



**NARRATIVES OF ENGLISH HOME LANGUAGE TEACHERS' PERSONAL AND
PROFESSIONAL IDENTITIES AT TWO SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE
WEMBEZI CIRCUIT OF THE UTHUKELA DISTRICT**

by

ARESH WOODRAJ

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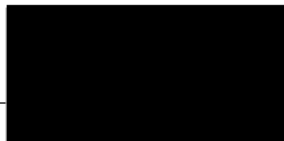
DECLARATION

This thesis has been submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Masters in Education in the Postgraduate Programme of the College of Humanities, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.

I, ARESH WOODRAJ, student number 218085723, declare that:

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Student signature _____



Date: 2 February 2022

Name of Supervisor: Dr. Jaqueline Naidoo

Signature _____



Date: 2 February 2022

DEDICATION

*This thesis is dedicated to my mum,
Mrs Soorathadevi Woodraj for her support
encouragement and love.*

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First and foremost, I would like to thank God for the spiritual guidance and motivation in completing this dissertation.

Furthermore, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to:

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PREFACE

The research study described in this dissertation was carried out with five English Home Language teachers at two public schools in the Wembezi Circuit of the UThukela District. The interviews commenced in June 2021 and concluded in July 2021, under the supervision of Dr J. Naidoo of the Pietermaritzburg campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

This study represents the original work completed by the author and has not been submitted in any form for any diploma or degree to any other tertiary institution. Where the author has made use of the work of other authors, this has been duly acknowledged in the text.

—  —

Aresh Woodraj

2 February 2022

Date

As the candidate's supervisor I agree/~~do not agree~~ to the submission of this dissertation.

—  —

Dr Jaqueline Naidoo

Supervisor

Pietermaritzburg Campus

2 February 2022

Date

ABSTRACT

English Home Language is a medium of instruction in schools. The manner in which learners adapt to the subject is dependent on English teachers. This study explored the personal and professional identities of teachers of English Home Language, in the Senior Phase (Grades 7-9) and Further Education and Training Phase (Grades 10-12). Additionally, the personal and professional identities of English Home Language teachers in the Senior Phase (Grades 7-9) and Further Education and Training Phase (FET) at different stages of their careers were explored. This study adopted Day and Gu's (2007) dimensions of teacher identity and professional life phases as a conceptual framework. The study was located within the interpretative paradigm and a qualitative approach was adopted. The narratives of this study were constructed through poetry, collages and semi-structured interviews. Five English Home Language teachers from two secondary schools participated in this study.

The findings of this study indicated that teachers had multiple identities and their identities were influenced and constructed by different factors. These factors were relationships, religion, complexities of teaching English as a Home Language and emotions. Data showed that the situated, professional and personal dimensions of teacher identity overlapped and influenced each other. Furthermore, it indicated that in order to have a strong identity, all the dimensions must be in balance. Additionally, it was revealed that teachers believed that the curriculum was not designed for a holistic education, especially since most learners had a language barrier that affected the identities of teachers, making them feel despondent. In line with this, the emotions of teachers were affected as they were unable to judge whether the concepts taught were understood by learners. In this regard, teachers lost confidence, felt frustrated and only did the bare minimum.

The 0-3, 8-15, 16-23- and 24-30-years' career phases of teachers were explored in line with Day and Gu's (2007) professional life phases. Teachers required support throughout their careers. Despite facing numerous challenges, teachers were positive and hoped to remain in the profession. Teachers also required professional development. However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic this was not possible. Contrary to Day and Gu (2007), data revealed that teachers did not require validation in the early phases only but throughout their careers. A factor not considered by Day and Gu (2007) was also identified. Data revealed that an increase in salary was a contributing factor towards teachers remaining in the profession. A major recommendation of this study was that the contextual factors that teachers work under be considered in the design and implementation of workshops.

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Chapter 1: Introduction and Background to The Study

1.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the purpose of this study which examined narratives of English Home Language teachers' personal and professional identities at two secondary schools in the Wembezi circuit of the uThukela District. In this chapter, the rationale and background of this study is highlighted. This is followed by an outline of the methodological approach and conceptual framework employed in this study. The chapter concludes with a brief synopsis of the content of the five chapters in this dissertation.

1.2 Purpose of The Study

The ability of teachers to teach is dependent on their personal and professional identities, which further allows them to position themselves in relation to society (Yazan, 2018). Furthermore, this contributes to their ability to become effective teachers (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). The purpose of this study was to explore the personal and professional identities of teachers, particularly English Home Language teachers, in the Senior Phase (Grades 7-9) and Further Education and Training Phase (Grades 10-12).

In addition, this study aimed to examine the personal and professional identities of English Home Language teachers in the Senior Phase (Grades 7-9) and Further Education and Training (FET) Phase at different stages in their careers. The objectives of this study were:

- To explore the personal and professional identities of English Home Language teachers in the Further Education and Training (FET) Phase in secondary schools.
- To examine the development of personal and professional identities of English Home Language teachers at different life phases in their careers.

1.3 Research questions

The following research questions underpinned this study:

1. What do English Home Language teacher's stories tell us about their personal and professional identities and their teaching of English Home Language?
2. How do personal and professional identities of English Home Language teachers develop at different life phases in their careers?

1.4 Background

English serves as a “global lingua franca” (Widodo et al., 2020, p. 6). In other words, Widodo et al. (2020) purport that English is a language that is spoken throughout the world. In addition, it is the language of learning and teaching in a significant percentage of schools. Teachers of English have a daunting task of not only speaking it, but teaching it as well. Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) assert that the manner in which teachers perform in the classroom was dependent on both their personal and professional identity. Language teacher identity was an emerging subject of interest in research on language education and teacher development (Varghese et al., 2005). However, Widodo et al. (2020) point out that until now, very little research has been undertaken in the way in which language teachers construct their professional identity.

Day et al. (2006a) contend that the social conditions that teachers live and work under and their personal and professional lives are integral to one another. It has an impact on teachers’ identity. Identity is an influencing factor on teachers’ sense of purpose, motivation, commitment, job satisfaction and effectiveness. Knowledge of who they are as teachers is essential since it affects the construction of the nature of their work. Thus, knowledge of their identity contributes to motivation, commitment and job satisfaction.

Over the past five years, there has been a fluctuation in the results of English Home Language at secondary schools. In order to pass a particular grade, a learner must obtain 50% in the Senior Phase and 40% in the FET phase, in the language offered at a home level (Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement, DBE., 2011). These percentages might seem obtainable, however, learners struggle to obtain them. There is an influx of learners entering the Senior Phase (Grade 8), which is generally a transition from primary school to secondary school. However, towards the end of the Further Education and Training (grade 12) Phase the number decreases drastically. Very few pass English and at the end of grade 12 the percentage drops even further.

In the Wembezi circuit where this study took place, learners who entered the senior phase came from schools where English was taught as a First Additional Language. These learners chose to enrol at secondary schools that offered English at a Home Language level. As a result, these learners struggled to make the transition from English First Additional Language to English Home Language. This resulted in poor results and a bottle neck at the end of grade 12. Even though these learners struggle and in some cases did not understand English, the onus was on

the English Home Language teacher to ensure that they were sufficiently prepared to write and pass the subject.

Intervention programmes were put in place to provide assistance. However, intervention programmes were learner-centred, and curriculum related. Day (2013) affirms that teachers need to be motivated and shown strategies for coping and delivering this curriculum effectively. In order to do so intervention programmes must be aligned with their identities so it can be effectively delivered.

1.5 Rationale

Varghese et al. (2005) argue that to ensure that teachers remain proactive and critical thinkers, it is essential that we understand how language teachers form their identities in communities, schools and in their classrooms. In addition, Yazan (2018) acknowledges that teacher identity plays an integral role in a teacher's ability to teach. Furthermore, Christensen (2019) asserts that identity plays a significant role in a teacher's ability to face the challenges that arise from day-to-day activities and deal with them comfortably.

Christensen (2019) argues that when teachers understand who they are, they understand their self-worth and their effectiveness in the profession is enhanced. Likewise, Yüksel's (2014) research on Turkish pre-service English teachers found that there was a relationship between what teachers believed about themselves and the manner in which they viewed their jobs. According to Allinder and Ross (1994, 1992, as cited in Yüksel, 2014) teachers who had a strong sense of self-worth took the time to plan and incorporate new ideas into their teaching.

Mora et al. (2014) argue that a teacher's self-worth is developed from their personal and professional contexts as well as beliefs constructed socially and professionally. This ultimately leads to the development of one's professional identity. However, Christensen (2019), points out that very little evidence exists on how teachers construct these professional identities.

Taylor (2017) contends that in order to understand how teachers engage in new practices, attention must be given to identity development. Furthermore, he maintains that teacher identity is relevant in the current educational climate because education is reforming continuously. Understanding their identity does not only allow teachers to better support their learners but gives them the ability to challenge the reforms that do not serve their interests. Additionally, Zhu et al. (2020) contend that an understanding of teacher identity can also reduce teacher attrition, as more teachers will feel they want to remain in the profession as the

changes that take place together, with teacher development, will be congruent with who they are and their identity.

Day et al. (2006a) maintain that teaching is a very emotional job as teachers experience a variety of emotions in a single day. Research conducted by Zembylas (2002) on the emotions of a science teacher, highlighted a relationship between teacher's emotions and learner performance. According to Zembylas (2002), when teachers were positive, they approached subject content in a very positive way, resulting in learners who were more receptive and engaged positively with the content. This suggests that emotions play a vital role in the acquisition of knowledge. Correspondingly, Manasia et al. (2020, p. 488) assert that the emotions of teachers are pertinent, "not only for their own wellbeing but also for the functioning of classrooms."

In the same vein, Widodo et al. (2020) assert that the emotional dimensions of teaching and its effect on the identity of teachers has been given very little attention. They suggest that teacher training centres equip students with the necessary strategies to cope with the array of emotions that they will experience professionally. Teachers should also be equipped with the knowledge of solving problems which will assist them in controlling their emotions.

There have been several studies conducted on the identities and narratives of teachers who teach English as a Second Language to non-native speakers of the language (Golembek & Johnson, 2004; Prabjandee, 2019, 2020; Yazan, 2018; Yüksel, 2014). In contrast, there is a dearth of studies on the narratives of teachers who teach English Home Language. According to Beauchamp and Thomas (2009), undertaking a narrative study is beneficial since narratives give teachers an opportunity to reflect on their practices. This allows them to be in harmony with themselves and how they fit into society, thereby shaping their personal and professional identities. Similarly, Prabjandee (2019) maintains that narratives help teachers make sense of their own experiences and what makes them who they are. In line with this, Mora et al. (2014) contend that understanding teacher identity can be achieved through interaction with one's past, present and future experiences, thus allowing teachers to take charge of their own lives.

Werbinska (2017, p. 103) asserts that "language teaching often depends on language teachers, who they are, how they teach, and what they promote through their teaching." Furthermore, Zhu et al. (2020) affirm that in order to understand teachers of a language, one needs to have a clear picture of who they are and their professional, cultural, political and individual identity, which they assign to themselves. As a result, one will be able to understand language teaching.

In addition, Gholami et al. (2021) maintain that teacher personal and professional identity is an important aspect in determining how teaching a language is carried out in context.

Widodo et al. (2020) argue that even though studies have been conducted on teacher identity, very little research has been conducted on identities of English teachers. Mora et al. (2014) assert that identity is a valuable tool in understanding the different facets of teaching English. Further studies are required in order to establish a link between English teacher's identity and pedagogy and to determine the relationship between teacher's professional development and their identities (Mora et al., 2014; Widodo et al., 2020). Correspondingly, Derakhshan et al. (2020) assert that an understanding of professional identity also contributes to an improved understanding of the link between English Home Language teachers' personal and professional identities and their teaching practices, since a relationship exists between professional identity and teacher's success. Likewise, Werbinska (2017) maintains that there was a need to continue exploring the dynamics of relationships between language teacher identities, emotions and context and how this contributes to teacher professional development.

This study was therefore significant since it afforded English Home Language teachers the opportunity to share their narratives about their experiences and personal and professional identities at different stages in their careers. From my experience as the Departmental Head for Languages, very little support was received from the Department of Education in support of English Home Language teachers. Support was generally attained through collaborative learning in clusters. This study was important as it provided insight into English Home Language teachers' personal and professional identities and how these influenced their teaching.

Furthermore, Mora et al. (2014) argue that there is a need to study identity in order to determine a way in which teachers can be encouraged and supported in their professional development. Moreover, Zhu et al. (2020, p. 127) contend that "teacher education programmes should be considered from the view of identity development." Any understanding of teacher professional development must start with an understanding of teachers' personal and professional identities. The work and life of teachers are influenced by both internal and external factors. Therefore, Day (2013) argues that both personal and professional identity must be studied together.

Additionally, Derakhshan et al. (2020) assert that research into language teacher's professional identity is a promising area of study when compared to the large body of research that exists on learner identity. Furthermore, Derakhshan et al. (2020) suggest that an understanding of

professional identity plays a key role in professional development and attitudes towards educational changes and changes to policy.

Similarly, Gholami et al. (2021) contend that an understanding of teacher professional identity will also allow teacher education centres to show students how to integrate moral and rational foundations of teaching into their professional identities. Rational foundations of teaching may be defined as pedagogical, psychological and sociological abilities of teachers that is used to improve student learning orientations. In addition, Taylor (2017) emphasises that knowledge of identity should be given priority, thereafter knowledge of content and teaching practice should follow.

The preceding discussion highlights the rationale and need for this study to contribute to an understanding of English Home Language teachers' personal and professional identities and their emotions, and how they influence their teaching.

1.6 Methodological Approach

This study was located within the interpretive paradigm as it aimed to understand how English Home Language teachers developed their personal and professional identities through their subjective interpretations of the world around them. Accordingly, Cohen et al. (2007) contend that researchers positioned within the interpretive paradigm aim to understand how individuals interpret the world around them. Additionally, the goal of the researcher working within this paradigm is to understand the views of the participants (Creswell, 2009). As a researcher, I hoped to understand high school English Home Language teachers' personal and professional identities by understanding their social, cultural and professional worlds.

In this study, the interest was to gain insights into the relationships between the experiences that teachers had and their personal and professional identities. Identity is an uninterrupted process, where individuals make meaning of their experiences that they go through on a day-to-day basis (Flores & Day, 2006). This study employed a qualitative approach since qualitative studies examine how people derive in-depth meaning from their subjective experiences.

A narrative research design was adopted. Prabjandee (2019) contends that teacher identity is developed through the accounts of one's past experiences. Narratives allow individuals to express themselves in the form of a story that helps them to understand their experiences (Clandinin & Caine, 2008). A narrative approach helped teachers to understand what aided the

development of their personal and professional identities as English Home Language teachers and gave them the opportunity to understand themselves.

Semi-structured interviews, poetry and collages were used to generate data for this study. An understanding of the relationship between contexts and experiences, and personal and professional identity development, was required. Semi-structured interviews allowed a greater understanding of the views of participants without many limitations. In this study, participants were asked to write a poem or make a collage reflecting on their past and present experiences that had shaped their identities. These forms of data generation present the lived experiences that may not have been revealed during the semi-structured interviews (Sztó et al., 2005). It offered teachers an opportunity to reflect on their identities and the people of past and present, who have contributed to their identity development.

Creswell's (2009) criteria was employed in choosing participants for the study. Participants were chosen by their accessibility. Those who were willing to participate, provide information and had experience in the field were selected. For this study, two English Home Language schools were chosen and five English Home Language teachers, who taught in the Senior phase (Grades 7-9) and Further Education and Training phase (10-12), were chosen. These five participants were knowledgeable and best suited to generate data that was required for the study (Cohen et al., 2007).

As Departmental Head for Languages, in one of the participating schools, it was necessary that I acknowledged the potential for certain biases as well as its effect on voluntary participation. Therefore, I attempted to take on the role of practitioner researcher and bracketed my opinions, experience and knowledge to reduce the risk of bias and avoid, in anyway, influencing participation.

Data for the first research question was analysed inductively and data for the second research question was analysed deductively. Cohen et al. (2007) describe inductive analysis as a process where categories and themes emerge from data, and deductive analysis as a process where a researcher starts with a set of themes that is then used to organise data. Organisation of codes and data were guided by the two research questions to ensure that relevant data was generated.

1.7 Conceptual Framework

This study adopted Day and Gu's (2007) dimensions of teacher identity and professional life phases as a conceptual framework.

Day and Gu (2007) outline three dimensions as a framework to understand teacher's identities: the personal, professional and situated dimensions. The professional dimension reflects the way in which teachers view and interpret what an ideal teacher should look like and their personal thoughts on education. On the other hand, the situated dimension is what happens within the school context and how it is influenced by environmental and local circumstances. The personal dimension encompasses the lives of teachers outside the school environment which includes their family and social needs. These dimensions do not remain constant, are connected and influence each other. Furthermore, Day and Gu (2007) describe six professional life phases: 0-3 years, 4-7 years, 8-15 years, 16-23 years, 24-30 years, and 31+ years of teaching. For this study, participants were categorised into four professional life phases; 0-3 years, 8-15 years, 16-23 years and 24-30 years, which were used for analysis.

This framework assisted in analysing the first research question: What do English Home Language teacher's stories tell us about their personal and professional identities and their teaching of English Home Language? The second research question: How do personal and professional identities of English Home Language teachers develop at different life phases in their careers? The professional life phases show that a teacher's personal and professional identity are connected and do not remain the same throughout their teaching career

1.8 My Personal Narrative

I have been working in the education sector for the past 18 years and I have taught English Home language from grades 8-12. At present, I am the Departmental Head for languages. My identity has influenced the manner in which I teach my lessons. When I commenced teaching in 2002, I did not enjoy it very much. I believed firmly that teaching was not for me and who I wanted to be. I grew up in a period where teaching was a very reputable profession. When one was a teacher, they received the utmost respect from the community. However, financially it was not a promising career.

Growing up in a small town, I wanted to escape as soon as I had finished matric. I felt that teaching was not going to do that for me. I felt that I would get no satisfaction from it personally and professionally if I remained in the career. Due to unforeseen circumstances, I was unable to leave and it therefore seemed like I was forced into education. It was difficult for me to go to work every day as I experienced emotions of frustration and anxiety. As time went on, I met different teachers and attended different orientation programs. Upon reflection, it was these

teachers and professional development programs that influenced my personal and professional identities. This contributed immensely towards the change in my attitude towards teaching.

Over the years, the teaching profession began to grow on me. However, this only occurred when I chose to change my perception of teaching. My personal and professional identities were reshaped and revised as the years progressed. When I started accepting the profession, my attitude towards learners at school also changed. I became more tolerant and accommodating towards them. This influenced the performance of my learners as well. My professional and personal identities have contributed to my job satisfaction. Thus, I was interested in exploring the personal and professional identities of other teachers and how this changed over their different career phases.

1.9 Overview of Dissertation

This dissertation comprises of five chapters. A brief summary of each chapter follows.

Chapter 1 outlines the purpose of the study and provides a background and rationale for the study. A brief summary of the methodological approach as well as the conceptual framework is discussed. My personal narrative, elaborating on my personal and professional identities is then presented. Chapter 1 concludes with a brief overview of the chapters in this dissertation.

Chapter 2 presents a review of the literature. It begins with an outline of definitions of teacher identity and provides different understandings and perspectives of identity. Teachers' personal and professional identities are discussed and how these contribute towards their success in teaching. Teacher identity and emotions are then discussed as emotions play an important role in teaching. An explanation of how teacher identity can be understood through narratives is outlined as well as the relationship between identity and English Home Language. The chapter concludes with an outline of the conceptual framework, namely, Day and Gu's (2007) dimensions of teacher identity and professional life phases.

Chapter 3 presents the methodological approach used in the study. The study was positioned within the interpretative paradigm employing a qualitative research approach. Furthermore, it presents an outline of the narrative approach and purposive sampling method. The chapter also describes the data generation instruments, namely, semi-structured interviews, collages and poetry as well as the process of data analysis. The chapter concludes with a discussion of trustworthiness and ethical considerations.

Chapter 4 presents an analyses of the data that was generated in this study. Data is presented according to research questions. The narratives of the five participants, which were constructed drawing on data generated from semi-structured interviews, collages and poetry, are presented. This is followed by the discussion of the findings of this study, adopting the conceptual framework and relevant literature to analyse the results.

Chapter 5 presents a summary of the five chapters in this dissertation. The suitability of the methodological approach and conceptual framework is briefly outlined. The key findings of the study are summarised and the limitations of the study are outlined. Chapter 5 concludes with recommendations for further research.

1.10 Conclusion

This chapter briefly discussed the purpose of the study and provided a background to the study. Thereafter, the rationale and research questions were presented. Furthermore, a brief overview of the methodological approach and conceptual framework were discussed. This was followed with a brief outline of my personal narrative. The chapter concluded with a brief overview of chapters in this dissertation.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This study explored the personal and professional identities of teachers who taught English Home Language. It further examined the personal and professional identities of teachers in the Further Education and Training (FET) and Senior Phases at different stages of their careers. This chapter presents literature on the personal and professional identities of teachers. It begins with an outline of teacher identities followed by a discussion on teacher's personal and professional identities. Next, teacher emotions, identities and narratives, are described. A review of teacher identity in a South African context is then presented. Thereafter, a discussion of teacher identity and English Home Language as a secondary school subject follows. This chapter concludes with a discussion of Day and Gu's (2007) framework on teacher identities and professional life phases, which was adopted as the conceptual framework of this study.

2.2 Understanding Teacher Identities

Given that different scholars define identity in various ways, Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) contend that it is not an easy task providing a universal definition of identity. Beauchamp and Thomas (2011, p. 7) define teacher identity as multi-dimensional and "dynamic within a variety of contexts". Identity is influenced by different factors within contexts. Rodgers and Scott (2008) describe identity as being psychological and dependant on the context that one is situated within while Yazan (2018, p.27) contends that identity is "constructed and reconstructed" over a period of time while interacting with society.

According to Flores and Day (2006, p. 220), identity is "an ongoing and dynamic process where one makes sense of reality and interprets or reinterprets their own values and experiences." Correspondingly, Yazan (2018) maintains that identity is dynamic and open to change while Prabjandee (2020) asserts that identity is neither fixed nor stable. Likewise, Taylor (2017) affirms that identity is a continuous multiple process that is constructed through society and within certain contexts. In line with this, Christensen (2019) points out that in a lifetime, an individual will experience a variety of situations which they will have multiple interpretations of, and they must have the ability to respond to them in a personal and unique way.

Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) maintain that identity is a continuous process that involves both the person and their surroundings. Likewise, Prabjandee (2020) affirms that identity is continuously evolving. Additionally, Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) assert that there are multiple dimensions of identity which question how one is supposed to behave and how one understands professional and personal characteristics of identity. In the same vein, Prabjandee (2020, p.72) describes teacher identity as teachers “self-conceptions and imaginations of themselves” which changes with their interactions within society, and how they see themselves in social contexts.

On another note, Beauchamp and Thomas (2011) maintain that there are various factors that influence the development of one’s identity, namely; culture, society, contexts and conceptions, that shape and mould teacher identity. Similarly, Rodgers and Scott (2008) maintain that identity is shaped by external factors such as society. Prabjandee (2020) concurs that identity is socially constructed and that identity develops within the social context that one interacts in.

Beauchamp and Thomas (2011, p.8) affirm that interactions within one’s community shapes an individual’s identity making them aware of the identity “they are expected to assume.” Rodgers and Scott (2008) concur that identity changes according to contexts and relationships. Congruently, Rodrigues et al. (2018) argue that one’s identity is constructed as one socialises in different work contexts. Similarly, Day et al. (2006a) assert that identity and social interaction are closely linked. Language and social experiences within groups creates and helps individuals sustain their identity. Ironically it is the conflicts and tension within these working environments that are responsible for the construction of this identity (Rodrigues et al., 2018).

In addition, Yazan (2018) explains that experience is also a contributing factor to the development of identity. Significantly, this experience is gained through the manner in which teachers learn and their pedagogical practices. Likewise, Derakhshan et al. (2020) assert that identity is related to who teachers think they are and what other people think of them.

Correspondingly, Prabjandee (2020) asserts that self-image, self-concept and self-esteem are contributing factors towards identity formation. Prabjandee (2020) defines self-image as the belief that one has about their personality, appearance and abilities. On the other hand, self-concept is dependent on the individual and how they see themselves. It is also social in that what others think of one influences the manner in which one sees oneself. In contrast, self-esteem is when one compares themselves to others specifically, in the teaching fraternity.

Furthermore, Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) point out that there are various understandings of identity making it a complex phenomenon since a connection between identity and self exists. Nevertheless, Flores and Day (2006) assert that identity is a contributing factor in becoming an effective teacher. Moreover, Yazan (2018) is of the opinion that teachers' identities develop when they participate and commit themselves to the profession.

This study adopted Beauchamp and Thomas' (2009) definition of identity, which described identity as a continuous process that involves both the individual and their context, which is subject to change. This study aimed at understanding both personal and professional identities of teachers as they evolve and adapt, at various life stages of their careers. Therefore, I believed that this definition was most suitable for this study and succinctly served this purpose.

2.3 Teachers' Personal and Professional Identities

2.3.1 Teacher's Personal Identities

Morgan (2004) asserts that teachers' personal identities are dependent on the type of teachers they envisage to be. Beauchamp and Thomas (2009, p. 175) agree that the identity of teachers become 'organizing elements' in their lives. Moreover, McClure (1993, as cited in Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009) argue that when teachers are aware of their personal identity, they have the ability to understand who they are when compared to others in society. Furthermore, Day and Gu (2007) contend that the atmosphere and congeniality within the schooling community affects the development of teacher's personal identity. Likewise, Rodrigues et al. (2018) add that as a teacher, one has to become sensitive to the social diversity that exists in different schooling communities and contexts. As a result, teachers respond to the needs that arise within the contexts that they work. Through interacting and participating within these contexts, teachers have the ability to construct their identities. The identities of teachers are developed in conjunction with the social dynamics of schools and therefore each teacher's identity is different, complex and unique.

Day et al. (2006a) affirm that identity is also dependant on the role that individuals play in their interactions. In order to communicate and participate in social interactions, the "self" needs to adjust and adapt to the context. Furthermore, they maintain that interactions in their personal lives will influence how they interact professionally. Congruently, Day et al. (2006a, p 603) affirm that there are "unavoidable interrelationships between teachers personal and professional lives. Consequently, Day (2013, p. 15) argues that "teaching demands personal

investment.” In support of this argument, research conducted by Zhu et al. (2020) confirm that personal beliefs and family environment have an impact on the way in which teachers teach as well as their identities. Likewise, Christensen (2019) asserts that an understanding of oneself will allow their identity to be strengthened.

Yazan (2018) maintains that teachers’ ability to make decisions and the manner in which they learn is dependent on their personal identity and how they see themselves in relation to the profession. In addition, Golembek and Johnson (2004) argue that teachers do not learn in a linear way, but through engaging with others. However, they will only accept instructional practices that are aligned with their personal identity. As a result, Yazan (2018) affirms that all aspects of their teaching practices are dependent on their knowledge, thoughts and assumptions of themselves.

On another note, Christensen (2019, p. 48) contends that “teacher identity has been viewed as possessing particular character traits that some are born with and others not.” The argument presented here, claims that teaching is something that one is born with, however the question arises as to what happens to the identities of these individuals when their teaching practise is called into question (Christensen, 2019). Christensen (2019) further notes that this perception has the potential of creating pressure on teachers who try to meet the qualities and characteristics of what is expected of them or what an ideal teacher should be. According to Prabjandee (2020), a good teacher is viewed as one who possesses an array of knowledge and when they do not possess such knowledge, teachers view themselves as being ineffective. Correspondingly, Mohamed et al. (2016) point out that when teachers are unable to teach in the way in which they would like to, frustration in their professional identity develops.

According to Olsen (2008), teaching is a complex phenomenon and teachers’ personal identities ensure that teachers are seen as a whole and surrounded by various contexts that are continually evolving. Beauchamp and Thomas (2011) contend that when teachers enter new social contexts, their personal identity changes as a result of their learning. They also argue that experience does not only construct personal identity, but also how they are perceived by the community and the culture of that community. Interaction within a community moulds an individual’s personal identity and makes them aware of their identity and the identity that they are expected to possess. Furthermore, Yazan (2018) acknowledges that teachers’ personal identities are determined by their beliefs in themselves, as well as what others expect from

them. Additionally, Werbinska (2017) maintains that teachers are continuously working on their personal identities, which are central to their work.

Rodrigues et al. (2018) contend that teachers use their own school memories together with their personality traits to define their personal identity. Furthermore, Day et al. (2006a) affirm that teachers also define themselves by their beliefs and values and the teachers they hope to be. In addition, a teacher's personal identity is developed through collaboration and a significant relationship between experience, teaching skills, practice and theory. When teachers become aware of their identities it leads them to having a greater understanding of education in its entirety.

Day et al. (2006a) maintain that identity is influenced both internally, such as personal events and past experiences, and externally, such as policy changes in education. Correspondingly, Day (2013) maintains that external curricular, policy, teacher assessment and monitoring initiatives should be implemented correctly. If they have not been implemented in the correct way, it adds further pressure onto teachers, sometimes causing workloads to intensify and increase. When this happens, a crisis develops in the identities of teachers.

Day (2013) maintains that when teachers have received positive support throughout their lives, professionally and personally, they become better equipped to handle negative circumstances. This allows them to become resilient. Likewise, Taylor (2017) maintains that teachers' commitment and resilience are interrelated with their personal identity. In addition, teachers' sense of identity is important as it enables them to be motivated from within, be committed to themselves and their wellbeing and have the capacity to cope with any situation (Day, 2013).

Day et al. (2006a) argue that identity does not remain stable. On the same note, Christensen (2019) emphasises that teachers' identities change and evolve since every year children change and so do their needs. Consequently, this gives teachers the ability to adapt to current situations and issues from a better standpoint. Teaching requires an individual to take on new views relating to different needs and abilities (Christensen, 2019). Moreover, Christensen (2019) suggests that when identity is viewed as multiple and constantly changing, teachers are given the opportunity of exploring their experiences as individuals and teachers. Therefore, Christensen (2019) emphasises the importance of acknowledging the existence of multiple identities. When teachers become aware of their multiple identities, they are given the opportunity to reflect on their contexts and experiences, thus creating an awareness as to how the various identities affect their teaching practises. In addition, Ruohotie-Lyhty (2013)

contends that the manner in which one teaches is a reflection of their identity as their experiences influence the way in which they view content and deliver this content. Furthermore, Christensen (2019) asserts that a teacher's personal identity has the potential of being both helpful and a hindrance when teachers are experiencing challenging situations in their classrooms and schools. However, Christensen (2019) explains that while it might provide comfort, it has the possibility of being restrictive when teachers cannot be who they want to be.

Settlage et al. (2009) purport that personal identity influences the effort that teachers put into their professional lives and how they view professional development. Additionally, problems that arise in a teacher's personal life influences their professional lives directly or indirectly. Therefore, Ghanizadeh and Ostad (2016) assert that only when teachers have the ability to balance their personal lives, can they work on developing their professional identities.

2.3.2 Teacher's Professional Identity

An area contested among scholars is the definition of a teacher's professional identity. Zhu et al. (2020, p. 5) define a teacher's professional identity as "teachers' multiple ways of knowing, doing and being based on shifting professional landscapes." On the other hand, Gholami et al. (2021, p. 2) define a teacher's professional identity as "a kind of professional self-conception, in which a commitment to the wellbeing and learning capacities of the student directs teachers' practice and thoughts." In the same vein, Lasky (2005, as cited in Ghanizadeh & Ostad, 2016) defines professional identity as the manner in which teachers characterise the different parts of their profession.

Salinas and Ayala (2018) maintain that professional identity is dynamic and shaped by external and internal relationship factors whereas Ghanizadeh and Ostad (2016, p 831)) argue that "professional identity is dynamic and subject to an ongoing learning process." Likewise, Rodgers and Scott (2008) maintain that besides circumstances changing, professional identities also form when there is an interaction between external and internal environments. Teachers must have the ability to incorporate these changes when developing their professional identities.

Nevertheless, Gholami et al. (2021) assert that it is unclear as to when teachers construct their professional identities. Research conducted by Varghese et al. (2005) suggested that it might occur during in-service training. In the same vein, Gholami et al. (2021) contend that the aim of in-service training in teacher education is to assist teachers in shaping and re-shaping their

identities in line with their commitment to the profession, taking into consideration that they are fully framed individuals outside training institutions. At the same time, Rodrigues et al. (2018) illustrates that the manner in which students perceive older teachers in the profession has an impact on the development of their professional identity.

According to Beijaard et al. (2000) teacher's professional identities stem from the way in which they see themselves as experts in their subjects, pedagogically and didactically.

Subject Experts-Teachers require a great deal of knowledge when it comes to their subject matter. Knowledge of their subject matter allows them to develop and revise new tasks and gives them the ability to diagnose learner performance and clarify misconceptions. Being a subject expert is included in their professional identity.

Pedagogy experts -This encompasses, among other things, what is going on in students' minds, ways of communicating with and speaking about other people and personal or private problems that they have. In addition, teachers are faced continuously with emotional and social predicaments. Children come with various issues which teachers have to deal with. Beijaard et al. (2000) opine that teachers take on the role of parents. Pastoral care begins to merge into teachers' professional identity.

Didactical Experts-Teachers are advised on how to plan, evaluate and deliver their lessons. In this way teachers learn the different facets of teaching. However, due to developments in education the role of teachers is more of being a facilitator, since learning has become student-centred. This causes conflict in the professional identities of teachers, especially older teachers as they now have to change or shift their professional identities to accommodate the changes in their roles.

Additionally, Beijaard et al. (2000) identified three factors that influenced the perceptions of teachers towards their professional identity; teacher context, teacher experiences and teacher biographies.

Teacher context-The contexts in which learning, and teaching occurs contributes to the knowledge of teachers. There are several teaching cultures present in a school. Teachers' awareness of these cultures does not necessarily take place during socialisation but also as a result of their personal development. Teaching and learning cultures contribute to the narratives that teachers construct, which includes the way in which teachers perceive their professional identities.

Teaching experiences-The years of experience that teachers have has an influence on how they view teaching. When compared with inexperienced teachers, experienced teachers have more expert knowledge of their subject. When these teachers are delivering a lesson, they are able to recall content and subject matter from memory. Furthermore, they are better equipped to solve problems in different contexts much easier. This contributes to the stories that they tell which shapes their perception of their professional identity.

Teacher biographies-The biographies of teachers influence their professional identity. Personal contexts together with experiences form and transform their work. Research conducted by Huberman (1993, as cited in Beijaard et al., 2000), found that teachers who had children who were the same age as those that they taught were more tolerant towards learners of that age group. This enabled them to have more positive experiences with these learners. Thus, experiences from teachers' personal lives has an effect on their professional lives and professional identities.

Day (2013) correspondingly asserts that a teacher's professional identity is influenced by what they think of themselves, their experiences, what they think others might think of them, relationships with others and educational ideals of the said teacher. On the same note, Carr (2000, as cited in Ghanizadeh & Ostad, 2016), maintains that the professional identity of teachers can be attributed to three qualities: the ability that one has in the subject they specialised in, their behaviour inside and outside their classroom, and their methods of instruction. However, Settlage et al. (2009) maintain that professional identity is underpinned by four dimensions: engaging in a set of practises shared by a particular community (being a caring teacher), grounded in the authority given to teachers (classroom control), through debate with colleagues (speaking of actions and beliefs) and professional identity is embedded in one's race, gender and personality.

Research conducted by Ghanizadeh and Ostad (2016) highlighted that there was a link between the experience teachers have and teacher professional identity. Moreover, Ruohotie-Lyhty (2013) contends that the professional identity of teachers is developed through interpretations and reinterpretations of their experiences. Additionally, Ghanizadeh and Ostad (2016) maintain that professional identity incorporates an individual's self-concept and the experiences that they attain as a teacher. In this study, the aim was to understand how experiences and self-concepts of English Home Language teachers are incorporated into their professional identity.

Similarly, Kelchtermans (1993, as cited in Day et al. 2006a) maintains that professional identity, like the personal self, evolves over time and consists of five parts. These are:

- Self-image - Teachers' description of themselves through the stories in their careers.
- Self-esteem - Advancement of the self as a teacher. How others and the 'self' define an individual.
- Job-motivation - The reason as to why teachers choose to remain in the profession.
- Task perception - The way in which teachers view their jobs.
- Future perspective - How teachers view their future developments in education.

Day (2004, as cited in Day et al., 2006a, p. 604) reiterates, "a positive sense of identity with subject, relationships and roles is important to maintaining self-esteem or self-efficacy, commitment and a passion for teaching." Furthermore, Day et al. (2006a) assert that professional identity is derived from the subjects that teachers teach. In the same vein, Beijaard et al. (2000) argue that knowledge of the subject matter plays a role in teachers' professional knowledge base while context plays a role in the knowledge that teachers attain in practice. This has an influence on how they view themselves as professionals (Day et al., 2006a). In this study, the aim was to understand how English Home Language teachers viewed their profession and derived their professional identities from it.

Morgan (2004) acknowledges that professional identity is created through what one envisions for the future and the experiences they have during the teaching process. In the same vein, Ghanizadeh and Ostad (2016) contend that professional advancement and teacher's awareness of change are shaped by their professional identity. Like personal identity, Ghanizadeh and Ostad (2016) argue that professional identity is also influenced by internal and external factors. Factors such as instability in their personal lives affects teachers' professional identity since professional identities are related to images of 'self' and their roles as teachers.

Ghanizadeh and Ostad (2016) further acknowledge that professional identity is also an ongoing process that involves the person and context. They claim that within a person's professional identity there are sub-identities that need to be balanced. Professional identity in-cooperates agency through actively participating in professional development and learning while keeping one's goals in mind. Likewise, Beauchamp and Thomas (2011) maintain that to have a strong professional identity there must be agency, which is the belief that one has the ability to take

action. Additionally, Prabjandee (2019) contends that the action does not have to be perfected as trial and error influences the development of one's professional identity. Ghanizadeh and Ostad (2016, p. 833) argue that "professional identity then stands at the core of the teaching profession. It provides a framework to construct their own ideas of 'how to be', 'how to act' and 'how to understand' their work and place in society."

Mohamed et al. (2016) note that professional identity construction is a multifaceted stage in learning and teaching. Teaching careers span over decades and teachers experience different contexts and situations. Day and Gu (2007) identified different professional life phases that span across a teacher's career that influence the effectiveness of their work. Furthermore, Day and Gu (2007, p 423) contend that teachers do not essentially learn from experience but are at a "greater risk of being less effective in later stages of their professional lives." Professional identity changes at different stages throughout one's teaching career and form during interactions, even though one might not be aware that it is occurring (Day & Gu, 2007; Prabjandee, 2020; Rodgers & Scott, 2008). Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) contend that it is necessary that teachers become aware of the changes in their professional identity, be it social or contextual, since this will allow for an examination of who they are. Furthermore, Yazan (2018) maintains that knowledge of one's professional identity provides teachers with the ability to understand how they teach, since they are aware of where they fit in.

Flores and Day (2006, p. 230) suggest that when teachers enter the teaching profession their professional identities are "personally embedded" and are shaped and reshaped as teaching becomes more predictable. Prabjandee (2019) argues that teaching practice adds to the growth of professional identity and learning to teach is the construction of this identity. However, the identity that is constructed during teaching practice does not remain stable but evolves as one grows as a teacher. According to Day and Gu (2007), teachers need to be active and consistent in developing their professional identities since it is affected by various circumstances that can either be positive or negative.

Salinas and Ayala (2018) affirm that one cannot separate one's personal identity from one's professional identity because personal involvement with students and communities, where students come from, is needed. Furthermore, Derakhshan et al. (2020) concurs that when teachers have established their identities and have been accepted in their communities, they have the ability to work towards their personal and professional aspirations. On a similar note, Day (2013) asserts that teacher wellbeing and purpose are related to their professional identity.

He argues that when teachers lose their purpose and their wellbeing is compromised, they are unable to take charge and control different contexts that they teach and learn in. They become emotionally unstable. Zhu et al. (2020) assert that professional identity plays a significant role in teacher motivation and their reasons for remaining in the profession. Ultimately, Christensen (2019) contends that teachers should be aware that an ideal identity does not exist. An ideal identity is derived from unattainable ideological expectations. Should one consider following such an identity, it will lead to conflict and discrepancies within them.

2.4 Teacher Identities and Teacher Emotions

Even though teaching might seem repetitive and tedious, Lasky (2005) contends that it requires a great deal of emotion. According to Saunders (2013), teachers experience a variety of emotions which impact on their professional development. In the same vein, Keller et al. (2014a) suggest that teacher emotions are essential as they influence the manner in which teachers teach and perform. In addition, Naidoo (2013) asserts that there is a relationship between teachers' emotions, lives and teaching. Furthermore, Manasia et al. (2020) acknowledge the impact of the educational environment and students on the emotions of teachers. In order to ensure teachers wellbeing, it is important to understand their emotions and the way in which they manage these emotions.

Emotions play an important role in the way in which teachers think and view reality. Day et al. (2006b) maintain that teachers experience a variety of negative emotions. Some of these emotions occur when their long-held principles are challenged and trust and respect from learners and parents alike disintegrates. Furthermore, Chen et al. (2020) argue that negative experiences such as pressure and competition amongst colleagues also lead to negative emotions. Consequently, Zembylas (2005) asserts that the identity of teachers come into conflict with their context.

Subsequently, Saunders (2013) contends that teachers who experience negative emotions, find it very difficult to be productive. In addition, Manasia et al. (2020) argue that when teachers are unable to teach in a way in which they would like to, they experience negative emotions. Keller et al. (2014a) and Richards (2020) also noted that when teachers experience negative emotions such as anger, anxiety, boredom, nervousness and sadness, it impacts negatively on learner achievement as this emotion is transferred indirectly to learners, who then begin to feel resentment towards the subject being taught. Most importantly, Zembylas (2005) purports that negative emotions create problems in the identity formation of teachers.

In contrast, positive emotions have a direct influence on learning and teaching and helps teachers build stronger relationships with learners. Learners in turn become more positive and productive (Hagenauer et al., 2015; Manasia et al., 2020; Zembylas, 2002). Manasia et al. (2020) argue that when teachers have a good rapport with learners, they find more joy in their profession. Furthermore, Lasky (2005) contends that when teachers are dedicated to their profession, they are geared towards developing students holistically. On the same note, Richards (2020) adds that if teachers experience positive emotions for example, confidence, amusement and enjoyment, their behaviour towards learners is positive. Ultimately, learners become positive which results in positive learning outcomes (Keller et al., 2014a). Likewise, Chen et al. (2020) reiterate that when the environment is positive teachers experience positive emotions. Their relationship with colleagues becomes more harmonious and supportive.

Richards (2020) argues that emotions should not only be understood from individual characteristics but also from socio-cultural and social contexts. Chen et al. (2020) maintain that the emotions of teachers begin to fluctuate when change is experienced. Correspondingly, Yazan (2018) affirms that teacher emotions change due to experience, and this has an effect on teachers' future practices and interactions. In the same vein, Hargreaves (2004) asserts that over the span of their career, teachers are faced with changes which may be drastic or subtle. When change is managed poorly it leads to negative emotions. Government changes which are mandatory are an important aspect of both positive and negative emotions.

Saunders (2013) agrees that the different emotions that teachers experience during the course of their career has an effect on the development of their identity. Additionally, teachers' emotions play an important role in the way teachers view the profession and the reasons why they remain in the profession (Keller et al., 2014b). Moreover, Golembek and Johnson (2004, p.306) contend that emotions influence the thought processes of teachers and helps them "externalise their experiences." As teachers experience a variety of emotions, it allows them to integrate new knowledge into their teaching. Likewise, Zembylas (2002, p. 488) points out that emotions have a direct impact on the decisions that teachers make. He adds that the emotions of teachers are important "not only for their own well-being, but also for the functioning of classrooms."

Manasia et al. (2020) acknowledge that teaching is a demanding career where teachers find themselves in a variety of contexts. As a result, teachers' emotions are moulded by the contexts in which they work in (Rodgers & Scott, 2008). Furthermore, Saunders (2013) maintains that

emotions are not only influenced by context but also social interactions, since teachers do not work alone.

Zembylas (2005) contends that aside from social interactions, the emotions that teachers experience are embedded in morals and values, which they learnt through their families and communities. It is during this time when they learn appropriate or inappropriate behaviour, which Zembylas (2005) describes as emotional rules. Flores and Day (2006) agree that teachers already have a set of beliefs and emotions when entering the profession. Additionally, Zembylas (2002, p.90) asserts that by exploring their own emotions in relation to others, teachers will be able to make contact with the emotional experiences that had occurred in their lives, which they had forgotten. He maintains that reflecting on one's emotions "is a powerful tool to enrich knowledge."

Reflection can occur through emotional assessment. Owens and Hudson (2021) suggest that emotional assessment within professional development will allow for early indication of teacher's stress before it leads to teachers leaving the profession. In addition, Richards (2020) maintains that when teachers are aware of their emotions, they will also have the ability to manage the emotional dimension of learning and teaching, aside from just managing subject content matter. In the same vein, Richards (2020) explains that since emotions influence the way teachers teach, it also impacts on the way teachers learn. Consequently, in the long run the emotions of teachers has an impact on learners' academic achievement.

Day and Gu (2007) affirm that when teachers begin teaching, they are internally motivated, and their goal is to ensure that they provide the best for their students. However, Keller et al. (2014) contend that student behaviour and achievement have a significant impact on teachers' emotions. This behaviour includes being uncooperative, unenthusiastic and unappreciative. Aside from learners' behaviour, Richards (2020) argues that when teachers work in an environment where there are limited resources, they experience negative emotions that prevent them from having an ideal professional identity. With a lack of resources, frustration sets in, and teachers begin to feel negative emotions. Additionally, a lack of content knowledge of a subject leads to teachers becoming frustrated and guilty at the same time. They begin to feel that they will not be able to understand or answer questions posed by learners and are afraid to make mistakes (Richards, 2020). Richards (2020) contends that the emotional atmosphere of the classroom will be dependent on how teachers see themselves personally and professionally.

On the same note, Chen et al. (2020) emphasise that a learner's ability to take ownership of their studying also has an impact on the emotional atmosphere of the classroom.

Zembylas (2002, p. 81) asserts that "emotion is a psychological phenomenon" that is within every individual. Similarly, Keller et al. (2014a) contend that emotions play a significant role in the mental health of teachers. Christensen (2019) correspondingly asserts that the emotional experiences of teachers is dependent on how they interpret their experiences. Their responsibilities, for example practicing culturally appropriate pedagogy or interpreting school policies, causes conflict within their social identity. These tasks might create dilemmas in their mind causing uncertainties. This uncertainty impacts on a teacher's ability to teach by bringing up emotions causing them to question their conceptions of themselves.

Studies conducted by Keller et al. (2014a) and Manasia et al. (2020) affirm that emotions play a key role in teacher fatigue. When teachers experience anxiety, their personal and professional identity is threatened (Keller et al., 2014a). Li (2020) emphasises that teachers' beliefs and emotions interact together and aid in the development of teacher identity. As a result, it is essential that the social and professional interactions that will affect their emotions are understood.

Richards (2020) asserts that emotions play a pivotal role in language teaching since teaching is a social activity, whereas Keller et al. (2014b) assert that emotions cannot be disregarded, as it plays an integral part in teachers' professional lives. The manner in which one reacts is dependent on their emotions. Keller et al. (2014b) acknowledge that teacher emotions are imperative since they affect the manner in which teachers teach and aids the construction of the relationship between learners and teachers. Additionally, Chen et al. (2020) suggest that teachers should possess the ability to read the emotions of others.

Keller et al. (2014b, p.78) affirm that teachers are "charged with emotion" since in the course of a day they experience a range of emotions. For this reason, emotions cannot be ignored when studying teachers' personal or professional identity.

2.5 Teacher Identities and Narratives

Yazan (2018) maintains that one's history and biography play a major role in the development of identity. It is through narratives that one is able to connect their past with their present since the past shapes their present and who they are. Correspondingly, Prabjandee (2019) maintains that teacher identity is developed through accounts of their past. Moreover, Golembek and

Johnson (2004, p. 308) highlight that those narratives help teachers make sense of past events, therefore shaping their identity as they “situate and narrate facts to one another.” Likewise, Ritchie and Wilson (2000) argue that narratives allow teachers to change their lives and revise previous understandings of their experiences.

Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) maintain that in order to be effective and productive as a teacher, one has to have a thorough knowledge of their self-concept. They argue that narratives allow for reflection which enable teachers to understand the self. Ritchie and Wilson (2000) add that when stories are retold new meanings are constructed which allows for reflection about where they fit in. Similarly, Golembek and Johnson (2004) contend that by connecting their past with their present, through reflection, teachers make sense of who they are.

Flores and Day (2006) argue that past experiences interact with contextual factors at school, while Rodgers and Scott (2008) agree that social contexts shape identity. Correspondingly, Lasky (2005) maintains that social contexts play an essential role in the development of professional identity. Through narratives, a link between early years of training and how social contexts influence professional identity development are made.

Ritchie and Wilson (2000, p. 82) assert that narratives provide teachers with “insight, strategies, and confidence to resist” negativity and therefore aid teacher development. Also, they suggest that narratives allow teachers to identify their beliefs and the inconsistencies that exist between their beliefs and teaching practice. Ritchie and Wilson (2000) further add that when teachers listen to other people’s stories, their identities become restricted and put under pressure. According to Golembek and Johnson (2004), narratives enable one to resist other stories by giving one the ability to give a voice to who one is.

2.6 Teacher Identity in South Africa

After the end of apartheid in South Africa, radical change was needed to transform and reform the education system. During the apartheid regime the education system was racially segregated (Davids, 2018). Furthermore, Davids (2018, p. 2) contends that “Democratic South Africa was in need of an education system that would instil the values critical for a humane and socially just society” This led to the introduction of Outcomes Based Education (OBE) in 1997. Jita and Vandeyar (2006) assert that the introduction of Outcomes Based Education was to reform the education system and achieve uniformity in the system. This curriculum was replaced by the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) in 2002, the revised National

Curriculum (RNCS) from 2004-2008. Thereafter, the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) was phased in between 2012 and 2014 and is the current policy guiding education (Jita & Vandeyar, 2006).

According to Davids (2018), the introduction of the changes in curriculum came with changes in content knowledge that was hoped to eradicate the injustices and inequalities of the past. Furthermore, Davids (2018) argues that in order to equip teachers for changes, teachers were trained only in content. Davids (2018) further claims that little or no attention was paid to teacher narratives and teacher identities. Teachers were expected to carry out and adopt the changes expected by the curriculum with little regard for their professional identities. Cross and Ndofirepi (2015) assert that it is essential that teachers learn how to construct their professional identities. In doing so, their expectations and ambitions are shaped in new ways enabling them to adapt to the current education system.

Due to the Group Areas Act of 1966, the people of South Africa were divided into groups and were placed in racially- zoned areas (Mabin, 1992). Furthermore, schools for different population groups were also placed in these racially zoned areas. As a result, they were situated in both rural areas, namely townships, and urban areas, such as town and cities. Accordingly, Smit and Fritz (2008) argue that the situational and contextual factors in townships and urban areas shaped the identity of teachers. Subsequently, Cross and Ndofirepi (2015) argue that in order to develop their professional identities, teachers do not only require knowledge of teaching skills or professionalism, but also knowledge of contextual factors that assist them in creating their identities. Cross and Ndofirepi (2015) further contend that teachers in South Africa face a number of challenges they have to deal with such as HIV/Aids, poverty, teenage pregnancies and crime, which also impacts on the development of their personal and professional identities.

Correspondingly, Samuel (2008) asserts that the identities of teachers in South Africa has changed together with the political, social and historical context of the country. Accordingly, the identity of teachers is “a kaleidoscope of many permutations: race, class, gender, language, age and stage of career” (Samuel, 2008. p. 9). This puts added pressure on teachers and they lose control (Smit & Fritz, 2008). Consequently, the loss of control that teachers experience has an effect on their personal and professional identities. Smit and Fritz (2008. p.99) contend that “teacher identity is forged by the problems and daily challenges they face”.

External pressures from situations and society impact on teachers' personal identities. In South Africa, Smit and Fritz (2008) argue that the expectations of being a teacher exceeds far beyond teaching and learning due to the social climate and ongoing changes in the curriculum. Furthermore, they maintain that teachers' identities are continuously being challenged due to hunger, poverty, teenage pregnancies and neglected children. In the same vein, they claim that in South Africa, there is a lack of appreciation for the profession. Owing to this, Smit and Fritz (2008) assert that there are various interpretations, views and understanding towards professional development due to the unique identities that have developed, because of the challenges that they are faced with.

The South African Council of Ethics is responsible for the promotion of professional development for teachers (Davids, 2018). Professional identities are predetermined by a set of guidelines and ethics that are determined by the above body. Teaching in a democratic environment, is influenced by teacher identity and how teachers live with the values of apartheid. Correspondingly, Smit and Fritz (2008) affirm that the professional identities of teachers reflect their place of work. If teachers come with pre-existing beliefs on apartheid and racism, the manner in which they deliver their lessons will be affected. This defeats the purpose of the manifesto on values in education which according to the Department of Education, emphasises that education should be democratic, non-racist and equal (2001, as cited in Davids, 2018). These values are supposed to be taught in a way that brings the tenets of the constitution to the forefront of the classroom. Therefore, Davids (2018, p. 10) contends that "it becomes necessary to make sense of how teachers conceive of themselves in relation to propagating the democratic values, as espoused through CAPS".

A study conducted by Samuel (2008) examined the impact of apartheid on teacher education. The research highlighted that in South Africa, apartheid education produced poor quality teacher education. Education was content-driven and handed down to teachers who would then hand that down to learners in a mechanical fashion. Consequently, this led to teachers not being developed as individuals who can work independently. This further led to the belief that the development of teachers must come from the state and teachers are not responsible for their own development. As a result, teachers became reliant on state driven developmental workshops. Nel (2012) purports that continuously providing teachers with new content knowledge does not necessarily lead to teachers' professional development.

The identities of teachers became acclimatised with the situation in South Africa. Samuel (2008) argues that seasoned teachers who find it difficult to adjust and adapt to the changes do not believe that they can develop themselves but rather choose to wait for government intervention. Furthermore, they found it difficult to move forward and take responsibility for their own personal growth. In addition, Samuel's (2008) study found that when South Africa transformed and changes began to take place, those teachers who had developed an identity based on that era, found it very difficult adjusting to the new regime as a whole.

Samuel (2008) attributes this to the conflict that arose from the identity that they had previously acquired. As curriculum changes occurred in South Africa, a shift occurred from the norm. As a result, older teachers' experience frustration and leave the profession as they find it difficult to align their identity with the current climate. In addition, Samuel (2008) maintains that this has had a ripple effect. Novice teachers are now faced with working with teachers who are against change. This affects the identity of younger teachers as they try to bridge the gap between forming their own identity and what they are being taught from older teachers. Samuel (2008) further asserts that teachers need to be aware that they are responsible for their own professional growth.

According to Nel (2012), even though a large amount of time was spent on re-skilling teachers, in South Africa, in new learning areas, nothing has been done to develop teacher identities so that teachers can take charge and 'ownership' of their learning area. In a study of Mathematical Literacy teacher identity conducted by Nel (2012), it was found that when learning programmes were conducive to changes in identity, teachers began seeing themselves as professionals in the field. When the content was placed in context, their identity began to shift. When collaborative learning occurs, teachers are more inclined to adopt a new stance in new and different learning areas. Even though learning is done collaboratively, Nel (2012) maintains that teachers still develop a unique and independent identity. Many teachers in South Africa require professional and personal support and development. Furthermore, Davids (2018) asserts that change cannot merely come from content that teachers teach if they are not aligned with its values. In the same vein, Smit and Fritz (2008) acknowledge that how educational change manifests itself in South African schools will only occur when the meaning teachers assign to their professional lives is understood.

Smit and Fritz (2008) contend that teacher identity is shaped by different narratives that teachers have. They identified three types of narratives: the situational, personal and social

narratives. These narratives interact with one another shaping identity thereby affecting their behaviour. In South Africa, Smit and Fritz (2008) contend that teachers have a variety of experiences personally, professionally and socially. These experiences are vast and diverse which is brought into the classroom with them every day. Correspondingly, Davids (2018) asserts that each teacher has their own narratives on what made them teachers and how they experience teaching in diverse classroom settings. Narratives will create a space for teachers to express themselves and make them aware of the identities that they bring into the classroom (Davids, 2018). Thus, a narrative approach was employed in this study so that teachers became aware of who they were and what had influenced their practices.

In order to ensure that learners become democratic citizens, the onus is put on the teacher in their enactments and practise which is influenced by their personal identities (Davids, 2018). Furthermore, Davids (2018) asserts that the curriculum provides content knowledge which is not enough to instil democratic values in South African children. A change in the curriculum cannot be limited to only preparing teachers for the content. Davids (2018) concludes that efforts should be made to reconcile identities with what it means to be accountable and responsible teachers. Notably, Cross and Ndofirepi (2015) highlight that an improvement in education in South Africa will not occur through policy changes and workshops, but from an understanding of teacher identity. It was hoped that the findings of this study would create a better understanding of the identities and teaching of English Home Language teachers which could possibly result in an improvement in the subject.

2.7 Teacher Identities and English Home Language

Mohamed et al. (2016) assert that English is the most common language of communication. According to the National Curriculum Statement (Department of Basic Education, 2011), a number of schools in South Africa do not offer learners their Home Language, which is the first language that they have attained at birth, to some or all South African learners. English is most commonly offered on a Home Language level. The Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) (DBE, 2011, p.8) contends that Home Language level:

...provides for language proficiency that reflects the mastery of basic interpersonal communication skills required in social situations and the cognitive academic skills essential for learning across the curriculum. Emphasis is placed on the teaching of the listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills at this language level. This level also provides learners with a literary, aesthetic, and imaginative ability that will provide

them with the ability to recreate, imagine, and empower their understandings of the world they live in.

Yazan (2018) maintains that language teachers' identities develop through their values and beliefs which were developed within their society and schooling communities.

Similarly, Prabjandee (2019) highlights that language teachers' identities develop all the time. According to Werbinska (2017), even though language teachers' identity develops over time, it is also dependent on their social contexts. Furthermore, in this study, the schooling community was mostly non-native English speakers. Hence a teacher's success was dependent on their understanding of these community. Correspondingly, Canagarajah (2014,) maintains that the success in teaching English is dependent on the context, since local communities have their own set of identities that influence the way in which they acquire knowledge. His auto-ethnography study in Sri-Lanka, showed that in order to be successful in teaching English, it was important to "chart a constructive relationship" between communities (p. 258).

Prabjandee (2019) contends that the struggle in teaching a language is that it is both taught as a discipline and a medium of instruction. Moreover, Mohamed et al. (2016) maintain that teaching English as a discipline requires one to not only know what needs to be taught but also how it must be taught. Morgan and Clark (2011, as cited in Yazan, 2018), maintain that language teachers' identities play an important role in construction of knowledge. Identity as a teacher of English is becoming someone who can use their knowledge of English, to support learners in creating identities that allow them to attain academic success. Correspondingly, Mohamed et al. (2016) emphasise that in order to be successful as an English teacher, there needs to be a shift in English teachers' identities.

Ghanizadeh and Ostad (2016) argue that the willingness of learners to learn a subject, in this case, English Home Language, has a negative or positive impact on the development of teachers' professional identity. In addition, it influences and contributes towards the development of their competence in the subject. Correspondingly, when teachers have sufficient knowledge of the curriculum and methods of teaching, their relationship with students is improved and a connection between students and teachers is easily established.

Mora et al. (2014) affirm that language professionals should be contributors rather than borrowers in identity formation. Identity formation and negotiations take place and are interwoven into every aspect of teaching. In the same vein, Mora et al. (2014) and Settlage et

al. (2009) purport that the identity of language teachers influences the amount of effort that these teachers put into their professional life as well as how they view professional development.

Zhu et al. (2020) argue that when one starts teaching a language with an under or poorly developed identity, their success in the profession is minimal. Nevertheless, Mora et al. (2014) suggest that teachers with poorly formed identities should be given an opportunity to strengthen their identities through professional development even if professional development is sanctioned by institutions. Derakhshan et al. (2020) indicate that teachers' success is positive when their professional identity is positive. They conclude that language teachers should continuously re-shape their professional identity, and that by doing so, they can become successful in their professions.

Werbinska (2017) affirms that the success of language teaching is dependent on language teachers' beliefs about who they are and what they hope to achieve through their teaching. Likewise, Yüksel (2014) asserts that teachers who believe that they have the ability to instruct learners are likely to achieve greater academic success.

2.8 Conceptual Framework

2.8.1 Professional, Situated and Personal Dimensions of Teacher's Identity

This study adopted Day and Gu's (2007) dimensions of teacher identity and professional life phases as a conceptual framework. Day and Gu (2007) use the socio-cultural theory as a foundation. This conceptual framework outlines the three dimensions of teacher identity and the different life phases that were used to understand, interpret and address each research question.

According to Day and Gu (2007, p.424), teachers' abilities to "sustain their commitment" to the teaching fraternity is influenced by both their professional life phases and their identities. Furthermore, they contend that these are dependent on the contexts and conditions in which teachers work and live.

Day and Gu (2007) outline three dimensions as a framework to understand teachers' identities: the personal, professional and situated dimensions, which are dynamic. Day and Gu (2007) maintain that at any given time, teachers experience variations of different intensities between and within these dimensions. As a result, the stability or instability of teachers' identities were affected. They conclude that a change that occurs in one dimension will affect a teacher's

ability to control the others as each dimension overlaps with the other. Therefore, Day and Gu (2007) maintain that teacher's resilience and commitment is based on their ability to balance and control the three dimensions of teacher identity.

Day and Gu (2007) contend that the professional dimension reflects teachers' social outlook. Furthermore, it examines the experiences of teachers as they become influenced by new policies that are implemented by the Department of Education, which they are to maintain and adhere to. Additionally, the professional dimension is also made up of the educational ideas that teachers have, which affects their ability to perform in the classroom. Day et al. (2006b) assert that teaching is a demanding profession where the expectation is high with an ever-increasing workload. When teachers feel that they are unable to meet the expectations set out, a reduction in their job satisfaction occurs. This in turn impacts on the professional dimension and the professional identity of teachers begins to shift.

On the other hand, Day and Gu (2007) maintain that the situated dimension is positioned within a school context and is affected by environmental and local circumstances, such as pupil behaviour and leadership at schools. Similarly, Day (2013) contends that when leadership, relationships with colleague and support are positive, teachers' commitment and passion remain steady. In contrast, a change in working conditions and contexts results in teachers losing their passion for teaching.

The personal dimension makes reference to the lives of teachers outside the schooling environment. Day and Gu (2007) argue that experiences and relationships outside the schooling environment has an influence over teachers. They argue that this plays a role in classrooms when teachers teach as they reflect on their lives which influences the way in which they deliver the content of the curriculum. In addition, Day and Gu (2007) affirm that the morals and values that teachers possess also play a role in their behaviour. This also forms part of the personal dimension.

These three dimensions of teacher identity do not remain the same but change throughout one's teaching career. Furthermore, they are connected and influence each other (Figure. 2.1). Day et al. (2006a) contend that when teachers are positive and have a positive professional identity, they become more effective. At the same time, how teachers manage their personal and professional identity during their careers, influences the stability and instability in their identities. Additionally, Day et al. (2006) affirm that when these three dimensions are in balance, teachers have the ability to manage small changes in their lives (Figure 2.1).

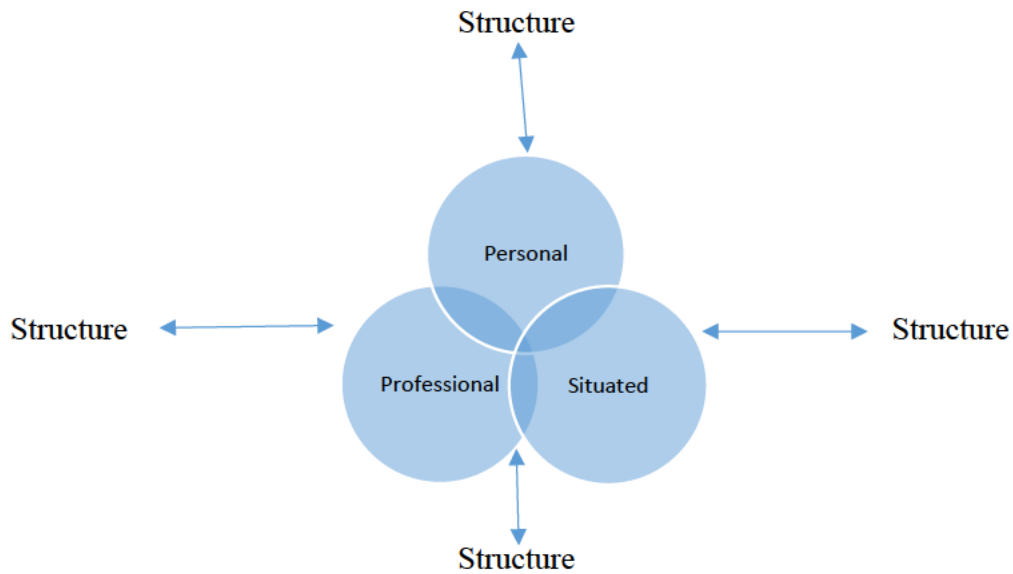


Figure 2.1- Dimensions of teacher identity in balance (Source: Day et al., 2006b, p. 151).

On the other hand, if one dimension dominates and is affected by an external or internal event (Figure 2.2), the individual is required to put in greater effort in managing this fluctuation. In this study, the professional, situated and personal dimensions provided a framework to understand the personal and professional identities of English Home Language teachers.

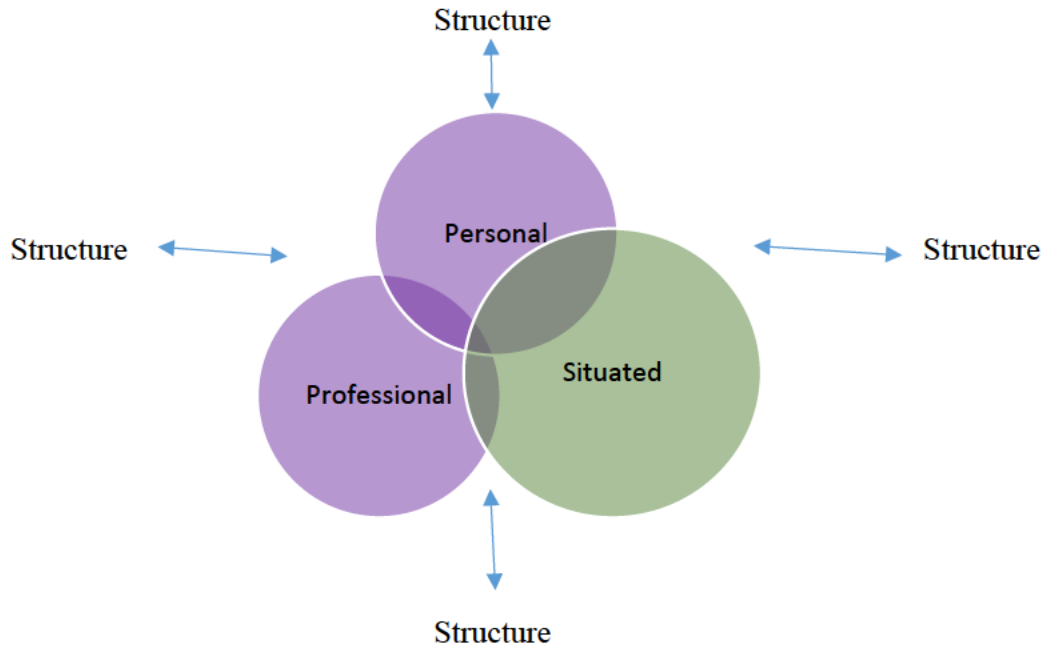


Figure 2.2 -Dimensions of teacher identity not in balance, one dominating dimension (Source: Day et al., 2006b. p. 151).

2.8.2 Professional Life Phases

Day and Gu (2007) define a professional life phase as “the number of years that a teacher has been teaching.” They describe six professional life phases (p. 433). According to Day et al (2006a) identity develops over the lifespan of an individual and undergoes numerous changes at different periods or phases of their lives. Additionally, they contend that teacher identity is more or less stable or fragmented at different phases of their lives and careers. As a result, Day et al. (2006a, p. 613) contend that teachers’ professional identities are “discontinuous, fragmented and subject to turbulence and change, in continuing to struggle to construct and sustain a stable identity” at different life phases. Day and Gu (2007) identify six professional life phases, namely; 0-3 years, 4-7 years, 8-15 years, 16-23 years, 24-30 years, and 31+ years of teaching.

According to Day and Gu (2007), the 0-3 years’ phase is when teachers begin to discover who they are and whether they will be competent in their classroom practices. It is during this phase that teachers have a high level of motivation and are committed to the profession. Even though their morals and confidence are developed during this phase, they are easily influenced. Day and Gu (2007) maintain that positive feedback, support from colleagues and a conducive learning environment creates positivity in teachers. Furthermore, they assert that professional activities related to knowledge of the classroom boosts the morale of teachers in this phase. Furthermore, Day and Gu (2007) argue that during this phase, the influence of school principals, colleagues, and the culture of the school aid in teachers becoming professionals. However, Day and Gu (2007) assert that the behaviour of learners’ impact on teachers between this life phase negatively. Nevertheless, they acknowledge that activities aimed at developing professional identity are most effective in the development of teachers. A combination of these factors establishes and maintains a sense of professional identity within this life phase.

Day and Gu (2007) contend that throughout the 4-7 years’ life phase, the development of teachers’ professional identities occurs. During this life phase, teachers’ responsibilities begin to increase as well as the responsibilities in their personal lives. Even though teachers in this life phase are piecing together their professional identities in the classroom, they are confronted with further expectations. Furthermore, Day and Gu (2007) maintain that an increase in workloads impact on the effectiveness of teachers, which also influences teacher identity. Those who possess the ability to cope, develop a strong sense of identity whilst those who struggle to cope, experience instability in theirs. To try and alleviate this situation, this phase

should be characterised by initiatives and programs that are aimed towards developing and sustaining a strong professional identity.

In the 8-15-year life phase, teachers are beginning to balance their personal and professional lives (Day & Gu, 2007). Additionally, teachers, during this phase, face greater pressure in trying to juggle both their personal and professional lives. However, they continue to engage in out of classroom activities. These added responsibilities impact on teachers' abilities to teach. Day and Gu (2007) contend that teachers who aspire of promotion and furthering their careers are able to handle the added tensions successfully. In the same vein, Day and Gu (2007) suggest that those teachers who are unable to cope during this phase should be provided with support, which should be focused on their emotions, morale, and self-efficacy. Day and Gu (2007, p. 436) emphasise that professional development should be aimed at this phase, since "it is likely to influence their final commitment and effectiveness trajectories."

Day and Gu (2007) assert that in the 16-23 years' life phase, teachers become more settled allowing their professional identity to be clearly defined. Even though they have become more settled, their responsibilities, both personally and professionally, increase. Heavy workloads and an increase in administration, together with favourable or unfavourable family circumstances, mean that teachers have to manage the conflicts amongst their personal and professional lives. Their ability to balance their responsibilities influences their motivation and commitment. Day and Gu (2007) suggest that enhancing teachers' role effectiveness through professional development activities is beneficial for teachers in this phase. However, they emphasise encouragement and support from management and knowledgeable individuals that assist them in dealing with tension and conflict, motivate them.

Day and Gu (2007, p. 437) contend that in the 24-30-year life phase teachers often experience "extreme professional life phase scenarios". They point out that in this phase, teachers are confronted by a continuous decline in learner behaviour, different policy and curriculum changes and possible adverse personal events. This has an impact on their professional identities. Teachers' identities during this phase are continually being readjusted and continuous learning opportunities that boost morale and commitment are essential. Subsequently, teachers who are unable to maintain a strong sense of motivation, benefit when development initiatives come from within. Such development may include but is not restricted to, simplifying new policies. In this way, it does not look so daunting but approachable. The identities that teachers have developed in previous life phases are challenged and have to

evolve. A positive personal and professional environment determines how motivated and committed teachers are to the profession.

Day and Gu (2007, p.437) refer to the 30+ years life phase as the “sustaining commitment” phase. During this phase, job satisfaction is influenced by positive relationships amongst pupils and teachers. Furthermore, it includes learner performance in different learning areas. Despite being affected by ill-health, teachers during this life phase, improve their skills and work towards ensuring that they leave the profession in a positive way. Unlike the previous phases, in the 30+ year phase, teachers require more emotional based support from school management, thus ensuring that they remain committed and effective. Day and Gu (2007) further add that if teachers were successful in developing strong identities throughout their professional life phases, the likelihood of sustained commitment and motivation is greater. Teachers whose careers improved through promotion also fair better. Day and Gu (2007) conclude that development for these teachers should come from within the school environment since it promotes their overall wellbeing and commitment.

Day and Gu’s (2007) framework was suitable for this study since it described three dimensions of teacher identities and six professional life phases. This framework assisted in analysing the first research question: What do English Home Language teachers’ stories tell us about their personal and professional identities and their teaching of English Home Language? As well as the second research question: How do personal and professional identities of English Home Language teachers develop at different life phases in their careers? The professional life phases show that one’s personal and professional identity are intertwined and does not remain constant throughout one's teaching career, but is evolving, challenged and balanced.

2.9 Conclusion

This chapter presented an overview of teachers’ personal and professional identities drawing from both national and international literature. The literature pointed out that defining identity is not straightforward and encompasses various definitions from different scholars. Teachers’ personal and professional identities were then discussed which highlighted the effects and impact of identity on the lives of teachers both professionally and personally. The literature also outlined that identity in South Africa has to be looked at from a social and political context. It indicated that social situations such as poverty should not be ignored when studying identity. Overall, the literature pointed out, both from a national and international context, that identity is a factor that contributes to the success or failure of teachers and impacts on the academic

performance of learners. The chapter concluded with an outline of Day and Gu's (2007) professional, situated and personal dimensions of teacher identity followed by a discussion of the six professional life phases. This framework underpinned this research study and data analysis process. The next chapter describes the research methodology employed in this study.

Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The aim of this study was to explore the personal and professional identities of English Home Language teachers at two secondary schools. The study further aimed to understand the personal and professional identities of teachers at different life phases in their careers. This chapter outlines the research design and methodology that was used to generate and interpret data to understand these phenomena. The chapter begins with a discussion of the interpretative research paradigm and qualitative methodological approach employed in this study. This is followed by an outline of the narrative inquiry research design. The methods of data generation, namely, semi-structured interviews, collages and poetry, are then discussed. Next, purposive sampling strategy, trustworthiness and ethical considerations are discussed. The research design and methodology were directed towards addressing the following research questions:

1. What do English Home Language teacher's stories tell us about their personal and professional identities?
2. How do personal and professional identities of English Home Language teachers develop at different life phases in their careers?

3.2. Interpretive Research Paradigm

Cuba (1990, as cited in Creswell, 2009, p. 19) defines a paradigm "as a set of beliefs that guides action". Similarly, Mertens (2005) and Bertram and Christiansen (2014) maintain that a paradigm is the manner in which an individual views the world. This study was located within the interpretive paradigm. Merriam (2009) asserts that qualitative research is often placed in the interpretive paradigm and works with the assumption that reality is constructed through society and a single reality does not exist. As a result, there are numerous interpretations of events.

Cohen et al. (2013) define the interpretative paradigm as a process where researchers interpret situations from the view of participants, rather than that of the researcher, while concern for research participants is prioritised. Furthermore, Leavy (2017) maintains that this paradigm examines how individuals, through interaction, create and re-create meaning. In the same vein, Cohen et al. (2017) affirm that the interpretative paradigm aims to understand the world from

the view of the individuals in it. Similarly, Tracy (2013) contends that both knowledge and reality are created through communication. Likewise, Creswell (2009) asserts that meanings are created socially and are influenced by past actions and scenarios. In other words, meaning is dependent on human social interactions and through historical and cultural values that function within the lives of individuals. Cohen et al. (2017) suggest that in the interpretative paradigm, concern is placed on the individual. It acknowledges that each individual has their own experiences. The participants that are being studied are understood from within. This paradigm focuses on action and further acknowledges that humans are multifaceted and undergo various situations and contexts which influence the actions that they take.

Prabjandee (2020) contends that identity is created through interaction and communication within one's social contexts. Therefore, the interpretative paradigm was appropriate for this study which examined how English Home Language teachers created meaning through human social interaction, which led to the development of their personal and professional identities. Moreover, in the interpretative paradigm the researcher aims to understand the views that others have of the world. Cohen et al. (2007, p. 22) contend that researchers working within the interpretive paradigm "begin with individuals and set out to understand their interpretations of the world around them." Likewise, this study aimed to understand how English Home Language teachers interpreted the world around them and how it contributed to the development of their personal and professional identities.

Creswell (2009) argues that people strive to understand the world that they live in. The meanings that they assign to their experiences are subjective. Similarly, Leavy (2017) affirms that patterns of interaction and the process in which meaning is derived from in situations is given attention. Within the interpretive paradigm, the subjective experiences and the different meanings one associates with a situation is given importance. One hopes to achieve an understanding of the world that surrounds them. Additionally, Creswell (2009) contends that the goal of the researcher is to understand the views of the participants. As a researcher, I hoped to understand high school English Home Language teachers' personal and professional identities by understanding their social, cultural and professional worlds.

3.3 Qualitative Approach

According to Cohen et al. (2017), qualitative research is underpinned by the ontological assumption that people are creative and active individuals who create their own meanings. People create their own futures, but not necessarily from contexts that they choose, and people

and situations are unique. The epistemological assumption acknowledges that knowledge is attained from how one understands a particular context. All factors need to be considered when understanding a phenomenon and the focus is placed on subjective views. Cohen et al. (2017) contend that the methodological assumptions are characterised by rich thick descriptions and research must be conducted in a natural setting or context and there must be no interference from the researcher. In studying the personal and professional identities of English Home Language teachers, data obtained was subjective to the individual participants and the manner in which they understood how their social, cultural and professional contexts influenced the development of their personal and professional identities.

Creswell and Creswell (2018, p. 2) define qualitative research as an “approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem”. In the same vein, Merriam (2009) asserts that through qualitative inquiry, a researcher obtains data that is rich and descriptive. Additionally, Tracy (2013) maintains that this data emerges from problems positioned in the research site. Creswell (2009) argues that a feature of qualitative research is that it comprises of several methods of data generation and involves challenging procedures.

On the other hand, Leavy (2017) asserts that qualitative approaches provide the researcher with an understanding of the research topic by looking at how participants understand the experiences that they encounter in their lives. Likewise, Merriam (2009) contends that qualitative studies examine subjective experiences of people and how they derive in-depth meaning from them. Flores and Day (2006) argue that identity is a continuous process that is dynamic, where individuals try and understand the experiences that they go through in their daily lives. In this study, I was interested in gaining insights into the relationships between the experiences that teachers had and their personal and professional identities.

Creswell (2009, p. 40) maintains that qualitative research is conducted when, “we want to empower individuals to share their stories and hear their voices”. These stories unfold over time. He further adds that a qualitative study also enables the researcher to understand the impact of the participant’s context (personal and professional) on their experiences. Rodgers and Scott (2008) describe identity as being psychological and dependant on the context that one is situated within. This suggests that identity is influenced by different factors within contexts.

Teacher professional learning and teaching are influenced by different factors, for example teacher attitudes, working environments and contextual factors are intertwined with their personal lives and emotions (Day & Gu, 2007; Zembylas, 2003). Merriam (2009, p.14) asserts that “the overall purposes of qualitative research are to achieve an understanding of how people make sense out of their lives, delineate the process of meaning - making, and describe how people interpret what they experience”.

Given that this study aimed to understand English Home Language teachers’ experiences and their personal and professional identities, I believed that the qualitative research approach was most suitable for this study.

3.4 Narrative Research Design

According to Bell (2002), a narrative research design is based on the epistemological assumption that humans make sense of their experiences through storytelling. In the same vein, Bingley et al. (2008, p. 654) define narratives as a “form of expression that is recognizable as a story”. Specifically, discourses arranged in chronological order that tie up events in a way that is meaningful (Clandinin, 2006; Bingley et al., 2008; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). It is through stories that individuals form their personal interactions that define their lives thereby influencing and informing their practice (Bell, 2002; Clandinin et al., 2009). Prabjandee (2019) maintains that teacher identity is developed through accounts of one’s past. Likewise, in choosing a narrative approach, participants were given an opportunity to tell and retell stories of their experiences, that shaped their identities.

Clandinin and Caine (2008) define narratives as a way in which one understands their experiences. Likewise, Naidoo (2018, p. 6) maintains that narratives allow for an understanding and interpretation of human experience which means that “issues of voice and the influence of social, cultural and political contexts is emphasised.” In addition, Bell (2002) argues that stories are constantly restructured by new events and exist together with lifelong personal and social narratives. Furthermore, Clandinin et al. (2009) contend that as teachers interact with learners over the years, they become aware of who they are and who they are becoming. Their personal and professional identities do not remain constant. Norton and Early (2011) assert that it is through narratives that self-identity is constructed. Therefore, this study employed a narrative approach which helped teachers to understand what aided the development of their personal and professional identities as English Home Language teachers and enabled them to understand themselves.

Narratives allow researchers to present experiences “holistically in all its complexity and richness” in the form of stories (Bell, 2002, p. 209). Additionally, Clandinin et al. (2009) assert that if experiences cannot be expressed in words it can be expressed creatively, for example through photographs, collages or drawings.

Bell (2002) contends that narrative research has both advantages and limitations. Firstly, it enables researchers to study and understand experience (Barkhuizen & Wette, 2008; Naidoo, 2018). Bell (2002) argues that other research designs look at outcomes and disregard the impact of experience. Secondly, narrative research allows the researcher to attain information that participants do not know themselves since it allows for self-reflection (Barkhuizen & Wette, 2008; Bell, 2002).

A limitation of narrative research is that it is only suitable for a small number of participants since it requires close collaboration with participants which is time consuming (Bell, 2002). Barkhuizen and Wette (2008) contend that narratives might not allow for sufficient content to be attained because at times, there is a limit to what teachers can say. Additionally, teachers may respond with unconnected ideas. As a result, some topics of the research may only be covered briefly.

However, a narrative approach was suitable for this study as it allowed me to gather information from participants either verbally or through visuals, about their personal and professional experiences throughout their careers (Bell, 2002). In addition, a narrative approach gave them an opportunity to discuss how these experiences aided the development of their personal and professional identities (Ritchie & Wilson, 2000) through self-reflection (Golembek & Johnson, 2004). Furthermore, narratives are used to construct identities and highlight multifaceted identity positions and is therefore important when studying identity (Norton & Early, 2011; Taylor, 2017). Ford (2020) contends that narrative inquiry assists one in examining how to aid individuals and build on current research methods. Additionally, it allows one to reflect on the society they belong to, which in turn assists in enabling changes in language education.

3.5 Methods of Data Generation

The data generation methods that were used in this study were poetry, collages, and semi-structured interviews. These three methods generated data to address both research questions.

3.5.1 Poetry

The first method of data generation was through poetry. Szto et al. (2005, p. 135) define poetry as a “compression of experiences in words.” Poetry allows a researcher to become aware and understand the behaviour of human beings. Furthermore, it presents data that is consistent with research participants lived experiences. Additionally, poetry allows for a holistic understanding, by encompassing human emotions within their contexts. Poems are usually based on solid images taken from the real world. Additionally, Szto et al. (2005) argue that if one wants to understand the experiences and world of participants, they should be told to write a poem. Figurative language used in poetry, has the potential of highlighting essential themes in art-based narratives (Furman, 2006).

Poetry allows participants to express their deeper emotions, in context, which cannot be revealed during an interview. Butler-Kisber (2002, p.234) asserts that poetry is a way of “representing holistically what otherwise might go unnoticed.” Similarly, Furman (2006, p. 561) maintains that poetry creates “a space for an interactional process of discovery.” Furthermore, Bishop and Willis (2014) assert that through poetry one is able to reflect on their lived experiences as it provides a starting point to their experiences.

Poetry as a data generation instrument has both advantages and limitations

According to Reinertsen (2016, p. 39) the advantages of poetry are:

- Poetry has the ability to probe into the emotions of participants succinctly.
- It has the ability to stimulate creativity and imagination.
- Poetry allows for self-knowledge and reflection, especially in narrative research.
- An understanding of ones lived experiences can be understood

At the same time, Poindexter (2002) identified a major disadvantage of using poetry as a means of data generation. He contends that the use of poetry as a method of data generation is controversial and highly debated. In addition, Furman (2006) maintains that the data generated cannot be generalised.

In this study a qualitative approach was used. Accordingly, Creswell (2009) maintains that the results obtained from a qualitative approach cannot be generalised and attention is paid to detail rather than generalisation. Therefore, poetry was used as data generation instrument in this qualitative study as the focus was not placed on generalisation. At the same time, poetry also

allowed me as the researcher to understand how participants' identities developed over different life phases in their careers, through their lived experiences, that did not emerge during the semi-structured interviews (Szto et al., 2005).

In this study, English Home Language teachers were asked to write a poem reflecting on their past and present and the professional experiences that shaped their identities as teachers. Since poetry required the participants to consider what aspects of their lives they wanted to share, whether it be literal or figurative, it was introduced first to participants so that they had enough time to put their thoughts into words. After I met with participants to discuss the study, I explained the procedure and purpose of writing a poem. In addition, I provided them with a copy of the poem, "Where I'm from" by Velma L Pate (*Appendix 3*). Together, we read through the poem, and I explained to them that their poems should be about how their personal and professional identities developed over the course of their careers. This facilitated their understanding of what was required. After my discussion with participants, three of the five participants volunteered to write a poem. Data generated from these poems assisted in answering the first and second research questions about their personal and professional identities.

3.5.2 Collages

After poetry, collages were used to generate data. Butler-Kisber and Poldma (2010, p. 2) defines a collage as a process, where cuttings of pictures or images are pasted onto a surface in order to "portray phenomenon". According to Gerstenblatt (2013, p. 304) collages are a "visual representation" of the narratives of participants in a study. It is a flexible way of generating data in qualitative research. In addition, Davis and Butler-Kisber (1999) argue that a collage allows for insight and a deeper understanding of the events that have transpired in their lived experiences and emotions, that they had attached to these experiences. In a collage, the expression of one's thoughts become more flexible in comparison to traditional methods of data generation. Furthermore, collages help individuals recreate the experiences that they had (Butler-Kisber, 2002) and provides an in-depth understanding of these lived experiences (Butler-Kisber & Poldma, 2010). Unlike traditional methods of data generation, Butler-Kisber and Poldma (2010, p.3) contend that collages begin working from "feelings about something to the ideas they evoke". Additionally, Gerstenblatt (2013) affirms that collages have the ability to produce emotions that might not be able to be uncovered through interviews.

Butler-Kisber and Poldma (2010) assert that an advantage of collage making is that it can be done by people who do not have any experience of collages. The cutting and pasting of images produce a sense of satisfaction. Furthermore, it has the ability to link experiences of the past and present creating meaning. In the same vein, Gerstenblatt (2013, p.295) argues that collages “contextualise multiple realities” and enables a researcher to understand the meanings that participants place on the experiences of their pasts.

Research conducted by Mackworth-Young et al. (2020) on critical reflections on individual collages as a research method with young women living with HIV in Zambia highlighted the benefits of collages in research. It was found that collages enabled participants to express themselves while reflecting on their personal lives. Even though participants did not have any knowledge of how to design a collage, magazines as materials provided a point in which they could begin. Furthermore, Mackworth-Young et al. (2020) affirm that collages are able to show complex and layered identities of participants when compared to traditional methods of data generation. Although using a collage can provide the researcher with rich data, Nomakhwezi Mayaba and Wood (2015, p.8) contend that using a collage as a data generation instrument, “requires more time, patience, and flexibility on the part of the researcher.”

For this study of English Home Language teacher’s personal and professional identities, collages were a suitable method of generating data as it allowed them to think about their identities and objects or people, in their past and present, who contributed to the development of their personal and profession identities. Furthermore, Mackworth-Young et al. (2020) highlighted that collages reveal the multiple layers of identity. Therefore, collages were a valuable tool in generating data for this study as it enabled the researcher to understand the identity of participants at an in-depth level.

Due to time constraints and to decrease the number of interactions between participants, due to Covid-19 regulations, after my discussion of poetry as a data generation method, I met with participants individually, and explained the process of designing a collage. I explained that the making of a collage was strictly voluntary. As a result, two of the participants were eager to create collages. Moving away from the traditional method of perusing through magazines, participants preferred taking subject matter for their collages from the internet. One participant designed her collage on Microsoft Word, by copying and pasting pictures from the internet. The other opted for the more traditional method of using newspapers and magazines together with pictures from the internet. To remove the issue of time, I allowed the two participants to

complete their collages over three weeks. This provided them with sufficient time, and they were able to consider in depth the pictures they wished to use. On concluding, the two participants were asked to write a paragraph with words, pictures, and phrases. Data generated from the collage assisted me in answering the first and second research question about their personal and professional identities.

Leavy (2017) maintains that an advantage of art-based narratives is that it allows people to think deeply and gives them the ability to make connections between their contexts, emotions, and experiences and how it influences their lives. Additionally, art-based narratives are “often useful in studies involving identity work.” (p. 10) This study aimed to understand how teacher’s experiences, emotions and contexts influenced the development of their personal and professional identities, therefore making poetry and collages appropriate methods for data generation.

3.5.3 Semi-Structured Interviews

Data generation was concluded by conducting semi-structured interviews. Cohen et al. (2017, p. 506) define an interview as “an interchange of views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest, sees the centrality of human interaction for knowledge production, and emphasizes the social situatedness of research data.” Furthermore, an interview is not merely a means to generate data but it is also social and interpersonal. Likewise, Bertram and Christiansen (2014) contend that an interview is a conversation that occurs between a researcher and participant. In the same vein, Creswell (2009) asserts that an interview is an interchange of information that generally takes place face-to-face. On the same note, Leavy (2017, p. 139) argues that “interview methods use conversation as a learning tool”. Cohen et al. (2017) assert that an interview allows the researcher to use multi-sensory traits (verbal and non-verbal) in order to generate data. Even though the order of interview schedule questions can be changed, it still allows for spontaneous answers. Furthermore, Cohen et al. (2017) acknowledge that the interviewer has the ability to garner responses on complex phenomena.

Cohen et al. (2013) contend that interviews can be sub-divided into structured, semi-structured and unstructured. For the purpose of this study, a semi-structured, interview was used. Cohen et al. (2013) assert that in a semi-structured interview, interviewees respond to topics and questions, but the questions remain open-ended. Similarly, Leavy (2017) maintains that these questions do not have a pre-set of suitable answers. Open-ended questions allow the researcher to change the wording and order of the questions to suit the participant (Cohen et al., 2017;

Leavy, 2017). Likewise, Tracy (2013) affirms that the question or topics discussed are merely there to stimulate discussion and allow for probing. Furthermore, semi-structured interviews elicit content knowledge and tap into the emotions of participants. Additionally, Cohen et al. (2013, p. 506) assert that an “interview is a flexible tool for data collection”. As a result, rich in-depth knowledge is obtained.

Leavy (2017) defines a narrative interview as a semi-structured interview that allows research participants to tell their stories through open-ended questions. The stories that participants tell are related to their experiences and the different events that happened in their lives. Similarly, Cohen et al. (2013) affirm that participants are able to discuss the manner in which they interpret the contexts they live in and their subjective experiences. Therefore, semi-structured interviews allowed me to ascertain the relationship between contexts and experience and personal and professional identity development. Likewise, Tracy (2013) contends that interviews ensure greater understanding and allow the participants’ complex views and experiences, without any limitations, to be heard.

Interviews have both advantages and disadvantages. Kothari (2004, p.98) identified the following advantages of interviews:

- A large amount of information can be attained.
- There is greater flexibility. As a result, questions can be reworded to facilitate understanding.
- Observation can also be used while the respondent is answering a particular question.
- Information about respondents’ personal lives can be attained.
- Personal characteristics and information on the environment may be collected which will be valuable.

In addition, Kothari (2004, p. 99) identified the following disadvantages of interviews:

- There’s a possibility of bias arising from both interviewer and interviewee.
- This method consumes a lot of time.
- Sometimes the respondent maybe overstimulated by the presence of the interviewer. This might lead to the interviewee responding with information that they think is desirable.

This study required in-depth information on the interviewee's personal and professional lives and the influence of the environment on their identities. Therefore, the advantages of semi-structured interviews outweighed the disadvantages.

Nevertheless, Gerstenblatt (2013) contends that interviews can be intimidating making respondents uneasy and uncomfortable to tell their stories. He proposed that art-based narratives be considered as they can be adapted to diverse population groups and transcend the restrictions placed on language barriers. McNiff (2008) defines art-based narratives as a process that uses different forms of artistic expression to understand the experiences of research participants. Furthermore, this form of research allows for a holistic understanding of narratives of participants. It aims to acquire knowledge about life. Correspondingly, Mackworth-Young et al. (2020, p. 1) assert that "art-based research methods can enable people to generate data that provide insights into their lives." Furman (2006) and Butler-Kisber and Poldma (2010) maintain that art-based narratives uncover multisensory insights, in the environment of humans that might not have been noticed.

Leavy (2017) asserts that there are two forms of art-based narratives, namely literary and visual narratives. Literary forms consist of short stories, plays, essays and poetry. On the other hand, visual forms, include, drawings, photography, paintings and collages. Ford (2020) contends that narrative inquiry is a form of qualitative research that allows for examining human experiences through a multitude of methods in data generation including art-based narratives. In this study, I decided to use poetry and collages as tools for data generation, since these forms allowed for a greater understanding of the lived experience of participants, together with their contexts and emotions (Butler-Kisber, 2002; Davis & Butler-Kisber, 1999; Szto et al., 2005).

In this study, semi-structured interviews were the third data generation instrument. These interviews were conducted a week after I had met with participants to explain poetry and collages. I did this so that participants would not be bombarded with too much information, but at the same time not forgetting the purpose of this study. Semi-structured interviews were conducted individually ensuring that all Covid-19 protocols were in place. Questions were open-ended which allowed participants to speak freely. Furthermore, as the researcher, I was able to probe and ask participants to elaborate and clarify their statements. Semi-structured interviews were also used to answer the first and second research questions.

3.6 Research Context

The study was located in two schools in the Wembezi Circuit of the uThukela District in KwaZulu-Natal. The schools were situated centrally in a semi-urban town. The schools are multi-racial with respect to teachers and learners. The first school consisted of 980 learners and 30 members of staff. The school management team comprised of 6 individuals, namely the Principal, Deputy Principal and Departmental Heads for Languages, Commerce, Mathematics and Science, and Humanities. The second school comprised of 1100 learners and 48 members of staff. The SMT comprised of 7 members, namely the Principal, 2 Deputy Principals and 4 Departmental Heads.

The medium of instruction in both schools was English and only English was offered as the Home Language and isiZulu or Afrikaans as a First Additional Language. Both schools were made up of the General Education and Training (grades 8 and 9) and the Further Education and Training Phase (Grade 10-12). The participants for this study taught English Home Language in both phases. These teachers had been teaching between one and 25 years.

The schools were made up of learners from deep rural areas where English was not their first language. This presented a challenge, since English was the only medium of instruction. However, parents choose schools that offered English as a Home Language. This presented a problem for teachers teaching English Home Language which led to them become frustrated and anxious. Furthermore, many learners lived in poverty and with their grandparents or in child-headed households. Due to the restricted number of schools that offered English on a Home Language level, in the Wembezi circuit, classrooms were over-crowded. Both schools offered co-curricular and extra-curricular activities.

In 2021, we were in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic. Due to this, the dynamics of each school has changed. Learners attended school depending on the timetabling model that their schools used. The two participating schools used the alternate day timetabling model. In this model, different grades attended school on alternate days. However, Grade 12 learners attended school every day. To accommodate this method, the workloads of teachers in the study changed and they taught across all grades.

3.7 Purposive Sampling

Kothari (2004) defines sampling as a procedure that researchers use to select the participants of a study. In this study, purposive sampling was used. Cohen et al. (2017) define purposive

sampling as a procedure where the researcher deliberately chooses a particular group of individuals on the basis that they are typical and/or in possession of the distinctive characteristics that they were looking for. Additionally, Etikan et al. (2016, p. 2) argue that purposive sampling “is the deliberate choice of a participant due to the qualities the participants possess”. Correspondingly, Palinkas et al. (2015) maintain that subjects who have knowledge of what is being studied are identified and selected. Since this study aimed to understand the personal and professional identities of English Home Language teachers, a purposive sample of five English Home Language teachers were chosen as participants for this study. They possessed the knowledge that was required to generate data to address the research questions.

Mertens (2005, p. 317) maintains that a feature of purposeful sampling is that the sample is selected “with the goal of identifying information-rich cases,” with the aim of attaining a deeper understanding of what is being studied, and with the purpose of answering the research questions. In the same vein, Cohen et al. (2017) contend that a sample is drawn together to meet the specific needs of the study. When choosing a sample, Cohen et al. (2017) assert that access to the sample must be taken into consideration before a sample is decided on. Researchers should be aware of whether they will be able to gain access to the sample and if it is practical. Creswell (2009) concurs that individuals who are willing to participate in the study and those who are experts in the field of study, who can provide data on the phenomena, should be chosen for the study.

Five schools that offered English Home Language in the Wembezi Circuit of the uThukela District were identified. These schools were identified, since they were the only schools that offer English as a Home Language in the circuit. Of these five schools, two schools were easily accessible and were therefore chosen as research sites.

I purposively selected five participants who were English Home Language teachers at two high schools in the circuit. These participants taught in the General Education and Training Phase (GET) as well as the Further Education and Training Phase (FET). The criteria suggested by Creswell (2009) are the accessibility of participants, willingness to take part in the study, willingness to provide information, experience in the field and the ability to provide data on the phenomena of the study, was used as a guide in the selection of participants for this study. Furthermore, the selection criteria for participants were also the number of years that they were in the

teaching profession. According to Bell (2002), since narrative research requires close collaboration with participants which is time consuming, he suggests that a small number of participants be selected. Therefore, only five English Home Language high school teachers were selected. Cohen et al. (2007) affirm that the researcher using purposive sampling is interested in attaining in-depth knowledge from individuals who possess it. Participants identified in these schools possessed in-depth knowledge and were able to provide rich, in-depth data for the study.

3.8 Data Analysis

Szto et al. (2005) maintain that qualitative research produces a large amount of data. Therefore, they suggest that the researcher “reduce the information to discover patterns, categories or themes” (p. 147). Similarly, Cohen et al. (2007, p. 461) contend that data analyses is a process of “organizing, accounting for, and explaining the data..., making sense of data in terms of the participants’ definitions of the situation, noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities”.

Riesman (2008) contends that in narrative research, thematic analyses is used to interpret the data generated. According to Clarke and Braun (2017), thematic analysis is a procedure for recognizing, analysing, and deducing outlines of meaning (‘themes’) in qualitative data. Consequently, codes, categories and themes arise from the findings (Mertens, 2005). Clarke and Braun (2006, as cited in Xu & Zammit, 2020) describe themes as patterns in data that contain important aspects within the data that is related to the research question. Clarke and Braun (2006, as cited in Xu and Zammit, 2020, p.2) outline six steps in the data analysis process including familiarizing yourself with your data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report.

Xu and Zammit (2020) add that the steps outlined above incorporates both inductive and deductive analyses.

Inductive analysis is a process where categories and themes emerge from data (Cohen et al., 2007) and patterns are detected leading to interpretations (Barkhuizen & Wette, 2008). In contrast, Creswell and Creswell (2018), define deductive analyses as a process where a researcher starts with a set of themes that is then used to organise data. Additionally, Woiceshyn and Daellenbach (2018) contend that deductive analyses may begin from a theoretical foundation. For the purpose of this study the first research question was analysed inductively whereas the second research question, deductively.

I analysed the poems using Furman et al.'s (2006, p. 27) five methods of data analyses. At first, I read the poems several times with the aim of familiarizing myself with the writing. Secondly, I made notes on my overall impression of their poems. Thereafter a line-by-line analyses was conducted. General themes were identified. A fifth round of coding was conducted a week later to ensure that I had not missed anything of value.

Participants were asked to write a paragraph explaining their collages. The paragraph was used to analyse the collages.

Organising of data, codes and themes were guided by the two research questions

The first research question analysed inductively was:

1. What do English Home Language teacher's stories tell us about their personal and professional identities?

The second research question, was answered deductively using Day and Gu's (2007) professional life phases as a theoretical framework, which was:

2. How do personal and professional identities of English Home Language teachers develop at different life phases in their careers.

Cohen et al. (2007) assert that organising data using the research questions ensures that relevant data is generated, and it allows for the material to be organised coherently. Furthermore, it directs the reader to the actual phenomena that is being studied. By using this process, all the relevant data allowed me to address the research questions. A further advantage of this process is that it "enables patterns, relationships, comparisons and qualifications across data types to be explored conveniently and clearly" (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 468).

3.9 Trustworthiness

Lahman et al. (2010) contend that one of the most important aspects of the research process is how trustworthiness is addressed. According to Lincoln and Guba and Ary et al. (1985, 2002, as cited in Cohen et al., 2017, p. 248) there are four criteria to ensure validity in qualitative research. They are credibility: the truth value, transferability: generalizability, dependability: consistency, and confirmability: neutrality.

Korstjens and Moser (2018, p. 121) refer to credibility as "the confidence that can be placed in the truth of the research findings." Furthermore, it ensures that the research findings show accurate and original information that was obtained and indicate the original viewpoints of

participants. Likewise, Cohen et al. (2017) assert that credibility refers to whether the study indeed reflected the participants' reality and lived experiences. According to Kumar (2011), since qualitative studies reflect the beliefs and experiences of participants of a study, in order to ensure credibility in a study, the research findings should be taken back to participants since they are the most effective in determining whether the study reflected their experiences and perceptions accurately. The more confirmation that was obtained indicated that the more valid the study was. Additionally, in order to increase the credibility of a study, Cohen et al. (2017) suggest that the process of triangulation be used for data generation. Triangulation is a process where multiple instruments are used to generate data improving the validity and reliability of the findings (Cohen, et al., 2017; Golafshani, 2003). To increase the credibility of this study, three instruments were used for data generation, namely; semi-structured interviews, poetry, and collages.

In the same vein, Korstjens and Moser (2018) assert that dependability is related to the findings remaining stable over a period. Dependability encompasses participants examining recommendations, interpretation, and findings to ensure it is supported by the data that was received. Additionally, dependability refers to the quality of data generation and data analyses (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014; Creswell, 2009; Tracy, 2013). According to Korstjens and Moser (2018), confirmability refers to whether a study can be confirmed by other researchers and the findings of the study are not from the researcher's mind, but from data received. In addition, confirmability refers to whether the findings of the research are supported by the data that was obtained during the research process and whether the results can be confirmed. Kumar (2011) maintains that this can only be made certain if researchers follow the exact process when conducting the study.

Korstjens and Moser (2018) assert that transferability refers to whether a study can be transferred and the extent to which the research can be replicated in other contexts. People have various interpretations of different phenomena and interpretations of both a researcher and participants are subjective. Likewise, Creswell (2009) argues that the results of a qualitative study cannot be generalised. In the same vein, Greene and Caracelli (1997, as cited in Creswell, 2009, p.193) maintain that qualitative researchers are concerned with "particularity rather than generalizability." On the other hand, Kumar (2011) asserts that by providing a comprehensive description of the process involved in the study, the study can be replicated.

On a similar note, Butler-Kisber (2002) and Cohen et al. (2017) assert that trustworthiness in qualitative research is obtained through detailed descriptions of procedures, and rich in-depth data. Additionally, Creswell (2009, p. 192) asserts that the setting of the research site must be discussed to such an extent that the “description may transport readers to the setting.” In addition, Creswell (2009) maintains that trustworthiness can be attained when data is audiotaped and transcribed verbatim. Therefore, the semi-structured interviews that were conducted for this study, were audiotaped and transcribed verbatim. Participants of this study were given back the interview transcripts to check whether the correct information was transcribed. Birt et al. (2016) refer to this process as member checking. Furthermore, Doyle (2007, as cited in Birt et al., 2016, p.3) emphasises that “member checking is used to validate, verify or assess the trustworthiness of qualitative results.” At the same time, Creswell (2009) affirms that member checking also increases trustworthiness.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

Sobočan et al. (2019) argue that in each phase of a research process, ethical issues must be considered. Vanclay et al. (2013, p. 243) define ethics as a “moral obligation and responsibility” towards research participants whereas, Cavan (1977, as cited in Cohen et al. 2017, p. 112) define ethics as “a matter of principled sensitivity to the rights of others.” Likewise, Cohen et al. (2017) affirm that in educational research, the researcher must take into account the repercussions of the study on participants. The dignity of all human beings must be acknowledged. In any research study undertaken, there must be complete honesty, good intentions and issues handled with utmost sensitivity. Neumann, (2007) makes reference to four principles of ethical consideration, namely autonomy, non-maleficence, beneficence, and justice.

It is necessary that participants in the study give informed consent. This is referred to as autonomy (Neumann, 2007). Cohen et al. (2017, p. 122) reiterate that informed consent, “protects and respects the right of self-determination” in participants. Bertram and Christiansen (2014) assert that a clear explanation of the research project must be given to the participants. Furthermore, participation in the project must be voluntary.

Due to the regulations of the Covid-19 pandemic, face-to-face meetings with principals and participants were not possible. Therefore, the purpose of the study was explained to principals telephonically. Informed consent forms were then emailed to the respective school principals requesting permission for the research to be conducted at their schools and allow teachers to

be participants. Thereafter participants were telephoned and the purpose of the study, data generation methods and timeframes were explained to them. A date was then set for a meeting with all participants ensuring that all covid-19 protocols were in place. Informed consent forms were emailed to the five participants. They signed the forms, consenting to participate in the study. It was explained to them that their participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study at any time if they wished to.

Wiles et al. (2008, p. 422) argue that “researchers seek to protect research participants from the accidental breaking of confidentiality is through the process of anonymization.” Likewise, Cohen et al. (2017) contend that the crux of anonymity is that the identity of participants should not be revealed through the information that was provided. According to Wiles et al. (2008) this could be done through the use of pseudonyms. This protects the identity of the research participants. In this study, pseudonyms were used for the names of the schools as well as research participants.

Cohen et al. (2017, p. 130) suggest that a way of protecting a participant’s right to privacy “is through the promise of confidentiality: not disclosing information from a participant in any way that might identify that individual or that might enable the individual to be traced.” Wiles et al. (2008) and Cohen et al. (2007) point out that confidentiality must be maintained, and data generated during this study should not be disclosed or by no means reveal their identities. Since this study focused on the personal and professional identity of participants, their biographies were detailed and in-depth. Even though pseudonyms were used, participants were afforded the opportunity to read through their biographies and findings of the study. They consented and validated the findings and biographies.

Additionally, Vanassche and Kelchtermans (2016) point out that permission must also be obtained to have interviews recorded. Interviews were audio-taped and transcribed verbatim. For this study, permission from the Department of Education was obtained. Ethical clearance was obtained from the University of KwaZulu-Natal’s Research Ethics committee as well.

3.11 Conclusion

In this chapter, the research design and methodology were discussed. The chapter discussed the interpretative paradigm, qualitative research approach and narrative research design and justified why these were appropriate for this study. Furthermore, this chapter discussed the research context and data generation methods, namely, semi-structured interviews, poetry and

collages and the advantages and disadvantages of each method. The purposive sampling strategy and criteria for selecting the purposive sample was also explained. This was followed by a discussion on how trustworthiness and ethical considerations were ensured. The following chapter presents and analyses the data in response to the two research questions.

Chapter 4: Presentation and Analysis of Data

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter outlined the methodological approach employed in this study to address the two research questions. The focus of this chapter is on the presentation and analysis of the data. Day and Gu's (2007) dimensions of teacher identity was employed as a conceptual framework to analyse and interpret the results. Additionally, relevant literature reviewed in Chapter 2 was used to make sense of the findings of this study.

Data was obtained from five participants who taught English Home Language in the Senior and Further Education and Training Phase at two high schools in the Wembezi Circuit of the uThukela district. Narratives were constructed from data generated through semi-structured interviews, collages and poetry. Data generated from semi-structured interviews were transcribed verbatim and cross-checked by participants to ensure validity. Narratives generated from collages and poetry were examined and read several times in order to have an in-depth understanding of the data. Through these processes common themes were derived to address the first research question. On the other hand, the second research question was analysed using the themes outlined in Day and Gu's (2007) professional life phases. Analysis was guided by the two research questions:

1. What do English Home Language teacher's stories tell us about their personal and professional identities and their teaching of English Home Language?
2. How do personal and professional identities of English Home Language teachers develop at different life phases in their careers?

The participants of the study had different understandings of teachers' personal and professional identity, which was dependant on the various contextual factors that they were faced with. This was in line with Beauchamp and Thomas' (2009) definition of identity as a continuous process involving the individual and their context.

This chapter begins with a brief biography of the five participants obtained through the data generated from the semi-structured interviews, collages, and poems. All five participants were allocated pseudonyms to protect their anonymity allowing them to communicate without the fear of being exposed. Participants of the study were asked to provide pseudonyms. The pseudonyms provided were: Jade, Mary, Khan, Jenny, and Mam. This allowed participants to

be honest and open and provide detailed narratives on their personal and professional experiences which influenced the development of their personal and professional identities. Furthermore, pseudonyms were used for the schools to conceal their names and ensure anonymity. This is followed by an analysis of the results.

4.2 Biographical Profiles of Participants

4.2.1 Jade's Narrative

Jade, 32 years of age, had been teaching for almost two years. She was teaching grade eight, and at the time of the study was teaching both grades eight and nine. She obtained her Bachelor of Education degree in 2019 specialising in English Home Language and Psychology. Jade described herself as a positive individual who always strived to be the best that she could be. Jade's secondary school moulded her into the person she had become. As a learner, she participated in various extra mural activities. She was surrounded by teachers who were, "*supportive and dedicated*" and made sure that they knew that their, "*futures were a priority.*"

Jade's career as a teacher began later on in life, as she was uncertain about which career path she wanted to follow. Jade grew up amongst a family of teachers. However, she attributes her choosing a career as a teacher to her aunt who is currently the principal of the school in which Jade currently teaches. She was inspired by the manner in which her aunt motivated learners and wanted to be an inspiration and motivator herself. Jade believed that she always saw herself as a teacher but needed motivation to pursue it as a career. Jade identifies as homosexual and the support and motivation she received from her partner gave her the "*final push*" she needed. Jade looks up to her partner and admires the manner in which she takes education seriously, making a better life for herself. Prior to meeting her partner, Jade did not take anything seriously. She started off as a rebellious teenager who grew into herself. Her partner motivated her and made her want to be a better person. She concludes that her partner was a major influence in developing her personal identity.

The school that Jade teaches at was centrally located in a small town. She described it as a semi-urban school that was well resourced. Even though the school was a feeder school to local primary schools in the area, it was populated mainly with learners from deep rural areas. These learners spoke isiZulu at home but choose to attend an English Home Language school. According to Jade, this was added pressure on teachers, as she first had to teach these learners

basic language skills before attempting to complete the curriculum prescribed by the Department of Basic Education.

Even though this may be frustrating at times, the conditions under which these learners lived and grew up in had humbled her as a person and contributed to moulding her personal and professional identity. The plight of these learners had enabled her to appreciate what she had and make an added effort in providing them with a holistic education.

Jade sees herself as a good person. She believed that in order to succeed one had to, “*Live, Laugh and Love*” as apparent in her collage (refer to Figure 4.2). She is sensible and tries to be positive, despite these trying times as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. She defined teacher identity as the way one saw themselves. She described herself as an introvert. She preferred being in the “*background*” and welcomed the opinion of others. Professionally she felt that she was still growing and had to “*make a lot of improvements.*”

Jade believed firmly that her personal and professional identity overlapped. She saw herself as a person who had a sense of humour. She brought this humour into the classroom in order to help learners understand the concepts being studied. She believed that there should be a balance in one’s personal and professional identities. She feels it is not “*fair to the learners that we must bring our personal lives into the classroom.*”

4.2.2 Mary’s Narrative

Mary was a 45-year-old single mother of two children and had a National Professional Diploma in Education majoring in English Home Language and Geography. She began her career at the age of 19 years at an industrial school for girls with behavioural problems. Mary’s passion for working with children lead to her taking on a position as an English Home Language teacher a few years later. Thereafter, Mary moved to a primary school where she began teaching English Home Language from grade four to grade six. According to Mary, teaching in a primary school required a lot of patience since learners were still immature and fighting for attention. However, the workload was manageable with very little added pressure. Comparatively, when she moved to a secondary school, she encountered the reverse; mature learners but added pressure. There had to be a shift in her professional identity. However, due to her experience she was able to make the transition smoothly. In total she had been in the teaching fraternity for twenty-five years and had taught English Home Language for twenty years. Mary believed that she was meant to be a teacher as she explains:

When you growing up you tend to have a passion for somethings. And my passion was always standing in front of children and teaching and doing spelling test with them, and writing with them in my journal all the time so, I think from that experience growing up, I think I always meant to be a teacher.

Mary's children took priority in her life. However, Mary was of belief that colleagues should also take precedence since one spends more hours with them than anyone else in life. She was able to maintain good relations amongst her colleagues. Additionally, Mary described herself as a very approachable teacher who had a good rapport with learners. Working in a school with learners who had behavioural problems had made her more understanding and sensitised to the various backgrounds and situations that learners came from, together with their differing personalities.

Mary attributed her passion for teaching English Home Language to her own English teacher when she was in high school. Mary described herself as animated, dramatic and broad- minded, while still attempting to accommodate the plight of the learners. Furthermore, she was supported by her parents who encouraged her in whatever career path she wanted to follow.

Mary described the school that she currently taught at as being "*fairly well-structured.*" It had good infrastructure, was well resourced and safe. The school was populated with learners from surrounding and deeply rural areas. These learners were poverty-stricken and had very little knowledge of English, which presented a challenge. As a teacher, she believed that there must be a shift in identity, especially in teachers who believe teaching is a linear process. Teaching is a circular process that incorporates society, culture, and social circumstances.

Mary described teacher identity as the manner in which one saw themselves as a teacher. As a teacher, she believed that one's professional and personal identities cannot overlap. Since one was working with children, they needed to guard what could and could not be said, since one needed to be a role model to learners. She describes teacher identity as "*very, very respectable and watches how they speak and watches how they walk and watches how they dress, and your manner in which you approach people and, and so forth, for me that will be my teacher identity.*"

Professionally, Mary felt that she was much more restrictive in what she did and said. She believed that in order to get along with others, she needed to be a different person at work. However, she felt that even though she was a different person, her personal and professional

identities overlapped at times, since one spent more time with the individuals at work than with anyone else. Therefore, one could not be guarded all the time.

4.2.3 Mam's Narrative

Mam, a 32-year-old mother of three, had been teaching English Home Language for eleven years at high school level. She was in possession of a Bachelor of Education degree specialising in English Home Language and Psychology. Mam did not see herself as a teacher but as a journalist. Her parents influenced her choice of career. Due to cultural reasons, Mam was not allowed to leave home and study at a university. She was forced to use distance learning and opted to complete her Bachelor of Education Degree.

Her specialisation in English was inspired by her high school English teacher, whom she described as being passionate and exciting. She enjoyed her English lessons thoroughly. The teachers at her school were also involved in the lives of learners. Therefore, if it meant that she would be a teacher, she decided it would be an English teacher since her passion was in the subject and she wanted to follow in her luminaries "*footsteps*." Furthermore, Mam saw herself as an intellectual who always excelled in school. Obtaining a distinction in English at grade 12 level also influenced her choice when she was choosing her field of specialisation.

In her life, her children featured prominently and played a huge role in the decisions that she made. According to her, her children had played a crucial role in her growth as an individual and in the growth of her personal identity as "*being a mother has really influenced who I am*." Owing to this she had a broader perspective of the world around her.

Mam taught at a public school that she described as having, "*lots of kids*." The school was populated with learners from outlying areas as well as the immediate surroundings. These children came from under-privileged societies resulting in them being disadvantaged in many ways. These learners also came from "*broken homes*" and were unable to survive financially. Mam sympathised with these learners and took it into consideration when she worked with them. She had to adjust her professional identity so that she could be more accommodating to the circumstances of the learners she taught.

Mam understood teacher identity as the type of teacher one envisages to be. A teacher with exceptional morals and values. She described herself as a very reserved individual who preferred her own company. However, she emphasised that she was a dedicated individual who, "*would never leave anything undone*."

4.2.4 Khan's Narrative

Khan had been in the profession for 19 years and was 49 years old. Khan was in possession of a National Professional Diploma in Education and an Advanced Certificate in Education in English Home Language. She was in the process of completing her Bachelor of Education Honours degree; however, did not finish due to family commitments.

As a learner herself, Khan identified as a sports fanatic. Even though she excelled academically, sport was her passion. Her motivation for going to school every day was the thought of being able to participate in some sort of sporting activity. She believes that when she was growing up, sport was encouraged whereas at present it was very restricted, and current learners were not given the opportunities that she had received.

Khan believed that she was "*born to be a teacher.*" While growing up she enjoyed reading. Prior to joining the teaching profession, Khan read books of a religious nature to women of the Islamic faith. This was where she was inspired to pursue a career in teaching as she felt a sense of accomplishment after each session. Furthermore, the women who she read to encouraged her to pursue a career in teaching. As a result, after marriage she completed her teaching qualifications.

According to Khan, while growing up, there were very little opportunities for women and they were dominated by men. Women saw themselves as only being responsible for managing the household "*...women weren't considered as breadwinners or going out into the career orientated path.*" However, her husband, whom she described as her best friend, was liberal and supportive and persuaded her to pursue her career. After marriage there was a shift in her personal identity as she was able to live out her dreams without any restrictions.

Khan had been teaching English in grades 11 and 12 for a number of years. However, she felt that the foundation in the senior phase was not strong and she would be better suited teaching in Grade 8. She believed that she would be able to "*rectify the problem from the bottom.*" At the time of the study, she was teaching grades 8 and 12.

Khan described the school that she taught at as being well developed structurally. However, the classrooms were relatively small, and some classes did not have flooring. Comparatively though to other schools in the area, her school was well maintained. The school was populated with learners from different social backgrounds, from societies that were both advantaged and less advantaged. Khan explains that a number of issues arose, however she had not had any

problems and commanded respect. She described herself as compassionate but at the same time professional. Her compassion for the learners was derived from her love and compassion for her own children.

Khan equates teacher identity to the manner in which one was expected to behave when around learners. Furthermore, she added that it was also the respect and treatment of learners in a humane way. Identity was also the manner in which one handled issues that arose in the moment. Compassion and understanding were a prerequisite. However, she firmly believed that her identity was to *“act like a gentleman and be a lady.”*

4.2.5 Jenny’s Narrative

Jenny, who was 35 years old, began her teaching career at the age of 17 as a locum teacher. At that time, she was unqualified. She was offered a bursary and studied towards a National Professional Diploma in Education. Thereafter, she completed her Advanced Certificate in Education. Jenny is also in possession of a Bachelor of Education Honours degree in Education Management. She had been teaching English Home Language for 18 years.

Growing up, Jenny and her family experienced a number of financial difficulties. Jenny completed her primary school education at an Islamic institution. She credited her accomplishments and achievements to the fact that she was intellectually gifted. Due to ethical issues that arose, Jenny moved to a public high school where she grew as an individual. She excelled and was credited for her achievements. Jenny described herself as a rebellious teenager and only had a change in attitude after meeting her husband. He encouraged her to channel her goals into a career.

After matriculation, Jenny wanted to pursue a career in law. However due to financial constraints, she was unable to do so. She believes that her becoming a teacher was due to divine intervention. She explains *“teaching practically in the classroom and being around the children, made me feel inclined, that I was supposed to study teaching. So, I began my journey in the profession.”*

Jenny’s personal identity was shaped by her cultural faith which restricted the growth of women. She was the daughter of a polygamous marriage which resulted in the absence of a stable home environment. However, after marriage she was given the opportunity to live her life the way she wanted too. Her identity grew and changed together with her husband. She

was given the opportunity to experience life the way it was meant to be experienced. As a mother of two her children were her priority.

Jenny taught at a school she described as advantaged. However, due to the large number of learners there was insufficient floor space. When compared to other schools in the area, the school was well resourced and catered for the basic needs of the learners. Even though she considered the school to be privileged, the “*funding is low, we do our outmost to make things happen.*” The school was populated with learners from different social and financial backgrounds and each year Jenny encountered a variety of learners. As a result, she had to change her perceptions, methods of instruction and behaviour accordingly. Jenny believes the learners were of utmost importance and should be prioritised.

Jenny viewed teacher identity as what constituted being a teacher. Teachers were always to present themselves in a respectable manner. Furthermore, she believes that the personal identity of teachers should not overlap with their professional identities to a certain extent.

4.3 Analysis of Data and Emerging Themes

This section presents the data that was generated from the poetry, collages, and semi-structured interviews. The data generated aimed to address both research questions. Thematic analysis was used to interpret the data since a narrative study was undertaken (Riesman, 2008). Codes and categories emerged from the data (Mertens, 2005). The themes that emerged shed light on the personal and professional identities of English Home Language teachers in the Senior and Further Education and Training Phase. The first research question was analysed inductively as themes emerged from the data generated. On the other hand, the second research question was analysed deductively since data was arranged and organised by themes identified in the conceptual framework. The data is presented and analysed according to the research questions.

4.4 Research Question One

What do English Home Language teacher’s stories tell us about their personal and professional identities?

The first research question was analysed inductively. From the data generated, multiple identities were identified including teachers in a pastoral role, being a lifelong learner and experts in pedagogy.

4.4.1 Multiple Identities

According to Beauchamp and Thomas (2011) and Christensen (2019), there are multiple identities that change because of factors within societies and communities which teachers are aware of, allowing for reflection, enabling them to understand how the various identities affect their teaching practice. The values and experiences that one uses to make sense of their reality is being continuously interpreted (Flores & Day, 2006). Furthermore, the development of identity is dependent on different factors within a particular context. Each individual experiences a variety of situations resulting in the development of multiple identities. Data revealed that participants in this study displayed multiple identities. The following identities were identified from the data: a teacher in a pastoral role, a teacher as a lifelong learner and a teacher as an expert in pedagogy.

4.4.1.1 Teacher in a Pastoral Role

In the schools that the participants taught at there were diverse learners who came from different communities. Most learners came from poverty-stricken families and broken homes, lacking financial security and support. Khan, Jenny, Mary and Mam took on the role of parents as they tried to encourage these learners. As a result, their identities shifted to take on the roles that they felt were necessary for the wellbeing of their learners.

Khan explained, *“I think a lot of kids come to me as they see me as a guidance counsellor because they’ve come to me with their issues, I try to guide them as far as possible...”*

While Khan believed that she was more of a counsellor to the learners, Jenny viewed herself as a friend assisting learners to become better individuals in life. Jenny acknowledged that, *“[I am] a teacher who is more like, like a friend.”* Furthermore, Jenny also believed: *“we are there to help the child and we there urh to hold and mould our learners but to know that you are touching lives and you empowering a child to go out in the real world and to actually make a life through”*

Mary, on the other hand, explained that she always had a love for children and this love overflowed into her professional life, *“I’m quite good at imparting information and knowledge to children, also they are very comfortable with me, have a love for children”* Mary believed that she was more of a motherly figure towards the learners.

Mam similarly asserted that she was responsible for shaping the lives of learners that she taught. Furthermore, she hoped to ensure that she was able to make them better citizens,

“To mould these children, I was going to make them better and you know help them you know to be a better people.” Even though participants took on different roles towards learners, it was clear that they aimed to enhance their physical and emotional wellbeing, which is an essential foundation for learning.

With reference to this, Rodrigues et al. (2018) argue that as a teacher, one has to be sensitive to the social diversity that exists in different schooling communities which results in teachers responding to the needs of learners as they arise. As a result, the identities of teachers are being challenged considerably. Teachers in this study were mentors and *“motherly”* figures towards the learners they taught. The pastoral role taken by participants tried to ensure the wellbeing of learners despite the circumstances that they were surrounded by. This notion is in line with Smit and Fritz (2008) and Cross and Ndofirepi (2015) who argue that the expectations of teachers in South Africa goes beyond teaching and learning due to the social climate. A social climate that was brought upon by the apartheid system that discriminated against groups of people, thereby facilitating inequality. Correspondingly, Beauchamp and Thomas (2011) contend that when teachers take on different roles, their personal identity and professional identity undergoes a metamorphosis. This means that the identities of participants in this study had to undergo changes which allowed them to adapt to the situation.

In addition, Davids (2018) maintains that the personal identities of teachers influence the way in which they relate to learners, which in turn helps develop democratic citizens. This resonates with Rodrigues et al. (2018) who argue that each teachers’ identity is different and unique as it is moulded by the social dynamics of the school. The ability of teachers to adapt to different circumstances and situations within the schooling community, taking on different roles leads to a shift in identity (Prabjandee, 2020).

Accordingly, Day et al. (2006b) affirm that interactions in their personal lives influence the way in which teachers interact professionally. Furthermore, teachers react differently in different situations. This is consistent with Day and Gu’s (2007) conceptual framework which acknowledges the interrelationship between teachers’ personal, professional and situated dimensions of identity. Participants in this study displayed an overlapping of these three dimensions of teacher identity (Day et al., 2006b). Consequently, a balance in the three dimensions allowed teachers to take on a pastoral role effectively. This resonates with Salinas and Ayala (2018) who assert that one cannot distinguish between their personal and professional identity, since teaching requires a great deal of personal involvement.

4.4.1.2 Being a Lifelong Learner

All the participants had different needs and requirements and had different aspects in their lives which they believed required more work. However, the most common thread was the changing of the curriculum several times in South Africa that had forced them to re-learn certain aspects. At the time of the study, the Curriculum and Assessment Policy was the curriculum that was being followed. Jenny expressed her feelings towards the several curriculum changes:

The ever-changing urh concepts, terminology and syllabus such as you know the caps curriculum and so forth. We are constantly required to change to adapt, to, like a simple change-over of set work gets me studying all over again.

On the other hand, Mary felt, *“I don’t think it’s to do with going and per se, study. I think it’s a personal, it’s a personal development.”* Mary believed that the identities of teachers required development together with a training in content. With the numerous changes taking place, Mary explained she had to, *“read and take study guides and so forth and read those study guides.”*

Jenny expressed her dissatisfaction by stating,

Can I blame the department of education for firstly the marking is horrific? I think every English teacher if there’s one thing that makes them want to quit, it’s the immense amount of marking that we take home.

Jenny further added that from the beginning of her career she had to learn and digest a lot of information. However, due to the continuous change in concepts she had to study all over again, since as a teacher, she was required to adapt to the change. Therefore, she believed learning was *“gradual and it’s a constant experience.”*

Similarly, Khan like Jenny, believed that each year new concepts were introduced and concepts that were introduced in the past had been reintroduced. Khan suggested that teachers should take cognisance of the fact that it was imperative that one becomes knowledgeable so that they could become aware of all the intricacies of the subject being taught. Failing which, learners would become disadvantaged.

In contrast, two participants namely Mam and Jade did not see the curriculum as an issue but felt that their approach to delivering the lessons needed change. Mam felt that her methods of

teaching could be incorrect which could be the reason for learners' poor performance. She felt she needed to *"sit in on a lesson of some of my colleagues... to improve myself."*

Jade, on the other hand, felt that she lacked confidence and after the end of the lesson questioned her abilities as a teacher. She added, *"every time I leave that class, I feel like there's something that I could have done better."*

Correspondingly, Ghanizadeh and Ostad (2016) explain that the development of one's professional identity is dependent on their willingness to actively participate in professional development and learning. Likewise, Beauchamp and Thomas (2011) maintain that in order for teachers to develop a strong professional identity they must be willing to take action for their own education. Participants in this study felt that they still required a lot of learning. None of the participants believed that they had learnt everything they needed to know about the subject. This suggested that they did not consider themselves experts in the subjects they taught. What was noteworthy, however, was that these participants had taken the initiative to reskill themselves. This resonates with Beauchamp and Thomas (2011) who contend that taking action and initiative for one's own development is linked to the development of a stronger professional identity. Correspondingly, Beijaard et al. (2000) contend that how teachers see themselves in relation to the subjects they teach contributes to the development of their professional identities.

Similarly, Yazan (2018) maintains that teachers' personal and professional identities are influenced by what they believe about themselves. This was evident in this study as both Mam and Jade believed that they were not effective classroom practitioners. As a result, they were unaware of whether learners had grasped the themes being studied. This was detrimental to their professional identity as Kelchtermans (1993, as cited in Day et al., 2006a) affirms that in order for one's professional identity to evolve, teachers must have a strong self-image and healthy self-esteem. Accordingly, studies conducted by Day (2013), suggested that teachers require support both personally and professionally in order to become resilient and develop a stronger self-concept, strengthening their professional identity. Teachers in this study placed emphasis on the personal support they received from their respective partners. However, only Jade acknowledged that she had received professional support from the school management team, which had enabled her to adapt to the profession becoming more resilient. This supports Day's (2013) study.

The findings above lend itself to Day and Gu's (2007) three dimensions of teacher identity, namely, the personal, professional, and situated dimensions. Day and Gu (2007) maintain that when teachers are feeling positive about their own development it meant that their three dimensions were in balance and as a result, they were able to face many challenges. The professional dimension guides teachers as to what is expected of them when they are in a classroom. In the same vein, Jade and Mam lack confidence and were unable to recognise whether they managed their lessons successfully. According to Day and Gu (2007), this suggests an imbalance in the personal, professional, and situated dimensions which was hampering the development of their professional identity. Day and Gu (2007) contend that teachers need to have a strong self-image in order to fulfil their professional lives which will ultimately shape their identity.

4.4.1.3 Experts in Pedagogy

Pedagogy is used as an umbrella term encompassing both aspects of teaching and the emotional and social wellbeing of learners (Beijaard et al., 2000). Participants in this study tended to focus mainly on the latter since they believed that no one was an expert in teaching in the classroom. Accordingly, they believed that it was a circular process. Therefore, in the discussion that follows emphasis was placed on the emotional and social aspect of pedagogy.

In her narrative, Khan believed that learners saw her as a confidant, whom they could trust and share their problems and issues with. Learners had also come to her with sensitive issues. Khan emphasised that aside from being a teaching practitioner, teachers were also in loco parentis.

Similarly, Jenny saw herself as a parent to the learners who she taught. Her personal identity as a parent allowed her to engage with and understand learners better. She explained, *"I always believe that when I see a child, I always put my child's face in front of them and think how I would like my own child to be treated in that particular situation."*

On the other hand, Mary had a better understanding of the social and economic lives of learners she taught.

When they come to school, some of them are tired, they've been travelling for long distances, some of them you can see are actually hungry because they haven't eaten so they battle a bit with their concentration, and I think also on the level of performance as well.

Her compassion for learners stemmed from her previous experience working with learners with similar backgrounds. Mary also worked with children with behavioural problems. This held her in good stead when dealing with issues relating to this.

With respect to this, Beijaard et al. (2000) maintain that the development of teachers' professional identity arises from the way in which they viewed their capabilities as subject and pedagogy experts. Part of being an expert does not only require knowledge of teaching but also the ability to understand learners holistically, including their emotional and social predicaments. Mary, Khan, and Jenny believed that their experiences enabled them to understand learners from a social and emotional background thereby creating a better repertoire with them.

This resonates with Beijaard et al. (2000) who contends that previous knowledge and experience equips teachers with the skills to manage problems and situations in different settings with ease. Mary remains committed to the wellbeing of her learners.

Accordingly, Beijaard et al. (2000) contend that this role begins to merge with teachers' professional identities. Since participants played an important role in the well-being of learners, they believed that learners had greater respect for them and felt comfortable in their classrooms. Participants felt better professionally and were content personally. This is consistent with Rodrigues et al. (2018) who contend that the way in which learners view their teachers has an indirect impact on their professional development and identity. Participants were much happier when learners responded positively towards them. Consequently, they had fewer behavioural problems as well. In the same vein, by engaging with learners, Rodrigues et al. (2018), further noted that teachers gain the ability to construct, develop and mould their identities. Additionally, research conducted by Gholami et al. (2021) suggest that a commitment for the wellbeing of learners plays an integral role in the development of a teacher's professional identity.

On another note, Huberman (1993, as cited in Beijaard et al., 2000) in his research, illustrated that those teachers who had children of their own, were more tolerant towards learners and had positive experiences with the children that they taught. In line with this, Jenny felt that it was easier for her to relate to the learners who she taught because of her own children. Similarly, Salinas and Ayala (2018) affirm that teacher's personal and professional identities cannot be separated since personal involvement in the lives of learners is required.

Day and Gu's (2007) situated dimension, that is positioned in a precise context, is influenced by the circumstances that learners come with, which presents a challenge to teachers. Learners from most of the participants' schools lived in poverty-stricken societies and were supported by teachers. At the same time, the personal dimension influences the interactions that teachers have with learners. Teachers react positively and are able to handle the situations that learners come from. Accordingly, with regards to the above participants (Jenny, Mary, and Khan), they were positive that they handled the situated factors that were presented to them, with ease. Day and Gu (2007) affirm that positivity experienced by teachers enabled them to be better classroom practitioners. Furthermore, when teachers were able to handle working conditions successfully, they had the ability to develop their professional identities successfully.

4.4.2 Factors Influencing Identity

Beauchamp and Thomas (2011) contend that identity is influenced by various factors within different contexts. These factors mould and shape identity as one progresses. In this study, four factors that influenced teacher identity were identified: Relationships and identity, religion and identity, complexities of teaching English Home Language and identity and emotions and identity.

4.4.2.1 Relationships and Teacher Identity

Mary attributed her inspiration and motivation to her children and biological parents. She felt that without them, she would not be the person who she was. Even though Mary was supported by her parents she received no support from her siblings.

The excerpt below, from her poem, emphasises the joy that she felt in her childhood as well as her love for sport.

*I come from the city that lies in the Msunduzi River Valley,
Roses, azaleas, all so beautiful, you are the 'City of flowers'.
Hopscotch, hide and seek, we spy, we run up and down the
alley.
If you outrun, outsmart, outplay, you will have all the
power.*

In her collage (*Figure 4.1*) Mary illustrated that she started off as a very confident young lady who took a liking to sport.



Figure 4.1(Mary’s Collage)

Furthermore, in her collage (Figure 4.1), Mary highlighted the “confidence game”. When asked to elaborate, Mary explained, *“the confidence game which was myself as a young woman looking to a bright future with a lot of confidence ummmm, I participated professionally as a netball player, and these were my training days and these were the best years of my life.”*

The people who she encountered in her life changed the identity she developed when growing up. These influences impacted her development but at the same time made her a stronger individual. Her collage (Figure 4.1) depicted the “confidence game.”

Mary had hoped to have a better future for herself. However, she married at a young age and was restricted in what she could and could not do. She stated, *“the will to want to do so many things, but then the reality of life sometimes teaches you that you don’t always get what you want”*.

Later after marriage she realised that she was being abused, however not physically but in other ways (reflected in her collage (Figure 4.1). Mary’s personal identity was threatened as she tried to take on this new role. She felt as if she was living under a shadow, *“can you see the real me?”* (Figure 4.1).

Being a single women and mother played a major role in Mary’s personal and professional life. She identified as both a mother and a professional. As a single woman, Mary had to manage her finances with caution. As a mother, her first priority was her children. Even though she was free, as a mother she could not step over any boundaries. However, at the same time she mentioned, *“[I] appreciate everything that I have now and appreciate what I have been through because it’s made me who I am today.”*

The excerpt below from Mary's poem indicated a change in the direction of her life. Similar to her collage (*Figure 4.1*), her poem revealed that she had eventually found herself and the women she hoped to be.

*I come from a place of confusion and motherhood
Motherhood, my happiness, my commitment, my eternity
Children learn from what you do, not what you say, understood
Hold on wait a minute, I am taking control of my destiny
It's a new day, I learn I grow, I am humble
I come from a place where I will never crumble*

Jenny, on the other hand, came from a broken home and attributed the growth of her identity to “*my grandmother's death that helped me grow as an individual and also to become more compassionate and learn to you know take life one day at a time and to enjoy and embrace life.*” Jenny believed that her personal identity was mainly influenced by her family, specifically her children. Her own family played an integral role and affected her behaviour and moods in her professional life. Despite the barriers she experienced from her parents, she was able to thrive.

Khan found inspiration and motivation from her husband who she attributed the growth of her identity to. She shared, “*Family is very important to me, extremely, my husband is my best friend, He has inspired me to always go forward. In fact, it was because of his persuasion and his way of like always saying that a woman needs to be emancipated.*” Prior to marriage she felt disempowered by the society she had come from.

Mam had a very supportive family who encouraged her to pursue her aspirations. The positivity that she received from her family influenced her professionally. However, since becoming a mother, she was unable to give 100% to her career. She added, “*So married and 3 little children. They take up a big, big portion of my life.*” She would like to do more for the learners she taught but she had commitments relating to her family that were a priority.

Jade identified herself as a rebellious teenager. However, due to the influence of her life partner, she was able to build her identity into the person who she aspired to be. Once she was able to understand herself and became confident in her personal identity, professionally she was able to sympathise with the plight of the learners she taught. It had also taught her to appreciate what she had. She saw family as a priority, as displayed in her collage.



Figure 4.2 (Jade's Collage)

All of the participants related their experiences and influences to situational factors within various contexts. What is noteworthy is that there was a lot of tension and conflict in the growth of participants. Accordingly, Rodrigues et al. (2018) explain that tensions and conflicts experienced by individuals should not be ignored as it also plays an integral role in identity development.

The findings in this study concur with Rodgers and Scott (2008) who argue that identity is psychological and dependant on the contexts that one is in. Additionally, the identity of participants evolved as they “grew into themselves.” This evolution is in keeping with Yazan (2018) and Prabjandee (2020) who assert that identity is dynamic and subject to change. They maintain that individuals have the ability to respond to these experiences in a unique way. While growing up participants experienced a variety of scenarios that affected their identity which forced them to accept new identities.

Jade was uncertain about the career that she wanted to follow. However, when she met her partner, stability in her personal life started to ensue. This resonates with Christensen (2019) who points out that one’s personal identity plays a role in their ability to handle experiences with success. The development of a stable identity is dependent on the degree of stability in teacher’s personal relationships.

Relationships within society influence personal identity, forcing teachers to adopt identities that are not congruent with their perceptions and beliefs. Due to societal influences, Khan, and Mam experienced difficulty in pursuing their own goals that were congruent with their personal

identities. This notion corresponds with Beauchamp and Thomas (2011) who contend that in order for the successful development of an individual's identity, their contexts and perceptions of the contexts in constructing their identities, must be understood. According to them, communities, which is a focal point in one's context, make one aware of the identity they were expected to take on. Beauchamp and Thomas (2011) conclude that identity involves both the person and surroundings which was evident in this study.

When the situation and context change, one's identity shifts. Furthermore, the relationships that they have influences the change that one experiences in their identity. When it is in line with one's ideals and beliefs then one's identity begins to bloom. This resonates with the view of Rodgers and Scott (2008) who assert that identity changes according to context and relationships. Additionally, when individuals begin to socialise in different contexts, their identity begins to become congruent with their own ideals and aspirations. At the same time, Golembek and Johnson (2004) echo that teachers only accept instructional practises that are aligned with their personal identity.

The results of this study are consistent with Day et al. (2006b) who conclude that a strong link exists between interactions and socialising. Prabjandee (2020) asserts that what others think of an individual, influences their self-concept, which is an essential factor in teacher identity development. The relationships and influence of situational factors impact the professional life of teachers, as some participants' compassion and understanding, spilled over into the way they taught and viewed learners. Throughout their careers, the identities of teachers changed. This reverberates Day and Gu's (2007) argument that the three dimensions of teacher identity were continuously changing and fluctuating. In addition, Day and Gu (2007) contend that the three dimensions of teacher identity are interwoven and overlap. When the personal dimension was not in balance, it interfered with participants' professional lives. This furthermore is in line with Day and Gu's (2007) dimensions of teacher identity, when the dimensions of teacher identity were balanced, teachers manage changes in their lives successfully.

Mary experienced a number of challenges in her personal life. However, she believed that despite the fluctuations in her personal dimension of her identity, she was still able to be effective as a teacher. At the same time, Mary and Jenny both believed that the professional and personal identity of teachers cannot overlap. In maintaining the status quo Jenny and Mary felt that it should be separate. However, prior to this, Jenny explained, "*it has impacted on me as a teacher as well, being a parent, being a mother*"

Therefore, this suggests that there is an overlapping of the personal and professional dimensions of teacher identity, even though, it might be subtle and some participants mentioned, that they did not overlap.

This resonates with Day and Gu (2007) who contend that it is not possible to separate the personal and professional dimensions of teacher identity as interactions within one's personal life affects them professionally. Ghanizadeh and Ostad (2016) concur that instability in an individuals' personal life affects the development of their professional identity. Nevertheless, Mary and Jenny acknowledged that a relationship between personal and professional identities existed, which helped them gain a better understanding of their personal identity (Yazan, 2018).

4.4.2.2 Religion and Teacher Identity

Mary was born into a Christian home and converted to Islam. She explained *"I had to learn how to love and celebrate myself again"* as she had lost her identity as a Christian and had to take on another. As her poem below reflects, her change in religion had a huge impact on her identity. Her mind-set had adjusted to accommodate the change in her religion.

*"I come from a place of family, love and trust.
Yes, I come from Sunday school, a place of culture.
Change, change your mind or your soul will rust.
They eat your heart, spit it out and fly away like a vulture."*

Mary further expressed her dissatisfaction in her collage (*Figure. 4.1*). Her collage depicted a marriage where religion was seen as the most important aspect of human existence. However, she was able to break away from it and follow her passion which was to educate the youth.

On the other hand, Jenny, born into a staunch Islamic home attributed her stagnation in growth to the restrictions placed on her by the faith. She expressed her dissatisfaction, *"because of Islamic home setup, me not being able to be too liberated as youngsters."* It did not allow her to be, *"liberated as a youngster."* Contrary to this, she felt that when she married, she took a greater interest in the faith, which allowed her to grow and develop into the person who she had become today. She explained *"I think religion itself as a whole has moulded me a lot in terms of my spiritual capacity I, I, I have little to no fear after I have become more spiritually inclined."* Being spiritually inclined strengthened Jenny's identity and enabled her to cope with the different situations that she had to face.

Similarly, Khan coming from an Islamic home, experienced the same issues as Jenny that hampered the growth of her identity as a young woman. She explained *“coming from a community that generally, where women weren’t considered as breadwinners or going out into the career orientated path.”* However, she married into a *“liberal Islamic family.”* She was supported by her husband who believed that women should be empowered and be career-oriented. As a result, Khan began studying towards her teaching qualifications after her marriage.

Khan argued that all religions believe that women are equal but, *“society makes us believe that we are not.”* Through her teaching she hoped to ensure that the new generation moves away from the tenets of patriarchy and allow women to develop their identity as they grow up and not be influenced by the inequalities that exist.

On the same note, Mam was forced to study through correspondence. Being a Muslim woman meant that she was not allowed to leave the home. However, she counted this as a *“blessing in disguise”* since she now felt that it was *“her calling.”*

In her collage (*Figure. 4.1*), Jade placed emphasis on religion. Identifying as homosexual, she felt that she would not be accepted into her religion.

*“Raised in a Catholic family that pray
What would they say if I told them I’m Gay?”*

The excerpt above from Jades poem, “Who am I” shows the conflict that Jade underwent before coming out as homosexual. In conjunction with her collage (*Figure. 4.2*), Jade began to see that *“Love is not a sin.”* With the support of her partner, she found strength in God which affected her identity allowing it to develop holistically.

The narratives presented by the participants resonate with Rodgers and Scott (2008) who argue that community and society dictate the identity that an individual is to follow. Despite the predicaments and influence of religion, with positive motivation and support participants were able to achieve their goals and handle the negativity that they faced. This is also linked to Prabjandee (2019) who affirms that social interaction within one’s community shapes identity.

In line with this notion, Zhu et al. (2020) assert that family environments have an impact on the way teachers teach as well as on their identities. Consistent with this, Day (2013) asserts that positive support received enables one to be better equipped to handle negative

circumstances making them resilient. Participants thrived when their religious beliefs were congruent with their personal identity.

It is therefore evident that the findings of this study reiterate Day and Gu's (2007) notion of the situated dimension that the success of teachers depends on the situation and communities they belong to. Additionally, Day and Gu (2007) contend that teachers use the experience they get from different situations to create their knowledge base. The success of teachers is dependent on their reaction towards the influences of their parents. In this situation, their success depended on their shift in religious beliefs through a change in their family dynamics. As a result, the three dimensions of Day and Gu (2007) are always fluctuating continuously in a state of modification. A balance is responsible for the development of a strong identity.

4.4.2.3 Complexities in Teaching English Home Language and Identity

Mary explained that there were a number of challenges teaching English as a Home Language. The majority of learners in her school were English second language speakers making the teaching of the subject daunting. Frustration sets in as Mary explained "*[they]not even been to a primary school, whereby they were taught in the English Home Language, but they are expected to perform as a home language learner at high school.*" Communication becomes a problem as she was unable to gauge whether they had adequately understood the concepts that had been taught. She further added that there were no learners who performed above average, and at times, it was really demotivating.

Mary further expressed her dissatisfaction with the workload associated with teaching English Home Language. She explained "*the workload seems to be a lot more especially when it comes to our assessment task and also when it comes to the marking as well. So basically, we meant to mark, by reading every single sentence. At the same time, the content can change at any time and as an English teacher you have to change your methods of teaching at the spur of the moment. The subject is also not content driven.*"

Likewise, Jenny felt that the English Home Language curriculum was very restrictive and said, "*English is English, and the curriculum doesn't tend to extend you.*" She attributed the extensive curriculum as the reason why many teachers, after teaching one year of English Home Language, chose to leave the Department of Languages, and opted for something more structured. However, having said that Jenny believed that she had adapted to the profession.

*"Wordsmith challenges drew me to Wordsworth,
Shakespeare counselled my sorrows..."*

*...language was drenched in my blood,
I transitioned from learner to teacher.”*

The excerpt taken above from Jenny’s poem entitled, “Destiny my Devotion” shows her love for the English Language and the inspiration that she found from the greats of English literature. However, she believed that the curriculum does not lend itself to the current generation. Jenny further elaborated that she identifies as an intellectual and that was why it appealed to her. She believed that *“we need a more practical approach to the way English is being taught in the country as a whole as a subject.”*

The majority of learners in Khan’s school were not English Home Language speakers as well. As a result, teaching English Home Language was difficult as learners lacked the basic skills in the language. However, Khan emphasised that even though this was the case, the learners were not rude or disrespectful towards her. Contradictory to Jenny’s beliefs, Khan believed that teaching English was not about teaching different concepts but instilling values in her learners. Furthermore, she suggested that teaching English could not be done in isolation since there were several life lessons to be learnt. These lessons contribute to the development of learner’s identities and should not be overlooked. She highlighted that teaching English was more personal and required personal investment. She said, *“English is subjective, so we got to learn to understand the child before we can mark a child or teach a child.”*

Mam asserted that the Covid-19 pandemic had a huge impact on her teaching of English Home Language, due to the large number of learners she taught. As a result, it became repetitive. At the same time, she felt that it was an interesting subject as one gets a variety of responses from different learners resulting in very diverse answers. Like Khan, Mam believed that teaching English was *“teaching a way of thinking.”* She explained further that when teaching concepts, you were not merely teaching the concept, but how to understand it and adapt it to day-to-day experiences.

In the same vein, Jade acknowledged that the Covid-19 pandemic had impacted her day-to-day activities as an English Home Language teacher. She had to alternate between two grades in the course of a week and was exposed to learners who knew very little or no English and those who were able to understand the language. Being a complex subject, Jade believed that the change in mind-set affected the way she performed in the classroom as her strategies of teaching had to change drastically. However, she managed to shift her thought process and

incorporate this new way of teaching into her professional identity. Even though she managed to do this she explained that due to the language barrier, *“it’s very difficult to teach English.”*

Day et al. (2006a) assert that professional identity is derived from the subjects’ teachers teach. In this study, all the participants were English Home Language teachers. Furthermore, Day and Gu (2007) contend that the atmosphere within school communities affects the development of teacher’s professional identity. In the schools that participants taught, they were confronted with social diversity and cultural and ethnic difficulties. Due to the system of apartheid in South Africa, unequal and segregated education existed which was a contributing factor towards the diversity and language barrier that currently exist (Smit & Fritz, 2008). Due to this, participants experienced challenges when trying to make non-english speaking learners understand concepts. When they left the classroom, teachers were unaware of whether they had covered the content adequately and whether learners had a basic understanding of the subject matter being discussed. Consequently, Smit and Fritz (2008) contend that such a situation adds pressure on teachers, which in turn affects their professional identity. Feelings of inadequacy then begin to set in.

On another note, Werbinska (2017) argues that language teacher’s success is dependent on their understanding of the community. Participants of this study claimed to understand the social climate of the learners they teach. Nevertheless, they experienced learning barriers when teaching English Home Language. At the same time, from his study in Sri-Lanka, Canagarajah (2014), deduced that a relationship between community and teachers must be forged to ensure success in teaching English. Although participants understood the social dynamics of the learners who they taught, relationships between the community and the participants were non-existent. This could account for the learning barriers that they experienced.

Jenny believes that the English Home Language Curriculum in South Africa does not support the current generation. In line with this, Davids (2018) contends that the curriculum is content based and is not enough to instil values in South African learners. At the same time, Smit and Fritz (2008) argue that the ongoing changes in curriculum, challenges the professional identities of teachers being. Participants felt that the workload in English was immense. To add to the pressure, the Covid-19 pandemic affected timetabling resulting in an increase in workloads. This resonates with Day (2013) argument that as curriculum changes take place, workloads of teacher’s increase. In the same vein, Day (2013) contend that the pressure

experienced by teachers affects their identities resulting in them being continuously revised. Similarly, Prabjandee (2019) asserts that language teachers identities develop all the time.

The teaching of English Home Language cannot be taught in isolation as it has several life lessons preparing learners for different circumstances. Therefore, Jenny and Mam concluded that the life lessons that learners were taught reflect the communities and societies that they belonged to. This is in keeping with Yazan (2018) who contends that the values that learners are taught, from teacher identity, and the values that were instilled in them through societies and communities, interact. Despite the challenges experienced by the participants, they tried to remain committed. Yazan (2018) explains that this is a positive ideology. Subsequently it is a contributing factor to teacher identity development.

The findings above are in line with the conceptual framework of Day and Gu (2007) who purport that for teachers to be positive and happy, the three dimensions of teacher identity must be balanced. A balance allows teachers to confront a situation in a positive manner and gives them the ability to address challenges that might arise. The professional dimension influences the role of teachers in the classrooms and the situational dimension is a contributing factor to teachers remaining passionate and steady. Day and Gu (2007) contend that when teachers are happy, they can satisfy their professional lives, which in turn shaped their identities. These teachers need to be seen as successful in their teaching even though they face challenging situations.

4.4.2.4 Emotions and Teacher Identity

Participants displayed a variety of emotions that they experienced in their day-to-day activities. It was evident that learners and the curriculum affected teachers' emotions substantially.

Khan mentioned that she got her inspiration from learners and they described her as a very passionate teacher. Furthermore, she emphasised that she obtained great satisfaction when she was able to have an impact on the life of even just one learner. She stated that the learners had a huge impact on the growth of her personal identity. Khan said:

They've influenced me in the sense that, I've now tried to do a little bit of poetry writing, I do a lot of quotes, started an Instagram, where my followers are mostly my students and on the Instagram. It's all positive quotes so I gotta whole lot of Instagram quotes that I, I always come up with thinking of a particular child. And I put that up on my Instagram page.

Owing to this, Khan believed that there is definite overlapping of her personal and professional identities. The learners in Khan's school saw her as an inspiration. When she received validation from learners, she *"felt like, I was like really emotional because it was, basically that's what I said."* However, at the same time, because of her relationship with learners she felt that other teachers saw her as competition. She attributed this also to the fact that she made an added effort and brought technology into her classroom. She believed that teaching had given her a purpose and she felt joy when she interacted with learners and colleagues. She added:

I love teaching. I always tell my students one line, "if you love what you are doing, you have never worked a day in your life".

On the other hand, Mams' emotions were influenced by the positive encounters she had when she met learners whom she had already taught. She explained *"kids remember you even after they're done with school, remember like remember what you have done for them, what you have taught them, life lessons, more than English lessons."* However, due to the lack of interest of the current learners, she felt frustrated. She was demotivated to the extent that she only did *"what needs to be done."*

Jade mentioned that her learners influenced her level of confidence. Due to their difficulty in conversing in English, learners were afraid to answer questions that were posed to them. As a result, it was difficult to decipher whether the concepts taught had been understood. This discouraged Jade as she felt that she could have done something different or used another method of teaching. Despite having a congenial relationship with her colleagues, Jade believed that many of them saw her as being playful with a wicked sense of humour. She tried to not let this affect her emotions but as a first-year teacher she was still developing her personal and professional identities.

Jenny, however felt that the intense workload would be a reason for her to give up the profession. Jenny believed that she was viewed by her colleagues as headstrong, domineering and rude. Jenny saw herself as being emotionally strong which enabled her to continue doing the best she could. She mentioned;

...at the end of the day if something is going to obstruct the learner's success, I will definitely speak up, yes sometimes it may be misconstrued as being rude and impolite but, in my conscience, if I know that what I am doing is for the right reason then I have no restraints

Jenny stated that at times, she let her anger get in the way of her relationships with learners. Nonetheless, she believed that she had a good rapport with them. At the same time, she mentioned that if she was able to control her anger her methods of instruction would improve drastically. On a different note, Jenny expressed her frustration at the lack of importance given to the profession. She believed that teaching should be given more prominence.

Nevertheless, Jenny still enjoyed the profession together with everything that goes with it. This was reflected in this excerpt from her poem, “*Destiny my devotion.*”

*O the unrestrained joy of past
and present never ceases to be pleasant
with my,
destiny of devotion.*

Jenny further believed that the teaching environment was a very stressful one, and individuals should always take note of what they say to colleagues in order to maintain an amiable relationship with them.

Jenny attributed the gap between older and younger teachers as a mitigating factor that affected the emotions of teachers. She believed “*a generational gap where the older teachers might not completely understand the approach of newer teachers*” but under close scrutiny one might discover, “*neither approach is totally harmful.*” Nevertheless, she suggested that this could be detrimental to “*a younger teacher who is not as confident, it could be quite debilitating, and you know break them down. In fact, ruin their whole career.*” She firmly believed that everyone should be allowed to develop their own identity and not try and emulate someone else’s.

Similarly, Mary expressed her frustration at the intense workload that comes with teaching a language as well as the continuous change of content. Despite the frustration and issues that she experiences, Mary’s collage (*Figure. 4.1*) showed her love for teaching. She believed that she was a diverse teacher, “*Diversity rules.*” Additionally, her collage portrayed her passion for teaching with the intention of ensuring that every child was given an opportunity in life. She attributed this to the birth of her two sons.

Lasky (2005) contends that teaching requires a great deal of emotion. Keller et al. (2014a) suggest that emotions should not be ignored as it affects the way teachers teach and perform in the classroom. In the same vein, Naidoo (2013) highlights the relationship between teacher emotions, lives and teaching. This is evident when Mam stated that she found her learners

disinterested and expected everything to be given to them, resulting in her doing only what she was supposed to do. Correspondingly, Chen et al. (2020) emphasises that a learner's ability to take ownership of their studying influences the emotional environment of the classroom. Similarly, the anger that was felt by Jenny transferred onto the learners when they did not do what she had asked them to do. This resonates with Chen et al. (2020) study which found that that there was a link between emotions and teaching.

In the same vein, Manasia et al. (2020) contend that the education environment and students' impact on the emotions of teachers. The lack of confidence experienced by Jade could be attributed to the lack of responses from learners resulting in her feeling that her lessons were unproductive. She was unable to teach the way she liked to. This is in line with Manasia et al. (2020) who argue that when teachers are unable to teach in the way they like; they experience negative emotions. Jenny's belief that older teachers have an impact on the self-esteem of younger teachers is congruent with Kelchtermans (1993, as cited in Day et al., 2006a) who identified self-esteem as an essential component for the development of teachers' professional identities.

Chen et al. (2020) argues that negative experiences lead to negative emotions. Similarly, Saunders (2013) contends that when teachers experience negative emotions, they are not productive. Khan believed that others saw her as "*competition*", Jenny was seen as rude and dominating and Jade's lack of confidence led to them experiencing negative emotions. Consequently, Keller et al. (2014a) and Richards (2020) assert that these negative emotions experienced by teachers had a domino effect on learners. In addition, Zembylas (2005) contends that it also disrupts the identity formation of teachers.

Day (2013) maintains that changes within the curriculum creates frustration in teachers as workloads intensify since it meant that new content had to be learnt. Furthermore, the amount of work that a teacher is required to do increases tremendously. When this happens the identities of teachers undergo a crisis (Day, 2013). According to Day and Gu (2007), increased workloads as well as learning new content weakens professional identity as some teachers are unable to meet the expectations put on them, resulting in a decrease in job satisfaction.

When teachers are frustrated with the heavy workloads, it leads to the development of negative emotions, resulting in their inability to perform at a maximum level. This is in line with Richards (2020) who contends that when teachers are exposed to negativity, they are not as productive, and due to the negative emotions felt, they are unable to have an ideal professional

identity. Zembylas (2005) contends that it is normal when teacher's express negative emotions and it does not imply that they are being unprofessional, since it's an expression of how they feel at that moment. Teachers come from diverse backgrounds and work under a multitude of conditions. This could be attributed to the unequal education system in South Africa (Davids, 2018). Accordingly, this is a tenet of the situational dimension in Day and Gu's (2007) dimensions of teacher identity. Teachers construct their knowledge and identity from the emotions that they experience in varying situations.

In contrast, Zembylas (2002) asserts that positive emotions influence learning and teaching. Manasia et al. (2020) contend that this allows teachers to have a good rapport with learners. This was apparent in Khan's classrooms. Due to her positivity, learners saw her as a confidant or, "*mother figure*" to them. According to Khan, learners who had obtained lower percentages at the beginning of the year showed a remarkable improvement in their grades. Khan was inspired by the learners to write poetry, positive quotations and started her own Instagram page. At the same time, her reason to remain in the profession was because of the learners. This reciprocal relationship was fostered by the positive atmosphere created in her classrooms. Correspondingly, Saunders (2013) postulates that teachers' emotions are integral to the reasons why teachers remain in the profession.

Despite the frustration felt by Mary, she was still passionate about teaching. She attributed this to the birth of her sons which made her want to see other children succeed. This is in line with Zembylas' (2005) argument, that the emotions felt by teachers are influenced in the values they attain from their families.

The emotions that teachers feel in relation to the effect learners have on them, resonates with the dimensions of teacher's identities (Day & Gu, 2007). The experiences that they had in their professional lives influences their personal lives, thus contributing to the development of their personal identity. Furthermore, negative emotions felt due to an increase in workloads resulting in teachers being unable to meet expectations highlights the professional dimension. Accordingly, Day and Gu (2007) maintain that this causes a shift in the professional identity of teachers since it affects their professional identity. Furthermore, the situated dimension of Day and Gu's (2007) conceptual framework highlights the relationship amongst colleagues which influence the passion that teachers have. Khan who was seen as "*competition*" and Jenny as "*rude and dominating,*" may in future affect their joy for the profession (Day & Gu, 2007).

4.5 Research Question Two

How do personal and professional identities of English Home Language teachers develop at different life phases in their careers?

Day et al. (2006b) contend that the identity of teachers develops throughout their teaching careers and undergoes several changes at different phases of their lives. Day and Gu (2007) identified six professional life phases. Data for the second research question was analysed deductively using the themes from Day and Gu's (2007) professional life phases. For this study, participants were categorised according to four of the six professional life phases as outlined in Day and Gu's (2007) conceptual framework. These were: 0-3 years, 8-15 years, 16-23 years and 24-30-years life phases.

4.5.1 0-3 Year Life Phase (*Jade*)

Day and Gu (2007) describe teachers during this phase as being highly motivated and having a commitment to the profession. Jade began her teaching career in 2020 and was in her second year of teaching. At this point, she was motivated and committed to the profession. She explained *"I love my job; I look forward to getting up in the morning."* Furthermore, she expressed her excitement and motivation and stated *"[An] exciting journey ahead of me."* This corresponds with the 0-3-year life phase of Day and Gu's (2007) conceptual framework. They highlight that during this phase the confidence and morals of teachers begin to develop. In addition, they are easily motivated. Correspondingly, Jade believed that she lacked the confidence when it came to teaching. Prabjandee (2020) contends that the development of a strong identity is dependent on one's perception of themselves. At this point in Jade's career, she is still developing her self-image. Day (2013) correspondingly asserts that teachers' professional identity is influenced by what they think of themselves. However, according to Day and Gu (2007), at this phase in Jade's career she is still developing and as Jade grows as a teacher, she will become more motivated allowing her confidence levels to increase. Jade's collage (*Figure 4.2*) highlighted her lack of confidence.

I am thankful for all my teachers who gave me their best. Through them I'm able to fend every test. I try to be the best educator I can be. Hopefully one day my hard work will be out there for everyone to see.

The excerpt from Jade's poem, "Who am I," (*Appendix 6*) highlights Jade's hope that she will succeed in her career. She also hoped to receive recognition for the work that she did. This

resonates with Morgan (2004) who asserts that the personal identity of teachers is dependent on the type of teacher they envisage to be. Correspondingly, Jade envisions being successful at teaching and attributed the development of her confidence to the support she received from management. In line with this, Day (2013) maintains that the positive support received will better equip Jade to handle negativity and at the same time, make her resilient. This resonates with Day and Gu (2007) who assert that positive feedback creates positivity in teachers. Accordingly, this will boost Jade's morale in this phase of her career.

Furthermore, Jade felt uncertain and unsure about whether the learners whom she taught understood what she said:

"I also need to learn to have more confidence in myself. I feel that if I develop that confidence then my lessons in English will really become better you know, because every time I leave that class, I feel like there's something that I could have done better."

This she attributed partly to the language barrier that was impacting her negatively. According to Beijaard et al. (2000), for teachers to develop their professional identity, they must learn to handle various issues that learners come with to school. Cross and Ndofirepi (2015) correspondingly asserts that teaching in a South African context becomes challenging for younger teachers as they are faced with the various situations and circumstances due to the residual effects of apartheid. At this point in Jade's career her ability to handle issues with learners was still being developed and therefore affected her day-to-day activities. This resonates with Day and Gu (2007) who contend that the behaviour of learners impacts on teachers during this life phase.

Nevertheless, studies conducted by Smit and Fritz (2008) in South Africa, reiterate that the contextual and situational factors of learners shape the identity of teachers. Therefore, as Jade grows in the profession the negative factors that she currently faces will shape her identity. Despite this, Jade remains committed to the profession. Day and Gu (2007) suggest that activities aimed at boosting morale is highly effective during this phase which will assist Jade in adapting. However, Jade entered the profession at the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. Due to the pandemic, activities are limited as Covid- 19 protocols must be adhered to.

On the other hand, Jade received positive feedback from management, *"the management is so professional, you know like they make a person want to be there, yes, like when see the standard they hold it makes you want to be the best that you can be."* Day and Gu (2007) contend that

the congenial relationships experienced by Jade with management allows her to become a professional. Furthermore, the positive relationship she maintained with the school management influenced her situated dimension. Day and Gu (2007) contend that this increases her passion for the profession. Accordingly, these factors combined together enable teachers in this life phase to maintain a sense of professional identity.

4.5.2 8-15 Year Life Phase (*Mam*)

Day and Gu (2007) affirm that teachers during this phase are at a point where they are trying to balance their personal and professional life with the result of having increased pressure. It was clear that at this point in her career, Mam was experiencing instability in her personal and professional life. She highlighted that since she became a mother, she did not have as much time as she hoped she would have to dedicate to her teaching. She stated *“so married and 3 little children. They take up a big, big portion of my life.* “She further added *“in much as I would sometimes like to spend extra time in order to have extra lessons with kids or to take on extra-mural activities, you know drama classes and stuff I would, because of my little children at home I wouldn’t.* “At this point Mam felt it difficult to remain committed. This resonates with studies conducted by Taylor (2017) which maintains that teachers’ resilience and commitment to the profession is intertwined with their personal identity. At the same time, Day et al. (2006b) contends that the relationship between teachers personal and profession life cannot be avoided while Day (2013) acknowledges that teaching requires personal involvement. Mam found it difficult to balance her personal and professional life and suggested that more attention was being paid towards her personal life.

This is in line with Zhu et al. (2020) who confirm that family environment impacts the way teachers teach. Consequently, Day et al. (2006b) highlight that when one dimension of professional identity dominates, a greater effort is required by the individual to maintain this fluctuation. Christiansen (2019) suggests that a way of counteracting this, one requires a greater understanding of oneself. Correspondingly, this will strengthen Mam’s identity enabling her to balance her personal and professional life.

Furthermore, Mam was demotivated by the learners she taught as they did not cooperate in class and had behavioural problems which resulted in her not teaching the way she would of liked to. Research conducted by Mohamed et al. (2016) point out that when teachers are unable to teach in the way they liked to, frustration develops in their professional identity. On the other hand, Keller et al. (2014a) noted that the emotions experienced by teachers affects their

performance in the classroom. Consequently, Zembylas (2005) asserts that the negative emotions experienced creates problems in the formation of a professional identity.

Zhu et al. (2020) identified professional identity as a contributing factor towards motivation and resilience. Due to this, Mam felt despondent and would leave the profession if she could afford to. Nevertheless, Mam believed that she is a dedicated teacher who always gives of her best. Day and Gu (2007) maintain that support during this phase should be focused on emotions and morale. On a similar note, Day (2013) argues that when teachers lose their purpose their well-being is compromised. Congruently, Manasia et al. (2020) affirm that in order to ensure the wellbeing of teachers, their emotions must be taken into consideration and ways of managing these emotions should be identified. Respectively, Mam attains support from her family who motivate her to continue. This resonates with Day and Gu (2007) who assert that support is a strategy to help teachers cope with the instability that they experience.

4.5.3 16-23 Year Life Phase (*Jenny and Khan*)

Having taught for 18 years, Jenny had become settled in her career. However, in line with Day and Gu (2007), her responsibilities had increased both personally and professionally. She explained “*personal life might be hectic. I remember with my kids being newly born, it was quite hectic juggling between that and a professional career.*” Nevertheless, she maintained that she tried her best to balance both her personal and professional life. She believed that her ability to balance her personal and professional life was a contributing factor to her staying motivated and committed to the profession. This, according to Day and Gu (2007), is a crucial component to teachers wanting to remain in the profession. Another factor mentioned by Day and Gu (2007) with reference to this life phase, is that support from management and knowledgeable individuals plays a role in teacher motivation. Furthermore, Golembek and Johnson (2004) assert that one way that learning occurs is through interactions and engaging with others. This resonates with Jenny since the invaluable support she received from her Departmental Head (Languages) holds her in good stead.

Data generated from Jenny’s narrative, further highlighted another component that she felt was a motivating factor. For Jenny, her main motivation for remaining in the profession was the learners. Due to the experience Jenny had, Yazan (2018) claims that a strong identity has been developed. Likewise, Beijaard et al. (2000) confirm that the more experience that teachers have, the better equipped they are at handling different contextual factors. With reference to this, Cross and Ndofirepi (2015) outline that in South Africa teachers are faced with challenges

such as hunger, teenage pregnancy, and neglected children. Therefore, Jenny's experience holds her in good stead allowing her to develop a better repertoire with learners. Accordingly, Jenny asserts:

It's definitely the children. It's the fact that you know it's frustrating as it may be at times, but to know that you are touching lives and you empowering a child... its far more meaningful for me than doing anything else.

On the other hand, Khan who was in the same career life phase as Jenny, was settled and comfortable with her professional identity. However contrary to Jenny, Khan's responsibilities had decreased personally and professionally. According to Khan, the reason for this was that she began teaching later in her life. Her children were older and had families of their own. Khan's professional, personal and situated dimensions were in balance and therefore she was able to manage the minor changes in her life (Day & Gu, 2007). Interestingly though, research conducted by Beijaard et al. (2000), found that personal contexts together with experience, transform the work of teachers. It enables them to have more positive experiences with learners. Beijaard et al. (2000) concluded that the experiences from the personal lives of teachers have an effect on their professional life and identity. As a result, Khan remains motivated to the profession. Additionally, Khan summarises her reasons for remaining in the profession succinctly, *"I'm more motivated in the sense that I have seen a different world. I've been first a mum and a house executive and then I started teaching so I had the best of both worlds."* This resonates with Taylor (2017) who emphasises that teachers become committed and resilient when they are settled in their personal identity.

However, like Jenny, Khan was also motivated to remain in the profession by the learners that she taught. Unlike Jenny though, even though she had been in the profession for 19 years, Khan still felt that she required *"validation"* for the tasks and activities that she undertook. In the first phase of Day and Gu's (2007) dimensions of teacher identity, individuals are still building their confidence and as Jade mentioned in her poem, *"her hard work will be there for everyone to see."* According to the Day and Gu (2007), Khan should be more settled, and at the same time have a clearly defined professional identity. Contradictory to this, Khan's narrative indicated that she sought validation and acceptance from others. Arguably, Day (2013) notes that the professional identity of teachers is influenced by what others think of them. Similarly, Ghanizadeh and Ostad (2016) and Salinas and Ayala (2018) maintain that professional identity is subjected to ongoing change. Taking this into consideration, Khan seeks validation because

her professional identity is evolving. What is interesting to note is that the validation that she seeks is not from her peers but from the learners who she teaches. Khan affirms, “[it] gives me validation that the child likes it, you know when the child likes it, it makes me happy.”

A contributing factor that was not included in this life phase of Day and Gu’s (2007) dimension of teacher identity, was financial security. This in turn affected the personal dimension of Day and Gu’s (2007) conceptual framework. This research study highlighted that participant’s motivation and reason for remaining in the profession during this phase was financial remuneration. Since responsibilities increased during this life phase, participants felt that the income received was not substantial enough to support this increase. Jenny explained “*I do believe that financially, all teachers see it as a setback.*” Therefore, participants believed that teachers leave the profession to earn a better income. Thus, Jenny concluded that you had to be a “*compassionate teacher*” to remain in the profession.

4.5.5 24-30 Year Life Phase (Mary)

Due to the number of years Mary had taught, she had been through several curriculum changes as well as adverse personal events. Accordingly, Day and Gu (2007, p. 437) describe this as “extreme professional life phases scenarios” However despite these adverse events Mary believed

Incidents in my life that have forced me to be who I am today, I mean you always try, try not to make it nasty, instead you try to make it a better person because you realise you have your life planned out.

Furthermore, Mary believed that the changes that she underwent influenced her identity and the identity that she had adapted. Congruently, Beauchamp and Thomas (2011) contend that when teachers experience negative situations, their personal identity is moulded resulting in them becoming aware of their identity. Additionally, Salinas and Ayala (2018) maintain that factors within internal relationships shape professional identity. Mary’s collage (*Figure, 4.1*) illustrated her belief that her personal and professional identities are linked to each other. Likewise, Ghanizadeh and Ostad (2016) draw attention to the important link that exists between experience and professional identity. Mary’s poem below showed the transition of her life from a young girl becoming a strong and confident woman. Mary’s poem below described the readjustments, that Day and Gu (2007) refer to, that were essential for her to be who she was.

Who am I?

By Mary

*I come from the city that lies in the Msunduzi River Valley,
Roses, azaleas, all so beautiful, you are the 'City of flowers.'
Hopscotch, hide and seek, we spy, we run up and down the alley.
If you outrun, outsmart, outplay, you will have all the power.
I came from, 'pardon me', 'may I please be excused'.
Now listen child, you should be seen and not heard.
When you are spoken to, don't you dare, or you will be cursed
If your friend says, jump into the fire, will you be lured?*

*I come from a place of family, love and trust.
Yes, I come from Sunday school, a place of culture.
Change, change your mind or your soul will rust.*

*They eat your heart, spit it out and fly away like a vulture.
I come from a place of confusion and motherhood.
Motherhood, my happiness, my commitment, my eternity.
Children learn from what you do, not what you say, understood
Hold on wait a minute, I am taking control of my destiny.*

*It's a new day, I learn, I grow, I am humble
I come from a place where I will never crumble.*

Even though Mary believed that teaching is a demanding profession, “*nevertheless we still enjoy doing it.*” Day and Gu (2007) point out that during this phase, when teachers take the initiatives to develop themselves professionally, they remained motivated in the profession. Similarly, Mary took the initiative on her own to learn and become familiar with the curriculum and syllabus changes that she had been confronted with during her years as a teacher. According to Davids (2018) this is essential in South Africa due to the numerous curriculum changes. At the same time Cross and Ndofirepi (2015) acknowledge that by Mary doing this her expectations are altered which enables her to adapt to the current educational climate.

Day (2013) highlights that when teachers are motivated from within, they have a strong sense of identity. Subsequently, Zhu et al. (2020) further explains that a strong professional identity

is a contributing factor towards teacher motivation and their reasons for remaining in the profession. Additionally, Mary was motivated by her, "*passion for the children you know, in being able to impart certain knowledge with children.*" Despite being in the profession for several years, Mary's narratives, similarly to Khan's, showed that she also felt better and motivated when learners validated the efforts that she made. Additionally, she also felt motivated when past learners complimented her.

During this phase, teacher's identity is changing all the time. To cope with the changes taking place, Mary had to change or readjust her identity. Correspondingly, during this phase, Day and Gu (2007) contend that learning opportunities must be available to help teachers cope with this phase of their lives.

Throughout the professional life phases, professional development is highlighted by Day and Gu (2007) as a mitigating factor towards teacher motivation and resilience. However, the narratives of participants emphasised the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic that played a significant role in their emotions. Mam stated "*with Covid at the moment it's, uh, if I had to describe it in one word it would be repetitive.*" Li (2020) maintains that emotions are inseparable to the development of one's identity. On the same note, Zembylas (2005) purports that the negative emotions experienced, can create problems in the identity of teachers. However, despite the negative emotions experienced by teachers because of the pandemic, they still remained positive. This, according to Rodgers and Scott (2008) can be attributed to teachers adapting to the current contexts that they worked in. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, all professional development workshops were limited as Covid-19 protocols had to be adhered to. Therefore, the onus was on teachers to develop themselves within their contexts. However, studies conducted by Nel (2012) in South Africa suggested that learning and development can be done collaboratively. In this way, teachers can still be developed even though they are unable to attend departmental workshops.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter analysed the data that was generated through semi-structured interviews, collages and poetry. The information was gathered from five participants who taught English Home Language in the Senior and Further Education and Training Phase at two secondary schools in the uThukela district. Narratives were constructed and the responses of participants were thematically analysed, first into categories and then into themes using Day and Gu's (2007) conceptual framework.

Data analysis showed that teachers had multiple identities. The different identities were used by them to make sense of their realities. Most participants took on different roles in the lives of the learners that they had taught, however the common identity present was that of a caregiver. Furthermore, participants identified as individuals who continuously wanted to develop themselves personally and professionally.

Narratives also illustrated that there were different factors that affected the identities of teachers. These factors were analysed using the professional, personal and situated dimensions of Day and Gu's (2007) dimensions of teacher identity. Furthermore, environmental factors inside and outside of the institutions and societal factors influenced the development of teachers' personal and professional identities. Within the narratives it was evident that the dimensions of teacher identity overlapped, and balance was dependant on the way in which situations were handled by participants.

Factors that influenced participants in their respective life phases were analysed deductively and were in line with the various factors within Day and Gu's (2007) professional life phases. Narratives of participants highlighted the fluctuations and changes that occurred during each career life phase. Teachers faced many challenges which they overcame using different coping mechanisms. The following chapter summaries the findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

The aim of this study was to explore the personal and professional identities of English Home Language teachers, in the Senior (Grades 7-9) and Further Education and Training Phase (Grades 10-12). Furthermore, it examined the personal and professional identities of English Home Language teachers in the Senior (Grades 7-9) and Further Education and Training (FET) Phase at different life phases in their careers. The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the findings of this study in relation to the two research questions. This study examined the narratives of five participants from two high schools that offer English as a Home Language. Participants in this study were assigned their preferred pseudonyms. Data for this study were generated through poetry, collages and semi-structured interviews. These data generation instruments informed this narrative study, which aimed to address the following research questions:

1. What do English Home Language teacher's stories tell us about their personal and professional identities and their teaching of English Home Language?
2. How do personal and professional identities of English Home Language teachers develop at different life phases in their careers?

The data generated was analysed using Day and Gu's (2007) personal, professional, and situated dimensions of teacher identity as a conceptual framework. The first research question was analysed inductively highlighting themes that emerged from the data generated. The second research question was analysed deductively using the different professional life phases identified by Day and Gu (2007).

This research study exploring the personal and professional identities of English Home Language teachers were presented in five chapters.

Chapter One outlined the purpose and aim of the study and provided a background and rationale. Key research questions were introduced as well as an overview of the literature reviewed, conceptual framework and the research methodology employed in the study. The chapter concluded with a summary of the structure of the thesis.

Chapter Two incorporated a detailed literature review together with the conceptual framework. International and National literature were reviewed on teachers' personal and professional

identities. The literature presented arguments and views of different authors about identity. A detailed description of identity in South Africa was examined. The chapter concluded with Day and Gu's (2007) personal, situated, and professional identity together with the different life phases as a conceptual framework.

Chapter Three outlined the methodological approach utilised in the study. A qualitative research methodology positioned within the interpretive paradigm was utilised. Purposeful sampling of five English Home Language teachers from the GET and FET phase were selected. Data was generated via semi-structured interviews, collages, and poetry. Collages and poetry allowed for a deeper understanding of participants' identities as it allowed for an expression of emotions. The trustworthiness and reliability of this study were then outlined. This chapter concluded with the ethical considerations employed in this study.

Chapter Four presented the analyses of data generated from the semi-structured interviews, collages and poetry. The first research question was analysed inductively and underpinned by Day and Gu's (2007) professional, personal and situated dimensions of teacher identity. The themes that emerged were analysed and it was found that English Home Language teachers had multiple identities and different factors influenced their personal and professional identities. The second research question was analysed deductively using the themes identified in Day and Gu's (2007) different professional life phases.

Chapter Five concludes this thesis by providing clarification and responding to the research questions by bringing data together ensuring that this study was significant. The key findings that affected the personal, professional, and situated dimension of Day and Gu's (2007) conceptual framework were presented; teachers identified as caregivers and strived to be lifelong learners, relationships influenced teacher identities, experienced teachers identified as experts, changing contexts and curricula influenced English teaching, the relationships between emotions and English teaching and an examination of the different life phases as identified by Day and Gu (2007). The strengths and limitations followed by recommendations for further study concluded this chapter.

5.2 Discussion of Findings

Beauchamp and Thomas (2011) maintain that individuals have different identities that evolve over time. Similarly, data generated from the narratives of English Home Language teachers

pointed out that participants had multiple identities that they negotiated throughout the day and their careers. The findings are discussed as per research question.

5.3 First Research Question

The following findings were identified in response to the first research question: *What English Home language teacher's narratives tell us about their personal and professional identities?*

The narratives of English Home language teachers tell us that teachers have multiple identities. Teachers identified as caregivers, lifelong learners and experts in their field. Furthermore, teacher's personal identities were influenced by the relationships that they had, whereas their professional identities influenced by the changing context and curricular and their emotions, when teaching English Home language. A discussion of these factors follows.

5.3.1 Teachers Identify as Caregivers

Rodgers and Scott (2008) contend that identity is dependent on the context that one finds themselves in. At the same time, Beijaard et al. (2000) affirms that the pastoral role that many teachers take on merges with teachers' professional identity. Congruently, in this study, teachers took on the role of parents as they acted in *loco parentis* resulting in them taking on a pastoral role in their classrooms. Participants taught learners from disadvantaged social backgrounds and communities and were affected by several factors. Owing to this, teachers were required to take on a more pastoral role.

Data suggested that curriculum-based knowledge had to be assimilated with a teacher's ability to sympathise with learners. Day and Gu (2007) contend that one's personal and professional identities overlap. This became evident when Jenny and Khan mentioned that, as a parent themselves, they were better equipped to handle sensitive issues that arose in their professional lives. In the same vein, stability in one's personal identity enabled one's professional identity to stabilise. (Day & Gu, 2007).

Due to the social climate of South Africa, Smit and Fritz (2008) contend that the role of teachers goes beyond being just a teacher and the contextual and situational factors in South African townships shape the identity of teachers. In the same vein, Cross and Ndofirepi (2015) identified factors in South Africa that affect the identities of teachers. These are HIV/Aids, poverty, teenage pregnancy, and crime. Likewise, Taylor (2017) maintains that identity is constructed through such contexts. Poverty, as suggested by participants, displayed itself in different scenarios in their day-to-day teaching. Teachers who were robust and had a strong

personal and professional identity were better able to provide support to learners when handling issues that presented itself. This resonates with Christensen (2019) who asserts that teachers who develop a strong sense of professional identity have the ability to adapt and respond to a variety of situations with ease. At the same time, data inferred that acknowledging that diversity existed was a mitigating factor in a teacher's ability to handle situations that arose. Accordingly, Ghanizadeh and Ostad (2016) note that the ability of teachers to acknowledge diversity is shaped by their professional identity. This resonates with Rodrigues et al. (2018) who also contend that by interacting within the various contexts, the identity of teachers is constructed.

On another note, Gholami et al. (2021) explains that teacher's professional identity is characterised by their level of commitment and concern they have for the wellbeing of the learners they teach. The narratives of participants illustrated that they believed that they were responsible for developing these learners into global citizens and independent functioning citizens of this country. Mam believed that she had a personal responsibility, towards the learners she taught, to ensure that they made a success of their lives. Care, compassion, and responsibility for learners were at the forefront of all the participant's beliefs and ideals.

The acknowledgement that there were different roles that teachers had to play is indicative that a professional identity is being developed. This is in line with Lasky (2005) who defines teacher professional identity as the way in which teachers react to the different facets of being a teacher.

5.3.2 Teachers Strive to Be Lifelong Learners

Beauchamp and Thomas (2011) assert that agency is a contributing factor to the development of a professional identity and that through participating actively in development initiatives, one's professional identity becomes strengthened. Correspondingly, narratives of participants in this study revealed that they were responsible for their own personal development. Furthermore, they believed that learning was a lifelong process. However, even though participants were eager to learn and extend their knowledge base, they still experienced frustration due to the numerous changes in the South African school curriculum. On the same note, Cross and Ndofirepi (2015) suggest that the ability of teachers to adapt to the changes that have occurred in South Africa is an indication that a strong professional identity is being constructed. Data further revealed that despite identifying as a lifelong learner, it was not something that English Home Language teachers wanted to do. Ironically though, despite the frustration, they all agreed that they felt empowered when they were confronted with new

knowledge. With reference to this, Beijaard et al. (2000) argues that when teachers attain new knowledge, it plays a major role in their professional knowledge base strengthening their professional identity.

On a different note, the narratives of participants suggested that they lacked the level of confidence required as classroom practitioners. They felt that they would benefit from observing senior teachers teach. Day (2013) asserts that the ability of teachers to do introspection influences their professional identity. Congruently, Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) affirm that when teachers are aware of changes in their professional identities, they gain the ability to examine themselves. However, I did note that there were varying degrees of confidence. Younger teachers' lacked confidence more than others. In line with this Day and Gu (2007) acknowledge that teachers who are in the beginning of their careers are still negotiating and developing their professional identity. It can be concluded that when their professional identities stabilise, confidence will begin to develop.

5.3.3 Experienced Teachers Identify as Experts

In South Africa, Smit and Fritz (2008) argue that teachers have a variety of both personal and professional experiences. Correspondingly, Mohamed et al. (2016) emphasise that teachers experience a variety of situations and contexts. Consequently, Ghanizadeh and Ostad (2016) purport that since there is a link between experience and professional identity, the situations that teachers experience is incorporated into their professional identity. The experiences that teachers had, held them in good stead and enabled them to react better, when confronted with new learners. Prior experience featured prominently while analysing the data. Participants who had more teaching experience felt more confident in their teaching and were better equipped to handle the social difficulties experienced by their learners.

However, Ruohotie-Lyhty (2013) assert that identity is developed through interpretations of these experiences. Nevertheless, experience is beneficial for teachers as Beauchamp and Thomas (2011) explain that experience does not only build the personal identity of teachers but at the same time determines how they are viewed by the teaching community. On the same note, Beijaard et al. (2000) acknowledges that teachers, who had experience, also possessed more expert knowledge in the subjects they taught.

5.3.4 Relationships Influence Teacher Identities

Settlage et al. (2009) maintain that the personal life of teachers directly or indirectly affects their performance as teachers. Studies conducted by Huberman (1993, as cited in Beijaard et al., 2000) revealed that when teachers had children of their own, they were more tolerant and had positive experiences with the learners who they taught. The collage designed and poem written by Mary illustrated the effect that her biological children had on her. Mary identified as an individual who had a love for her own children. This resulted in her transferring that love to the learners who she taught. Like Mary, Jenny felt that having children of her own benefited her since she was able to view matters from a unique perspective.

The stories of teachers illustrated that their personal and professional identities had been influenced by various factors. Results indicated that the personal relationship that teachers had in their personal environments affected their professional environments. Considering this, Day and Gu (2007) explain that in order for teachers to have a stable and firm identity, their personal, professional, and situational dimensions must be in balance. Additionally, Ghanizadeh and Ostad (2016) assert that when teachers can find balance in their personal lives, their professional identities begin to stabilise.

The growth or stagnation of one's professional identity was dependant on the personal lives of participants. This resonates with Day and Gu (2007) who argue that the personal lives of teachers impact them professionally. This argument was supported by Jenny who highlighted that coming from a broken home coupled with the restrictions placed on her by her immediate family restricted her growth. Even though data indicated that as parents themselves, participants were more congenial towards the learners they taught, data revealed that owing to this, participants were unable to commit 100% to the profession, which in turn influenced their professional identity.

This led to another fundamental finding; instability in one's personal life, affected the temperaments of participants when they came to school. Frustration felt at home transferred into their day-to-day activities at school. As a result, it indirectly affected their professional identity because of the negativity that was felt. The negativity derived from the personal problems of teachers as outlined by Day and Gu (2007) transferred itself into the classroom. Contrary to this, participants who had trust in their families and were comfortable with their personal identities remained positive in their professional environment. This speaks to Day and

Gu's (2007) theory that when the personal, professional, and situated dimensions of identity are in balance, identity develops successfully.

Yazan (2018) maintains that a teacher's ability to make decisions and the way in which they learn are dependent on their personal identities. At the same time, Day and Gu (2007) assert that the trauma experienced in one's personal life impacts on a teacher's ability to perform in the classroom. Positive relationships affect the personal and professional identity of teachers in a positive way. It was apparent that when positive reinforcement was received, a stable personal identity developed. On the other hand, negative reinforcement influenced identity negatively.

Data generated highlighted a conflict that existed between culture and identity. As women, participants felt that they were disempowered, and it stagnated the growth of their personal identities as they were unable to realise their own potential. As a result, they were compelled to take on the identity that was imposed on them by their respective cultures.

Another conflict that was identified was that between religion and identity. Lasky (2005) maintains that the social context of individuals plays an essential role in developing a professional identity. Similarly, to culture, religion sometimes stagnated the growth of identity due to the restrictions it placed on individuals. This resulted in conflicts arising within participants. When one tried to adopt a religion that was not congruent with their personal beliefs, they were unable to be who they wanted to be. Mary adopted a new religion after getting married which affected her growth due to the restrictions she believed were placed on women. However, after becoming independent again she was able to become the person whom she wanted to be. Contradictory to this, data generated also illustrated that religion and faith could impact positively on individuals. Participants who were in harmony with their faith had the ability to develop strong identities. Being spiritually inclined allowed for growth of personal identity as participants were given the ability to cope with unforeseen situations.

5.3.5 Changing Contexts and Curricula Influence English Teaching

During the apartheid era, schools were placed in racially zoned areas and there was inequality in education (Mabin, 1992). Prabjandee (2019) asserts that it is difficult to teach English because it is being taught as a discipline and a medium of instruction. The schools that participated in this study accommodated learners who were previously disadvantaged from rural areas. Many of these learners have difficulty writing or conversing in English as the language of communication making it difficult for them to progress in English Home

Language, as part of the school curriculum. Owing to this, participants experienced frustration and were demotivated as teachers since learners performed below average. Furthermore, participants were unable to judge whether learners had grasped the concepts that were covered during instruction time. Correspondingly, Ghanizadeh and Ostad (2016) assert that the ability of learners to learn a subject can have a negative or positive impact on the development of identity. Furthermore, it affects teachers' competence in the subject that they teach. Congruently, this study found that the confidence of teachers teaching the subject was threatened because, due to the language barrier, teachers felt that they were unable to determine if learners had grasped the concepts being taught in their lessons. This resulted in their professional identity being compromised.

Canagarajah (2014) explains that teaching English is dependent on the context. Communities have their own set of identities and different ways of acquiring knowledge. Therefore, Canagarajah (2014) affirms that in order to be successful as a teacher, one needs to have a greater understanding of the community that learners come from. In contrast, despite having a good repertoire with learners, learners still experienced difficulties in grasping the content being taught at the schools where participants came from. Even though a relationship between teachers and learners were forged, teachers in this study did not form any relationships with the communities of the learners who they taught. With reference to this, Canagarajah's (2014) study in Sri-Lanka confirmed that a relationship between communities and teachers is essential.

To add to the trepidation, the continuous change of curriculum impacted negatively on teachers. According to Jenny, teachers who chose to teach English sometimes only remained teaching the subject for a year. They felt that they preferred a more structured syllabus and therefore moved on to other subjects. In South Africa, Davids (2018) contends that when changes occurred in the curriculum, teachers were trained merely on content and policy. Little attention was paid to the identity of teachers. Participants in the study who were seasoned teachers had developed a strong professional identity which they believed enabled them to cope with different scenarios. Furthermore, it was noteworthy, that despite the comprehensive English Home Language curriculum, participants believed that it did not lend itself to the current generation of learners. Participants suggested that learners needed a more practical approach which might alleviate their slow progression. Nevertheless, Rodgers and Scott (2008) affirm that the development of teachers' professional identity can only occur once teachers learn to accept and incorporate these changes.

Werbinska (2017) contends that the success to language teaching is dependent on teachers and what they want to achieve through their lessons. Accordingly, participants indicated that teaching English was not merely about teaching a curriculum but at the same time teaching learners life lessons. The lessons learnt and experiences of teachers were transferred to learners through the delivery of the curriculum. These experiences were subjective and arose from the personal lives of teachers. However, in order for this to occur, a strong professional identity must be apparent, to maintain a balance (Day & Gu, 2007).

5.3.6 The Relationship Between Emotions and English Teaching

Keller et al. (2014a) suggest that it is essential to understand the emotions of teachers since it influences the manner in which they teach. Additionally, Naidoo (2013) asserts that there is a relationship between emotions, lives, and teaching. Furthermore, Manasia et al. (2020) also noted that there was an impact of the educational environment on the emotions of teachers. The negative emotions experienced by teachers makes it difficult for them to be productive (Saunders, 2013). It was evident in this study that when participants did not experience a reciprocal relationship between themselves and learners, they felt demotivated and unproductive, which affected their self-esteem and confidence.

However, Zembylas (2002) acknowledges that the positive emotions experienced by teachers builds stronger relationships between learners and teachers. Even though teachers found it difficult to communicate and deliver lessons, some teachers became inspired by the learners who they taught. Teachers who had a balance in the personal, professional, and situated dimensions of identity, did not feel demotivated by the poor performance of learners. When learners showed a little improvement in their knowledge, it inspired these teachers to continue finding different methods of instruction. Their dedication to the profession enabled them to develop learners as a whole (Lasky, 2005). Similarly, teachers felt positive when they encountered learners who they had taught previously and who had made a success of their lives despite the odds that they had faced.

The discussion above highlighted the different identities that teachers develop. These identities develop according to their personal, professional, and situated dimensions. The discussion to follow examines how these dimensions are affected at different life phases in a teacher's career.

5.4 Research Question Two

The following findings were identified in response to Research Question 2: *How do personal and professional identities of English Home Language teachers develop at different life phases in their careers?*

The study found that the professional identities of English Home Language teachers develop at different life phases of their careers. During the various life phases a number of factors influenced how their personal, professional and situated dimensions evolved. A discussion of these factors and how the personal and professional identities of English Home Language teachers develop at different life phases in their careers is to follow.

5.4.1 0-3-Year Life Phase

Day and Gu (2007) contend that teachers, during this life phase, are motivated and committed to the profession. At the same time, they maintain that the confidence of teachers is unstable and beginning to develop. Jade who belonged to this phase was motivated and believed that she was committed to the profession. However, Jade's confidence was continuously being challenged. Due to contextual factors, Jade felt that she lacked confidence because she was unsure whether she had delivered her lessons successfully. This is in line with Day and Gu's (2007) conceptual framework that describes the instability of Jade's confidence that was continuously being challenged. In the same vein, the impact of the learners' performance, as outlined by Day and Gu (2007), affected Jade's confidence. Jade's commitment to the wellbeing and learning capacities of the learners she taught were still being developed. Accordingly, Gholami et al. (2021) contends that when teachers are able to commit themselves, they are able to develop a professional identity. Day and Gu (2007) contend that the personal and professional identity of teachers at this phase of their career is being developed which aligns itself with the way Jade's personal and professional identity had developed thus far.

5.4.2 8-15-Year Life Phase

The participant Mam belonged to this life phase. According to Day and Gu (2007), teachers in this phase of their lives try to balance their personal and professional lives and are generally under a lot of pressure. This resonates with Mam who at this point of her career was unable to balance her personal and professional life. According to Taylor (2017), personal and professional identity is intertwined. This was evident when Mam explained that due to major commitments in her personal life, her professional identity was under threat since she was

unable to juggle both her personal and professional life, giving them equal attention. Furthermore, Mam was dissatisfied with the performance of her learners. This led to frustration which affected her professional identity. Zembylas (2005) acknowledges that negative emotions affect the development of a stable professional identity. To counteract this, Day and Gu (2007) maintain that support is required during this life phase. Accordingly, the support Mam received from her family motivated her to continue in the profession. She explained that without support she would have left the profession. This resonates with Day and Gu (2007) who suggest that professional identity determines if one becomes resilient. In addition, a balance in the situational, professional, and personal dimensions enabled Mam to cope with the frustration that she felt.

5.4.3 16-23-Year Life Phase

Day and Gu (2007) maintain that during this life phase, teachers are becoming more settled in their lives and careers. However, their personal and professional responsibilities have increased. This resonates with Jenny who was in this life phase. The ability to balance the different dimensions of her life was a crucial component in her remaining in the profession. Owing to this Jenny was committed and motivated to remain in the profession. On the other hand, Khan who was in the same life phase as Jenny, had a different experience. Contrary to Day and Gu's (2007) assertion, Khan was settled in the profession and had been for the past 18 years. However, Khan still sought validation for her efforts which according to Day and Gu (2007) generally occurs in the first life phase. At the same time, data revealed that Khan felt settled in her career because she got into the profession later in life and had already developed a stable personal identity which enabled her to settle quicker in her professional identity.

The data generated paved the way to the introduction of another key finding, financial remuneration. Financial remuneration was key in teachers remaining in the profession during this life phase. Participants believed that as teachers they were underpaid, and this would be a motivating factor for them leaving the profession. Despite having a settled professional and personal identity, which according to Day and Gu (2007) was a motivating factor for teachers remaining in the profession, monetary remuneration also influenced the decisions that teachers made.

5.4.4 24-30-Year Life Phase

Mary belonged to this life phase of her teaching career. This life phase as outlined by Day and Gu (2007) consists of both positive and negative professional life phases. This is congruent

with the life that Mary experienced, which got her to this point in her career. Even though Mary went through several negative situations, she managed to overcome them and had developed a strong professional identity. Day and Gu (2007) acknowledge that teachers, during this time, require considerably more support and personal motivation to equip them to face the changes that had taken place during this life phase. This was evident in Mary's narrative, as she shared that she took on the initiative to study further and familiarise herself with the changes in the curriculum. She attributed the stability of her personal identity to helping develop a solid professional identity. Furthermore, Mary had a positive outlook and therefore she was still motivated and committed to the profession. This is in line with Day and Gu (2007) who suggest that a positive environment determines the motivation that teachers have. Nevertheless, after 24 years of teaching, Mary was still not confident enough when she was teaching in the classroom. She still sought validation from peers and learners. However, teachers in this life phase are continuously bombarded with policy and curriculum changes as well as a decline in learner behaviour (Day & Gu, 2007). For Mary to become confident in what she does, Day and Gu (2007) suggest that she needs to evolve and adapt to her current situation.

From the discussion above it was clear that the findings were consistent with Day and Gu's (2007) professional life phases. The study found that teacher's experiences and the manner in which they relate and adapt to various changes, and the development of their identities were determined by the life phase in which they were at.

5.5 Limitations of The Study

This study examined narratives of five teachers from two schools in one circuit. Furthermore, all participants were female which was not by the design of the researcher. Therefore, the study cannot be generalised. As the Departmental Head for Languages, I knew all participants who were chosen because they represented the different life phases as identified by Day and Gu (2007). One participant each was chosen from three of the life phases and two participants for one. Therefore, the study does not reflect the thoughts or ideas of others teaching in the same life phase.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, I only met participants twice, once for an explanation on how to design a collage and write a poem and then for the semi-structured interviews. Follow-up interviews and member checking was done via email. Due to covid-19 protocols, participants wore masks so it was difficult to judge their non-verbal responses.

5.6 Recommendations for Further Research

One of the recommendations of this study is that the Department of Education try and understand the contextual factors of teachers and their identity before implementing workshops. This will provide teachers with proper guidance on how to approach the subject matter. Furthermore, the English Home Language curriculum needs to be streamlined and geared towards the current learners. Participants in this study were affected dramatically by the Covid-19 pandemic. It is recommended that studies be conducted that explore the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the identity of teachers.

In addition, it is envisaged that the findings of this study will assist the Department of Education to design intervention programmes to assist English Home Language teachers. It is also hoped that this study will add to the growing body of literature on teacher identities, especially English Home Language teachers. At the same time, the findings of this study would enable schools to come up with development programs that will support professional learning in the later phases of life (Day, 2013).

5.7 Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to explore the personal and professional identities of English Home Language teachers in the Senior and Further Education and Training (FET) Phases. In addition, it aimed to examine the personal and professional identities of English Home Language teachers in the Senior and Further Education and Training (FET) Phases at different stages in their careers. This chapter highlighted the link between the preceding chapters and merging them together, contributing to the completeness of this study. The study revealed that teachers have multiple identities which were continuously evolving because of changing contexts of participants. This is in line with Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) who described identity as a continuous process which involves both the individual and the context.

The findings showed that aside from the differing identities that English Home Language teachers possessed, there were both personal and professional factors that affect the development of personal and professional identities. As identified by Day and Gu's (2007) conceptual framework, the personal, professional and situated dimensions of teacher identity need to be in balance. The study showed that an imbalance in either one of these dimensions affects identity. In addition, teaching English Home Language was dependant on the strength of teachers' identities. Due to curriculum changes, language barriers and increased workloads,

teachers experienced instability in their identity. On a different note, the study also showed that teachers with strong professional identities have the ability to cope better with different situations.

Finally, this study showed that teachers experience different challenges in the different stages of their careers. The way in which they responded to challenges, were dependant on how their identities developed in their previous life phases (Day & Gu, 2007).

To conclude, Hammerness, Darling-Hammond and Bransford, (2005, as cited in Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009, p.383) surmise:

Developing an identity as a teacher is an important part of securing teachers' commitment to their work and adherence to professional norms... the identities teachers develop shape their dispositions, where they place their effort, whether and how they seek out professional development opportunities, and what obligations they see as intrinsic to their role.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Letter to Principal

14 Zinnia Road

Estcourt

3310

20 November 2020

Dear Sir/Madam

My name is Aresh Woodraj (Student No. 218085723) a Master of Education (MEd) student in the School of Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Pietermaritzburg campus). As part of the requirement for this degree, I am required to conduct a research project. The title of my research study is: Narratives of English Home Language teachers' personal and professional identities at two secondary schools in the Wembezi circuit in the UThukela district.

The aim and purpose of this research study is to explore the personal and professional identities of English Home Language teachers in the Further Education and Training (FET) phase in secondary schools. This study will also focus on FET English Home Language teachers at different life phases in their careers.

I request your assistance in this research project by being granted permission to conduct my study in your school/institution. This study is expected to use two (2) participants who are teachers in your school and will involve the following procedures. Participants will be required to participate in semi-structured, narrative interviews that are expected to last between 20 to 40 minutes at a time suitable to them which will not disturb teaching and learning. Follow-up interviews may be conducted if necessary. Each interview will be voice-recorded. Participants will also be requested to write poetry and design a collage. The duration of their participation if they choose to participate and remain in the study is expected to be 4-6 weeks.

This study will not involve any risks and/or discomfort for the school and participants. Also, the study will not provide direct benefits for the school or participants.

In the event of any problems or concerns/questions you may contact me, my supervisor or the UKZN Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee, contact details as follows:

My contact number

Email: ares@lantic.net

Cell: [REDACTED]

Supervisor :Dr J. Naidoo Email address: naidoj@ukzn.ac.za Telephone 033 260 5867

UKZN Research Office

Research Office, Westville Campus

Govan Mbeki Building

Private Bag X 54001

Durban

4000

KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: 27 31 2604557- Fax: 27 31 2604609

Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

Participation in this research study is voluntary and participants may withdraw participation at any point. In the event of refusal/withdrawal of participation the participants will not be penalised. There are no consequences for participants who withdraw from the study.

No costs will be incurred by participants as a result of participation in the study and there are no incentives or reimbursements for participation in the study.

All names of schools and participants will be changed and pseudonyms will be used so that schools and participants remain anonymous. Information provided by participants will remain confidential and will not be shared with anyone else. Data generated through semi-structured, narrative interviews, poetry and collage will be stored in my supervisor's office (Room 47), at the School of Education, Pietermaritzburg campus for five years, and thereafter be destroyed.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours in Education

Aresh Woodraj

DECLARATION OF CONSENT

I _____ (Full names of the school principal) have been informed about the study entitled: Narratives of English Home Language teachers' personal and professional identities in secondary schools in the UThukela district by Aresh Woodraj.

I understand the purpose and procedures of the study

SIGNATURE OF PRINCIPAL

DATE

Appendix 2: Letter to Participant

14 Zinnia Road
Estcourt
3310
20 November 2020

Dear Participant

REQUEST FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH PROJECT

My name is Aresh Woodraj (Student No. 218085723) a Master of Education (MEd) student in the School of Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Pietermaritzburg campus). As part of the requirement for this degree, I am required to conduct a research project. I request your participation in this research study. The title of my study is: "Narratives of English Home Language teachers' personal and professional identities at two secondary schools in the Wembezi circuit in the UThukela district.

The aim and purpose of this research study is to explore the personal and professional identities of English Home Language teachers in the Further Education and Training (FET) phase in secondary schools. This study will also focus on FET English Home Language teachers at different life phases in their careers.

This study is expected to use four (4) participants and will involve the following procedures. As participants, teachers will be requested to participate in semi-structured, narrative interviews that are expected to last between 20 to 40 minutes at a time suitable to them which will not disturb teaching and learning. Follow-up interviews may be conducted if necessary. Each interview will be voice-recorded. Participants will also be requested to write poetry and design a collage. The duration of your participation if you choose to participate and remain in the study is expected to be 4-6 weeks.

This study will not involve any risks and/or discomfort to teachers. Also, the study will not provide direct benefits for teachers.

In the event of any problems or concerns/questions you may contact me, my supervisor or the UKZN Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee, contact details as follows:

My contact number

Email: aresh@lantic.net [REDACTED]

Supervisor

My supervisor is Dr J. Naidoo who is located at the School of Education, Pietermaritzburg campus of University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Telephone 033 260 5867, Email address: naidooj@ukzn.ac.za

UKZN Research Office

Research Office, Westville Campus

Govan Mbeki Building

Private Bag X 54001

Durban

4000

KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: 27 31 2604557- Fax: 27 31 2604609

Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

Participation in this research study is voluntary and you may withdraw participation at any point. In the event of refusal/withdrawal of participation you will not be penalised. There are no consequences for participants if they withdraw from the study.

No costs will be incurred by teachers as a result of participation in the study and there are no incentives or reimbursements for participation in the study.

All names of schools and participants will be changed and pseudonyms will be used so that schools and participants remain anonymous. Information provided by participants will remain confidential and will not be shared with anyone else. Data generated through semi-structured, narrative interviews, poetry and collage will be stored in my supervisor's office (Room 47), at the School of Education, Pietermaritzburg campus for five years, and thereafter be destroyed.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours in Education

Aresh Woodraj

DECLARATION OF CONSENT

I, _____ (Name of participant) have been informed about the study entitled: Narratives of English Home Language teachers' personal and professional identities in secondary schools in the UThukela district by Aresh Woodraj.

I understand the purpose and procedures of the study.

I have been given an opportunity to ask questions about the study and have had answers to my satisfaction.

I declare that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without affecting any of the benefits that I usually am entitled to.

If I have any further questions/concerns or queries related to the study, I understand that I may contact the researcher at 0828398496.

If I have any questions or concerns about my rights as a study participant, or if I am concerned about an aspect of the study or the researchers then I may contact:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION

Research Office, Westville Campus

Govan Mbeki Building

Private Bag X 54001

Durban

4000

KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: 27 31 2604557 - Fax: 27 31 2604609

Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

Additional consent, where applicable

I hereby provide consent to: (Please circle response)

Participate in semi-structured interview	YES / NO
Audio-record my interview	YES / NO
Design a collage	YES / NO
Write a poem	YES / NO

Signature of Participant

Date

Appendix 3 Data generation instruments

Interview Schedule

Project title

Narratives of English Home Language teachers' personal and professional identities at two secondary schools in the Wembezi circuit in the UThukela district.

Research Questions

1. What do English Home Language teacher's stories tell us about their personal and professional identities?
2. How do personal and professional identities of English Home Language teachers develop at different life phases in their careers?

Background information

1. Briefly describe your schooling experiences in primary and secondary school.
2. What tertiary qualifications do you have?
3. What subjects did you major in?
4. How many years teaching experience do you have?
5. How many years teaching experience do you have as an English Home Language teacher?
6. Briefly describe your school context/setting.
7. What grades have you taught / are currently teaching?

Interview questions

1. What motivated you to become a teacher?
2. How would you describe yourself as a teacher?
3. Tell me about the significant others in your life.
4. Tell me about how significant others eg. parents, teachers, siblings, relatives or friends influenced your choice to become a teacher.
5. Describe a few critical incidents that influenced you as a person.
6. Describe a few critical incidents that influenced you as a teacher.
7. Briefly describe your day to day experiences as an English Home Language teacher in the Further Education and Training phase.

8. Do you feel that teaching English Home Language in the FET phase is different from teaching other subjects? If yes, briefly explain how is it different?
9. Describe the way you see yourself and how you think others see you with respect to behaviour, emotions and the way you think (cognition).
10. What do you understand about the concept of ‘teacher identity’?
11. How would you describe your personal ‘self’?
12. How would you describe your teacher ‘self’?
13. Briefly explain how your personal identities might relate to your professional identities.
14. Briefly comment on factors that influence your personal and professional identities.
15. What do you think you still need to learn to become an expert in teaching English Home Language in the FET phase?
16. Is there anything more that you would like to tell me about your personal and personal identities? If yes, please feel free to share it.

Poetry Instructions

Participants will be requested to write a Poem using the following guidelines:

Write a poem reflecting on your personal and professional experiences as an English Home Language teacher. Reflect on your childhood, schooling and teaching experiences, where you come from, where you are at as an English Home Language teacher and where do see yourself both personally and professionally in the next five years. Participants will be given a sample of the poem, “*Where I am from*” by *Velma Pate* (below) so that they are able to see what is expected of them

Where I’m from

by Velma L. Pate

Covenant United Church of Christ (Faith in Place and Connect partner)

I'm from the dirt road of Lexington, Mississippi.

Water rushing down the pond, birds singing in the window

Shotgun house with no phone to ring

Seating on the porch rocking in the chair.

I'm from the cotton fields, sweat running down my face

to a kitchen of greens, cornbread and peach cobbler.

Garden of flower freshly blooming for the summer,

Smells of hogs, chicken, dogs, horses, cows
waiting to be milked, fed each morning.

I'm from "see you tomorrow if the Lord say the same"
"don't count all your chicken before they hatch"
"Fairly-Miley" If you know what I mean.
Hanging clothes on the line, fishing pole hooking the worms.

I'm from going to town on Saturday and church on Sunday
reading the Bible and memorizing poems for Easter and Children
Day's
I'm from a grandmamma who was a tough no-nonsense woman
bring you in this world and will take you out.

Waiting for the Commodity Truck at the end on the road
Candy, cheese, cookies and bologna.
Lamps become my light for night
Chop wood to keep me warm for winter.

I'm from the rib, living a thousand years is like yesterday.
A fragrance from flowers, trees that buds in the spring,
The hills of Mt. Olive, Randall Town Road.
I'm a breath of life, Heaven is my home.

Like George Ella Lyon,
"I am from those moments
snapped before I budded
leaf-fall from the family tree.

(Source: www.connectcca.org)

Collage Instructions

Participants will be requested to design a Collage on their personal and professional identities as English Home Language teachers in the FET phase. Each participant will be given a sample of a collage to give them an idea of what is expected of them.

Participants will be requested to design a Collage using the following guidelines:

Read through the magazines provided and identify and cut out words, phrases and pictures that relate to your personal and professional identities as an English Home Language teachers in the FET phase.

Explore aspects of your family, significant others, critical incidents, relationships, community life etc. that have influenced your personal and professional identities as an English Home Language teacher. Include as many details as possible that contribute to your uniqueness.

After completing your collage, explain in as much detail as possible, your personal and professional identities, the significant people or events that contributed to the development of your personal and professional identities and how your collage describes you as a person and as a teacher. Identify the challenges and positive and negative emotions you experience as an English Home Language teachers in the FET phase, and what has enabled you to become the person and the teacher that you are.

Appendix 4: Ethical Clearance UKZN



24 April 2021

Mr Aresh Woodraj (218085723)
School of Education
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Dear Mr Woodraj,

Protocol reference number: HSSREC/00002644/2021

Project title: Narratives of English Home Language teachers' personal and professional identities at two secondary schools in the Wembezi circuit in the uThukela District.

Degree: Masters

Approval Notification – Expedited Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application received on 26 March 2021 in connection with the above, was reviewed by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

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 discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

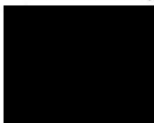
This approval is valid until 24 April 2022.

To ensure uninterrupted approval of this study beyond the approval expiry date, a progress report must be submitted to the Research Office on the appropriate form 2 - 3 months before the expiry date. A close-out report to be submitted when study is finished.

All research conducted during the COVID-19 period must adhere to the national and UKZN guidelines.

HSSREC is registered with the South African National Research Ethics Council (REC-040414-040).

Yours sincerely,



Professor Dipane Hlalele (Chair)

/dd

Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban, 4000, South Africa

Telephone: +27 (0)31 260 8350/4557/3587 Email: hssrec@ukzn.ac.za Website: <http://research.ukzn.ac.za/Research-Ethics>

Founding Campuses:  Edgewood  Howard College  Medical School  Pietermaritzburg  Westville

INSPIRING GREATNESS

Appendix 5: Department of Education Permission Letter



KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE
EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

OFFICE OF THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Private Bag X9137, PIETERMARITZBURG, 3200
Anton Lembede Building, 247 Burger Street, Pietermaritzburg, 3201
Tel: 033 3921062 / 033-3921051

Email: Phindile.duma@kzndoe.gov.za
Buyi.ntuli@kzndoe.gov.za

Enquiries: Phindile Duma/Buyi Ntuli

Ref.:2/4/8/7058

Mr Aresh Woodraj
14 Zinnia Road
ESTCOURT
3310

Dear Mr Woodraj

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct research entitled: **"NARRATIVES OF ENGLISH HOME LANGUAGE TEACHERS' PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL IDENTITIES AT TWO SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE UTHUKELA DISTRICT"** in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2. The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.
5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principals and Heads of Institutions where the Intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
6. The period of investigation is limited to the period from 11TH December 2020 to 10TH March 2023.
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Miss Phindile Duma/Mrs Buyi Ntuli at the contact numbers above.
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report/dissertation/thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Please address it to The Office of the HOD, Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to schools and institutions in KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education.


Dr. EV Nzama
Head of Department: Education
Date: 11TH December 2020

GROWING KWAZULU-NATAL TOGETHER

Appendix 6: Collages and poems of participants

Jades Collage and Poem



Who am I

By Jade

I am from the Estcourt born and bred

Poverty and abuse constantly on my head.

I am from a family of five,

My parents worked hard to ensure that we thrived.

Living to please my family

Even though it meant me living in agony.

Raised in a Catholic family that pray

What would they say if I told them I'm Gay?

I am thankful for all my teachers who gave me their best

Through them I'm able to fend every test.

I try to be the best educator I can be

Hopefully one day my hard work will be out there for everyone to see.

I am from having no direction in my life

To drawing inspiration from I call my wife

Hard work and dedication is key

I'm finally living for me.

Who am I

By Mary

I come from the city that lies in the Msunduzi River Valley,
Roses, azaleas, all so beautiful, you are the 'City of flowers'.
Hopscotch, hide and seek, we spy, we run up and down the
alley.

If you outrun, outsmart, outplay, you will have all the
power.

I came from, 'pardon me', 'may I please be excused'.
Now listen child, you should be seen and not heard.
When you are spoken to, don't you dare, or you will be cursed
If your friend says, jump into the fire, will you be lured?

I come from a place of family, love and trust.
Yes, I come from Sunday school, a place of culture.
Change, change your mind or your soul will rust.
They eat your heart, spit it out and fly away like a vulture.

I come from a place of confusion and motherhood.
Motherhood, my happiness, my commitment, my eternity.
Children learn from what you do, not what you say, understood
Hold on wait a minute, I am taking control of my destiny.
It's a new day, I learn I grow, I am humble
I come from a place where I will never crumble.

Poem by Jenny

Destiny of devotion

By Jenny

Growing up flourished by loves glove,
Immersed in a spirit of Mandela's uprising
I tread through the years at school,
Following the rules was not cool,
Mom said, "Don't be a fool."

Wordsmith challenges drew me to Wordsworth,
Shakespeare counselled my sorrows,
My classmates considered me, "one of the crazy fellows."
Language was drenched in my blood,
I transitioned from learner to teacher,

The path that never let me go weaker.
I aspire to reach great heights,
Everyday takes us on different flights,
Teach about rights, tell some to go fly a kite.

O the unrestrained joy of past
and present never ceases to be pleasant
with my,
destiny of devotion.

Appendix 7: Turnitin report

Aresh Woodraj MEd Thesis

ORIGINALITY REPORT

6%

SIMILARITY INDEX

5%

INTERNET SOURCES

2%

PUBLICATIONS

2%

STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

1

Submitted to University of KwaZulu-Natal

Student Paper

<1 %

2

hdl.handle.net

Internet Source

<1 %

3

researchspace.ukzn.ac.za

Internet Source

<1 %

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www.tandfonline.com

Internet Source

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Internet Source

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9

scholar.sun.ac.za

Internet Source

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Appendix 8: Proof of Editing



26th of January 2022

To whom it may concern

EDITING OF DISSERTATION FOR MR ARESH WOODRAJ

I have a master's degree in Social Science, Research Psychology and a TEFL qualification from UKZN. I also have an undergraduate and honour's degree Bachelor of Arts in Health Sciences and Social Services from UNISA.

I have 15 years of teaching experience and have been editing academic theses for students from UKZN, UNISA, the University of Fort Hare, and DUT for the past eight years. I have further undertaken editing, transcribing and other research work for private individuals and businesses.

I hereby confirm that I have edited Aresh Woodraj's dissertation titled "**Narratives of English Home Language Teachers**" for submission of his master's dissertation in Education in Teacher Development Studies at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Corrections were made in respect of grammar, tenses, spelling and language usage using track changes in MS Word 2013. Once corrections have been attended to, the dissertation should be correct.

Yours sincerely



Terry Shuttleworth (Hons BA Psych Coun, UNISA; TEFL, UKZN; MSocSc, UKZN).

DISCLAIMER

Should the student not attend to the changes suggested by the editor and make additions to the dissertation after editing has been completed, the editor cannot guarantee the language, grammar and tenses are correct at the time of publication.