amazing.

Leaving to teach in Thailand

After varsity I went back home to the farm. I knew I eventually I wanted to go to teach in Thailand. While I was at home I started, researching agencies and teaching in Thailand. I sent out my curriculum vitae to many different agencies and before I knew it I had to get my things in order and board a plane to Thailand. I ended up teaching in a Catholic school in Thailand. I taught a grade 1 class and I had a Thai lady who was my assistant. It was really difficult being a first year teacher because of the language barrier. I signed a contract for one semester because I wanted to come back to SA and start teaching from January the next year. I visited Vietnam and Cambodia while I was there and that's added to my list, including travelling to Paris, England and Germany.

Far away from home

When I got back from Thailand I had nothing to do most of the time, just sitting there playing games on the computer, no goals, no ambition and getting very depressed. I didn't enjoy it at all. This was just another sign telling me to get into teaching where I could interact with people all the time. I applied to schools all over. Eventually, I said to myself wherever I get a job it is just meant for me to be in that place and at that time. Towards the end of November, Holy Cross Convent contacted me saying that I had been shortlisted and the interview would be in December. This was the only school that responded in time so I did not mind that it was so far from home and I had applied for a high school position but when the school saw that I had experience teaching in the primary school in Thailand, they ended up giving me the grade 4 position.

Walking on egg shells

When I arrived at Holy Cross Convent, I was really out of my comfort zone so it took a long time for me to settle in. My first few months of teaching were in Thailand and this is the first time that I'm teaching in a South African Private Catholic school. I assumed that teaching in a private religious school, the teachers in general would be more accommodating and supportive. When I got here, I felt like the HoD assumed that I knew everything and I often did not know if I could ask questions without her thinking that it was a silly question. So a lot of the time I did not question anything. My mum had given me a piece of advice before

leaving home and that was as a new teacher I should just sit back and listen, and not try to be pushy or act like I know everything. She kept saying to me that I must be careful around the older teachers because they do not like that. During our meetings, Margaret would always say to me that I must speak up and let my voice be heard, otherwise teachers would take advantage of me and think that I am a push over. When it came to lessons and my prep, I would always go to Anne who was ever ready and willing to assist me. Anne gave me a flip file with all the necessary information about the primary school routines, admin stuff and general requirements. I found this so helpful and I was less stressed as well, because I now knew what I had to do. I expected this assistance and guidance from my HoD but I unfortunately never received it and I was actually quite terrified of her. She would only call to speak to me when she had something negative to say; she really intimidated me. On my own, I attached myself to Anne to be my mentor. I also found sanity in the fact that I had Sarah and Kerusha right next door to me because we are young, new teachers and finding our ways of coping. It was also good to just have someone to talk to who was experiencing the same thing as me. I did not feel so alone.

My responsibility is moulding children

Every day is something different. There are times when I love teaching and being in school and other times, I just want to run away. Teaching in this school I feel like I am in my comfort zone. Yes, there are many things that I can complain about but when I think about it I have eighteen kids in my class, plenty of resources, sport equipment and I am settled in now.

Figure 4.6:   Elizabeth's Collage: Shaping tomorrow

I feel like I have a huge responsibility moulding the leaders of tomorrow. I enjoy inspiring my kids and getting them to be the best they can be in anything that they do. I enjoy teaching them creative and practical things. I am all about going green and saving the environment, conserving water, saving the Rhinos and teaching them about being good to the earth and instilling the concept of Ubuntu in my teaching. I enjoyed arranging a 'Save the Rhino'

demonstration. I got the learners to make posters and we stood on the road at the bottom of the school to raise awareness about rhino pouching. One of my favourite Bible verses is *"God has made everything beautiful in its time"*. I just think it is such an important verse because it's saying that everyone is going to get there one day and everything will be how it's supposed to be.

Right now this is where I know I am supposed to be. I feel like I am changing myself through my learners. The religion teacher is important for me at school. I draw my strength and courage from her. Whenever I'm feeling down or I need to talk I know that she is always there to listen. She makes us all feel like we are important because we are all God's creation. I feel like a better teacher after her encouraging words. She reminds me of my mother. Teaching natural sciences in a religious school is difficult. I have to deliberately leave out aspects of the curriculum because it is not in line with the schools religious policy. I cannot teach certain aspects of Human Reproduction and methods of Contraception because it conflicts with the policy. As a teacher, I feel that I am not fulfilling my duty to my learners to acquire this knowledge. University did not prepare me for this.

My most treasured notebook
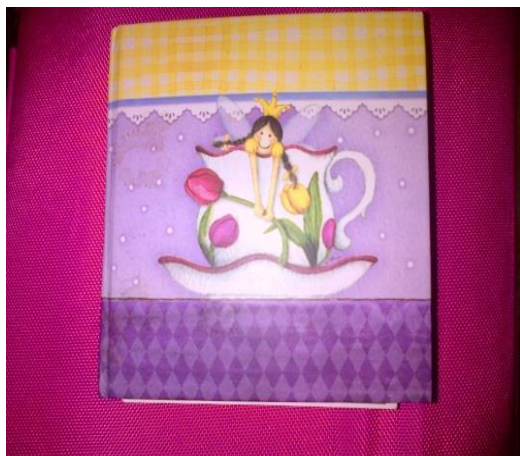
My mum got me this notebook. Inside the lively pages of this book were memories and praises that my nearest and dearest had written to me. My family members, my very close friends from varsity, my mum even managed to get hold of one of my friends who lives overseas to write a message to me.

Figure 4.7:   Elizabeth's Artefact: Memory Notebook

Each person got a page to write something about what I mean to them with a picture of them and me. At my party, she sent the book around for people to write their wishes for me in the book. This book is so special and valuable to me, it is like my pick-me-up book, better than any glass of wine. When I read the messages I feel appreciated and loved. I thank God for the people in my life who are there for me. Being so far away from home when I open up this book, it just takes me back and I feel close to my loved ones.

Conclusion

The NTs' storied narratives that are presented in this chapter reveal that one's personal life cannot be split into discrete bits. Adding a religious context that one is found in, makes this all the more complex and interesting. I have learnt from the re-storying process that the teacher narratives presented offer glimpses into these NTs' lives and how they position themselves as teachers and as individuals. I found that the dominant discourses around NTs' experiences with regard to race, class, gender, ethnicity, linguistics, context and tertiary experiences, construct their practices as teachers and as individuals. As NTs, they take up certain meanings which direct me in understanding of who they are as teachers within the Private Catholic School. Their meanings of the dominant discourses are reworked and recreated as NTs who find critical, meaningful spaces in which to make meaning. This gives rise to particular kinds of NTs who have the potential to change and challenge the dominant discourses mentioned above.

In the following chapter, I return to these NTs' narratives to present three vignettes. The vignettes will assist me in foregrounding one specific self for each NT at a particular point in time from the data generated. This will help me better understand the importance and meanings of the critical moments that have occurred in the NTs' lives. In order to facilitate this, I will be drawing on the Force Field Model (Samuel, 2008; see Chapter Three). I use this as a springboard to understand how these critical moments have impacted on theses NTs' personal-professional selves within the context of a Private Catholic school in SA.

CONSTRUCTIONS OF NOVICE TEACHER SELVES

Introduction

In the previous chapter, Kerusha, Sarah and Elizabeth's storied narratives were presented. The stories provide glimpses into their lives and their experiences. In this chapter, I present the vignettes for Kerusha, Sarah and Elizabeth. The vignettes are elicited from the storied narratives. The three vignettes presented in this chapter foreground one of the NT's multiple identities that I have selected from the data generated at a particular point in time.

Each NT's uniqueness as an individual is negotiated against and within dominant discourses around religion, family, race, class, ethnicity, context and their educational experiences. Wasserman and Jacobs (2003) argue that race, class, and gender are socially and historically constructed, and that the personal experiences of NTs shape their meanings of self. To illustrate this, I present three snapshots around which the NTs' experiences, feelings, meanings, desires, critical moments and relationships are explored and interpreted.

This chapter is divided into two sections. Section A presents three vignettes and Section B the conclusion. This chapter answers my first research question: *What are novice teacher's constructions of self?* Direct quotations from narratives are presented in italics.
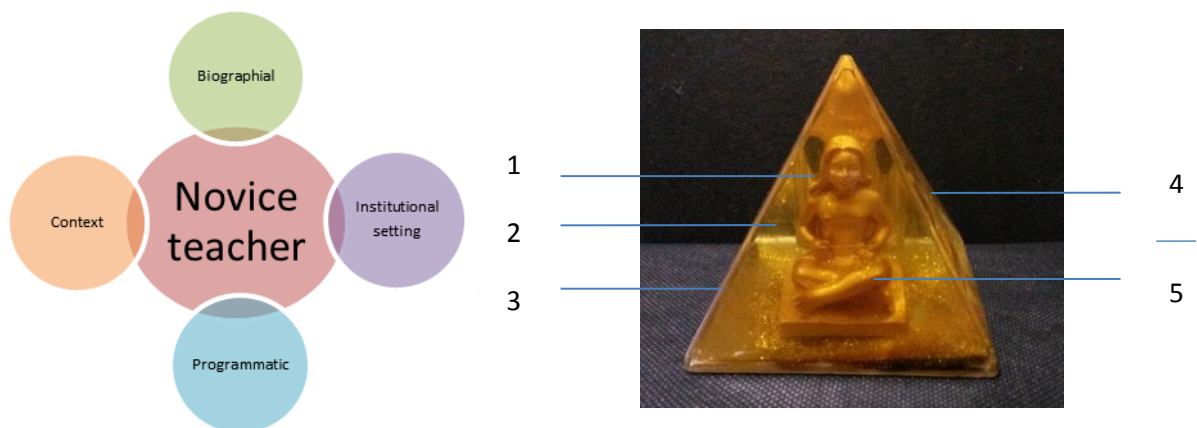

Figure 5.1: The adapted Force Field ModelFigure 5.2: My artefact

The figures above illustrate how my artefact becomes a metaphor for the Force Field Model (Samuel, 2008), in understanding the NT participants in this study (see Chapter Three). The vignettes foreground the statue inside the artefact.

SECTION A

Vignette One – Unique in social spaces

Flexible self in a safe living space

Kerusha was born into an Indian, middle class family twenty-two years ago in the well-established, comfortable area of Musgrave in Durban. Musgrave was and still is, a predominantly "White" area serving the elite, upper class inhabitants of Durban. During the apartheid era (1948-1994), the government used racial groupings of African, Coloured, Indian and White to stratify South African society as well as the areas in which people resided (Group Areas Act). After living there for many years, her family moved to Glenwood. This is also an area largely inhabited by White people living in Durban. Due to an increase in crime in the Musgrave area and after enduring a horrible attack by attempted robbers, her family moved. They did *not feel safe there anymore.* They moved to Glenwood. We *feel like we belong, we are part of a community here.* This area was more inviting to Kerusha's family because the White neighbours welcomed them into this new area. Desai and Vahed (2010, p.6) maintain that class divisions among Indians are becoming wider and starker and this is reflected by middle class Indians… moving into formerly White areas like Queensburgh in KZN and Robertsham in Gauteng, while more affluent Indians are moving to… Umhlanga in KZN.

Negotiating non-traditional relationships

Kerusha has a strong bond with her brother. *We do everything together, we bake together, cook together… we have so much fun together. We have an amazing relationship.* Although cooking has traditionally been a woman's forte, these days several men don the apron and pick up the knife (Hakeem, 2013, p. 1). The bond that Kerusha has with her brother allows them to be free in the kitchen cooking and baking.

Kerusha's family built relationships with the people around them. *I had many White friends who I used to play with growing up. Their parents came to my house to get recipes from my mother.* Kerusha's family thus have a good relationship with their White neighbours and exhibits what Desai and Vahed (2010, p. 10) suggest are "…increasing connections between the Indian and White middle classes. Living in the same gated communities, their children going to the same schools, enjoying the same sports…having the same problems of crime and affirmative action has unquestionably led to a bonding."

Kerusha learnt how to form relationships outside of the family with neighbours through the sharing of food, from her mother. Kerusha saw the impact this had in forming social relationships at home and she learned to do the same in society and school.

Negotiating an adaptable self in a Catholic School

Kerusha's sense of self is one that is flexible and open-minded, she adapted well to Holy Cross Convent. She is a religious young individual because her Ganesha deity represents her *safety blanket.* Kerusha's schooling career spans fourteen years at Holy Cross Convent. On her exposure to a new religion, she says:

> *I have learnt so much but most importantly I have learnt that all religions are working towards achieving the same thing and that is to love one and other and to do good…*

Kerusha's parents made an informed decision to send her to Holy Cross Convent, a Private Catholic School situated in Glenmore, even though they were Hindu. School and cultural forces (Samuel, 2008) play a significant role in Kerusha's life as part of her dominant discourses. Although Kerusha's race, religion and cultural background were different, her family's social-economic status was similar to the other parents who sent their children to Holy Cross Convent (Soudien, 2004). Desai and Vahed (2010, p. 6) argue that Indians send their children to "private schools where the annual fee per child is often more than what a working class Indian can expect to earn per annum. Expensive cars and homes, as well as links to the non-racial elite with business interests that span the globe, are what some Indian South Africans have come to see as a normal lifestyle". Kerusha's flexible middle class upbringing continues to influence her sense of self. She extends her knowledge of religion, ethnicity and diversity by trying to fit in through participating in all aspects of the school.

Kerusha can still remember:

> *…so much about the Bible and why certain rituals were done that when it came time to doing our prayers* (Hindu practices and rituals) *and actually understanding the meaning of it, I was at a dead end… I know so much about the Bible, I know stories in the Bible yet I do not understand some things from my own religion… growing up in a Hindu home and attending a Catholic school was normal…*

Christianity was a way for Kerusha to feel accepted by her friends, peers and the school by learning more about this new religion. The more she participated and accepted the Catholic religion, the more she felt accepted. Kerusha was not brought up with fixed views about many aspects and religion was one of them. Therefore, she adapted well to the school environment.

Kerusha says:

> *I knew the Cardinal was an important person just like the Brahman is in my religion.*

She was able to identify that the Cardinal was someone who was revered like the Brahman in the Hindu religion. By making this connection, Kerusha tried to gain acceptance in the school community.

Kerusha remembers:

> *…the teachers say' go and get a blessing from the priest'…There was no such thing as segregation. We* (non-Christians/Catholics) *were always made to feel part of the Mass by receiving a blessing.*

Even though Kerusha experiences an 'outsider and insider' status, she finds a way of fitting in by receiving a blessing. The above excerpts display Kerusha's longing to belong, and the need to feel accepted and included as part of the school community.

Negotiating an academic self at school

Kerusha excelled at Home Economics. She remembers this moment very clearly:

> *I was always called to help my teacher, Mrs Buttermilk bake the school's birthday cake. She put so much trust in me because she knew I could do it and she used to always say, 'My girl, your future is in cooking'.*

Kerusha's mum and Mrs Buttermilk were responsible for reproducing certain gender stereotypes as they exerted a significant influence on Kerusha's life. She learnt how to form a good social relationship with her teacher. She also learnt that being a lady and cooking forms a major part of social relationships. Kerusha's love for cooking is in tension with her need to be seen as a professional. This is aligned with her middle class social status because becoming a teacher was her chosen career path, as opposed to being a chef, even though she never felt favourably inclined towards children.

She says:

> *I remember the conversations my dad would have with me every other day to convince me to do teaching. I would get so angry because I did not like children…*

Choosing a career is "often linked to one's moral obligations" (Cross & Ndofirepi, 2013, p. 8). In addition, "Indian parents encourage their daughters to pursue a career by ensuring that their daughter's career choice is acceptable in their culture and would benefit them in the long run" (Vangarajaloo, 2011, p. 70). Kerusha was aware that as an Indian, she could not become a chef because becoming a teacher was a more secure and pleasing option to her father.

Kerusha had many choices for the career path to pursue after school. She was interested in environmental science, housing and geography. She remembers,

> *…when I filled out my application form, education was my last choice…*

Kerusha was set on pursuing architecture but unfortunately did not meet the requirements. She had to settle "for teaching after failing to access these and other lucrative careers such as engineering, law and business", which Cross and Ndofirepi (2013, p. 8) acknowledge as status career choices. Becoming a teacher was Kerusha's last option and she specialised in the foundation intermediate phase.

Student teacher self in an Islamic school

Kerusha's first encounter was being placed at a religious school for practice teaching:

> *I was told to go to a Muslim school. This school was a good school, not an under-resourced school. I did not know how the school would receive me since I was a non-*

Muslim. The teachers were so wonderful and they accepted me into their school…I instantly fell in love with the small children

Kerusha created new meanings of teaching from the teachers at this Muslim school. She soon realised that teaching was something she could do and her opinion of children changed considerably. She was able to relate to this school because it was a well-resourced school and she felt she would be able to work there. Her middle class up-bringing gave her access to resources and the sense of having the best of everything, in addition to attending an elite religious private school as a learner. Kerusha was afraid of how the teachers would react towards her since she was not Muslim.

Teacher assistant self in a Catholic School

There was a TA position at school and one of the teachers contacted Kerusha:

> *…I have so many passions…I don't believe in us being one person only because there is always something else that we are destined to do. There is always another person in us waiting to come out at the right time. For me it's the baker, the artist and the teacher. I honestly do not see myself in this profession for a very long time due to my on-going love affair with food…*

Kerusha feels that teaching is not what she is destined to do but she is happy to start at this point. Becoming a teacher assistant, from working in a fish shop was important for Kerusha as it signalled her professional status. While she has many other interests, being a TA gives her status. Obtaining professional status supersedes her personal interests and desires. Kerusha's chosen career was strongly influenced by her father. She was also determined to explore all facets of her life. The next year, Kerusha was offered the grade one post at Holy Cross Convent.

Like the pyramid artefact, Kerusha's vignette foregrounds a unique, flexible self. Kerusha is adaptable and flexible but, able to maintain her uniqueness in her position as a NT, which is a dominant category. She makes sense of who she wants to be as a teacher. Becoming a teacher offers her another social space in which to create relationships and be her own unique self. Kerusha's personal interests revolve around cooking, baking and being with her family. As an Indian female, the teaching profession gives her the professional status that she seeks as a teacher. Her middle class living space and well-resourced, social learning spaces are vital in understanding who Kerusha is within a personal-professional capacity. I agree with Jacklin

(2001), who submits that identities and space are inter-related because people are thought to "belong" in certain spaces, or can be the sort of people they are because of where they come from. She is constantly negotiating her personal meanings and interests to be accepted by others. Her ethnicity and race are always being negotiated. As an individual, Kerusha is constantly flexing her intellectual muscles and addressing who she is to fit into a particular social space.

Vignette Two – Creative in traditional spaces

Protected self in bonding relationships

Born into a White family in 1984, Sarah grew up in a middle to upper-class residential area in Westville with her dad, mum and brother. During the apartheid era, Westville was primarily a White area. Soudien (2004, p. 90) argues that "neither race nor class, by itself, is capable of explaining the nature of the South African social formation and the ways in which privilege, power and position are distributed". As a result, Sarah grew up protected and cushioned by her parents and oblivious to the "false realities" within which her stability existed as a White individual (Pillay, 2003, p. 177). Sarah's dad is self-employed and her mum is a house wife. Sarah grew up in stable home, with both parents, in a supportive environment where family values were instilled in her from a young age. Sarah comes from a family where "prior to 1994, white men had political power, were assured of jobs and had stable family lives" (Bhana, 2008, p. 6). Sarah grew up knowing the meaning of wealth, success, class and privilege.

Versatile in active spaces

Sarah says:

> I want to find something like that in my life were I can feel alive and motivated…

Growing up, Sarah did everything her older brother did. Sarah wishes she had her brothers' love and passion for his job as a pilot, for teaching.

As a member of the photography club, she adds:

> …I joined the club because it also gives us time to bond. And I enjoy spending time with my dad… Growing up we always had cameras around because dad enjoyed photography. He taught me how to take pictures…

Sarah shares a strong relationship with her dad. She joined him on photography courses which enabled her to spend more time with him.

Sport has always been a part of Sarah's family life:

> *I played sports at school and I was the swimming captain in Grade 12. My parents played sport and my brother and I also played sport. While I was growing up, most of our weekends were spent playing tennis and cricket with my family…*

Bhana (2008, p. 4) asserts that "sport has a very significant place in South Africa and is often viewed as a national religion. It is also highly racialized, and gender, race and class remain important" when dealing with sport matters here.

Catholic self in a familiar school space

At school Sarah mentions:

> *…it was my parents' choice to send me to a Catholic school. They just liked the feel of this school, its warmth when you walked through the doors, the friendliness of the learners on the corridors, the close-knit family bond that you could see with the teachers and learners, and most importantly the values that were instilled in the girls that came through the doors of Holy Cross Convent…*

It is no surprise that Sarah attended a traditional Catholic school in Glenmore called Holy Cross Convent. This school was an all-girls school with predominantly White girls whose parents could afford the expensive fees to send their girls to this prestigious establishment. The close-knit family bond that Sarah's parents saw at the school was the same close-knit family bond that Sarah experienced at home. According to Lambley cited in Jansen (2009, p. 70), "the Afrikaner child, like children everywhere in their different communities, is brought up on Afrikaner values and perspectives of life. But unlike other children, the Afrikaans child finds these same values expressed uniformly at every level of [her] society…at school [s]he hears this from all [her] teachers, [s]he reads it in all his school books. At home [her] parents reiterate the same values…". Sarah's religious upbringing dictated the type of school her parents would send her to, as Catholic values were important to them.

Adventurous self in alternate spaces

After Grade 12, Sarah decided she was not going to study as she was very uncertain what to study.

> *The next year everyone was going off to varsity and I didn't want to go. I didn't even have the slightest idea of what I wanted to study…I was not going to stay at home and waste my time or my parents' money…*

Sarah was in search of finding her passion and therefore did not want to study. This led to her decision to travel overseas. Her positive relationship with her father and brother prepared her well to be an *au pair* to two boys in Minnesota.

Sarah recalls that she served as:

> *…the boys' maid. I had to make their breakfast in the mornings, take them to school, make sure they did their homework, deal with their tantrums and I also had to play with them…*

Gender forces (Samuel, 1998) play a role here as Sarah took on a caring and nurturing role to the boys in her care. Bertram *et al.,* (2006) put forward that many newly qualified White teachers first decide on travelling overseas to *au pair* before they start teaching. Sarah made the decision not to study and sit at home and waste her time. In her case, becoming an *au pair* came as a consequence of her love for exploring and seeing the world beyond the camera lens.

After returning to SA two years later, Sarah eventually decided to study Sports Science at the University of Durban-Westville (UDW). She got a job in a gym in Cape Town and remembers:

> *Earning R5000 every month, paying rent, cleaning the flat and buying groceries made me feel like I was a professional person…*

Sarah was determined to find a career that she could be passionate about just like her father and brother. However, she eventually found the gym environment boring and unpleasant. She soon realised that she had no passion for the gym life and decided to change direction. Being happy in her working life was important and teaching soon became an option.

White privileged teacher self

Sarah decided to do her PGCE next:

> *I paid for my PGCE on my own. I specialised in the foundation phase. The more I thought about it, the more I could picture myself in a classroom making things happen…*

Sarah's middle-class up bringing did not prepare her, for the harsh reality of a public, under-resourced school. As a student teacher, she recalls:

> *I had no idea what an under-resourced school was nor had I ever been to one up till that time. The shock and horror of realising what actually happens in most of these schools really bugged me. I was shocked and astonished…I eventually completed the PGCE. But the posts that were available were the very same schools I didn't want to go to*

As Jansen (2009, p.18) argues, "White students…coming from stable schools with qualified and committed teachers, working in a pleasant physical environment and where the full range of cultural and sporting activities makes for a strong and holistic education" which is what Sarah had. As a result, an under-resourced school was not pleasant for Sarah as she was not familiar with this type of schooling environment.

Sarah chose to take up the grade six post at Holy Cross Convent, the same school she had attended as a learner. Even though she specialised in the Foundation Phase she applied for the post thinking because I was an old girl and the Head Girl there I might have a chance…

Sarah was offered the position and she was willing to grab this opportunity because, Bertram *et al.,* advices that "most newly qualified teachers are White and would choose to work in well resourced, urban schools" (2006, p. 10). Furthermore, the school space was familiar to her as she was an old girl at Holy Cross Convent. This type of schooling environment is where Sarah is comfortable, because it is a traditional and familiar space to her.

Artistic self in a traditional space

> *I have always had a love for art, pictures and creative things, where I can just be free to be me on a piece of paper or canvas. I'm quite happy when the kids are colouring*

in to sit and colour in with them. Sometimes if you come in my class my chalk drawings and charcoal drawings are on the board because it is relaxing

Sarah shows how she is not afraid to be herself in her classroom. Within the fixed environment of the school she finds a space where she can be creative to do what she wants and likes. She uses art to relax and to bond with her learners.

Sarah's biographical forces are illuminated through cultural, racial and class forces (Samuel, 1998). Her vignette shows how these forces intersect in different ways to shape her NT identity. Using the pyramid metaphor to understand Sarah's creative identity construction is complex. Her class and racial identity are critical in shaping her access to and success as a teacher. As an individual, Sarah's values are shaped by her family, religion and being creative. These values are important to her because she is able to perform her meanings of self within the school space. Home and school spaces are traditional and familiar spaces for Sarah and she fits in well in both. Her personal-professional meaning-making happens through close, traditional, bonding relationships and spaces. Becoming a teacher allows Sarah to explore her creativity as she is enticed by traditional, familiar spaces. She has the potential to draw on her abilities to find her passion within the boundaries of traditional, familiar spaces that she is accustomed to. Sport, family relationships and photography help Sarah appreciate the outside world. Sarah likes to be free from the formality of things and this comes through clearly in the next chapter when she takes on a NT position and exercises her creativity in the classroom.

Vignette Three – Active in alternate spaces

Free self in closed family relationships

Elizabeth was born in the late eighties on a farm in Northern Mpumulanga in the small town of Commondale. As a small close knit group of four, her family grew up in comfort. Elizabeth's dad runs their farm called Wit River, and her mum is a teacher in a rural primary school near their home. Elizabeth was familiar with the labourers and their children. A few years ago she had to leave home to start work in Durban at Holy Cross Convent as a grade four teacher.

On the farm, Elizabeth's parents learnt to speak IsiZulu. Jansen interestingly comments that, "Afrikaans was the language that shaped social relations…Blacks would quickly learn to speak Afrikaans out of economic necessity as farm labourers, store hands and domestic workers" (2009, p. 34).

IsiZulu helped Elizabeth's mum to communicate with her learners because most of the kids at her school cannot speak English. While language assisted in shaping social relations between Elizabeth's parents (who were the White farm owners) and the labourers, it worked against Elizabeth and her sister. Elizabeth's relationship with the Black farm kids was an alienating one because even though she wanted to play with them, she was taught to stay away from them. From an early age, Elizabeth was in search of the alternate to what her parents wanted for her.

Elizabeth wishes she could have learnt to speak the language when she was much younger. She mentions:

> *…my sister and I did not pick up the language because when we were growing up my parents were very paranoid to just let us go out and play. Crime was getting bad. We would still play with the farm kids but not as much. I was just unfortunate to not have picked up the language with the clicks…*

Elizabeth recognises that she could have benefitted from the Black children. She wanted to learn from them but she was aware that Blacks were also responsible for crime. Elizabeth is being politically correct when she refers to the Black children as 'farm kids'. She learnt prejudices from her parents. Differences rather than similarities were used to alienate White children like Elizabeth from the Black children. As a result, Elizabeth's parents stopped this interaction by sending Elizabeth and her sister to boarding school. Being sent to boarding school to grow up in a closed-up space away from Black children was acceptable at the time, as other White farmers did the same to their children.

Being moved to a German primary school in Vryheid came as no surprise.

Elizabeth says:

> *I stayed in a hostel since grade one. At the time I did not think it was anything bad because everyone in the area sent their kids there and we lived in the middle of*

nowhere. We had a great time there because you got a chance to be with your friends 24/7. It was amazing. It was fun to be at school rather than home.

Elizabeth enjoyed being in the hostel with her friends. Most of the White farm owners in the area sent their children to this school. This was also an opportunity for Elizabeth to be with her friends (White) and not the Black farm kids. After being restricted at home in terms of outdoor life, Elizabeth enjoyed hostel life.

The desire for alternate spaces

Elizabeth says:

> *I was never one of those people who knew what they wanted to do. When I was little I think a lot of kids wanted to be teachers because when you young you tend to look up to your teachers and my mum was a teacher. But, then I also wanted to be a game ranger because of the farm life that we had growing up. I didn't want to be a teacher because I could see the stress that my mum was often under*

Samuel (2008, p. 9) supports the view of teaching when he adds that students are not choosing teaching as a career "because the responsibilities being placed on teachers are becoming increasingly unrealistic and unattainable…overload and burnout". Elizabeth eventually studied towards a Bachelor in Humanities, majoring in Psychology and English for three years and in her fourth year she completed her PGCE in teaching.

> *I went to Stellenbosch straight after school. It was far away from home and I just wanted to experience something new. I have been in Natal my whole life so I wanted to see what the Cape was like. I prefer the small community, small town feel and close knit relationships…*

Stellenbosch University has a long history of racial and linguistic discrimination and exclusion which was aimed at benefitting the privileged White Afrikaners and punishing members of other races. Until the nineteen eighties, the university was exclusively reserved for White students (de Vos, 2013). Elizabeth enjoyed being away from home which was restricting. By showing her preference for the small community and close knit relationships of Stellenbosch, Elizabeth showed her longing for familiarity with the space and people (White) who reminded her of home.

Student teacher self in a free space

Whilst at varsity completing her degree, Elizabeth says:

> *I realised that it was going to be hard getting a job majoring in English and Psychology only. So that year my whole friendship group decided to do the PGCE because we figured we would always be able to get a job in teaching. When I started the PGCE I was not very enthusiastic but I knew that this would be something I could do. Eventually towards the end I was getting excited about teaching…*

Elizabeth and her group of White girlfriends took the 'easy' direction of teaching. Her sense of teaching at this point was that it was just a job.

Being an English graduate, Elizabeth got a taste of teaching for the first time when her mentor teacher asked her to teach Shakespeare's, 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' to grade eight learners. Elizabeth remembers:

> *…my mentor just let me go with it. I felt free and in control of what I was doing. It was amazing…*

Elizabeth realises that being a teacher offers her freedom of choice. She recognises that in her position as a teacher, she can interact with different people and be free and in control.

Novice teacher self in a Catholic school

After Elizabeth completed her degree, she went back home to the farm to look for a job. During this time she missed her interaction with people.

Elizabeth says:

> *I had nothing to do most of the time, just sitting there playing games on the computer, no goals, no ambition and getting very depressed, I didn't enjoy it at all. This was just another sign telling me I had to get into teaching where I could interact with people all the time…*

Elizabeth's experience of teaching in a Catholic school started when she accepted an offer to go abroad to teach grade one English, in Thailand. When Elizabeth got back from Thailand, she started applying to schools all over the country. Being far away from home caused Elizabeth to change the way in which she aligned herself to SA and to its people.

She says:

> *I eventually said to myself wherever I get a job it is just meant for me to be in that place and at that time*

Interestingly, Elizabeth's desire to be a teacher had a bigger purpose because she applied to schools all over the country. She did not mind where she found a job. All Elizabeth wanted was to teach and interact with people.

Holy Cross Covent was the only school that called Elizabeth in time and offered her a post as a grade four teacher, which she accepted.

A liberated teacher self of the 21st century

Elizabeth's position as a 21st century teacher provides her with the opportunity to take responsibility for inspiring her learners to be the best they can be. She finds herself in a comfortable position in this Private school which has a majority of Black learners.

> *...I have eighteen kids in my class, plenty of resources, sport equipment and I am settled in now...I feel like I have a huge responsibility moulding the kids of tomorrow. I enjoy inspiring my kids and getting them to be the best they can be in anything that they do... Right now this is where I know I am supposed to be...one of my favourite Bible verses is 'God has made everything beautiful in its time'...its saying that everyone is going to get there one day and everything will be how it's supposed to be...*

The sense of self that Elizabeth portrays here is contradictory to how she grew up. Drawing on the Bible as a resource to affirm her responsibility to acknowledge all learners, signals the possibilities that the teacher position holds for Elizabeth. She uses the Bible quotation to support and validate her re-framing and re-thinking in order to alter herself. Elizabeth is changing her attitudes and beliefs through her learners.

I present Elizabeth's vignette to foreground an activist, reflective self in the position of teacher. As a teacher in an alternate space, she creates relationships with all her learners. Elizabeth's parents were instrumental in promoting particular understandings of Black "identity and locality" (Jacklin, 2001, p. 17) that best served their interests and purpose. The discourses around race are dominant to Elizabeth's meaning of self. Her closed, isolated up bringing influenced how she chose to disrupt certain fixed meanings of who and what she

was, to make sense of her life as a teacher. While the dominant discourses of racial hierarchy persisted in her family, Elizabeth finds herself being a teacher in alternate spaces which gives her the freedom to interact with people: this is what she craves. These spaces open up the potential for alternate ways of thinking of Black people/learners. As a teacher in a Catholic school, Elizabeth forms relationships with her Black learners in an alternate space which are based on Catholic values. These values alter and shift her position as a teacher as she seeks alignment with what she knows best.

SECTION B

Conclusion

The three vignettes show how the NTs' negotiate their personal-professional selves and how particular biographical discourses shape their lives to become teachers. The strength and force from these identities are shaped from their biographical forces which are specific to the individual, such as their race, gender, class, home/family settings, beliefs, values and attitudes, as well as their interests. These forces pull and push the NTs in different directions causing them to negotiate who they are in the particular contexts in which they find themselves.

In this chapter, I focused on the complex and multi-facetted ways in which the formation of NTs' meanings of selves are communicated. SIT allowed me to see the three NTs as individuals acting in the context of social spaces, as individuals who are always in relation to context. The NT selves within a particular context are being shaped by the context that creates the narrative codes for the individuals; furthermore, it is how the individuals respond to those narrative codes (Varathiah, 2010). In some cases, the NTs as individuals give in to the dominant discourses and in other cases they resist and challenge the dominant discourses, given tensions and contradictions that exist. SIT is valuable in understanding the meanings that inform how NTs in this study negotiate the type of individuals they are and what they want to be seen as.

NTs' meanings of race, class, religion, linguistics and culture intersect in unique ways to inform who they are and what they do as NTs. As they reveal the stories of their experiences at home and their relationships with their families and friends, I am able to understand and appreciate the personal-professional constructions of self within a Private Catholic School. Particular constructions of identities for Kerusha, Sarah and Elizabeth which are unique in

social spaces, creative in traditional spaces and active in alternate spaces, give each NT the potential to challenge and change dominant discourses of race, class and gender within the context of a Private Catholic School. Kerusha is not a traditional Indian woman. She uses her uniqueness and flexibility to adapt in a social space. Sarah uses close, creative family bonds, to explore traditional spaces and Elizabeth illustrates through closed family bonds how she can become active and disrupt fixed race meanings. NTs' identities are dynamic and fluid within the complex positions they occupy as teachers; they are able to exercise power and agency to make their lives fun, passionate and unique.

The storied vignettes of Kerusha, Sarah and Elizabeth that are presented provide a dais for me to question how these NTs negotiate who they are and who they want to be as teachers in a religious schooling context. The vignettes offer me access into the NTs' layered lives and assist me in highlighting their lived experiences. Within each vignette, I foreground the specificities of each NT to make available their choice to become a teacher in post-apartheid South Africa. For example, inhabiting the identity of an Indian female (Kerusha) is very different from that of the White females (Sarah and Elizabeth). The process of identity construction in the South African context is one of contradictions and dispositions within the social context. However, meanings of why and what it means to be a NT as the storied vignettes have shown, can be strategically reworked and reinterpreted. The vignettes that are presented in this chapter reveal that one's personal life and professional life are not separated from one another. Adding context makes this more complex and nuanced.

In the next, section I return to the NTs' narratives to discover key themes to help me better understand NTs' practices within the distinctive educational environment of a Private Catholic School.

CHAPTER SIX

NOVICE TEACHERS' WORK IN A PRIVATE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I presented three vignettes of the experiences of my participants, Kerusha, Sarah and Elizabeth. The vignettes allowed me to gain a deeper insight into the dominant discourses and meanings that three NTs adopt in constructing who they are and why they chose to become teachers. I have developed themes from the storied narratives of Kerusha, Sarah and Elizabeth, which is in response to my second research question: *How do novice teachers negotiate their personal-professional selves in their professional practice in a Private Catholic school?*

Through the themes, I illustrate how Kerusha, Sarah and Elizabeth negotiate their work and construct meanings of self in a Private Catholic School. I identified recurring patterns across all three data sets and then through thorough filtering of the data sets, three themes were selected. The aspects that are negotiated within the Private Catholic School through their narratives are illuminated. In addition, it is vital to reflect on the context within which the pushing and pulling on their identities take place (Samuel, 2008). By working across the NT participants, this chapter presents the following sections:

      SECTION A – Dominant practices of Private Catholic Schooling
      SECTION B – Individual classroom practices
      SECTION C – Critical relationships

When looking at who the NTs are, I also consider their practices and the choices that shape their practices. The adapted Force Field Model provided me with the lenses needed to focus on the NTs within a specific context (Samuel, 2008). The contextual aspect is of importance as the NTs have to constantly negotiate who they are, within the distinctive school community at Holy Cross Convent. When focusing on the institutional setting, it is also important to consider the relationships that exist between the people who work at the Catholic school as well as the ethos of the school. Within the Catholic school community professional traits, intellectual motivation and professional relevance are essential for the NTs' development. Teaching in this religious school contributes to the NTs' professional

enhancement. However, this professional learning is reshaped by their personal beliefs, attitudes, class, race, gender, language, values and their social interactions (Samuel, 2008) within the Catholic School community.

I foreground dominant discourses of religious routines and practices, novice teachers and veteran teachers. Each NT signals these discourses in different ways. Religious routines and practices, rigorous curriculum and critical relationships reveal who Kerusha, Sarah and Elizabeth are in a Private Catholic School.

SECTION A

Dominant practices of Private Catholic Schooling

Religious routines and practices

When working in an environment that is governed by religious culture, practices, routines and rituals, these norms have to be followed and adhered to by the people who work in that institution. According to White (2009), religious practices are the things that people do to worship, expressing their beliefs through religious rituals that are performed. Routines are the things the teachers and learners do every day or on specific days in this religious school. There are certain routines and practices that Kerusha, Sarah and Elizabeth had to adopt and adapt to as NTs, to teach in this specific schooling context.

Making sense of the Catholic routines and rituals

Kerusha, the Hindu NT, says:

> *…I have a connection to God…we all believe in God or a supreme being, a higher power that we have to eventually answer to…I partake of the rituals performed because I believe that all religions teach the same values in different ways. I attend Mass at school every alternate Friday which is for the primary school, conduct assemblies with my class, pray for my learners, participant in religious celebrations wherever I can, attend retreats and follow the religious routines of the school. I even teach learners things from my own religion because I believe we should all appreciate each other for who we are. My learners get fascinated when I wear a Punjabi to school…*

As a Hindu teacher, Kerusha engages in personally meaningful ways to negotiate the routines, rituals and practices that she has to follow (White, 2009). She does not just follow the routines, rituals and practices because she has to, she questions them. Within the commonality and dominance of the school context, she acknowledges cultural and religious differences and appreciates everyone for who they are. Kerusha shifts the dominant educational environment by teaching her learners aspects from her own religion and culture. "When new teachers bringing new and different cultures are introduced into the lives of young people, then it is possible that we may be increasing ways that broaden their outlook" (Hramiak, 2014, p. 151). Kerusha re-shapes her learners' thinking about religion by empowering them with knowledge about her own religion. The shift from teaching Catholic/Christian values to Hindu values is not a problem for her, as she exercises her agency in this way. The religious identity that she exhibits at school stems from her flexible upbringing at home.

Extending my personal and professional practices and routines

Sarah complies with the religious practices and routines of the school. She states:

> *I follow all the religious practices and routines of the school because it's an extension of who I am... the values that this religion instils in an individual are beyond measure…*

Being a devoted Catholic and a learner at this school, Sarah follows all the rituals and ceremonies that the school celebrates. She does this because it strengthens the Catholic values and bonds that keep relationships together. Growing up with the same Catholic values instilled in her at home, Sarah embraces this extension of her religion at school. Sarah has the "tendency…to be rigid and to carry out rule-governed practices" relating to the religious practices and routines of the school (Caspersen & Raaen, 2014, p. 191).

Religious policy as a dominant discourse

Elizabeth says as a new teacher she found the curriculum problematic:

> *Teaching natural science in a religious school is difficult. I have to deliberately leave out aspects of the curriculum because it is not in line with the school's religious policy. I cannot teach certain aspects of Human Reproduction and methods of Contraception because it conflicts with the policy. As a teacher I feel that I am not*

fulfilling my duty to my learners to acquire this knowledge. University did not prepare
me for this.

For Elizabeth as a Natural Science teacher, teaching in a Private Catholic School means she is forced to comply with the school's religion policy to exclude some aspects relating to the Natural Science curriculum. As an individual she feels that she is withholding knowledge from her learners. She feels that she is doing them a dis-service and not helping them make informed decisions and choices because of the rigorous curriculum. The institutional setting of the school is important as this dictates aspects of the curriculum that should be left out. The independent schools' education and religion policy prescribes the curriculum. Hramiak (2014, p. 159) argues that in schools where religious and cultural beliefs are different to the learners, it is up to individual teachers to adapt the curriculum to suit the needs of the learners. This is where Elizabeth questions what she does as a teacher.

In their capacity as NTs, Kerusha produces new meanings and ways of thinking about religion and working in a Private Catholic School. Sarah, on the other hand, reproduces the same religious values and complies with the ethos of the school. Elizabeth tries to convey new knowledge to her learners but she is coerced by the religion policy not to do so due to the rigorous curriculum that is followed. Each NTs' biography plays a pivotal role in shaping the religious beliefs and acceptance of other religions. The family system as a whole is also responsible for inculcating values in them. In the absence of induction into the school, with regard to the religious routines and practices that learners and teachers have to follow, NTs' negotiate and manage this on their own. Culture is not fixed, as the NTs contribute to the ethos of the school. As immovable as the distinctive educational environment proves to be, Kerusha, Sarah and Elizabeth are shifting this as they exercise their agency.

Novice teachers and veteran teachers
There is a continuous battle between NTs and veteran teachers in all schools around the world (Pearce, 2011). Common perceptions of veteran teachers are that they are unhelpful, not willing to share content knowledge, skills, resources, and so on with the new teachers (Ambrosetti & Dekkers, 2010, Parker *et al.,* 2009, Hobson *et al.,* 2009).

Lack of interest in new strategies

Kerusha says:

> *...I voiced my opinions but I did not want to seem pushy because I was a first year teacher. Imagine me telling a teacher teaching for twenty five years what to do... but there were some things that we did not agree on or that I felt could have been done differently but she* (HoD) *was not interested in what I had to say...*

As a first year teacher negotiating her identity, Kerusha had the constant feeling that she was being watched in class. Being unable to share the new ideas she acquired at campus openly, Kerusha felt lost. She kept comparing the years of teaching experience to justify herself for not telling her mentor what to do, or how to change her style of teaching. Kerusha wanted to learn as much as she could so that she could be a better teacher. However, her HoD was not interested in the strategies or techniques that Kerusha wanted to employ in the classroom.Novices as recent graduates can bring a level of expertise about new teaching styles, approaches and theories to the table, but many veteran teachers view this in a negative light as they believe they have all the experience and look down upon learning from a novice (Parker *et al*., 2009).Kerusha had to learn the hard way that many veteran teachers are set in their ways of teaching, their patterns and beliefs of teaching and that some do not entertain change. In order to overcome this, she kept reminding herself that it was about the new knowledge and skills that she was going to acquire from her HoD.

Lack of support from management

Sarah remembers being scared of her HoD:

> *I did not want to make my HoD cross with me. I actually thought she would walk into my classroom and fire me there and then because I was not doing something the correct way.*

Sarah was afraid of her HoD because she was teaching in a phase that she was not accustomed to and she was not given any support. Ambrosetti and Dekkers (2010) argue that new teachers need to have basic information about the school, its routines and procedures so that they know what is expected from them and they have a guide to follow. This also helps them to settle in a new school environment. Caspersen and Raaen (2014, p. 190) argue that

"Novice teachers primarily want help with solving practical and technical problems in their work…however, support from school leadership are often lacking".

Lack of support from veteran teachers
Elizabeth says:

> *I assumed that when teaching in a private religious school, the teachers in general would be more accommodating and supportive…*

She can still remember her mum's advice clearly:

> *…as a new teacher I should just sit back and listen and don't try to be pushy or act like I know everything…I must be careful around the older teachers because they don't like that…*

Elizabeth heeds her mum's advice and tries to remain passive as a new teacher. Shank argues that veteran teachers are responsible for socializing the new teacher into the culture of a particular school and, its facilities, and "provide support in the face of challenges during the first few years of teaching" (Shank, 2005, p. 73). The support that Elizabeth required from her HoD was non-existent and she had to find her own way of doing things.

The endless struggles between NTs and veteran teachers (Caspersen & Raaen, 2014) proved to be dominant in this context. Kerusha, Sarah and Elizabeth each had their own struggles to deal with and with the lack of support, they found themselves in a helpless situation. In Section C, I show how these struggles are being managed and overcome in a Private Catholic School.

SECTION B
Individual classroom practices

Nahal (2010, p.3) identifies "increased paperwork, feelings of isolation, lack of parental support, lack of student achievement, lack of recognition, increased accountability, job dissatisfaction burnout and stress" as being the main issues that NTs struggle with in and out of the classroom. Most of these problems can become exacerbated if NTs are left alone to deal with them. If the problems experienced by the NTs are left unattended, then their

professional development will be hindered and will eventually lead to their early career exit, and a loss to the teaching profession (McCormack & Thomas, 2003).

Classroom practices can be grouped into two broad categories: "the teaching processes and the general socialisation of teachers" (Khamis, as cited in McCormack & Thomas, 2003, p. 126). Some of the difficulties experienced by NTs are around classroom management, discipline, motivating pupils, dealing with individual differences, assessment, and classroom organisation (Fantilli & McDougall, 2009). Then "feelings of fear, conflict and tension" would be categorised under socialisation (McCormack & Thomas 2003, p. 126). Before being taking up teaching position in schools NTs as student teachers were still being supervised by their university lecturers and school mentors. Once they are in their own classrooms no one will be "looking over their shoulder, affirming or second guessing their decisions, or what they are doing" (Mitchell, Reilly & Logue , 2009, p. 344). Adding the distinctive education environment of the Private Catholic School to the scenario makes this teaching experience for new teachers more complex and challenging.

Learning from others

Kerusha was a TA for Mrs Rose in the grade 1 class. Kerusha says:

> *I had many opportunities to teach, make mistakes and learn from them…I learnt so many things from her about structure and planning especially the admin stuff that university never tells you about or prepares you for…*

Even though university did not prepare Kerusha for teaching from a religious perspective, she was taught in this way as a learner. Growing up, Kerusha was used to getting what she wanted and now for the first time she was in a situation where she had no control and this made her uncomfortable. Having opportunities to teach and make mistakes suggests that she felt free in the classroom. Mrs Rose created spaces in the classroom for Kerusha to "learn the practice of teaching" from her as a mentor (Schwille, 2008, p. 139). This allowed Kerusha to learn and develop the skills for which university did not prepare her.

Learning through trial and error

Being a new teacher, Sarah says:

> *I had ten kids in my class but I found it challenging because I was out of my phase, I did not have experience teaching grade 6 and I realised that most of the things I learnt at varsity I could not really apply in the classroom. I was quite frustrated in the beginning, I felt like I wasted my time with the PGCE. I had to find my own way of doing things, it was like trial and error…*

She felt strongly that varsity did not prepare her sufficiently to teach. McCormack and Thomas (2003, p. 126) argue that, new teachers are "often required to teach outside their area of specialisation with little guidance and encouragement". Although this is true, it is this that allowed Sarah to find her own creative ways of doing things in the classroom because within the space Sarah finds herself in, she likes to be carefree, creative and independent. Ambrosetti and Dekkers (2010) suggest that novices take time to learn and find their own way through a process of trial and error.

Learning from experience

Elizabeth feels for the learners and connects with them on a different level. She says:

> *So often teachers are so stuck in what they think that some learners cannot do this or that and then the kids get labelled and they start to believe all the negative things that are said about them. So I tried to go in there with a different mind-set. I kept telling myself that I am going to give these kids a chance and try not to judge them or listen to what I have heard about them. Right now this is where I know I am supposed to be. I feel like I am changing myself through my learners and my experiences at school…*

As a teacher, Elizabeth tries to be accepting of her learners regardless of their abilities. Elizabeth is changing her prejudices and misconceptions about people by learning from and interacting with her learners. This space is an unconstrained "unique environment for teaching and learning…in a social setting that includes interaction among students and teacher (Hofstein & Lunetta, 2002, p. 32). Elizabeth uses this space to rework her race meaning-making. Through this process she frees herself. It is essential for these NTs to understand their own backgrounds and their implications for meaning-making and pedagogic practice in the classroom (Masinga, 2009). Elizabeth uses the classroom space to learn about her learners, herself, content knowledge and pedagogic content knowledge (Shulman, 1986).

This will lead to enhancing her professional understandings, beliefs, roles, behaviours and holistic development as a teacher (Shulman, 1986). Elizabeth uses her classroom space as a "science laboratory" to experiment, learn and change her meanings (Shulman & Tamir, 1973, p. 6).

In terms of enacting practices, NTs in religious schools, like other NTs, find difficulty in translating theory in to practice. Being new to the teaching profession can be a daunting experience, especially if there is no one to guide and assist the new teacher (Ambrosetti & Dekkers, 2010). I agree with Goodson (1992), when he mentions that biography influences NTs' classroom practices and behaviour. Learning from others, learning through trial and error, and learning from experience, is where Kerusha, Sarah and Elizabeth take their positions as NTs seriously, in order to learn about being a teacher in different ways. All three NTs felt that their university training did not prepare them effectively for the classroom in a specific religious schooling context. Steyn highlights that "beginner educators frequently complain that pre-service preparation had not prepared them for actual teaching, and they lack sufficient knowledge and skills" (2004, p. 85). Kerusha, Sarah and Elizabeth become agentic when they experience challenges in the classroom and need to overcome them in order to develop in the absence of a formal mentoring programme.

SECTION C
Critical relationships

Collective Relationships

NTs teaching in Holy Cross Convent had to find their own coping mechanisms in order to get through the day. As mentioned earlier, there was no structure in place to support NTs at the school. Being afraid to ask questions, not knowing what to do and afraid of making mistakes caused Kerusha, Sarah and Elizabeth to rely on one another for support and assistance.

We don't judge

Kerusha mentions:

> *No one else understands this feeling better than Sarah and Elizabeth. We can vent with each other and we don't judge each other for it because we are experiencing the same things…*

As NTs, Kerusha, Sarah and Elizabeth look to one another for support. By not judging one another, they see the others as equals. This gives them the courage to be open about the challenges they are experiencing because "it's nice to have someone in the same boat…we give each other ideas and talk a lot…just to share ideas" (Huisman, Singer & Catapano, 2010, p. 489). All three NTs share ideas with each other to make their teaching experiences better.

We are experiencing the same things

Sarah says:

> *Margaret was so good to me she's never made me feel intimidated. And I also feel a lot comfortable that Elizabeth is right next door to me and Kerusha is also close by. Having someone else there with me whose is also experiencing some of the things I am in school makes me feel like I am not alone. We are both young and learning and making mistakes. It's nice to have someone to talk to and who won't judge me…*

Sarah, Kerusha and Elizabeth draw strength and support from one another as a collective. Together they can get through anything because of the open relationship that they have established, as they do not intimidate each other. This allows them to feel free to talk and discuss things that they are having problems with or share positive ideas and strategies. Hramiak (2014, p. 160) argues that communities of practice can be established when "participants share knowledge across the boundaries of the classroom". Through experiencing similar experiences NTs are less likely to judge each other, resulting in the sharing of knowledge.

We are not alone

Elizabeth says:

> *…When it came to lessons and my prep I would always go to Anne who was ever ready and willing to assist me. Anne gave me a flip file with all the necessary*

information about the primary school routines, admin stuff and general requirements.
I found this so helpful and I was less stressed as well because I now knew what I had
to do…On my own I attached myself to Anne to be my mentor… I found sanity in the
fact that I had Sarah right next door to me because we were both young, new teachers
and finding our ways of coping. It was also good to just have someone to talk to who
was experiencing the same thing as me. I didn't feel so alone…

Teaching in this distinctive educational environment, Elizabeth assumed that the teachers would be willing to help her as a new teacher. She in fact found her HoD unapproachable, so she established a relationship with Anne on her own. Anne helped her find her way. Elizabeth took the initiative to seek guidance from Anne rather than remain in the dark on certain aspects in the school. As a NT, Elizabeth trusted Anne enough to share the gaps she had with regard to knowledge, skills and routines of the school without the fear of being inadequate or criticised. As an informal mentor, Anne assists Elizabeth. "Novice teachers who are often overwhelmed in their work may need added support in order for them to try new tactics and to reposition themselves when they fail" (Huisman *et al.,* 2010). From this, Elizabeth gets the courage to share what she has learnt or done with Kerusha and Sarah.

Kerusha, Sarah and Elizabeth found that by sharing their experiences, good and bad they could learn from one another within the distinctive educational environment. NTs are powerful and agentic because they can be critical towards others' learning and development. They depend on each other for guidance, support and just to have someone to talk to. These NTs found that they had a lot in common and they were experiencing the same challenges and dilemmas. Not having suitable mentors at the school meant they had to find their own ways of getting by, by using one another as support structures. They formed an informal collective support group for themselves in order to deal, cope, manage and get through each day with the challenges they experienced. Belonging to an informal learning community was useful: "…it makes it more difficult for teachers to leave their jobs" (Huisman *et al.,* 2010, p. 498). When NTs created their own support group, they benefitted from learning and sharing experiences with one another. Kerusha, Sarah and Elizabeth seemed to function better in their duties as teachers within the distinctive education environment

Mentor and mentee relationships are essential for NTs to reach their full potential during their early years. Kerusha, Sarah and Elizabeth did not have the opportunity of benefitting from this because a proper mentoring and induction system with regard to religion was non-

existent at Holy Cross Convent. All three NTs found their HoD unapproachable and unhelpful. Furthermore, they feared her due to the huge age and teaching experience gap that existed between them and her. The NTs expected that the HoD would act as a mentor to them. They did not question anything or voice their opinions because they were scared and worried about being victimised.

Individual Relationships

Teaching for NTs can be made less stressful if there is someone to go to for help, guidance and assistance whenever they need to (Ambrosetti & Dekkers, 2010). NTs in a Private Catholic School context have relationships to form and maintain throughout their teaching time at the school. Relationships with the Religion teacher and the Chaplin of the school, teachers, learners and parents, are vital. Different relationships exist between teachers and this adds to the distinctive educational environment in understanding NTs.

A risk taker novice teacher

Kerusha as a NT teaching religious values says:

> *When I had to teach my religion lessons I would sometimes get confused with certain proverbs and psalms from the Bible…I had to try and incorporate religion in my everyday teaching and I found it difficult…The religion teacher was always there to assist me and offer me extra resources to benefit my learners. She never looked down upon me because I wasn't Catholic. I enjoy discussing and debating religious issues with her.*

Kerusha's relationship with the religion teacher is important to her as she is a non-Catholic. She seeks out the help of the religion teacher to assist her learners professionally with resources. Kerusha has the confidence to discuss and debate religious issues with the religion teacher, taking this relationship to another level which is beyond the professional. The above excerpt illustrates that in a Private Catholic School, Kerusha exercises agency by developing a professional-social relationship. By forming key relationships, this allows NTs to cope with the demands of teaching (Hobsen *et al.,* 2009). This shows how personal-professional meanings and negotiations impact on teachers' work (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009).

An invitational novice teacher

Sarah mentions:

> *I like it when the Chaplin pops into my class during the day and he prays for my learners and I. He asks the learners what I taught them and then gives my learners and I some advice or relates what I'm teaching to the Bible. We really enjoy that.*

Sarah enjoys the closeness and openness with her learners. She feels comfortable when the Chaplin comes into her classroom because she is in a familiar, safe space. Through prayer, she creates bonding relationships with her learners and the Chaplin. "Culture can be thought of as more than just sharing a common language and tradition…it specifies what roles people play and the what status and respect they are accorded" as Hramiak argues (2014, p. 160). Sarah is not intimidated by the Chaplin coming unannounced into her classroom because of shared Catholic values. She welcomes him into her domain to engage with her and her learners. Within the traditional classroom space, Sarah has an informal-professional relationship with the Chaplin. Sarah is agentic since she is not intimidated or threatened by the Chaplin coming to her class and she does not feel that her authority as a teacher is being undermined in her classroom space.

A reflective novice teacher

Elizabeth states that:

> *The religion teacher is important for me at school. I draw my strength and courage from her. Whenever I'm feeling down or I need to talk, I know that she is always there to listen. She makes us all feel like we are important because we are all God's creation. I feel like a better teacher after her encouraging words. She reminds me of my mother…*

As a NT, Elizabeth looks to the religion teacher as someone in whom she can confide. She has a personal relationship with the religion teacher in a social space. Drawing strength and courage signals a close friendship as it goes far beyond a professional relationship. She set up a personal friendship at school so that she could have an equal relationship and connect with someone because she craves interacting with people. This relationship sustains her in this religious schooling context, helping her to go on. Believing that we are all God's creation, Elizabeth finds it easier to live so far from home with people who are there to

support her whenever she needs it. Holloway and Gouthro (2011, p. 29) argue that being reflective "increases the likelihood…that educators will continue to grow and be open to change".

Kerusha, Sarah and Elizabeth set up important relationships in school. Each relationship has a unique meaning for each NT. They sought different kinds of knowledge in the different relationships that they formed, whether professional, personal or social. Kerusha set up a social relationship in the professional space so that she could benefit from obtaining religious resources. This relationship sustains her as it offered her space to debate and discuss religious issues. An informal-professional relationship was thus set up by Sarah in the social space of the classroom to offer her and her learners religious support. Within the school space, Elizabeth set up a personal relationship so that she could interact with someone on a personal level. Each NT exercises agency by creating relationships that are important for their lives and their work. These relationships help the NTs in different ways to manage their work and sustain their professional lives in a Private Catholic School.

Conclusion

NTs' meanings of the dominant discourses are reworked and recreated as find critical, meaningful spaces in which to make the meaning making occur. This gives rise to particular kinds of NTs who have the potential to change and challenge the dominant discourses mentioned. This is illustrated by White (2009, p. 861), who explains that, "every person is composed of multiple, often conflicting identities which exist in volatile states of construction and reconstruction, reformation or erosion, addition or expansion". Kerusha, Sarah and Elizabeth negotiated their personal-professional selves with regards to routines and practices, relationships and rigorous curriculum. No-one at the school told the NTs what was required of them from a religious perspective. Just being a NT was complex enough; adding religion to the mix makes this more intricate.

NTs are constantly negotiating, reworking and recreating themselves as teachers and as individuals (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). In the absence of regularised mentoring NTs became resourceful and formed their own informal collective learning relationships and individual learning relationships. They supported one another and this helped them to survive in the school environment. They have thus taken the initiative to grow themselves within the Private Catholic School. Specific and situated mentoring and induction are two important

aspects that NTs require in order to fulfill their roles as teachers within a Private Catholic School.

In the next chapter, I conclude this study by providing a synthesis of the findings in response to my two research questions. I consider what I have learnt through this study about NTs' meanings of their personal-professional selves in a Private Catholic School. I also include the methodological reflections, contributions to educational research and deliberate possibilities for future research and final reflections.

CHAPTER SEVEN

VOICING MY RESEARCH

I started this study wanting to find out about NTs' lives within the context of Private Catholic schooling.

Being a NT myself, my curiosity was to find out about other NTs' lived lives and daily experiences. The NTs' various positions and meanings of personal-professional self cannot be separated (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). I came to understand how NTs negotiate who they are and what they do within the context of a religious Private School. Religious schooling in SA has grown in popularity in the last decade. Religious Private Schools are different to other schools in that there are many complexities in relation to relationships with teachers and learners, the curriculum, classroom and practice challenges, in addition to providing a distinctive educational environment and education.

Context of the study

This study presents my understanding of the three NTs and their meaning-making as teachers in Holy Cross Convent, a Private Catholic School in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. This thesis opens up possibilities of understanding how these NTs negotiate their multiple selves within a Private Catholic School. Scholars like White (2009) and Flores and Day (2006) emphasise that identities are shaped within cultural and institutional contexts. By documenting the stories of the NT participants, I am able to carefully depict what life at this Catholic School is like for them. NTs experience numerous challenges as discussed (Hobson *et al.,* 2009, Fantilli & McDougall, 2009). However, within the context of a Private Catholic School my study shows that some NTs do, feel, think and act in different and personal ways. Particular practices enable Kerusha, Sarah and Elizabeth to sustain who and what they are within the struggles of working at Holy Cross Convent and remaining in the profession.

It is important that people are treated as individuals and understood as such. However, they cannot be understood individualistically as they are always in 'relation to' a specific context (Ramkelewan, 2012). I agree with Clandinin (2006, p. 479) that teachers' lives are a "continuum" and that all events and people always have a past, present and future. In this study, I provide glimpses into the lives of Kerusha, Sarah and Elizabeth and their practices as NTs working in a Private Catholic School.

Methodological Reflections

Through narrative inquiry, I have deepened my understanding of the lived experiences of three NTs. This methodology offered me alternative ways to delve into NTs complex, lived experiences. My research study is located within the interpretivist paradigm where I could understand NTs through the narratives. I found working with narrative inquiry fruitful in understanding identity construction because as a researcher, this paradigm allowed me to explore the meanings of NTs as being fluid, dynamic and multiple. Narrative inquiry allowed for the difficulties, desires, anxieties, practices, meanings and interests to be explored. By using narratives as a research approach, I was able to view Kerusha, Sarah and Elizabeth as "real people in real situations" (Witherell & Noddings, 1991, p. 279). The re-storying process proved to be beneficial and invaluable to me as a researcher. I found the use of stories to be a creative and free way to understand and explore glimpses of my participants' daily lives.

In this study, three NTs focused on critical moments, including significant people and critical experiences in their lives, during open-ended interviews. Allowing the NTs time and space to voice their stories allowed me to obtain rich, thick data. The use of collage and artefact retrieval as visual methods also opened up opportunities for me to understand NT stories, and 'a life' as experienced. These varied methods assisted me to gain entry into the world of the three NTs and move me beyond the confines of the spoken word. Through the use of the collage, the NTs remembered certain experiences when they engaged in cutting and pasting pictures. They were able to remember and discuss experiences openly without me posing a structured question to them. The collages and artefacts added immense value to my research as they signaled particular positions that the NTs adopted.

Using these strategies to represent *"Our voices the way we are",* I was able to produce data that could arouse the innermost thoughts and feelings of the NTs by capturing complex ways of remembering the past. I found that by using collage and artefact retrieval, I was able to bring the NTs' memories to life. In addition to their stories and collages, Kerusha, Sarah and Elizabeth shared their most valued, sentimental items with me during the artefact retrieval exercise. This added to the data generation process, making believable and authentic. Through these methods I was able to gain more depth and clarity on their experiences, feelings and emotions. Furthermore, I used my own artefact to understand the adapted Force Field Model metaphorically (Samuel, 2008). I thus illustrate how researching each NTs' life is understood through the artefact.

Being a NT myself, I had to continuously be aware of my role as the researcher. Throughout the interviews and group discussions, I had to keep telling myself to listen more and talk and think less, so that I could absorb everything my participants were offering me. There were many instances when my responses were muted or silenced so that I could be objective or subjective, depending on the issue raised. My study shows how NTs draw on their personal-professional experiences to creatively and resourcefully manage, cope, and sustain themselves within the particular distinctive educational environment in which they worked.

**Novice teachers' construction of selves in a Private Catholic School**

I found the adapted Force Field Model (Samuel, 2008) useful as a lens to respond to my first research question. I examined the meanings of selves that shape and continue to shape the lives of each NT differently. The forces that are continually in tension with NTs are biography, context, institutional setting and programmatic forces. The model clarifies the fluidity of NT identity within a private religious schooling context. From each NT's story there were dominant discourses that shaped and continue to shape the way in which they perceived the world within which they live. Although Kerusha, Sarah and Elizabeth shared common discourses of being a female NT teaching in the same school and growing up during the apartheid era, each NT experienced the common discourses differently.
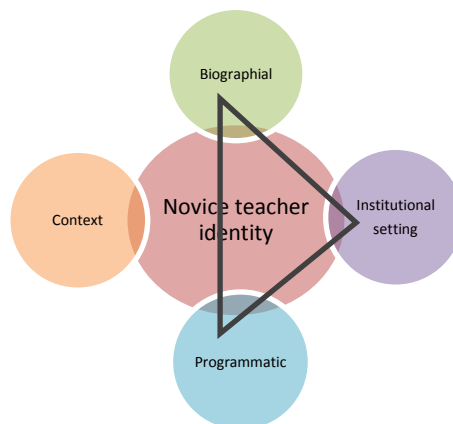
Figure 7.1: Kerusha's negotiation

Being a Hindu, and teaching in a particular religious context that is not the same as her own, forces Kerusha to continually shift, challenge and change what she has to do to fit within this context. Race, religion and class forces continuously push and pull her in different directions as she negotiates her life as a teacher. Kerusha draws on the hegemonic discourse of a

religious school as a social space to foreground her unique identity as a NT. Given the flexible person that Kerusha is, she uses her position as a NT to teach her learners diversity in relation to religion, specifically her Hindu religion. As a NT, Kerusha disrupts the hegemonic discourse of religion in the school as she continues to negotiate it in a personal way. In this religious school, Kerusha fulfils the role of a designer of learning programmes, mediator of learning and administrator and leader. She does not perpetuate racial stereotypes and inequities. She exercises agency in her classroom by encouraging and appreciating uniqueness in her learners. Kerusha is open-minded and flexible and this opens up the potential for her as a NT working in a South African Private Catholic School, to be agentic and powerful.
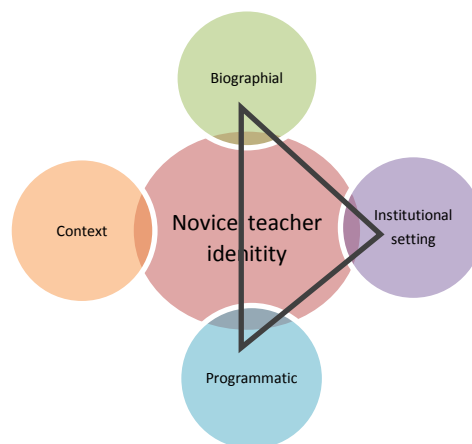
Figure 7.2: Sarah's negotiation

Sarah in contrast to Kerusha, displays a seam-less and smooth integration into the religious schooling ethos. As a White female Catholic this is an extension of who she is and what she knows. Private Catholic Schooling is not a new experience for Sarah, as she attended this school as a learner. She complies with what is expected of her. She contributes to the distinctive educational environment because the school is an extension of her religious values. As a creative NT, she is able to bring her personal interests, like her love of art, into the classroom space. She foregrounds her identity as a non-traditional, creative NT working in a traditional space. Sarah fulfils a designer of learning programme and pastoral care role. The classroom space is seen as an open space for Sarah as a non-traditional, creative teacher because she finds resourceful ways to reaching out to her learners. In Sarah's position as NT,

she exercises agency by blurring the boundaries between teacher and learner in her lessons; this enables her to create nurturing relationships with her learners.
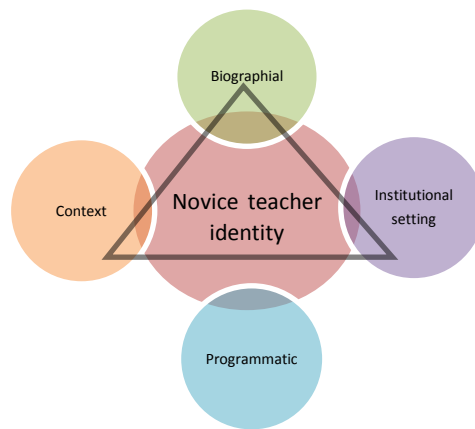
Figure 7.3: Elizabeth's negotiation

Growing up with certain meanings of race, class, and language, Elizabeth uses the school and her relationship with learners to create new meanings for herself as an individual in alternate spaces. She tries to rework her personal race meanings through her professional position as a teacher. Elizabeth disrupts her own hegemonic discourse of race which is constituted by her being White, middle-class and female. Teaching in a school that has predominantly Black children, Elizabeth is able to question and change her personal meanings. She is able to establish relationships with her learners by using the NT position to disrupt her race identity. Elizabeth displays an activist identity in her position as a NT. She challenges certain stereotypes and the oppressive discourse around race. Elizabeth asserts a specialist teacher, administrator and leader and pastoral role in the school context. As an active reflective NT she has the potential to exercise agency by being dynamic in alternate spaces. She is less likely to perpetuate racial stereotypical behaviour and inequities with her learners as an activist NT.

Novice teachers' enacted practices in a Private Catholic School
Research Question Two offers an understanding of how NTs negotiate their personal-professional selves in their professional practice at Holy Cross Convent. NTs teaching at Holy Cross Convent contribute to this particular context in their own unique ways. NTs are not sufficiently prepared for the classroom reality in a religious school context. NTs tend to

struggle with relationships with older teachers and classroom management issues. Religion plays a vital role in Kerusha, Sarah and Elizabeth's lives and this in turn impacts on their practice as NTs.

As a risk taker, Kerusha maintains her personal beliefs and uses this to assist her in the classroom. She negotiates how she teaches her religion lessons. She does this by relating her Hindu values to Catholic values. The relationship she has with the religion teacher is vital, as this assists her in the classroom. She establishes a professional-social relationship in which she gains professional knowledge because this allows her to exercise agency in the classroom by encouraging diversity. Kerusha is able to enact practices that recognize each learner's uniqueness in her classroom.

Sarah as an invitational teacher found space in her classroom to forge religious relationships and allowed herself to be creative with her learners by being artistic. She was also aware of their emotional needs. Within the strict routine of the school Sarah is free within the classroom space to do what she loves with her learners. Art lessons offer a creative space for Sarah. She reconfigures the classroom space to make it a creative space. Sarah also uses her NT position to seek religious values and knowledge from the Chaplin. As a NT, Sarah fulfils a pastoral and caregiver role. In blurring traditional boundaries between learner and teacher, the practices that Sarah enacts as a NT have potential for her to have open informal relationships with the Chaplin and her learners, as they will be more willing to respond to her. This also opens up opportunities for other subjects. In addition, learning opportunities can be created for learners in creative ways.

Through personal-professional experiences Elizabeth as a reflective NT, realizes that the perception of racial hierarchy that she grew up with as a White about Black children on the farm is not in line with what she knows now. In her position as a reflective NT seeking self-knowledge, she does not label and judge learners. She is willing to give them a chance and to challenge racial stereotypes. Elizabeth uses her position as a NT to correct and change herself as an active agent within the classroom space. She actively resists racial stereotypes and prejudices through her practices in the classroom. This raises hope for her role as a teacher in SA because her learners will flourish, as they will not feel inferior or different.

Across the three NTs, the risk taker NT (Kerusha), the invitational NT (Sarah) and the reflective NT (Elizabeth) we learn that while within the fixed broader Catholic schooling environment asserting routines and practices and the rigorous curriculum, NTs could not

exert agency. However, within the classroom space where they feel comfortable, safe and independent with their learners and the relationships they created, Kerusha, Sarah and Elizabeth were able to exercise agency in their own unique and powerful ways and be influential teachers.

Theoretical Conclusion

The struggles of being a new teacher and having to incorporate religious routines and practices, rigorous curriculum issues and establish and manage relationships in their everyday teaching, is where we learn how Kerusha, Sarah and Elizabeth construct their meanings. These NTs demonstrate how discourses of private and religious schooling seek to construct them in particular ways. There is an inextricable link between identity and agency (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Practicing teachers have a sense of agency because they are empowered with ideas, able to reach goals and transform the context in their own ways (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). My study shows that NTs are capable of exercising agency and reconstructing what it means to be a NT because they have one another and support another.

NTs in a Private Catholic School negotiate their personal-professional meanings of self through the creation of informal collective learning relationships and through individual learning relationships. In the absence of being formally prepared in their formal education and not being formally mentored and inducted in the school, NTs in a Private Catholic School are guided by informal mentoring and collective group support. The theoretical underpinning alludes to the fact that NTs have agency and voice when working as a collective. A collective identity of NTs makes space for them to discuss and cope with the everyday challenges, routines and rituals and practices of private religious school life. Within this space, NTs gain and develop their confidence to exercise their agency in unique ways and are capable of negotiating what it means to be a NT within constraints. They are able to think and work regardless. Furthermore, they are able to learn through experience from one another through improvising as they start to work spontaneously by rethinking and reworking their meanings as teachers. NTs are therefore able to construct and reconstruct their identities. The unique flexible NT, the non-traditional creative NT and the activist NT is how Kerusha, Sarah and Elizabeth respectively sustain themselves.

By utilising the Force Field Model (Samuel, 2008), I was able to examine and understand how NTs' unique experiences and the forces continually push and pull NTs meanings. The model also advocates that these forces "profess ideological theoretical positions about what the role and identities of [novice] teachers ought to be" (Samuel, 2008, p. 11). These discourses interact in complex ways to shape NTs' identities which is how they make sense of their daily lived experiences. However, in this study, each NT had her own ideas about teaching in a Private religious school, but when in the schooling reality, there were certain ideological theoretical positions that they had to negotiate. The sociological stance taken in researching NTs opens up the possibility of producing a different understanding of NTs. By using SIT, I was able to produce a different understanding of NTs. I was able to see that the individual NTs' responds in personally meaningful ways in relation to the religious schooling context and *vice versa.*

NTs in this study fall within the In-group and the Out-group. They form part of the In-group because of their shared commonalities as NTs holding common social identification (Stets & Burke, 2000) and the Out-group because they go against the norm of forming informal collective learning relationships and individual learning relationships. NTs are said to experience many challenges, as a result they cannot cope and many of them leave the profession (Hobson et al., 2009, Fantilli & McDougall, 2009). This study extends the Force Field Model because I have illustrated how NTs are able negotiate and rework their personal-professional identities and what it means to be a NT teaching in the 21st century.

Policy imperatives

The DoE has a religious policy in place for all Government schools to follow. Private schools, however, follow the ISASA policy. Private Religious schools have their own Religion Policy which they draw up and implement in their schools. In 2006, the DoE introduced a new system of Continuing Professional Teacher Development (CPTD). This initiative takes a top-down, one size fits all approach. The needs of individual teachers' contexts, experiences and interests are not taken into consideration. CPTD does not look at specific development and support for NTs. It is externally driven by the DoE and it does not meet the need of South African NTs teaching in a South African Private Catholic School. Specific, situated supportive programs must be put in place in order to provide a platform for NTs.

In Private Religious Schools with a particular ethos, a space or platform must be created for NTs to work through their issues, positive or negative, especially if the NT is of a different religion and culture. Induction and mentoring programs (formal and informal) must be compulsory for all NTs. Discursive spaces must be provided so all four forces of the NT can be included.

Practice Imperatives

This study has shown how the forces of NTs play out in a Private Catholic School. In order to cater for these forces, a suitable way of considering them within the school reality would be within an induction and mentoring programme. Kennedy's (2005, p. 159) model of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) suggests that "professional learning opportunities can be located along a continuum" and can be categorised as "transmissive, transitional, and transformative". NTs as professional learning communities must be supported so that NTs have voice.

NTs require transmissive assistance which will help them focus on technical aspects of the job rather than issues relating to values, beliefs and attitudes. These are the traditional entities that NTs are given to be able to carry out their duties (e.g. curriculum guidelines, template of lesson plans, content to teach, etc). Transitional learning includes coaching/mentoring and communities of practice for NTs as they need one-to-one relationships where "sharing dialogue with colleagues" is encouraged (Kennedy, 2005, p. 242).Transformative learning deals with the strong links that the NT makes between theory and practice. In addition, Reid's quadrant of teacher learning is also beneficially to NTs, as this takes into consideration the "formal, informal, planned and incidental learning" (Fraser *et al.,* 2007, p. 161). These types of learning will benefit NTs considerably.

If NTs are formally inducted and provided with the necessary information and knowledge about the rituals and routines of the school, alongside appropriate mentoring (coaching/guiding) by senior staff through formal, informal, planned and incidental learning, there will be possibilities and/or opportunities for the transformation of the NT. If discursive spaces are created for the above to occur formally or informally with a coach or mentor to discuss and negotiate the challenges that the NT is experiencing or any other issue, this will be transformative as the NT will be able to link theory with practice. As a result, NTs will function better in the school because they are able to understand and change the way they think, feel, act and do things.

Contribution to educational research

The findings for this study can assist in addressing the issues raised by the NTs and policy implementation. The findings should therefore be of benefit to NTs, mentors, university lecturers within the education faculty and policy-makers concerned with the professional development of NTs. The findings may also serve as a stepping stone for future prospects for school boards, teacher training institutions, provincial and state teacher organisations and other educational institutions. This will lead to establishing the foundation for further research into NTs' experiences as they negotiate who they are within a particular religious schooling context, as this type of literature is under-researched and limited. This study contributes to the educational research field of story and storytelling because a "comparatively neglected area in educational research is the field of stories and storytelling" (Cohen *et al.,* 2011, p. 454). Therefore, the study adds to the growing body of knowledge.

Suggestions for further research

Catholic/Christian-based religious schools are here to stay in South Africa. Tertiary institutions need to provide and implement a module as part of the formal program on religious education and teaching in religious schools so that new teachers will not be overwhelmed. This will impact on practice, policy and research. This research study focused on the meaning making of NTs in a Private Catholic School in Durban. It would be interesting to find out what negotiations other NTs in other types of religious private schools engage in. Furthermore, these questions can be posed,

  ➢ Are tertiary institutions preparing teachers to teach in religious schools?
  ➢ What does it mean for Private schools who appoint NTs who are not of the same religious denomination of the school?

Final Reflection

In researching the lives of three NTs, I have come to realise how complex their lives are within their position as NTs in a Private Catholic School. In this study, NTs engaged in story-telling which allowed me as the researcher to get glimpses into their lively and vibrant lives. I was also able to see what kinds of identities emerge at certain times in order to assist and sustain the NTs in their chosen profession. All three NTs showed how, through religious routines and practices, rigorous curriculum and critical relationships, they continued to

exercise agency so that they could exert their unique selves within the classroom space. In this study, Kerusha, Sarah and Elizabeth recalled their lived experiences to understand how the personal-professional meanings of self are negotiated. The NTs illustrated how they used their unique, creative and reflective identities to sustain themselves as teachers within the distinctive educational environment in which they work.

"May the Forces be with us" – as we continue this journey of understanding NTs' multiple selves (Samuel, 2008, p. 15).

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APPENDIX 1

<u>UNSTRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE</u>

INTERVIEWER: Before we begin this interview, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. The purpose of this is for me to hear your story and experiences as a novice teacher teaching in a private Catholic school. I will start by asking you some biographical questions about yourself and we will then move on to other aspects. You can feel free to say anything that comes to your mind; there is no wrong answer so you can take your time to answer the questions. You do not have to answer any questions that make you feel uncomfortable.

Title: Narratives of novice teachers teaching in a Private Catholic School.

Unstructured interview themes

There are two broad themes,

PERSONAL	PROFESSIONAL
Biographical issues	Teaching and related issues
Family	Teaching and learning
Community	Religious issues
Religious issues	
Schooling	
Student teaching-programmatic issues	
University experiences	

ARTEFACT SCHEDULE

Artefacts are historical objects or sources that lead us to think about the past in a different way. When you look for an artefact remember that many artefacts hold a very emotional, sentimental and important significance to your life. Artefacts can also bring back memories which can be good or bad. An example of an artefact can be a photograph.

PROMPTS FOR DISCUSSION ON ARTEFACTS

The following are suggested prompts for the discussion on artefacts: (Adapted from Samaras, 2011, p.105)

1. Explain why you chose this artefact.
2. Share what the artefact represents or symbolizes about you as an individual or teacher.
3. What is the time period of this artefact?
4. Does culture play a role in this artefact?
5. Are the other people involved in this artefact?
6. What role do they play?
7. What is their influence on you as an individual and as a teacher?
8. What metaphor would you choose to represent and reinforce the significance of this artefact to you?
9. Express an emotion that this artefact brings forth for you.
10. Describe where that emotion generates from and how it might extend your development as an individual or a teacher?

COLLAGE SCHEDULE

A collage is a process of cutting and sticking found images and words from popular print or magazines onto cardboard (Butler-Kisber, 2008, p. 265) and when the collage is interpreted, it tells a story.

TOPIC FOR COLLAGE- Who am I?

PROMPTS FOR DISCUSSION ON COLLAGE

The following are suggested prompts for the discussion on the collage.

1. How did you feel doing this activity?
2. What did this activity mean for you?
3. Explain your collage.
4. What part of this collage represents you as the teacher and you as the individual?
5. Do any of the pictures on the collage signify a critical moment or incident that may have occurred in your life?
6. Do any of the words on the collage signify a critical moment or incident that may have occurred in your life?
7. Is there any picture or word that stands out from your collage?

PERMISSION FROM SCHOOL PRINCIPAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Student's address and contact details

August 2012

The Principal (name of Principal)

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

I am currently studying towards a Master of Education (M. Ed) degree at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal (UKZN) and I am required to complete a dissertation.

The title of the study is *Narratives of Novice Teachers teaching in a Private Catholic School.*

This study will focus on novice teachers teaching at Holy Family College. The purpose of this study is to explore how novice teachers negotiate their personal and professional identities as teachers during teaching in a Private Catholic school. Starting from the premise that teacher's multiple identities are a dynamic and altering phenomenon which is being pushed and pulled by a range of forces. This study will focus on the fluid and changing nature of novice teacher's personal and professional identities in negotiation with their professional work in the context of Private Catholic schooling. The findings of this study will be used in my M. Ed dissertation.

This study is supervised by Dr Daisy Pillay who is a senior lecturer at the School of Education, UKZN. Dr Pillay can be contacted telephonically on 031-260 7598 or 082 776 5751.

In this study novice teachers are my participants. No learners will be used in this research. I will use collage, artifact retrieval, teacher metaphors, teacher self-portraits and unstructured interviews to collect my data. If I gain informed consent from the participants I will use this data in a way that respects their dignity and privacy. Copies of their contributions will be

securely stored and disposed of if no longer required for research purposes. Their names or any other information that might identify them or the school will not be used in any presentation or publication that might come out of this study. The participants will be informed that they have no binding commitment to the study and may withdraw their consent at any time if they feel the need to. If they withdraw their consent they will not be prejudiced in any way.

There are no direct benefits to participants from participating in this study. However, if they do intend pursuing their studies in a postgraduate program, participation in this study can provide some valuable learning experiences to enrich their studies. I hope that this study will make a significant contribution to research regarding novice teacher identities in Catholic schools.

If you have any questions relating to the rights of research participants, you can contact Ms Phume Ximba in the UKZN Humanities and Social Science Research Ethics Office on 031-260 3587.

I hereby request a letter of permission from you the Principal, to conduct this research with the novice teachers at your school.

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

Thank you for your assistance.

Yours in Education,
Leighandri Pillay (Ms)

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Title of study: Narratives of Novice Teachers teaching in a Private Catholic School.

AUTHORIZATION:

I, _____(full name) here-by confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of this study, and do consent for the study to be conducted in the school. I understand that participants are free to leave/withdraw from the study at any time if they want to, without negative or undesirable consequences to themselves.

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

	YES	NO
Audio-recording of unstructured interviews		
Audio-recording of discussions on collage, artefact and self-portraits		
Photographing of collage, artefact and self-portraits		

_____   _____

SIGNATURE OF PRINCIPAL   DATE

REQUEST FOR CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

Student's address and contact details

August 2012

Dear (name of teacher)

REQUEST FOR CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

I am currently studying towards a Master of Education (M.Ed) degree at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal (UKZN) and I am required to complete a dissertation.

Title of study: Narratives of Novice Teachers teaching in a Private Catholic School.

This study will focus on novice teachers teaching at Holy Family College. The purpose of this study is to explore how novice teachers negotiate their personal and professional identities as teachers during teaching in a Private Catholic school. Starting from the premise that teacher's multiple identities are a dynamic and altering phenomenon which is being pushed and pulled by a range of forces. This study will focus on the fluid and changing nature of novice teacher's personal and professional identities in negotiation with their professional work in the context of Private Catholic schooling. The findings of this study will be used in my M. Ed dissertation.

This study is supervised by Dr Daisy Pillay who is a senior lecturer at the School of Education, UKZN. Dr Pillay can be contacted telephonically on 031-260 7598 or 082 776 5751.

Participation in this research study is voluntary. I will use collage inquiry, artifact retrieval, teacher self-portraits and unstructured interviews to collect my data. In this study, I would like to interview you, have a conversation on the collage created by you and the artifact chosen by you. The interview, collage inquiry and artifact retrieval conversation will be digitally recorded in the audio format and I would like to photograph your collage, artifact

and self-portraits. Participation in this research will involve five meetings of approximately an hour each. These meetings will be held at a venue convenient to you. If I gain informed consent from you, I will use this data in a way that respects your dignity and privacy. Copies of your contributions will be securely stored and disposed of if no longer required for research purposes. Your name or any other information that might identify you or the school will not be used in any presentation or publication that might come out of this study. 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.

As a participant you have no binding commitment to the study and may withdraw your consent at any time if you feel the need to. If you withdraw your consent, you will not be prejudiced in any way. There are no direct benefits to you from participating in this study. However, if you do intend pursuing your studies in a postgraduate program, participation in this study can provide some valuable learning experiences to enrich your studies. I hope that this study will make a significant contribution to research regarding novice teacher identities in Catholic schools.

If you have any questions relating to the rights of research participants, you can contact Ms Phume Ximba in the UKZN Humanities and Social Science Research Ethics Office on 031-260 3587.

I hereby request a letter of permission from you the participant to conduct this research.

Thank you for your assistance.

Yours in Education,
Leighandri Pillay (Ms)

APPENDIX 6

<u>INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT FOR PARTICIPANTS</u>

Title of study: Narratives of Novice Teachers teaching in a Private Catholic School.

I, _____ (full name of participant) here-by confirm that I read the above and understand the contents of this document and the nature of this study. I understand that I may refuse to participate or I may withdraw from the study at any time without negative or undesirable consequences to myself. 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 the following data collection activities (please tick)

	YES	**NO**
Audio-recording of unstructured interviews		
Audio-recording of discussions on collage, artefact and self-portraits		
Photographing of collage, artefact and self-portraits		

_____   _____

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT   DATE

_____   _____

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCHER   DATE

APPENDIX 7

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 Kwa-Zulu Natal. The project has already obtained ethical clearance and the number is: HSS/0037/012

_____

Dr. K. J. Pithouse-Morgan