



Personal Narrative Inquiry:
**Exploring My Childhood Memories That Shape My Novice
Teacher Self in a Public Township School**

by
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DECLARATION

I, Siphesihle Londiwe Pamella Khumalo, student number 213548490, hereby declare that:

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

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

3. This dissertation does not contain other person's data, pictures, graphs, or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons, the details of which to be found as in-text references and in the References.

4. This dissertation does not contain other person's writing, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other researchers. Where other written sources have been quoted then:

4.1 their words have been re-written, but the general information attributed to them has be referenced.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my grandmother Adelaide Makhosazana Sosibo,
who instilled in me the values of love, respect and education.

I also dedicate this work to my beautiful daughter Oratile Sosibo. One of the
greatest gifts I've ever received is my daughter.

“Here’s to strong women. May we know them.

May we be them. May we raise them”

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My friends whose critique was appreciated, and my family for their motivation and support throughout this study.

God and my ancestors for giving me the strength to complete this work.

ABSTRACT

This thesis presents an understanding of stories about my personal and professional self as a novice teacher in a public township school. My curiosity to explore my childhood memories of growing up and attending schools in two different contextual setting, namely, rural and urban, and presently working in a township environment, was critical for my learning as a novice teacher. I was curious to explore how my childhood experiences translate and transform my past experiences into my present approaches and ways of understanding and aspirations as a novice teacher.

By using personal narrative inquiry, I was able to reflect retrospectively to remember my childhood memories and experiences that shaped, and shapes my meaning making as a novice teacher working in a township school. The kind of learning I experienced through this Masters study was a deep and insightful study that is internally driven. My stories and memories became a tool for me to resist and re-invent myself to become a better novice teacher in the future.

Beauchamp and Thomas (2009)'s theoretical framework of identities has been very useful throughout my Masters study. Using Beauchamp and Thomas to explore the internal and external forces that shape the self, has made me realize that I have good and bad selves that shape my novice teacher self. There is an inextricable link between my personal and professional identities.

Making visible my childhood experiences as a site for my teacher learning as a novice teacher was driven by my commitment to care for self. As well as to develop greater awareness of what informs the way I think, know and act as a teacher so I can always strive to be the best novice teacher.

I found that through this research I had a remarkable opportunity for a deep and insightful study that contributed to a deeper understanding of self through the recounting and retelling of stories. Retelling of stories became a tool for me to resist and re-invent myself, the positive ramifications of which I believe will positively contribute to the improved teaching and learning experiences for both me and my learners.

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CHAPTER ONE

Exploring my childhood memories that shaped my novice teacher self

1.1 Introduction

Growing up as an African girl in a rural area in the 2000s with my grandmother, was a memorable experience. Recollection and reflection upon childhood memories provides a rich source of information to understand one's identity. Coulter, Michael and Paynor (2007), asserts that stories are able to help us understand who we are and show us what legacies to transmit to future generations. Through my stories of experience evoked from my childhood memories, I want to understand how my identity as a teacher developed (Allender & Allender, 2006). I also wish to explore, how opening these memories through stories can assist me in understanding what kind of novice teacher I am and what I can become in a public township school. I am curious to know about how my childhood memories of life and schooling are potent sources for exploring the constructions of my novice teacher self in a classroom and what possibilities exist for what I can be in the future.

Reflecting on my childhood experiences of growing up in a rural context called Ixopo in KwaZulu-Natal. Ixopo is an underdeveloped rural context, where there is a shortage of water, no electricity, no network for cell phones. School children still have to walk long distances to go to school. Rural people are those that live in farming areas, which are less populated, have fewer services and are often "quite a distance to opportunities and services" (Slama 2004, p.10). With all of the mentioned constraints in the area such as having fewer services, people still support each other, and this is instilled in each person in our area.

Slama (2004) elaborates that certain values are instilled in rural people without even realizing it. All neighbours know each other and are helpful to one another which is a symbol of "Ubuntu" (humanity).

Fig.1: My grandmother's bedroom



My memory recollection of growing up in the rural area evokes fond memories of the time when I was 11 years old, my cousins and I would sit around Gogo (grandmother) in her bedroom listening to her tell stories. In the photograph below, the bedroom of my Gogo is shown (Fig.1).

It was a small bedroom, and it was where we felt free and happy. On Fridays after school when we arrived at home and took off our school uniforms, my siblings and I loved listening to our grandmother tell stories. Even today, the setting in the room is still the same, nothing has changed. We still sit around her now because that routine is so heart-warming. On one of those memorable days, Gogo didn't only tell us one story, but shared a lot of stories because we would always shout in IsiZulu, "Cha Gogo, sicela enye uyasirobha", which meant, "Noooooooo, Granny, please tell us another story!" Also, on this day, she said, "it's your turn now to tell a story".

It was there in my grandmother's bedroom where my own impetus of becoming a teacher was born. For this study, one must ask first, who is a novice teacher? Sarpy-Simpson (2005) states that a novice teacher is one who has just begun in professional field of teaching, with below two years of teaching experience. I have selected this definition by Sarpy- Sampson (2005) because it describes the first years of teaching as the most challenging. Doing a study about myself as a novice teacher enabled me to explore my constructions of novice teacher self, to learn through stories of my lived educational experiences.

1.2 Rationale for this study

In this section I discuss the personal, professional and contextual imperatives that motivated this study.

1.2.1 My personal rationale

Growing in a family that is loving and supportive influenced my love for teaching; my grandmother was also a teacher. The love of telling and listening to stories grew every day because it was connecting us (siblings) as a family, and we learned to respect and support one another. Childhood memories are rooted within us, and our memories help to make logical sense and meaning of our present conditions and choices (Chang-Kredl & Kingsley, 2014). Hence trying to understand the influence of my childhood upon my current identity and activity as a teacher is strong imperative for undertaking this study.

Another personal imperative for this study is that, as a novice teacher I reflect on many challenges I face daily. Other studies show that novice teachers have an agency to work and develop ways of managing the challenges they face daily (Chang-Kredl & Kingsley, 2004). In the absence of any mentoring support for me, I wanted to pause and reflect on who am I as a novice teacher and make available the deep-rooted beliefs and perspectives behind my everyday practices (Pillay, Hiralaal & Ramkelawan, 2018). Tracing the sources of my meanings and experiences (Vinz,1997) is what prompted me to draw on my childhood memories of schooling as potent spaces to understand what and how they shape me as an individual and who I am as a novice teacher. Miller and Shufflet (2016) assert that our

childhood experiences usually shape different educational experiences of an individual's during our lifetime.

As a child, I faced several challenges, like being abused by my fellow school mates, incidents not uncommon to the experiences of other children. For some learners, going home after school brings back the thoughts of being unloved due to responsibilities they had to take on as children. Learners play the role of being adults at home by having to take care of the whole family, by cooking, cleaning and earning money to support siblings (Bray & Brandt, 2007). Going home to such conditions makes these learners depressed and exhausted and affects them educationally and socially. Yet in my case, although experiencing challenging incidents at school, I always looked forward to going home to my grandmother, which was the only place where I felt loved and secure.

1.2.2 Professional imperative

According to Wilson, Mitchell, Morrison, Radford and Pithouse-Morgan (2014), the productive remembering and childhood memories entails bringing forth the past in remembering what is yet to come hence it connects the autobiographical, personal and with the social. Thus, this type of productive remembering and childhood memories provides a source and site for constructions of my novice teacher self, which forms the professional imperative for my study.

My interest as a Masters student in childhood memories is crystallized in the pantoum poem I created to develop a focus for my research. The pantoum is a French Malaysian poem with its repeated lines that allow remarkable and emotionally evocative themes (Furman, Leets & Langer, 2006), which help me identify and communicate what the striking features and significant ideas I can take up in my research study. Other researchers such as Pillay, Pithouse-Morgan, and Naiker (2017), have also used this technique, and according to these researcher's poetry can also be understood as a mode of research analysis that can strengthen creativity and reflexivity. The three-stanza poem is presented below: it is entitled "*Cha gogo sicela enye uyasirobha*".

“Cha gogo sicela enye uyasirobha”

Behind the stories

Stories of encouragement

Interesting and useful in life.

Our warm free and happy space

Stories of encouragement

Listening-telling stories Our

warm free and happy space We

shared love

*Listening-telling stories Interesting
and useful in life.*

We shared love.

Behind the stories

This pantoum poem crystalizes key issues about my childhood memories of growing up and the role of stories. The stanzas foreground the importance of a space that was shared between me and my siblings. They emphasize the bond and warmth and how, by relating to each other, we create caring/loving relationships to manage our everyday lives and practices. In this study I want to find out to what extent do my childhood memories influence my everyday lived experiences as a young African woman? Storying memories, for unlocking a novice teacher's self-identities and perspectives, is infused with power (Pillay, Hiralaal & Ramkelawan, 2019) and have the capacity to revise and invigorate crucial times of the past as embodied and empowering experiences.

According to Pithouse-Morgan, Mitchell and Pillay (2012) constructions of the novice teacher self, begin by looking for confirmation of beliefs and images, accumulated through experiences as pupils in the classroom. Allender and Allender (2006, p.15) emphasizes the influences of stories in early childhood experiences for novice teachers, and their study found that exploring childhood experiences influences the development of a strong self-image and knowing the

unique characteristics and values of being learners. Thus, this study explores the importance of childhood memories and how influential they are on my novice teacher's self-development.

In the absence of induction programmes, assigned mentors and collegial support in my career as a teacher, this study explores through personal stories, how my experiences, past, and present, enables me to understand what shapes my meanings as a novice teacher. Also, what possibilities exist for my novice teacher self in the future. While policies require all teachers to perform in particular ways in the workplace, novice teachers in SA schools are struggling with managing classrooms (Farrell 2006). In the absence of organizational support in place, novice teachers working in the complex educational landscape, have to draw on their resources to negotiate these several responsibilities in ways that are most meaningful and enhancing. How do novice teachers negotiate the multiple responsibilities of being a teacher?

This study hopes to illuminate stories that enable shifts in meaning-making, redefining who we are in the world and how we make sense of ourselves as teachers in empowering ways. Not much research has been written on the constructions of childhood memories and stories of experiences. Thus, this study can fill a gap in the literature on how the use of childhood memories can help understand better who I am as a novice teacher and what alternate perspectives are accurate to negotiate the challenges and responsibilities I have daily in a public township school.

1.2.3 Contextual Rationale

The context in which I find myself as a teacher gives further impetus for this study. South African township schools have particular issues that complexify the lives of novice teachers in many ways. South Africa education is designed to develop a teaching profession that is ready and able to meet the needs of a democratic society (Engelbrecht, 2006). Additionally, the policies are underpinned by the belief that teachers are the essential drivers of a good quality education system (Engelbrecht, 2006). This has serious implications for novice teachers teaching in SA schools. As novice teachers, we are expected to carry out a variety of responsibilities without assistance from our senior/experienced professional teachers in the workplace (Farrell, 2016). The Norms and Standards for Educators included in the Integrated Strategic Planning Framework (Department of Education, 2011), states that teachers are required to develop competencies and skills necessary to fulfil the seven roles of educators, for

example being an assessor, a leader, administrator and manager as well as being a lifelong learner.

The lives of novice teachers are complex, and they struggle to become liable for managing classrooms Farrell (2016). As newly qualified teachers, they are left to figure out for themselves how to handle classrooms. While most studies focus mainly on the challenges faced by novice teachers Farrell (2016), recent scholars talk about the more progressive experiences of novice teachers. Through novice teachers' stories, one can access rich information about novice teachers as unique individuals who go through a process of trials and mistakes to negotiate what they do and how they do what they do Pillay (2014).

According to Coleman and Hoffer (1987), 53% of public high school head teachers mentioned that parents are absent in their children's education – when called for parent meetings they do not show up. Parents do not want to be involved because they believe that schools are responsible for their children, they see schools as not fulfilling their duties when it attempts to involve parents (Christie, 2001). Furthermore, schooling suffers because learners come from poor backgrounds and they struggle to pay the school fees. Most of the school's battle with difficulties where people suffer from unemployment and other social ills (Soudien, 2007). Lastly, not understand the English language is a huge problem in the public schools, and the medium of instruction is English which adds another layer of complexity to the learners' problems with understanding the language (Bertram, 2001). Thus, the context in which I find myself as a novice teacher, is another driver of why I wish to engage in this research.

In this section, I described my personal, professional and contextual imperatives that motivate my research., which influence the values, beliefs, practices and knowledge that inform my choices as a novice teacher when confronting daily challenges. Therefore, this study focuses on my values and perspectives that shape constructions of my personal and professional self within a township school context and provides the impetus to reflect on who I am, what do I do and why.

This study focuses mostly on my novice teacher self, my childhood memories and experiences as well as personal and professional identities which makes these aspects the key concepts for this study.

1.3 Key concepts

- Novice teachers – people who are still new in the professional field between zero to two years of experience.
- Childhood memories and experiences – remembering of the past in constructing my novice teacher self.
- Personal and professional identities- identity is an on-going process; it is dynamic rather than stable.

1.4 Theoretical framework

I have adopted a Theoretical Framework by Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) “Understanding teacher identity”. According to Beauchamp and Thomas (2009), a teacher’s personal and professional identity is an ongoing procedure of shifts and changes, hence identity is active and relational to the social context. Beauchamp and Thomas’s Theoretical framework of Understanding teacher identity consist of certain dimensions of the self and identity

- Emotions and identity
- Context and identity
- The link between identity and agency

The above framing adapted from Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) assists me in understanding and explaining the process of constructing and negotiating personal and professional identity as an African woman and my choice of becoming a teacher.

Since this study is built on my childhood memories and remembering of my past experiences of growing up, I use productive remembering as well in collaboration with understanding teacher identity theory. Wertsch and Roediger (2008) states that in productive remembering, history is tied interpretively to the present-day. Also, according to Mitchell, Wilson, Allnut and Pithouse-Morgan (2013), productive remembering works as an umbrella under which to explore approaches to working with memories that are future orientated. Both the theory of understanding teacher identity and productive remembering is helpful in understanding how my past memories of growing up construct my novice teacher self.

1.5 Research questions for this study

My research questions are generated in relation to my title which outlines that I am exploring my childhood memories that shape my novice teacher self in a public township school. My narrative inquiry then triggered these questions as to “*what and how*” childhood memories shape my personal and professional construction of self as a novice teacher. These questions are relevant to this study because I intend in answering exactly what stories that shape my personal and professional self and how those stories shape myself as a novice teacher.

What are the stories of childhood memories that shape my personal and professional constructions of self as a novice teacher? The focus of this question is to discover who I am personally-professionally as a novice teacher teaching in a public township school. I draw on childhood memories using different methods such as photographs and paintings to retrieve some of the memories. *How stories of my childhood memories shape my everyday lived practices as a novice teacher teaching in a township school?* The focus here is to explore how my childhood memories shape what I do as a novice teacher in a public township school. The stories of my childhood memories shape me in particular ways. Using different methods like photographs, memory drawing and letter writing helps in generating data about the values and beliefs and practices that I have learned from my childhood experiences. Also, to understand what meanings and perspectives take to negotiate the multiple responsibilities I hold as a novice teacher.

1.6 Methodology

For my research methodology I use a qualitative framework called personal narrative inquiry. Narratives are a powerful instrument for teacher's personal, social and professional learning (Richie & Wilson, 2000). This method allows me as a participant in my study to go back in time to think about my childhood memories and experiences that add to my life now as a novice teacher working in a township school.

Data is generated using photographs, letter writing, artefacts and memory drawings. Pinnegar and Hamilton (2009) states that using multiple methods is important to gain variety of different perceptions on what is being researched. Trustworthiness is guaranteed by using three different methods to gather data (Creswell & Miller, 2000).

Using *self as a participant* is used as a descriptor for finding one's concept of self and the development of self-image as a participant (Loughran 2004, p. 8). According to Connelly and Clandinin (1990), voicing one's everyday lives as individual empowers an individual to take part in a community.

1.7 The organization of this study

I have outlined the focus and purpose of the study, which explores the constructions of my novice teacher self. The personal, professional and contextual rationale for my study has been highlighted. I have also described my two key research questions, including my methodological approach. I conclude this chapter by giving an overview of my master's thesis.

Chapter Two of this study focuses on the review of scholarly literature and debates to establish the current state of research and understand the contributions and contentions in the field. It informs the background to my research, the focus of which is on exploring my childhood memories to understand how it shapes my novice teacher self in a public township school. This chapter also includes the theoretical framing by Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) which is understanding teacher identity, I want to understand how my childhood memories shape my novice teacher self.

In Chapter Three of this study, the aim is to explain my research methodology, which includes the research design and methods. This section includes three aspects of the research design: Personal narrative inquiry as to the selected methodology for my study. The selection of my research participants and the context of my study.

Chapter Four of this study, called my personal narrative explores the constructions of my novice teacher-self working in a township school. This is done by making central the person of my novice teacher life, drawing on both the personal and professional domains, and using my memories and experiences of growing up in a rural context. The stories in this chapter are formed through a variety of methods discussed in Chapter Three.

In Chapter Five of this study, I respond to my first research question – *what are the stories of my childhood memories that shape my construction of self as a novice teacher?* This analysis is present through selected excerpts of my memories and experiences as potential spaces for

understanding personal and professional meanings and identities prompted by my storied narratives and grouped into themes. (analysis).

In Chapter Six, I respond to my second research question which is: *how stories prompted by my childhood memories shape my everyday lived practices as a novice teacher teaching in a township school?* in this chapter my personal narratives are discussed and analysed.

Finally, chapter seven concludes my study by offering my interpretation of my novice teacher self. The chapter further discusses the findings and recommendations for my construction as a novice teacher in a township school.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature review: personal and professional experiences of novice teachers

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews studies conducted on the teaching experiences of novice teachers' personal and professional lives in connection to past understandings and their embodied knowledge. The chapter also reviews the literature about childhood memories and the constructions of novice teacher self, as well as, how novice teachers negotiate change using their childhood memories and experiences.

This chapter further reviews studies conducted by scholars related to novice teachers' lived experiences and their constant negotiations of who they are and what they can draw on to negotiate daily challenges. This chapter is organized in four section as follows:

Section A: Novice teacher's personal and professional lives: this clarifies understandings of early years' experiences for novice teachers. I also review how self-knowledge is important in influencing their personal and professional lives of the novice teacher. I conclude this section with a discussion of childhood memories: this clarifies understandings that novice's come with unique personal experiences to the workplace which they could draw on to negotiate challenges.

Section B: Presents a discussion on novice teacher's work and the kinds of relationships developed: create spaces that encourage supporting one another (teacher-learner relationship and teacher-novice teacher relationship) and novice teacher and emotions.

Section C: Novice teacher's enacted practices: this clarifies understandings of managing a classroom well where novice teachers represent fairness and recognizing good behaviour of learners.

Section D: The Theoretical framework of this research: an explanation of the teacher's personal and professional identity.

2.2 SECTION A: Novice teachers' personal and professional lives

The early years of teaching are known as the most difficult years for novice teachers, especially those teaching in public schools. It has been revealed that 24% of newly qualified teachers quit teaching within the first years, and 33% leave work after three years Farrell (2016, p.12). This shows that novice teachers are facing difficulties at the beginning of their teaching careers Farrell (2016). The lack of support given to novice teachers from experienced teachers can lead to them feeling drained and wanting to leave work.

2.2.1 Personal identity

According to White and Lemieux (2015), personal identity refers to who you are as a person, personal identity may derive from past personal experiences and meanings which have contributed to the person a teacher is. Hence, it differs for each person, and the concept of identity is complex. Personal identities lie in the phenomena of religious, political beliefs, memories and reflections (White & Lemieux, 2015). Such interaction is formerly reproduced in our practice as educators. Furthermore, Williams (2008) clarifies that when each person embarks on the teaching profession route, they are seen to be making a distinctive career choice which is then linked to personal identity. Williams (2008), supports that personal identity and professional identity cannot be separated. Williams further elaborates that, history, culture, and society shaped who we are and where we stand at the beginning of our teaching career. He concludes by asserting that it is helpful to recognize the bigger picture that impacts our pasts (Williams, 2008).

White and Lemieux (2015, p. 268) declare that a teacher who does not know herself," cannot know the subject and dealing with a diversity of learners in our classrooms". This illustrates the importance of self-identity to succeed in developing a positive professional identity. The key ideas that I infer from these scholars is that the decisions teacher's make ultimately depend on their personal knowledge. Individual understandings and personal experiences are what govern our identities as novice teachers, which varies from one person to another. This relates

to my study since my study touches on understanding my personal narratives in constructing to my professional identity which is my novice teacher self.

2.2.2 Professional Identity

Professional development of a person is built through individual identity, who they are, their self-image, the meanings they attach to themselves and their work, and the meaning that attribute to them by others (Day & Gu, 2010). A teacher's professional identity has an inspiration for educator performances in the classroom (Heikkila, 2012). Through professional identity, the teacher connects to learners the facts, skills, and ethics that he or she finds applicable for teaching and learning (White & Lemieux, 2015).

Educators aim to teach through their values, and through their experiences which can be good or bad. A teacher may have bad experiences of schooling days but wants to make a difference to how they were taught in their times (White & Lemieux, 2015). Moreover, this is what makes the relationship between professional and personal identity so powerful and critical to explore and understand. The above debates relate to my study as my personal identity and my professional identity are shaping one another; I teach through my values and my experiences of growing up.

According to Samuel (2009) novice teachers must be knowledgeable in a wide range of knowledge, both propositional and craft knowledge for any deep understanding and professional growth to happen. This emphasis on self-knowledge of a novice teacher and their prior experiences are potential sources for novice teachers to draw on to negotiate any challenges they face is an interesting perspective. This has bearing on my study as it underscores my personal rationale for attempting to explore how my self-knowledge and own experiences has impacted upon my novice teacher status. Samuel (2009) observed that, in the absence of mentoring support, novice teachers often take the route of 'teaching as they were taught' with no understanding of whether they are doing the right thing or not.

Professional development requires change and adaptation to the context, the kind of learners found in that school context. This relates to my study focus and exploration working in a township school required me to draw on my own practical knowledge to negotiate complexities.

2.2.3 Personal and professional memory and the self

To plan for the future, it is essential for one to reactivate the past (Thomas, 2014). The field of memory studies has largely contributed to this type of reactivation to enhance the future. Memory-work methods have been introduced as methods with teachers to explore how their past, for example their memories of school, of teachers, of their educational experiences, influences their present practices (Thomas, 2014). Memories are used as a way of making sense of our current situation (Chang-Kredl & Kingsley, 2004).

Most research has focused on experienced teachers. According to Allender and Allender (2006, p.14), our experiences as student teachers are an important part of our development as teachers. For many teachers, their good and bad experiences as children, result in the type of teachers that they become. Novice teachers come with unique experiences to the workplace that they can draw on to negotiate the diversity of learners and the complexities faced daily (Chang-Kredl & Kingsley, 2004). Not much research has been done on novice teachers' unique childhood memories and the constructions of novice teacher self. My research attempts to explore my childhood memories that shape my novice teacher self in a public township school. Thus, my study attempts to contribute to reducing the dearth of research in this area.

Novice teachers bring with them their principles and descriptions constructed on their practices as students (Levin & Coffey, 2009). As novice teachers start to engage with students, novice teachers gain information of students, such as the variety in their willingness to learn, which they use to recreate their images of themselves as teachers. Thus, it gleaned from the review of studies in the literature that the personal and professional memory of self cannot be separated.

2.3 SECTION B: Novice teacher's learning and development

Teaching is not learnt overnight, it has its own challenges, it is experienced in energetic situations that are not the same; however, teaching depends on progress and expansion (Harris & Anthony, 2001). Novice teachers start their careers by acquiring full control of a class on their own, where they are challenged directly with discipline and managing matters. Research has shown that novice teachers lack management knowledge/skills, on how to handle the classrooms as well as the diversity around them (Deaton 2012, p.141).

For such reason's researchers like Long (2009, p. 317) assert that novice teachers must be involved in selected induction programmes and assigned mentors. Induction is necessary to assist the novice teachers' development in the profession. It has been proven that when novice teachers are given support, they are more likely to be positively engaged in the workplace. This is highly significant to me as participant in this self-exploration as I am a novice teacher who has not had any induction or mentoring in the school at which I was appointed. Hence it is of interest to explore my narratives to determine to what degree my own skills, motivation, self-esteem and other aspects have been impacted.

Other researchers like Hobson (2009) and Schaufeli and Salanova (2007), assert that mentoring is an essential tool to support the personal and professional development of a newly qualified teacher, and regard it as aa powerful process of encouraging the professional development of beginning teachers. Hence it is understood from the review of the literature that support for novice teachers encourages enthusiasm in their work and helps them develop positive self-esteem. Hobson (2009, p. 210), however, also found that mentors are lacking in the provision of adequate support for novice teachers and their emotional and psychological growth. This negatively affects their personal and professional development as teachers.

2.3.1 Novice teacher agency

According to Caires, Almeida and Vieira (2012), the concept of agency is not something that people can have, but something that people do. It is suggested that agency should be understood as a configuration of influences from the past, orientations towards the future and engagement with the present. Caires, Almeida and Vieira (2012), further elaborate that novice teachers constantly try to understand and give a sense of meaning to rules, resources, and ways in which they communicate to contribute to the school culture. Additionally, the early years of teaching are an area of intensive introspection of the self. Therefore, learning about the past practices of novice teachers is relevant. It is important to know our values and beliefs because it always has bearing on a novice teacher's self-knowledge and exploring lived experiences can help to understand how to negotiate the complexity of early years of teaching, which underscores the focus of my research. In doing personal narrative inquiry, I have found that there are multiple dimensions of identity in terms of how to be, how to act and how to understand situations around me as a novice teacher, and all of this involves both the personal and the professional aspects.

2.3.2 Novice teacher and relationships

Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) states that the caring emotions that novice teachers carry with them to work may affect teacher identity due to high levels of emotions involved. Novice teachers come across new relationships and new environments when starting their professional journey. In this section, I discuss them as in two categories, namely, learner-teacher relationships, and teacher-teacher relationships.

According to Claessens, *et al* (2016, p. 85) "interpersonal relationships are shaped and influenced not only by the actual behaviours and qualities of both actors involved, but also by the individual's mental representation, or working models of the relationship". In this case, a novice teacher is the driver of this relationship with the hope of creating an environment that is caring as well as pushing for good results. High-quality relations are well-defined by high levels of understanding, less conflict, and low levels of dependence. However, when there is no learner and teacher relationship the learners are most likely do badly in their work, and they do not show interest in the subject.

2.3.2.1 Novice teacher and learners

Generally, the first relationship in the school is between a novice teacher and students. This kind of relationship is vital for both students and teacher's wellbeing in schools (Claessens, Tartwijk, Pennings, Van der Want, Verloop, & Wubbels, 2016). These researchers assert that the sentiment of classroom teaching and learning lies in the relations amongst teachers and learners. Furthermore, this kind of relationship creates spaces where there is love, support, and caring for one another.

Relationships and love must not be feared or excluded from classrooms but must be recognized as vital to learning (Ritchie & Wilson, 2000). The novice teachers should allow learners to be able to speak to them and find help and support. As a novice teacher, my values and beliefs are rooted in a close-knit, woman-headed loving family.

2.3.2.2 Teacher-Teacher Relationships

Having a relationship amongst colleagues is also important in developing a novice teacher's profession as well to produce novice teachers that are committed to their work. According to Harris and Anthony (2001), collegial relationships amongst skilled educators and novice teachers includes shared beliefs and respect, shared responsibility and shared goals. For this to work perfectly it is essential that both experienced teachers and novice teachers be prepared to give, and obtain, both productive response and reinforcement.

Harris and Anthony (2001) positions that good relationship with colleagues takes pride in each other's accomplishments and recognizes the efforts of others, and not competing with each other. Such collegiality makes it possible to produce environments that are conducive to learning. In my study I also explore, that in environments where teacher-learner and collegial relationships are not created, what do novice teachers use to create these kinds of relationships. Another type of collegial relationship with a novice teacher is through mentor support, where the novice teacher is assigned mentors to help them with their work.

Mentoring is clear "as a nurturing procedure where a skilled or more experienced person, teacher, encourage and the council's a less skilled or a new person to promote professional or personal growth" (Ramnarain & Ramaila, 2012 p. 258). Furthermore, the culture of mentoring is a culture that inspires experienced teachers and novice students to view each other as one (Away 2003, p.52). A novice teacher can learn from a mentee as well as a mentee develops their skills by being mentored.

It is suggested that both parties can benefit if they work collaboratively and promotes guidance and support in the field. Novice teachers need to create spaces that produce good results. Additionally, producing good results also includes the relationships amongst novice teachers and experienced teachers which is called collegial relationship. When novice teachers are respected and cared for, they are likely to show their passion because they know who to turn to when they need help.

2.4 SECTION C: Novice teachers enacted practices

2.4.1 The classroom

Equality and fairness exist when a teacher can manage the classroom well, without bias or prejudice. According to Dennis (2012, p. 20) “fairness involves setting clear rules for classroom conduct at the beginning of the year and having high expectations of all students”. Teachers also represent equality by identifying good performance and by recognizing their students' readiness to learn.

Additionally, managing a classroom involves part of teaching that is central to student learning and teacher success (Deaton 2012, p. 241). It is essential for novice teachers to implement classroom approaches that are always constructive to keep the ethos of equality learning alive. Managing students is a main feature of keeping a more productive learning environment for our learners in public schools (Deaton, 2012 p.143). Similarly, liability also falls on students to develop responsible behaviour through “a self-regulatory process, not via compliance” (Roache & Lewis, 2011 p.234). Thus, it is important to be consistent at all times by avoiding favouritism to promote wide-ranging education. According to Nillsen (2004) happiness in learning produces happiness in teaching.

2.4.2. Novice teacher and school context

According to Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) the institute setting, the nature of the learner population, the effect of colleagues and the school managers can be an influence in constructing a novice teacher's identity. Schools work closely with the community, and some instructions for all teachers are related to certain beliefs for example, having an assembly in the morning with only Christian prayers does not consider that there are other religions. Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) further elaborate that placing teachers' identity within the context of practice implies the necessity to be aware of the effects this context might have on the shifts and changes on a teacher's identity. As a novice teacher teaching in a township context, this theme relates to my study on how context can be influential in shaping my novice teacher's development.

Thus a review of the literature reveals several factors that impact the identity of a novice teacher, namely, creating a classroom of mutual care and respect between teachers and learners, where teachers are not prejudicial, a constructive environment since students feel safe and appreciated when a teacher promotes wide-ranging education, and an understanding how context can shape or reshape teacher identity, and the role of emotions, in novice teachers' lives. School context plays an important role in shaping and reshaping of novice teacher's identities. Working in a township school has made it clear that drawing on personal knowledge's is automatic but also professional development is also powerful in shaping novice teacher's do things.

2.5 SECTION D: Theoretical Framework

This section incorporates the main approaches to personal and professional identity to understand identities within the workplace. Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) understanding teacher identity theory assert that identity cannot be viewed concerning the personal dimensions only, but it needs to be viewed as personal-professional relational, as the personal is inextricably linked with the professional.

I draw on the theoretical framework by Beauchamp and Thomas (2009), called understanding teacher identity to really understand the phenomenon of my study. The main claims of the Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) understanding teacher identity theory is described below.

They assert that a teacher's personal and professional identity is an ongoing process of shifts and ongoing change, therefore identity is self-motivated and relational to the social context. The theory of understanding teacher identity (Thomas & Beauchamp, 2009) provided the lens to explain the process of constructing and negotiating personal and professional identity as an African woman and my choice of becoming a teacher. To illustrate aspects of the theory, the descriptions by Ron Feldt and Grossman (2008), Thomas, (2014), and Rodgers and Scott (2008) are also presented.

Novice teachers need to carry an image that suits them in the classroom as well as in the context in which they work, to be able to make meaningful choices/decisions in negotiating the challenges faced daily (Ron Feldt & Grossman, 2008). There are certain images that impacted

upon me through my childhood experiences, and in this research, I suggest that my novice teacher development has been influenced productively by my childhood memories and most importantly by the female role models I had at home and school, and involves, as asserted by Thomas (2014, p. 445) “both phenomena memory of something and method approaches to remembering, as well as to forgetting” which he calls “productive remembering”.

2.5.1 Teacher identities

According to some of the main claims made by the Theory of understanding teacher identity, personal identity cannot be separated from the professional identity (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). The contexts we immerse ourselves in, home, schools, political parties, and educational programmes, are elements that influence our identity. This framework helps me understand how specific childhood memories evoked from my personal experiences have shaped and are shaping my professional identity.

Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) explain that identity is a broad and multifaceted concept that looks at one's beliefs and values. Identity is a continuing process, and hence it is dynamic, a constantly evolving phenomenon (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Identity is viewed with both the personal and professional dimensions of the teacher's identity. Novice teachers as individuals bring their values, attitudes, and beliefs into the classroom (Merseeth, Sommer & Dickstein, 2008). The novice teacher's uniqueness cannot be overlooked and childhood experiences and the meanings they adopted from them are part of the development of a teacher's identity, both personal and professional (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009).

Personal experiences and memories are what determines our identities (Day & Gu, 2010). Personal identity is what defines each person's values and beliefs, what each person carries within himself (Williams, 2008). The development of personal-professional identities is an unending process; thus, the identities are fluid rather than fixed as they involve both the personal and context (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009 p. 177). Framing novice teacher identity using the theory of understanding teacher identity by Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) enables me to make a connection between my personal and professional self as a teacher and assists me in explaining what and how my teacher's professional identity impacts my performances in the classroom (White & Lemieux 2015, p.270).

Therefore, the critical reflection of my memories and past experiences was necessary for developing a greater awareness and knowledge of what I am, how I have come to be who I am and what do I want to be. My past experiences shape and are reshaped by teaching in a township school.

2.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I reviewed the literature regarding novice teacher's personal and professional lives, focussing on those aspects particularly related to childhood memories and experiences. The literature states that the early years of teaching are known as the most difficult years for the novice teacher, and this is supported by scholars such as Farrell (2016) and Caires (2012). The position that I am taking is from a personal identity perspective, where a novice teacher's personalities are multiple. This is supported by many scholars Beauchamp and Thomas (2009), Cohen (2008), White (2009), and Ronfeldt and Grossman (2008). This study also provides a novice teacher different knowledge to draw on when negotiating the complexities of teaching and creating relationships amongst colleagues.

This highlights that a novice teacher's personal-professional self cannot be seen as separate but as one. Additionally, childhood experiences form an important part of my novice teacher's personal-professional life in a public township school. As my two research questions ask, *“what are stories of my childhood memories shape my everyday lived experiences as a novice teacher and how do stories of my childhood memories shape my everyday lived experiences as a novice teacher”*.

Chapter Three

Methodology

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss the research methodology and method, the research design, data collection and the data analysis used in this study. In my study called personal narrative inquiry: exploring my childhood memories that shape my novice teacher self in a public township school, I strive to answer the following research questions: 1) *What are the stories of my childhood memories that shape my construction of self as a novice teacher?* 2) *How stories of my childhood memories shape my everyday lived experiences as a novice teacher.*

To do this I use a qualitative framework called personal narrative enquiry, which is interested in the purposely told stories of people (Duff & Bell, 2002). The personal narrative inquiry concords with the choice of understanding teacher identity theory (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009) which asserts that “reflection is recognized as a key means by which teachers can become more in tune with their sense of self which allows them to have a deep understanding of how this self-fit into a larger context which involves others” (p.182).

This study aims to narrate the lived memories of my novice teacher self in a public township school, through exploring my past and present experiences. I want to understand how these experiences construct my novice teacher self. This chapter aims to explain my research design and research setting. This chapter is separated into three sections, section A and section B and section C.

Section A: This section is about three aspects of the research design: Personal narrative inquiry as to the selected methodology for my study. The research design plan and outline for understanding the complex lives of novice teachers. The selection of my research participants and the context of my study.

Section B: This section is about the discussion of the research plan, which includes: Data collection methods used in this study. My data is generated using found photos, memory drawing, letter writing, and artefact retrieval.

Section C: Data analysis and issues of representation of the stories of self.

3.2 Personal narrative inquiry

According to Clandinin (2013), we all live out narratives in our lives and because we understand our own lives in terms of the narratives that the form of narrative is appropriate for understanding the actions of others. Stories are lived before they are told, this method allows me as a participant in my study to enact a retrospective tracing of my childhood memories and experiences that add to my life now as a novice teacher working in a township school. Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) emphasize that stories are means of communicating one's self-image, and in my study, I explore the forces shaping my novice teacher identity, and more specifically, how my childhood memories of growing up in different context, shape my novice teacher self in a township public school.

3.3 Section A

According to Duff and Bell (2002) personal narrative inquiry are stories of self. It is about remembering my very own critical experiences that provide meaningful, retrievable and reliable information (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Narratives give researchers the platform to recognize that experiences and people's lives matter (Duff & Bell, 2002). Similarly, for the past few months, writing my personal narrative has made me realize some of the characteristics that I never thought I would discover through my childhood memories. The stories have also highlighted the unexpected emotions about myself that I did not realize. For example, I found that I am actually a caring and loving person, features I inherited from living with my grandmother, which I only realized while writing the personal experiences of my childhood. I also live in personal stories, as Clandinin (2013, p. 22) avers: that in some way" we are living the stories planted in us early or along the way, or we are also living the stories we planted knowingly or unknowingly in ourselves".

Narratives are a powerful instrument for teacher's personal, social and professional learning (Richie & Wilson, 2000). Within the told stories there are life lessons to be learned. As a novice

teacher, sending a message to my learners through stories is the most interesting way to capture their attention. As a novice teacher now, I wish to explore how the retelling the stories of my past experiences can help me understand the inextricable links to my professional self and my practices as a novice teacher in a township school.

3.4. The research processes of this study

Lewis (2015) state that qualitative research design allows for a deeper, richer understanding of the event being explored, and the meanings and construction of reality attached by participants to situations. Qualitative data analysis is the process of gathering data and converting it into narratives, which are generated into themes (Lewis, 2015).

Narrative analysis and the analysis of narratives are two procedures that my master's study is using to analyse my data. Narrative analysis is a series of practices that move the generated data into a specific arrangement to gain knowledge and an understanding of the phenomenon under study. Narrative analysis is anxious about stories as a whole, rather than conceptualizing them into discourses (Wong & Breheny, 2018).

The analysis of narratives requires one to have the ability to see patterns and relations as well as confusion, to reveal the social world (Wong & Breheny, 2018). My position as a narrative enquirer is to analyse the collected and generated data and understand the story with appropriate literature as well as to the research question and theoretical framework. The generation of data approaches assisted me in re-storying small stories using different themes.

The data from letter writing, storytelling, photographs and memory drawing enriches the construction of my stories. Letter writing gives us a chance to get hold of history (experiences) that one possesses inside of them (Masinga, 2012). Telling of stories unites documentary practice and ethics (Nash, 2015). Photographs convey accurate memories shared. All these methods were used to generate my data, and all these methods are described in further detail in this chapter in section B. After my stories (childhood memories) are generated through recordings, my data was transcribed and converted recordings into written texts. The stories are about the construction of my novice teacher self in a public township school.

3.4.1 Research Paradigm:

The research paradigm that supports this study is the interpretivist paradigm. According to Nieuwenhuis (2012, p. 59) states that “interpretive studies usually attempt to understand phenomena through the meanings that people assign to them”. The interpretive paradigm best suits my study since it aims at finding broader meaning in human behaviour through past experiences. Interpretive paradigm emphasizes on “people’s individual experiences, and how people “construct” the social world by sharing meanings, and how they interact with or relate to each other” (Nieuwenhuis, 2012, 59). My study does not aim at anticipating what novice teachers do but seeks to grasp knowledge that a novice teacher make use of, as well as how childhood memories can assist me as a novice teacher in a workplace (Bertram & Christensen 2014, p. 59).

3.4.2 Selection of Participant

Using *self as a participant* is used as a descriptor for finding one's concept of self and the development of self-image as a participant (Loughran 2004, p. 8). According to Connelly and Clandinin (1990), voicing one's everyday lives as individual empowers an individual to take part in a community. Using self as a participant arouses certain memories that one has never thought of speaking out about in one's personal life or in shaping identity. It gives me as a researcher and a participant the ability to uncover myself as a novice teacher in my study. I am studying my personal-professional self through my childhood memories.

Being the participant and a researcher in my study assists in advancing my professional development using my storied texts as evidence. Storied texts work as confirmation of personal meaning (Loh 2013, p.7). It does not only benefit an individual doing the self-study, but also other novice teachers, who can benefit from the shared information about my childhood memories.

According to Ellis (2016), telling stories includes others, which might be the parents or the siblings, and when one decides to go about eliciting stories, it is important to inform them and get their consent. In my study I have used my family members to help elicit stories. Consent form was given to my family members and signed by my grandmother. My family gave me permission to use our family photos and their names.

Therefore, drawing on our daily stories is a journey, a journey that we all need to take at some point (Rosenberg, 2016). Through stories, my study finds out how self as a focus of exploration can evoke the hidden meanings of life that one never thought are part of shaping who one is and can become in the future. In a study such as this, using the self as the both the researcher and the participant has a strong ethical and credibility implications, issues which I address in the next section.

3.4.3 Issues of trustworthiness

Morrow (2005, p. 251) states that “criteria for trustworthiness in qualitative research are closely tied to the paradigmatic underpinnings of the particular discipline in which a particular investigation is investigated. Trustworthiness is guaranteed by using three different methods to gather data (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Triangulation is a validity process where scholars search for a meeting point among multiple sources, which is letter writing, artefacts inquiry, and photographs (Creswell & Miller 2000, p.127). These three methods assisted in strengthening the stories of my childhood memories.

Ethical issues

Consent form was given to my grandmother, she gave permission to use the family photos and permission to conduct this study. The data gathered was analysed and transcribed into stories. The authenticity of my novice teacher stories was strengthened by my siblings and grandmother's recordings as well as my paintings. I was aware of my insider-outsider approach (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009), being an insider refers to when a researcher conducts research with populations of which they are also members and being an outsider simply means one views the work not as member (participant) but as researcher. This relates to my study because I am a researcher and a participant and an approach this insider/outside is taken deliberately, which makes me as a researcher vulnerable to the chances of overseeing different meanings which are hidden in the offered data (Olive (2014). I had difficulties being a researcher and a participant at the same time. Being a participant was easier, but being a researcher was difficult. I struggled a lot when I had to analyse my own data, I had to take myself out of the stories and look at it as an outsider to be able to analyse the data.

3.4.4 The research setting

This study is located in a public high school in a township in Durban, South Africa. A “township” is a marginalized, low income suburban area, which was developed within the apartheid era to house the black working population. In the period of the 1980s, the school was already regarded as dysfunctional. Working in a township school was never my first choice but I ended up getting a job there.

The school environment is not properly developed; physically the school lacks infrastructure, and windows are broken. There is high rate of crime and school computers have been stolen. Printers are broken, and it makes it difficult for teachers to work properly. The school has approximately 800 students and 28 teachers. In terms of discipline, learners are to comply with the school rules but late coming is very high. So far, the school has been producing good results; for the past two years the school has achieved an 80% matriculation pass rate. This is influenced by teacher’s commitment to producing good results and creating an environment where learning takes place at all time. Finding myself in such a context, I decided to base my research on how I negotiate the challenges I face daily as a novice teacher in a public township school, using my childhood memories to understand my constructions of self as a novice teacher in a township school.

3.5 Section B

3.5.1 Data production methods

For this study, letter writing, retelling of stories, photographs, artefacts and memory drawing were used to generate my data. Pinnegar and Hamilton (2009) states that using multiple methods is important to gain variety of different perceptions on what is being researched.

3.5.1.1 Letter writing

Letter writing gives the researcher a chance to get hold of history (experiences) that one possesses inside of them (Masinga 2012, p. 129). Through letter writing, we tend to grasp how some of our memories are connected with the emotions experienced during the time of an event

(Masinga, 2012) posits that working with memory has the potential to awaken reproduction and the production of personally meaningful ways of thinking and being for us, enabling us to become lifelong learners within our dissimilar roles and fields.

Letter writing is an important tool to use when writing a personal narrative because it triggers memories of the past as well as the hopes of the future. I chose this method because my current actions as a novice teacher are shaped by my past experiences of my early childhood. Writing is associated with the aspiration that something of myself remain alive for the future (Masinga, 2012), for example, writing a letter to my daughter telling her about my memories of growing helped me because I retrieved my history.

3.5.1.2 Telling (self)and Retelling stories

Telling stories and writing stories is different to me because when I write stories, I write in more detail, using it as a form of healing and bringing back happy memories at the same time. When I tell stories however, I tell them to give a lesson at the end. Through my childhood memories of growing up I discovered my talent, I discovered my profession and most of all I learned how to love. Nash (2015) further elaborates that telling of stories unites documentary practice and ethics. As children, stories introduce us to the moral world we inhabit, educating us on 'right' and 'wrong'.

3.5.1.3 Photographs as data source

Photographs convey accurate memories shared. Kuhn (2010) states that one of their key features as cultural artefacts is that it aids in remembering a personal or a shared past. By using photographs, I was able to reflect on how these spaces cultivated in me particular meanings about schooling in two different contexts. When I look at the picture below, for example, Gogo's bedroom, its memories are retrieved because as a family (for my siblings and me), this picture/room serves as an example of our cultural values and the significance these values holds for us.



Fig 2: Picture of our grandmother's bedroom

3.5.1.4 Artefact inquiry as a research method

Artefacts are historic objects that are key to making us think about the past in a different way (Allender & Manke, 2004). Artefact retrieval works as a tool to assist in evoking remembrances about our past. Artefacts embrace very sensitive, sentimental and important meanings in our lives (Allender & Manke, 2004). Moreover, artefacts are "the social accessories of institutions and everyday life that are instilled with history and with meanings" (Mitchell 2011, p. 36). Artefacts are symbols that remind us of who we are, as well as our backgrounds. They hold different meanings for different people. In my study, I have chosen artefact inquiry as one of my methods, because it best describes my childhood memories. Turkle (2007) states that some items are indeed evocative since they prompt our blurry childhood line between self and other.

3.5.1.5 Memory drawings as method (painting)

Memory drawing is seen as a primary way of understanding and exploring experiences by a researcher and the people that they involve in their studies as articulated (Theron, Mitchell, Smith & Stuart 2011) which is similar to the paintings in my study. Conversely, in this study, it is about exploring experiences of myself as a researcher and a novice teacher in a public township school. Through paintings, one can show their tragic experiences and as well as their happy memories, it all varies from one person to another. Drawings can reveal any secrets that one did not want to share as well as the emotions are best described in drawing of paintings, (Theron, Mitchell, Smith & Stuart, 2011). One important thing about paintings and drawings is that you can never say you fully understand what the person was feeling or going through

until you ask them. I find painting very interesting, thus I used my own painting to capture certain memories that were not found on in the photo albums but were on my mind. I enjoy using this method to generate my data.

Table 3.1: Data generation plan

RESEARCH QUESTION	METHOD OF DATA GENERATION	RESEARCH CONTEXT AND PARTICIPANTS	INTENDED METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS	TIME FRAMES
<p><u>Critical Question One:</u> 1.</p> <p>What are the stories of my childhood memories that shape my everyday lived experiences as a novice teacher?</p>	<p>Photo graphs</p> <p>Found photos</p> <p>Artefact retrieval</p>	<p>I am the participant reflecting on my past experiences</p>	<p>Narrative Analysis</p>	<p>For 2 hours 3-4 photos are used to evoke stories</p> <p>For 1 hour, audio recording and Transcribing of stories</p>
<p><u>Critical Question Two:</u></p> <p>How do stories of my childhood memories shape my everyday lived experiences as a novice teacher?</p>	<p>Letter writing</p> <p>Memory drawing a method (painting) artefacts</p>	<p>I am the participant with the help of my grandmother and my siblings reflecting on my past experiences.</p>	<p>Analysis of Narratives</p>	<p>For 2 hours, 2 memory drawings are analysed</p>

3.6 Section C

In this section I unpack what data analysis is, how I work with my data and data coding. I had struggles with creating the reconstructed stories, and that is also presented in this section.

3.6.1 Data analysis

Narrative Analysis and the Analysis of Narratives are two procedures that my master's study uses to analyse my data. Caine, Estefan, and Clandinin, (2013) state that analysis is the process of gathering data and reconstructing it into storied narratives, which are developed into themes. Narrative Analysis is a series of practices that move the generated data into a specific arrangement to gain knowledge and an understanding of the phenomenon under study. Wong and Breheny (2018) state that narrative analysis is interested about stories as a whole, rather than conceptualizing them into discourses.

My stories (childhood memories) are generated through recordings, and I then transcribe and convert the recordings into written texts. The stories are about the construction of my novice teacher self in a public township school. The data from photographs, artefacts, and letter writing enriches the construction of my stories.

The analysis of narratives requires one to have the ability to see patterns and relations as well as confusion, to reveal the social world (Wong & Breheny, 2018). My position as a narrative enquirer is to analyse the generated data and understand the stories of self in response to the research question and theoretical framing. The generation of categories through an inductive process assists me in re-storying small stories using different themes. While analysing my data using Narrative Analysis, I look for patterns and relations in my story, and group it together. The Second level is the analysis of narratives which are thematically organised and analysed in response to my two research questions.

3.6.2 Working with data

I started collecting photographs in January 2018. I went back to Ixopo to collect our family photos and came back with them to Durban. I did notify my family that I am doing a personal narrative inquiry study about my childhood experiences. Everyone in the family was excited

to be part of this journey, which made it easy for them to help me remember certain experiences. My grandmother signed the consent form which stated that I use family photos as part of my data generation and my data analysis.

On a Sunday all my siblings came home to visit our grandmother and that is when I had a chance to sit down with all of them, show them each photograph and give me feedback on what they could remember about those. It was fun, good and bad memories came back; I recorded them while they were talking sharing about my experiences of growing up. I then transcribed the recording into a written text. According to Nikander (2008), using audio and videotaped data offers qualitative researchers with a transportable, repeatable resource that allows multiple hearings or viewings as well as access to other readers. After my data was transcribed, I also added new paintings that I did to elicit more memories of growing up. The data that I derived from the paintings and data that was found in the photographs are similar and hence there is a connection between these two sources of data.

3.6.3 Data coding

The generated data was transcribed into writing. I manually used a highlighter to categorize different themes which are presented below. According to Blair (2015) coding is dependent on creating labels (codes) that can be applied to data in order to develop meaningful categories to be analysed and interpreted. To develop meaningful categories, I have used mapping as a tool to assist the reconstruction of the storied narrative.

3.6.3.1 Mapping as a tool to assist the reconstruction of the storied narrative

I used a (family) tree structure which includes both my personal and professional identity to group my themes according to each branch.

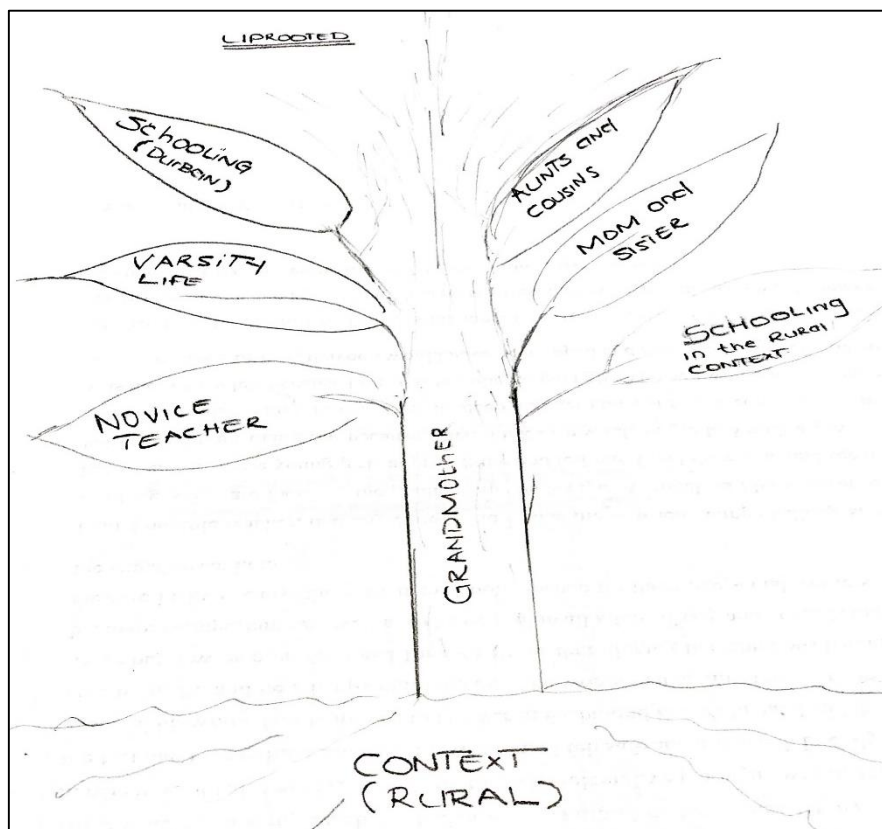


Fig 3: Family tree

This is the first step in the analysis; the tree map helped me to come up the stories that are represented in Chapter 4. The manner in which my stories unfold are aligned with the form of a family tree structure, starting with the roots (context), followed by the stem (grandmother) and branching to schooling in the rural context, followed by the stories about my mother and my sister as well as my aunts and cousins. The other side of the tree that follows is namely: myself being uprooted (going to Grade 8 in 2007, moving to another context which is to the city of Durban), my university life, and finally as my novice teacher self. As a researcher it was challenging to plot my story because they were written around critical incidents, anxieties, joy, excitement and pain. The tree map helped me to represent life as lived in a rural environment, urban, and teaching in a township school. The story had to be written in relation to the context. I always had to move from being an insider to be an outsider.

3.6.3.2 My struggles with creating the reconstructed stories

At first, my study was exciting, and I looked forward to being both a participant as well as a researcher in my study. However, with the passage of time I experienced particular difficulties, especially trying to balance both roles, and I tended to be more involved as a participant rather than being a researcher. This posed problems of analysing my data, moving from being an insider to be an outsider was the most challenging thing to do.

It was easier to understand why being a participant initially dominated my engagement, as I found it more exciting to construct my lived experiences as an individual and as a novice teacher.

3.6.3.3. Using understanding teacher Identity Theoretical Framework and Productive Remembering as analytical frames

Two theoretical frameworks were used to interpret the data, namely: Beauchamp and Thomas's Theoretical Framework of understanding teacher identity and Productive Remembering. According to Beauchamp and Thomas (2009), teacher's personal and professional identity is an ongoing process of shifts and changes, hence identity is active and relational to the social context. Productive remembering entails bringing forth the past in remembering what is yet to come hence it connects the autobiographical, personal and with the social (Mitchell et al, 2014). These two theoretical framework are in relation to my study as they assisted me in understanding and explaining the process of constructing and negotiating personal and professional identity as an African woman and my choice of becoming a teacher. Productive remembering of selected memories of the past is tied interpretatively to the present (Wilson, 2014) which is emphasized by the assertion of, Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) that identity cannot be viewed in relation to personal identity only, but also with professional identity. I describe this in relation to my research questions below:

Research Question one: *What are the stories of my childhood memories that shape my construction of self as a novice teacher?*

Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) identity theory provided me with the framework to understand and explain the process of constructing and negotiating personal and professional identity as an African woman and my choice of becoming a teacher. This critical reflection of my

memories and past experiences was necessary for developing a greater awareness and knowledge of what I am, how I have come to be who I am and what do want to be. For this research question, Identity theory assisted me in understanding that identity works very closely with practice. It assisted in linking my personal identity with my professional identity. Thus, my past experiences are influencing my novice teacher self.

Research question two: *How stories of my childhood memories shape my everyday lived experiences as a novice teacher.*

According to Ron Feldt and Grossman (2008), novice teachers need to carry an image that suits them in the classroom as well as in the context in which they work, to be able to make meaningful choices/decisions in negotiating the challenges faced daily. In this chapter 3, I offer an understanding of the link between childhood memories and my evolving novice teacher identity made explicit through the analysis of memories and stories of experience (Heikkila 2012). The professional identity of a novice teacher is informed by a person's beliefs and values and the novice teacher's practices (Rodgers & Scott, 2008). In answering both the questions, photographs and drawings were used to elicit memories in relation to the constructions of my novice teacher self.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the research design and the tools that are used to generate my data, provided an outline of the context within which this study takes place, and described the participants of this study. Data production methods were described using multiple methods to gain variety of different perspectives on the study. Data analysis of this study was presented as well as data coding, (codes) were done to develop meaningful categories to be analysed and interpreted. In my study, I am exploring my childhood experiences that are shaping my novice teacher self in a public township school and two theoretical frameworks were used to interpret the data, namely: Beauchamp and Thomas's Theoretical Framework of understanding teacher identity and Productive Remembering. In the next chapter I present my personal narrative, the stories I reconstructed of my novice teacher self, working in a township school.

Chapter Four

My Personal Narrative

4.1 Introduction: Life in Ixopo, My ‘Rural’ Home

The purpose of this chapter is to represent the stories I reconstructed of my novice teacher-self working in a township school. Making central the person of my novice teacher life drawing on both the personal and professional domains using my past memories and experiences of growing up. The stories in this chapter were formed through a variety of methods which have been discussed in Chapter Three, section 1.2, the stories are my experiences. All data and direct speech were presented in italics.

According to Clandinin, Caine, Lessard and Huber (2016), our daily lives are shaped by stories of who we are, and we interpret our past in terms of these stories, and hence, teachers’ daily lives are determined by stories. Understanding teacher identity theoretical framework by Beauchamp and (2009) emphasizes that teachers are socially constructed by an identity.

This chapter is organised according to metaphors; each metaphor contains a story about my childhood experiences, as well as my novice teacher self-stories. I have stories about my personal and professional selves. These stories are organised using a metaphor of a tree, that represents my childhood experiences in the rural environment. There is a link between the tree metaphor and my theoretical framework, which is about the personal and professional identities. My storied narratives include my personal identities as well as my professional identities, hence according to the theory of understanding teacher identity by Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) states that identity is viewed with both the personal and professional dimensions of teacher’s identity.

I was a smart and a beautiful girl. During assembly, the teachers would call me to come to the front, so they can show other learners how the school uniform should be worn. I wore a full school uniform, I was active in the school extra activities, I was also a good athlete.



This is an upside-down tree, with its roots at the top, and branches pointing downwards. This tree is the same idea of the tree I presented in Chapter 3, which assisted me to represent my stories for this Chapter 4. This emphasises on how strongly I am rooted in the rural area.

Fig: 4. Rooted in the rural

This is a complex painting which has different sides and different meanings, and different viewers can come up with their own interpretations, which makes Art so exciting and interesting. The values of love, care, sharing is what makes the person that I am today, and it has never changed.

I was born in 1993 and grew up in a rural context called Ixopo KwaZulu-Natal. It is an under-developed rural context, where there is a shortage of water, no electricity, no network for cell phones, and school children still have to walk long distances to go to schools, a context confirmed by Slama (2004, p.10) that people live in less populated areas, areas, with “fewer services locally, and it is often quite a distance to opportunities and services”. (However, with all of the mentioned constraints in the area, people support each other, and this is instilled in each person in our area. Slama (2004) further elaborates that there are certain values that are inculcated in rural people without even realizing it. It is a small community where all neighbours know each other and are helpful to one another. Nussbaum (2000, p.2) describes these values as an unspoken philosophy of *Ubuntu* – a cultural is consciousness of our natural desire to affirm our fellow human beings and to work and act towards each other with the communal good in the forefront of our minds.

My sister and I lived with my grandmother and uncles and their families. Growing up as an African girl in a rural area in the early 1990s with my Gogo (grandmother), who was a qualified

primary school teacher, was a memorable experience. My grandmother challenged the roles of the society.

I was never born at Ixopo, I was born in Ladysmith, but we stayed in Johannesburg with my parents, that is where I met your grandfather. We married, and I had to come and live at Ixopo. I felt the divisions of roles the most as I was new in the environment as the 'makoti' and told myself that I do not want my boys or my girls to grow up with the mindset of oppressing women or my girls growing up thinking it is okay to be oppressed by the society.



This picture was taken in the late 1990s behind our house at Ixopo KwaZulu Natal. From my birth, I did not stay with my mother as she had to go back to College to finish her studies at **Emadadeni Nursing School** in Newcastle, which was 416 km away.

Fig: 5, My mama and me

She left my sister and I with our grandmother in Ixopo. After she finished her studies, she obtained a nursing job in Ladysmith and worked there while our grandmother was taking care of us. Usually she came home when it was month end with groceries for all of us in the family. My mother explains:

Our father passed away in 1993 when I was pregnant with you and after he passed away life became so difficult. I was the eldest I had to go look for piece jobs to help my mother with all the children's and that time I already had your sister Hlengiwe she was 5 years old. As time

went by my mother sent me back to nursing school, leaving children at home with my mother was not an easy thing to do but something had to be done. My mother tried all she could for all of us to get better education. It is never easy not being able to be with your children when they need you the most because you are far away working, it had to be done because I was a single mother. I had to work hard for my family, failing was not an option. I used to send money home, so you guys can eat. I didn't mind being hungry as long as I knew that at home my mother and my children are eating I was happy. I continued to work hard and studied until I became the matron and I always emphasize this to you that there is no success without hardship.

I chose this picture because to me it did not really matter where she was, she used to call us and tell us that she's working hard for us and we must not trouble our granny. Whenever she came home, I was the happiest because I knew she was bringing sweets and food for us. Our grandmother made sure that we did not feel the gap of our mother's absence. My sister and I were happy.

This is a picture of my sister (Hlengiwe) and I. We have a 5-year gap between our ages. She used to take care of me as an elder sister and we would fight a lot because sometimes I would feel that she thought that she was my mother. She was over protective. She made sure that I ate and wear warm clothes when the sun had set.



Our grandmother would ask her: “Hlengiwe iphi ingane? Aybo phuthuma uyobheka izozilimaza”. When I asked her about this picture she mentioned that our grandmother always asked her that (Hlengiwe where is the child? Go look for her she will hurt herself where she is).

Fig: 6 My Sister and I

She mentioned that she had to make sure that I did not hurt myself because our granny would shout at her, asking about where

she was. Therefore, looking out for me began like that which led her to being over protective. This protective side of her grew in her, and even today I still get her calls asking “Haibo Sphe ukuphi? ukhulu ukhathazekile ngawe buya” (My grandmother calls my sister to ask where I am, and she would call me telling me to rush home because our granny is worried).

I choose this picture because it reminds me of some learners who go home to go look after their sick parents, to cook for their siblings and I read this to my sister to see how she felt about this:

For some learners, going home brings back the thought of being unloved due to responsibilities they had to take on as children. Learners play the role of being adults at home by having to take care of the whole family, by cooking, cleaning and earning money to support siblings (Bray & Brand 2007, p. 5). Going home to such conditions makes these learners depressed and exhausted and affects them educationally and socially.

She replied: *this is a different scenario because it was not my full responsibility to look after you, our grandmother was there, and our cousins were also there to look after both of us. So, I never felt like it's a burden because Phumzile (older cousin) was looking after me as well. It was a family thing that we make sure that each child in this house is safe. We had aunty Mangwane (our helper) who looked after all of us and we never had to wash or cook for ourselves, so it's a different scenario. However, looking after one another made us to create a caring relationship for all of us in the family. Even today I still get calls from Gugu and Phumzile checking up if I'm doing great, and what do I need, vise- versa. This was a way of instilling love for one another not some torture.*

4.2 What seems to be our happily ever after

In the following photograph, we identify my grandmother and her 7 grandchildren. Starting from the right-hand side, it is Khanyi, Phumzile, Hlengiwe, myself (grandmother is holding me) followed by Ayanda, Thabani and Gugu. I saw the need to use this picture because it shows that for each generation my grandmother did the same. She took care of us and created respectful and supportive spaces. Therefore, I give this picture a title called “our happily ever after “because it is a continuous norm in the family.



This picture was taken in the early 1990's when I was still very young. This is the house that was used by all the family members which includes our uncles as well as our mothers (aunts). When this photograph was taken, our grandmother was a primary school teacher at Inhlavini Primary School.

Fig: 7 our family picture

We usually sat outside when it was hot. She would come back from work and look after us because our nanny after cleaning and cooking, would leave when our granny came back from work. This picture brings back memories of how we would sit listening to Granny tell stories, and how we grew up knowing that we all gathered together for stories. As tired as she was from work, she still had time for us, and we felt loved and cared for. Unfortunately, the house is not there anymore it was destroyed by floods and was replaced by another building. If we were not sitting outside, we would sit around her bed and listening to her tell us stories.

4.3 Silenced by fear

In our area we were governed by Anglican church missionaries. Their purpose was to create a peaceful community in the name of Christianity. The community of Springvale Mission created unity amongst the neighbors. We all went to church on Sunday and had groups support if there was a family that needed help. Schooling at Ixopo had beautiful experiences but also bad experiences.

Our primary school which was called Aura B Primary School and we walked approximately 2,8 km to school. The learners walked from other parts of Emakhuzeni (which was our neighboring community) to attend this primary school. Walking long distances was physically draining. On rainy days it was worse because by the time I arrive at school I would be wet and be sent home because I could not concentrate feeling cold.

I remember that in our community there were family feuds which put all the people in danger, including the school children. Walking to school was really frightening because when these wars started, members of the opposing families would hide in the trees and shoot at each other. The worst experience was that the children from these two families went to the same school as us. The fights would also start in our own class rooms, and it would escalate to an extent where the principal closed the school early for our own safety as these families were killing each other. Many people died, and we were so afraid of these children from these two families.

Schooling in the rural, I was a smart learner, I was praised for being smart and wearing the full school uniform. Teacher's loved us because our grandmother was also a teacher in the area, being praised by teachers led to learner's bullying me, forcing me to do their work for them. The feeling of being bullied was painful, I had no freedom anymore at school and teachers were not helping me.

I was afraid to tell my grandmother about this boy who kept threatening me. He threatened me with "Uzongithwala" which is a form of abduction that involves kidnapping with the intention of forcing me to marry him. I was only in grade 5 and my marks dropped drastically, and the teachers did not ask me anything. As soon as the school bell would ring after school, I would for my life back home. I did not want to be in a relationship with him, he would beat me up and whoever was around me would also be beaten up. It was such a traumatic experience that I could not even tell my sibling nor my teacher's because I was afraid of how these family feuds start and perhaps it would also expose my family to such violence.

Home was a safe space, even though I was unable to talk about the fact that I was bullied, whenever I was home, I felt safe and protected. During the shootings that would occur sporadically, his father was shot and his whole family moved to Bulwer, in Richmond KwaZulu Natal, 60 km away. That was how I was able to breathe and be a happy child again because the boy that was bullying me moved to another area. I was also fortunate to have a loving and supportive family because when I arrived home from school I had no worries, I knew I was safe and loved. Listening to our grandmother tell stories erased all the frustrations I faced in school.



This is the picture of my grandmother in the front row and her three daughters as well as us the children. In this picture (from left to right) is my aunt Nomusa, who is my uncle's wife, aunt Xolly who is my grandmother's second daughter in the back row, as well as aunt Nombuso, who is my grandmother's last daughter in the front row. My mother, who is the eldest daughter, was not around when the picture was taken.

Fig: 8, Having many moms

My grandmother sent all her children to college and offered to look after us while our parents were getting an education. My mother was in a nursing college, while my uncle's wife was studying at a teacher training college and aunt Nombuso and aunt Xolly were at Business College. Grandmother said,

I liked all my children to go and get better education in the cities and I volunteered to look after you as my grandchildren while my children were trying for a better life for all of us in this family.

I felt like using this picture because of how rural life has taught myself and all my family member's to be "one". We all had different mother's, but we have never felt it because we called all the aunt's "mom". We were taught to treat everyone with love and care even if that child is not your own. A packet of chips would be divided into four parts, so we could all eat. An apple was sliced into four or eight slices so that every child could have a bite. We learnt to share no matter how little we had. All the females in our family took part in raising all of us. My grandmother's last daughter said:

God did not bless me with children, but I have never felt it because of how our mother raised us. She instilled ubuntu within us and that makes my brother's children my own children as well as my sister's children my very own.

My grandmother's last daughter does not have children, but she raised my sister and I like her own children because our mother lived far away due to work. She has never complained, even today she treats us like her own children.



It was on a sunny Saturday when my cousins decided to play soccer and as young as I was, I insisted in joining them. In the picture there were 8 of us (I am the youngest in the picture). This is a picture of myself and my siblings (In the first row it is Hlengiwe, my blood sister and Fiko, my cousin.

Fig 9, Playing happily with my cousins

In the second row, from the left, is Phumzile, Nonhlanhla, Gugu and myself (Gugu is holding me), followed by Sthe and lastly Sandile.

This picture was taken in 1996 when I was three years old. It was taken at home at Ixopo KwaZulu Natal. This picture was taken by our older cousin after we played soccer in the yard. Looking all dirty and ugly was normal to us as we liked playing a lot. We all grew up together in the rural context as siblings and played together – we never went to play outside our yard. This picture is about how growing up in the rural context with our grandmother made us united as girls and boys. I chose this picture because it shows how happy we were when growing up. It is an important memory of growing in the rural context which shows the support and the unity amongst us as siblings. It was all instilled by our grandmother's values that we support one another and that there is no dominant meaning of masculinity. As a girl child growing up

in the rural environment it has taught me that societies have different roles for females and males, but our grandmother challenged that by not splitting the roles amongst all of us as girls and boys. The home was a site for non-traditional gender constructions, but in the school environment traditional gender roles were present.

We played soccer with the boys and they played with us. We all washed dishes and did cleaning with the boys. She taught us to never divide the roles like how our society did. Staying at home also helped us to be not influenced by what other's do in their homes we lived according to our home rules. Which was the most treasured moments of growing up in the rural context, the beauty and the constrains it had in my life as a child and how I view it now as a novice teacher and how much influence it has in shaping the teacher I am today.

4.4 Moving to the city

In 2007, I moved to a new context which is an urban area (Durban) I stayed in the city with my aunt. I was going to do grade 8 in a girl's only school. In this photograph, I chose to draw a dead flower as a way of expressing how I felt when I moved to Durban to live with my aunt (my mother's sister).



Fig 10: Marginalized (uprooted), Lonely and unhappy

As beautiful as it was growing up in the rural context, I only learnt and understood only one language, which was Isizulu. When I stayed at my aunt's home in Durban I felt like a dead flower because other children were playing and speaking English, and I could not even say a word, which worried my aunt who said that I

needed to learn English. My primary school was not a multiracial school, nevertheless in 2007 I came to Durban and went to a multiracial school, with no English background.

I was 14 years when I started at Adelaide high school, it was in an urban environment, and the school was situated in the suburbs, next to malls, the hospitals, the taxi ranks and bus stops.

Everything seemed to be closer together and that was new to me as I was coming from a rural environment where we had to walk miles to get to the shops or clinics.

According to Dempsey, Bramley, Power and Brown (2011 p. 2) “urban context is defined mostly on the basis of population density, concentration of administrative bodies and infrastructure and a diverse set of livelihood and income generation activities”.

Miss P, who was my former class teacher made me feel at home even though I could not even construct one sentence in English. She also introduced me to my Visual Arts teacher. My classmates used to laugh at me, make jokes about me, even calling me by the name “Farm Girl”. Nonetheless, my teacher always made sure that I felt loved and secure.

In 2007 everything felt like a nightmare to me. Everything was new to me, starting from the school context, methods used by teachers and the language. During break times, I always felt alone because I did not have friends, nobody wanted to sit with the farm girl. The year 2007 was the worst year of my life and even when I think about it now, I still wonder how I survived that year. As young as I was, I sometimes felt like killing myself or going back to Ixopo where I felt smart and alive. The home space was familiar, the school space was difficult, and the memory of schooling in the urban environment was painful. Learners used to laugh at me and bully me for not understanding the English language and that experience used to kill me completely because I felt invisible, unwanted and isolated.

My teacher would come to me and try to speak to me, she would give me English papers to read, give me English books to read. She would ask me questions that required me to speak for a long time. At that time, I didn’t understand why, but she wanted me to get used to speaking English. She made me discover the talent that I never thought I had. She used to say I should put whatever I felt into writing, and that helped me mostly to improve my English writing. She would say that I should sometimes paint what I feel and put colour into it that expresses my feelings. I felt too comfortable around her. I disliked writing what I felt, I liked painting and drawing more. The Arts class was a small group, that was very supportive and we became more like a family. I became closely bonded with different races, I was included like a family, encouraged and supported. The reason behind me choosing Arts was because I wanted a subject that does not require me to speak much. I chose Visual Arts because I knew that I was going to be quiet most of the time and just draw or paint and write exams.

This painting of a dead flower brings forth to me pain that I had felt. The bigger rose represents myself when I had lost hope and wanting to go back home (Ixopo), when I thought things were not going to get better, but then the light coming from the side signifies hopes creeping into my life. The smaller rose is my self-trying to rise, growing waiting to blossom and seeing hope. Through my Visual Arts teacher, I found support unexpectedly and, I found love. Unfortunately, I repeated grade 8 in 2008. When I was in matric I said to myself, I want to be an educator. The dead flower that I chose also reflects to me that I was almost dead, and my teacher kept on watering me until I arose again. She gave life to me.

4.5 Life after being a high school learner

After getting my matric results in 2012 and wanting to be a teacher in urban areas was influenced by schooling in an urban area. My reason for wanting to teach in urban areas is that during my high school days I could see that there is order, rules are used to help run the school smoothly and there is high parental involvement. Lastly working conditions are good with all the equipment for every subject. Pass rates is very high too. I did not like teaching in townships school because of the schools that I did my teaching practice in, while I was doing my teaching practice in a township school I noticed that the school was dysfunctional, there was shortage of water in the area and schools closed early every day. There was less time for teachers to teach, and high absenteeism from both teachers and learners and less parental support.

However, I felt in love with the idea of being a teacher after I realised that a teacher is able to change how a learner sees herself or view the world around them. I also wanted to be like my high school teacher who was constantly helping me to read, write and speak English while other learners were making jokes about me. In 2013 January, I went to Edgewood campus but when I applied they were already full. The administrators advised me to go to Howard college and take Bachelor of Arts in general studies and take the teaching subjects as my majors, so I can be able to come back to Edgewood for post graduate certificate in education. I did as they told me, and I was accepted in Bachelor of Arts. I majored in tourism and IsiZulu, and after I finished my degree in 2015 I went to Edgewood for post graduate certificate in education and I have two subjects that I am passionate about, tourism and arts. I wanted to learn how to teach.

4.6 I am because you are (ubuntu) [Varsity life]

At university I stayed at the residence and met a lady who became my roommate. She was from the south coast of KwaZulu Natal (Port Shepstone) and was studying Community Development at university. By the time I entered to university all my aunts were working and I used to get money from them. My roommate was coming from a very poor background where she had to send her NFSAS money home, so they could eat. With the money that she used to get she would even buy her younger sister's winter and Christmas clothes and she would be left with absolutely nothing. Her situation reminded me of where I came from and I decided that if I had clothes that didn't fit me anymore I would give them to her. We ended up cooking together and eating together (we shared my groceries). Our friendship grew, and I also used to tell her about my stories about when I first came to Durban with no English background. We also shared stories of how we grew up in the rural context and that made us bond as the common spirit common the spirit of ubuntu which lived within us brought us closer. As much as she did not have much to give but she was caring and giving which kept my roots of caring and giving alive.

4.7 Moving into teaching (My novice teacher self)

Initially I was not happy to teach in a public township school. Teaching in a public township school was not my first choice due to situations that I came across while I was doing my teaching practice in a township. However, I eventually took the job in a township school, but told myself that I can create my own happy space in my classroom with my learners.

As a novice teacher in a public township school, I am faced daily with a range of challenges that are overwhelming. Is it possible, I asked, that in the same way that I looked forward to going home to my grandmother after school, my learners also look forward to coming to my classroom, considering the community that they come from? My childhood memories and experiences as a little girl made me think about my learners who come from households where there is no family support and children rely on schools and especially teachers for love, care and support. Importantly, schools are their only hope.



I had to work around the fact that my colleagues did not talk to each other and there was unequal treatment for teachers from the management. There was no mentor support from the older teachers and I struggled with classroom management often.

Fig 11, Negotiating the novice teacher self in a public township school

One of the most devastating challenges experienced by some learners in grade 8 and 9, is rape. As much as I have never told anyone about these, but whenever these young girls approached me and told me their experiences. I felt their pain and saw the need to help them with all that I can because I recall my own experience in grade 5 with a boy threatening me with “Ukungithwala” (forced marriage by abduction). Also, my experience of struggling in English started to influence how I engage with learners, how I teach in tourism is affecting the English teacher because I was lenient to learners who are struggling in English.

This painting shows myself as a novice teacher in a classroom with my learners. The love and support that is rooted through me, has shaped my novice teacher self to be a loving and supportive to all my learners in the classroom and outside my classes. Tourism is diverse, it talks about travelling, cultures and provinces, environment, attractions and sustaining the nature. I asked learners to get into different groups and choose one province that they can do research about. Finding out about the food that people eat in that province, the clothes they wear, the languages they speak and their dance. Learners had dress like the people of the province they are presenting, come with food they cooked from home that they going to show us and eat it themselves, the dance moves as well as their languages.

Growing up in an environment of caring females has cultivated in me the desire to help those children’s who need help, creating collegial relationships. When I started working my

colleagues were not talking to each other and in all situations, I had to be mutual and speak to everyone at work regardless of their own misunderstandings as staff. The values of close relationships drove me to see when a child was hungry and give what I could or refer them to a place called Ethembeni which is a community centre in Kwandengezi where they have social workers to help them. In my class I have about four learners with cases of rape and when they came to me and I referred them to the social workers. I make sure that I follow up as to how they are getting assisted. I find that on some days these challenges faced by learners affects me, but I feel the need to help and be the mother/ teacher they never had.

In grade 10, I have a boy who is 21 years of age. When he told me his story I didn't know how to help but told my colleagues who are closer to me, about this learner. We started buying him food during break times, other's donated clothes for him. But it was not enough because the huge problem was at home and it needed to be looked at. During breaks I went to the community centre with him and he explained himself to the social workers.

3rd March: Imbokodo (Women), this is a painting of the females that contributed to my life, and the female that I am yet becoming. It does not really matter if I teach them or not, but I am always willing to help where I could help the learners.



This painting depicts a proposition of a women, a mother, and a teacher. I used different colors in her body to show that she is intricate, that is so much in a soul as a woman, as a mother, as a teacher, she is three dimensional. Her inner strengths, her hardships, how society portrays her to be, but she is still holding the world in her hands.

Fig 12: A women's strength

It can be a teacher lifting up the children to rule the world in the future, because as teachers we are raising our future nurses, our doctors, our politicians as well as our presidents. It all starts

with a mother's (Teacher's) love, mother's warmth, mother's values. A female grows from her own roots but within those roots a female (mother) grows more life. She holds the key to the continuation of life. A female gives life, nature's it and let it to be exposed to the outside world. Just like a teacher, she gives life to the learners and introduces them the unkindness of the world (abuse that is around and diseases etc.). She guides them on how to face some issues and it is a continuation of life spreading around the world. I am a grade 9 former class teacher and I have girls and boys in my class. From the day I started teaching I have not separated classroom duties amongst my learners. I feel that I am nurturing the future wives, the future husbands and I want them to understand that no one should ever feel violated because of their gender. For example, in townships learners clean their own classrooms and, in my class, I use my childhood experiences that girl or boy everyone gets the same treatment. They all clean their classroom and all responsible for picking up litter in their classroom, and no particular gender is responsible for keeping the class clean, my grandmother's ungended roles are influencing my everyday life in how I relate to my learners. This has developed in me the desire to create supportive caring classroom as a novice teacher. I see the need for the children to be happy and be free to express themselves. I want to create a classroom in which learners can feel comfortable and free.

Now that I am a teacher, this means that I have a power to help shape the future of these young children, pass on what I know, it may not be the same as my experiences, but it only takes one person to make a change in the children's lives.



A trip that I took with my friends to Drakensberg, was a memorable one. We went hiking on the mountains, after walking for 5 hours we decided that we are taking different routes because we were getting lost. We took

different routes back to the hotel, and we arrived there on different times. The motive behind this story is that, one can start a journey with a lot of people but when the going gets tough you

end up alone. People may be heading to the same destination but arrive in different times. Through the stories and motivations that I share with learners is that about going hiking in the mountains is that, there is no set path, nature teaches us that there is no fixed way of doing things, we all get lost sometimes. As a novice teacher I still carry the love for the Arts with me. As I have mentioned in the previous stories that I teach grade 10 Tourism, grade 9 IsiZulu and grade 8 Creative Arts.

Fig 13: Myself as a novice teacher

I have subjects that I am passionate about, tourism, life orientation, and arts. These subjects allow my inner voice to come out in the form of being an activist. In my experiences I discovered that there many unspoken words in drawings, but now as a novice teacher in classes I discovered that there are also hidden feelings in poems that we do in our creative arts class. I tell my learners to express their feelings about what happens at home, experiences in school, and how they feel, in a form of poetry, drawing, song or act it out. Usually they do poems and create a song, or they ask me to video record them and save all that we do in class. Sometimes when I look at those videos, I can feel that some learners are really enjoying the subject because they are able to voice their feelings even though they are faced with challenges, in their communities and at home. In grade 8 there is a beautiful girl who sings so beautifully but her songs always left me many questions because I could feel that there was something bothering her. I sat down with her while other learners were practicing and asked her to tell me about herself and her family. While she was telling me, I discovered that she is being raped by her father's friend and her family did not know because she was afraid to tell them. I called her mother to school, took them to the police station and left them there because I was also afraid for my life. The man is now in jail and she is going through counselling. On Valentine's Day, the 14th of February, she wrote me a letter and gave it to me. I could not help but cry, I felt overwhelmed to know that I did change how she saw herself by just talking to her.

In these times, children need to hear the truth because they are also faced with daily challenges at home, at school, and are commonly exposed to and afflicted by diseases. Times have changed and sitting down with them to give them advice appears to help. The main goal that drove me into becoming a teacher was that I wanted to make a difference to the voiceless and to create relationships that encourages respect for one other and support amongst learners in a classroom and outside the classroom through stories. The love and support that is rooted through me, has

shaped my novice teacher self to be loving and supportive to all my learners in the classroom by allowing them to voice out their concerns through arts, through music, through drama, etc. I do this because I was once a victim of being voiceless and found my voice through storytelling and art paints.

4.8 Conclusion

This chapter has been the most interesting to me and very emotional at the same time. In this chapter I shared stories of growing up in the rural context with my grandmother. The experiences of growing up with my siblings plays a huge role in the persona that I have, the mother that I am and the novice teacher that I am today in a public township school. When faced with daily challenges at work, I always draw on embodied knowledge, which is the knowledge from my past history. This chapter did not only describe my childhood memories of growing up in the rural environment, but also about my moving from the rural environment in 2007 to an urban area called Durban. It also describes how my whole world changed when I was in Durban, as I was new in the environment and had an English language barrier, which made me feel marginalized. This feeling of being marginalized has an influence in the novice teacher that I am today as I do not want to see learners feeling like they do not belong, or they are sidelined in school environments, like how it happened to me.

Through the reflection of my reconstructed stories, I had a chance to gain insight into my complex and fixed childhood memories, as well as the present experiences of my novice teacher self. In this study my grandmother, my mother, aunt and my siblings did help me by adding what they still remember about certain pictures used. As a novice teacher with my childhood experiences of growing up in a rural environment my intention is to bring life to children who feel hopeless. Writing these stories, proved to be an emotional experience for me.

In the next Chapter (5), I present selected excerpts of my memories and experiences as potential spaces for understanding personal and professional meanings and identities prompted by my storied narratives.

Chapter Five

Personal and professional constructions of novice teacher self

5.1. Introduction

In Chapter 4, I offered a storied narrative of myself reconstructed around nodal moments evoked by memory work and artwork that I created as a learner. Composed as visual and narrative texts, the small stories, offer glimpses into my memories of a life lived, experienced and expressed in varied ways. According to Nash (2004, p. 140), we may not ever be able to change what happened in the past, but we can change how we view the past and how we see the future. In this chapter, I present selected excerpts of my memories and experiences as potential spaces for understanding personal and professional meanings and identities prompted by my storied narratives, grouped into themes in response to the research question, “*What are the stories of my childhood memories that shape my construction of self as a novice teacher?*” I have adopted a Theoretical Framework by Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) on teacher understanding teacher identity. Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) state that identity cannot be viewed with the personal dimensions only, but it needs to be viewed as personal-professional relational, as the personal is inextricably linked with the professional.

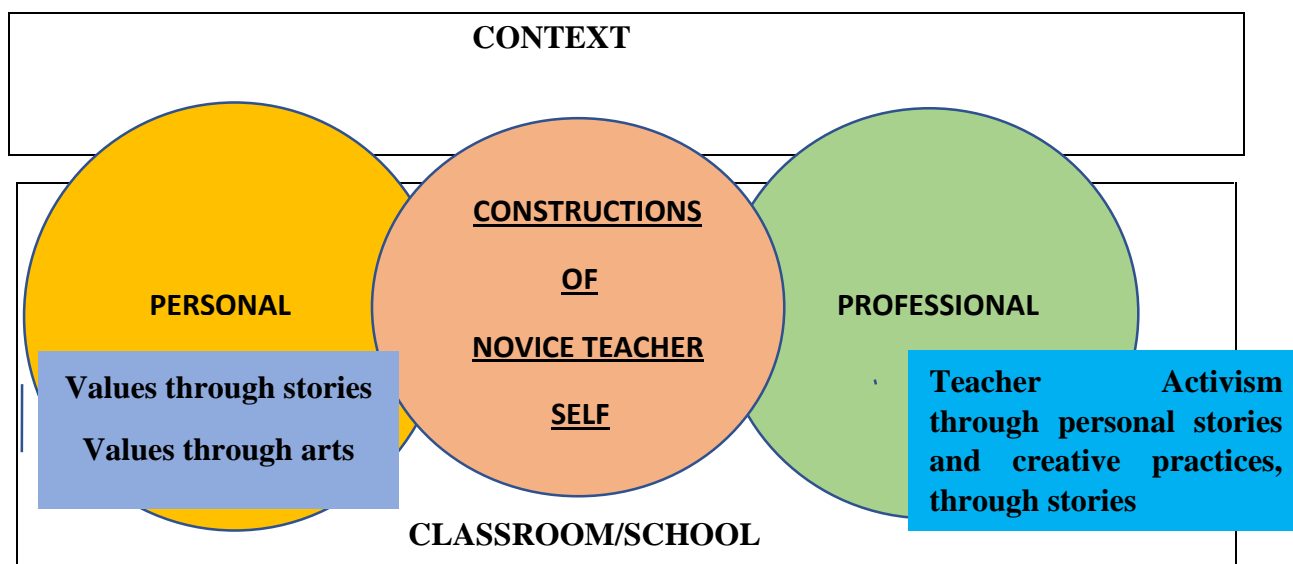


Figure 14: My model of framing novice teacher's constructions of self

Beauchamp and Thomas's Theoretical framework consist of certain dimensions of identity which were explained in the literature review Chapter 2, namely:

- The self and identity
- Emotions and identity
- Context and identity
- The link between identity and agency

The above framing adapted from Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) assisted me in understanding and explaining the process of constructing and negotiating personal and professional identity as an African woman and my choice of becoming a teacher. According to Ron Feldt and Grossman (2008), novice teachers need to carry an image that suits them in the classroom as well as in the context in which they work, to be able to make meaningful choices/decisions in negotiating the challenges faced daily. In this chapter, I offer an understanding of the link between childhood memories and my evolving novice teacher identity made explicit through the analysis of memories and stories of experience (Heikkila 2012). The professional identity of a novice teacher is informed by a person's beliefs and values and the novice teacher's practices (Rodgers & Scott, 2008). In this chapter, I analyse how my childhood experiences have a bearing on my professional identity as a novice teacher self. Using theory of understanding teacher identity by Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) I have analysed used themes that show the relationship between the professional and the personal identity, and the fact that these two cannot be separated from each other. I present the emerging themes from the data under two sections, A (Personal Constructions of the self) and B (Professional Constructions of self).

5.2 Section A: Personal Constructions of the Self

Growing up girl in a traditional rural community in the 1990's was a critical experience in my becoming an African woman novice teacher. Brought up by my grandmother in a place called Ixopo is a community steeped in conservative oppressive patriarchal practices and cultural ways were one of tension and struggle.

5.2.1 Growing up non-traditionally

In rural societies, the separation of roles amongst males and females influence how the child is brought up and how the child sees the world around them (Mitchell & Mandrona, 2019). As an African girl child, my growing up experiences with siblings and cousins both male and female was a happy memory. This picture (Fig15) is of my family sitting around our grandmother. We used to take pictures like the one below when we were growing up, and now as adults and young adults, we still do.



Fig 15: My whole family (importance of my grandmother and sisters taking care of me)

She taught us to never divide roles like how our society did. Staying at home also helped us to be not influenced by what others do in their homes. We lived according to our home rules.

At home, we lived according to our grandmothers' rules of not following societal norms. Girls and boys did as they were told in the family, boys and girls cooked. Males and females were brought up in a way that no one is superior to the other, and house chores were done by both males and females and that created a bond within us in a family.

We all had different mothers, but we have never felt it because we called all the aunt's "mom". We were taught to treat everyone with love and care even if that child is not your own.

This data speaks to the fact that in my family we were brought up by aunts that we ended up calling mothers since they treated us like their very own children. My grandmother was and is my role model. Important family values and beliefs were taught and shared through storytelling. The important relationships with my siblings and grandmother at home was critical for cultivating in me the value for healthy caring relationships and values of self-respect as a

girl child. However, outside the comfort of home, the school space was a critical space for reproducing values and beliefs that were unproductive and harmful to girl learners.

In our community at Ixopo, gendered roles played a huge role in schools and different families. Gender roles are constructed based on different expectations that people, groups, and societies have of individuals based on their sex and based on each society's values and beliefs about gender (Blackstone, 2003).

Our grandfather passed away when I was not even born, and our grandmother took over everything in the family. She was a provider in the family, and she also took care of the children; she became the head of the family as she made all the rules and decisions.

It was all instilled by our grandmother's values that we support one another and that there is no dominant meaning of masculinity

Blackstone (2003) further elaborates that people with non-traditional gender role orientations are more likely to believe that an individual's behaviour is not or should not be determined solely by her sex. However, communities and schools still perpetuate certain oppressive discourses around gender inequalities.

5.2.2. Conservative rural patriarchal community

Discourses of masculinity and patriarchy in the rural societies have made the young boys oppress females in a way that forces them into doing things they are not comfortable to do.

5.2.2.1 School reproducing oppressive values



Fig 16: Aura B primary school at Ixopo (My primary school)

The home was a site for non-traditional gender constructions, but in the school environment traditional gender roles were present.

According to Smit (2015 p.1), “bullying has been shown to harm both educators and learners”. Schooling was a site for reproducing traditional gendered roles was a critical experience,

This boy, he would beat me up and whoever is around me would also be beaten up. It was such a traumatic experience that I could not even tell my sibling nor my teacher's because I was afraid of how these family feuds start and maybe it would also expose my family to such violence.

In rural schools, bullying is not recognized, and it is not given attention because, violence is seen as a way of life, and if a male hit a female it is normal. Males are given all the power to rule females and females must always be submissive.

Discourses of masculinity and patriarchy in the rural societies have made the young boys oppress females in a way that forces them into doing things they are not comfortable to do. Additionally, according to Dunne, Humphreys and Leach (2006, p. 80) “gender relations and restrictions within the societies are part of the hidden curriculum and students informal learning, through which feminine and masculine identities are created and reinforced”.

5.2.2.2 Bright and bullied

Another form of bullying that occurs in a rural area, in schools is *ukuthwala intombi* – which according to Shabane (2011), is a form of kidnapping that forces a young girl to marry someone that she does not love.

“Uzongithwala” which is a form of forcing me to marry him, I was only in grade 5 and my marks dropped drastically, and the teachers did not ask me anything because ukuthwala was common in the school environment. He was forcing me to be in a relationship with him.

According to Bhana (2018, p. 98) "I am not asking you, I am telling you, love as force is an expression of masculinity through which gendered relations are ordered, but it also has tensions

with the surrounding socio-cultural context". Likewise, teenage boys have a highly cultured knowledge of the operation of power within relationship dynamics and it is situated experience within a context where males grow up in (Bhana, 2018).

Schooling in the rural, I was a smart learner, I was praised for being smart and wearing the full school uniform. Teacher's loved us because our grandmother was also a teacher in the area, being praised by teachers led to learner's bullying me, forcing me to do their work for them. The feeling of being bullied was painful, I had no freedom anymore at school and teachers were not helping me.

The culture in which males grow up, tend to influence how they do things and how they look at people around them. For example, a male child that grew up at Ixopo knows that to get a wife they need to thwala (kidnap) a girl, which is something that has been going on before they were even born, and it is still being practiced in the community and people see nothing wrong with it.

Furthermore, Shabane (2011) states that many young girls are victims of *ukuthwala*. This is a mode of getting wives, where men or young boys kidnap young girls violently and cruelly.

The words that signify this moment is of pain, fear, anger that I faced.

Thus, this boy who grew up in such a context was attempting to force himself upon me, a situation that was actually violating my rights to safety and non-violence, freedom of choice, and human dignity. However, growing up in a home where our voice was important and heard was different from what the community practiced. Within the community, I became vulnerable to the practices of *ukuthwala* and my voice as a girl child, was silenced. In the school that silence was reproduced because the school reproduced community values. At home I had a space for voice through equal relationships however at school, I was silenced because of dominant narratives of gender identities and unequal boy-girl relationships. My hope in who I am and what I can be was kept alive by my grandmother, who was my role model. Her stories and the values it cultivated in me energized me to value respectful relationships and learning.

5.2.3 Leaving home

When I moved from the rural context to the urban context in 2007 to complete my secondary schooling, I experienced a different form of marginalization in the form of verbal bullying by my classmates. Dennis and Satcher (1999), explains name-calling as an act of mocking or referring to a peer with a label that may create unfriendly or hurtful feelings.

5.2.3.1 A marginalized and voiceless learner

The home space was familiar, the school space was difficult, and the memory of schooling in the urban environment was painful. Learners used to laugh at me and bully me for not understanding the English language and that experience used to kill me completely because I felt invisible, unwanted and isolated.

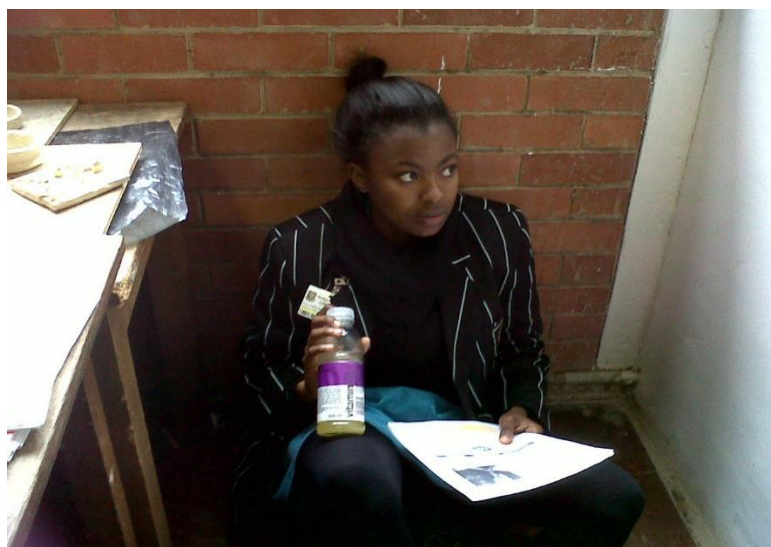


Fig 17: Picture of myself during my high school days

The discourse of rural life and people who live there as deficient and lacking, was prevalent in the city. “Oh, farm girl, farm girl” is a term that they used for people like me who came from rural areas and seen as “people who know nothing, someone who is not familiar with urban life” (Singh & Bhana 2015, p. 200).

The year 2007 was the worst year of my life even when I think about it now, I still wonder how I survived that year. As young as I was I sometimes felt like killing myself.

The feeling of isolation made me feel unwanted and it lowered my self-esteem. Dale and James (2015), states that an educational change is an alteration which may be associated with anxiety and maybe unwelcoming in a sense that one experiences unbearable feelings of isolation. I was that “rural girl child” who was seen as stupid.

5.2.4 Caring teachers

In high school I had positive encounters with two teachers, my former class teacher and my subject teacher (Visual Arts teacher). Both these teachers were very caring in such a way that benefited me emotionally and intellectually. Through both these teachers I learnt how to write and read in English. My Visual Arts teacher assisted me by developing my art skills, and while developing my English skills also. Their act of kindness benefited my wellbeing and intellectual well-being.

Miss P who was my former class teacher made me feel at home even though I could not even construct one sentence in English. Through my Visual Arts teacher Mrs K, I found support unexpectedly, I found love.

With the support and encouragement from my form class teacher who constantly encouraged me to read novels to help improve my reading skills, I was able to resist feelings of hopelessness. She introduced me to the world of the Arts, where I had to put my feelings into paintings and drawings. Through all of this, I found my voice again. In the art class, I was not bullied or called names, but I found support and care and respect.

The reason behind me choosing Arts was because I wanted a subject that does not require me to speak much. I chose Visual Arts because I knew that I was going to be quiet most of the time and just draw or paint and write exams.



Fig 18: The kinds of paintings that I enjoyed doing (outdoor)

When a caring relationship happens at an early stage in life, it encourages learners to become invested in composing what is meaningful to them (Ritchie & Wilson, 2000). Showing support and care to people is an important tool that can make one's situation much better without even realizing it as a teacher.

I still thank my grade 8 teacher for caring. She changed my life and I'm grateful for all the experiences because today I am a helpful person and I feel like I owe it to the whole world to change lives the way she changed mine in only a year.

In the Visual Art class, there were relationships of respect, love and caring shared amongst different races, which is similar to what was happening at home where spaces for love and care were created amongst boys and girls. In the art space, I was able to cultivate my unique voice and learn to appreciate the diversity that each learner brought into the artwork. In the art space, my 'rural-self' did not matter, instead, I was treated with love and respect.

5.2.5 Finding a voice through Visual Arts

According to Ritchie and Wilson (2000), a feeling of community produces willingness to supporting one another. The photo below represents the space that I felt safe, supported and

confident to voice my ideas and experiences in a personally meaningful way. Through art-making, we connected with our diverse experiences in a respectful, open-minded way.

It was a small class, that was very supportive, and we became more like a family, I became closely bonded with different races, I was included like a family, encouraged and supported.



Fig 19: Adelaide College visual arts class in 2010

In the art room, I had confidence doing presentations in class because nobody laughed at me, but instead, they assisted me until I was better in pronouncing English words. We had a diverse class of different races, Coloureds, Indians, Whites, as well as Africans. My close friend was a girl from Zimbabwe.

I found support and respect unexpectedly, through arts. Unfortunately, I repeated grade 8 in 2008. When I was in matric I said to myself, I want to be a teacher, I want to make a difference in at least one child's life.

When I developed confidence in speaking and doing orals in the Visual Arts class, I also developed confidence in doing orals in all the other subjects and classes. I love to paint flowers, trees, and mountains. Using Art to reconnect with my memories of your rural life and memories, was a fulfilling experience. Art-making energized my desire for nature and outdoor started back at home (Ixopo) when walking to school. That was all I could see around me when I walked to my 'rural' school. Importantly, my Visual Arts teacher never challenged me into drawing things I was uncomfortable to draw. I was free to draw what I loved most, Michell and

Mandrona (2019) states that various contributors of our rural selves have taken different approaches to memory and how we live now.

This teacher's support was more than just a teacher and a learner relationship. She made sure that I did not feel isolated in the school premises. This role model that I saw in my art-teacher motivated and inspired me to work towards becoming a teacher like her. According to Edwards and Edwards (2016), teacher identity grows in such a way that imitate the unique combination of culture, context, and experiences that one possesses.

I felt in love with the idea of being a teacher after I realized that a teacher can change how a learner sees herself or views the world around them. I also wanted to be like my high school teachers who were constantly helping me to read, write and speak English while other learners were making jokes about me.

In the Visual arts space, my voice was acknowledged and exercised, the relationship between learners in this space was caring and respectful, unlike when I was outside in the other spaces. I had a space to exercise my voice through the arts. The Arts offered me the space to cherish the memories of rural life because it provided me a space to draw about the environment. The Arts gave me a space to remember the environment that I used to interact with daily in the rural environment, it took me back to my roots. Lewis (2018) state that arts can help provide a vehicle for memory and means of recording past experiences and can also help renew the pleasure of seeing and help us feel more alive.

5..2.6 Synthesis

In a rural environment, I experienced being a girl in hurtful ways. I was marginalized in the community and school but found my voice in the comfort of my grandmother's room sharing stories and bonded by care and respect. In the urban context experiences of being 'the farm-girl' and unable to speak English fluently were overcome and supported through art-making and the relationships that I formed in this supportive and safe space. This productive remembering of my experiences of growing up as an African girl highlighted for me the love for nature that I grew up seeing in the rural area and being able to have a voice through Arts.

The key meanings of self as an African girl that my analysis highlighted the awareness of valuing racial and cultural differences and the importance of Visual Arts for expressing my love of nature. The respect and care for one another highlighted “Ubuntu”. Moving into teaching as a career was shaped by both my rural and urban experiences, which involve two female role models.

Training to be a teacher (Howard College), I majored in Tourism, Sociology, and IsiZulu with the interest to study different cultures and values. As well as the importance of sustaining the environment and practicing responsible tourism. According to Weber (2013), Sociology is the study of contextual meaning which deals with symbolic values, behaviours, and relationships. It broadened my understanding of people and the community.

5.3 SECTION B: Professional Constructions of self

Professional constructions of self are what shapes me into becoming a teacher, which includes who I am personally and what I want to be in the teaching profession.

5.3.1 Choosing to become a teacher

My values of growing up in a privileged family were shaping a school I wanted to teach in. I did not want to teach in a township school, because I went to well-resourced schools, grew up in middle class home, and had a privilege to attend a former Model C school. I wanted to work in urban schools because of the school I went to. However, I obtained a job offer in a public township school and I had to adjust to the environment

Becoming a novice teacher means transforming an identity adopting by personal understandings and ideals relational to institutional realities (Rodgers & Scott, 2008). This is emphasized by Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) who assert that personal identity cannot be separated from the professional.

5.3.2 Novice teacher in a public township school

According to Yu (2013), the high rate of unemployment has been one of the most persistent socio-economic problems of South Africa. The high unemployment rate is still a challenge even for graduates. Therefore, I also had a challenge finding a job in urban areas and I ended up working in a township school.

Teaching in a public township school was not my first choice due to situations that I came across while I was doing my teaching practice in a township. However, I did take a job in a township school and told myself that I can create my own happy space in my classroom with my learners.

In 2016, I wanted to work in urban schools because of the better infrastructure, educational equipment and sports facilities being available. I did most of my teaching practice in two schools in the township and I did not like how the schools operated. There were no relations amongst the staff.

My reason for wanting to teach in urban areas is that during my high school days I could see that there is order, rules are used to help run the school smoothly and there is high parental involvement. Lastly, working conditions are good with all the equipment for every subject. Pass rates are very high too.

It was not part of my plan to teach in a township but that is where I obtained job support. According to Pillay and Saloojee (2012), rural schooling produce students who have limited chances of obtaining a meaningful education and life after matriculation, because of a combination of poverty and poor-quality education that includes lack of encouragement from teachers. This is to the scenario of the education and conditions in the township schools – there is a high rate of crime, drugs, violence and less educational encouragement from teachers to learners. Ngcobo and Tirkly (2010) further state that many of the township schools and rural school continue to suffer from an acute shortage of textbooks and other learning materials, and the existence of extreme poverty in townships leads to high rate of crime and even amongst learners in school:

While I was doing my teaching practice in that school I noticed that the school was dysfunctional, there was a shortage of water in the area and schools closed early every day.

There was less time for teachers to teach, and high absenteeism from both teachers and learners and less parental support.

According to Ngwenya and Pretorious (2014) parental participation in their children's education is an important characteristic of an effective school. Dysfunctional schools are characterized by unbalanced management conditions, inappropriate or lack of leadership, lack of vision, and unhealthy school climate and culture. As a novice teacher, this is exactly what I came across when I started working in a township school and it was difficult to understand the situation. However, the value of working around with whatever I have around me influenced my choice of settling for the job.

I somehow felt like I was thrown in the deep end, I had to work around the fact that my colleagues don't talk to each other and there is unequal treatment for teachers from the management.

Knowing the value of making things work even if things seem impossible that I learned from my grandmother also helped me to work with passion in all subjects that I was given. Nieto (2003) further elaborates that novice teachers do not develop full-blown at the graduation ceremony nor are they born teachers, instead teachers are always in the process of becoming.

My evolving novice teacher self was shaped by my desire to create a happy safe and supportive classroom despite the rest of the school was dysfunctional. I wanted to establish collegial relationships with all teachers based on respect and equality. According to Jarvis (2012) collegiality, does not just naturally appear, it must be tolerated or silently encouraged by those who have the power within the organization to establish good relationships within the team.

5.3.3 Establishing good relationships as a novice teacher

There was no mentor support from the older teachers and I struggled with classroom management a lot, I did not know how to handle learner's different behaviours in class. In all situations, I had to be mutual and speak to everyone at work regardless of their misunderstandings as staff.

The staff members alone were not in good terms, and they hardly spoke to one other due to their political issues (SADTU and NADTU). These two unions divided the staff and it was difficult to work in such a condition where people are not talking to each other due to their differences in terms of unions. Ngwenya and Pretorius (2014), explains that a dysfunctional school as a school that lacks collegial support and teachers tend to violate educational norms, policies or internal values concerning minimum quality and quantity of work. However, I made sure that I did not get involved in their issues and treated everyone with kindness.

According to Eby, Lockwood and Butts (2006), schools that support mentoring, are more likely to spend their time and energy developing relationships that support other's professional and personal growth within the workplace. I received no personal support and mentoring support, but I made sure that I asked for assistance where I did not understand what needs to be done as I was still new in the school.

I used to take those who were troubling me to the office until I realized that, this is not going to stop and implemented my own class rules.

I became confident in standing in front of learners and started to create a learning environment that was fun, creative, loving and supportive. In return, learners love me for who I am, and I am accepting them as they are while putting education forward.

5.3.4 Teaching Visual Arts and Tourism in a township school

I have subjects that I am passionate about, tourism, life orientation, and arts. These subjects allow my inner voice to come out in the form of being an activist.

Teaching involves love and respect for both the subject and learners when a teacher is passionate about the subject they teach learners also respond positively (Nieto, 2003). Since the first day I started teaching in the township I felt belonging because the subjects that I am teaching are my favourites. The art space allowed me to work with different learners, a creative teacher and a passionate teacher encouraging voices.

The love and support that is rooted through me, has shaped my novice teacher self to be loving and supportive to all my learners in the classroom by allowing them to voice out their concerns

through arts, through music, through drama, etc. I do this because I was once a victim of being voiceless and found my voice through storytelling and art paints.

According to Bhana (2015), caring is beneath all we do as teachers adding further that when that climate is established and maintained, everything else falls into place. Now as a teacher in a public township school, using these two subjects I teach learners that being oppressed in any form shouldn't be accepted. Additionally, Bhana (2015) states that standing up for the child, with an approach of care, is negotiated within teachers socially constituted roles in the township and as they confront children's struggles. Through my subjects, I act as an activist against women abuse as well as certain cultural practices. I use my teacher role to support girls who in the name of culture are violated.

The main goal that drove me into becoming a teacher is that I wanted to make a difference to voiceless. Create relationships that encourage respect for one other and support amongst learners in a classroom and outside the classroom through stories.

The key meanings of self and my identity as a female teacher that my analysis is highlighting are that I have used my past experiences of being voiceless during my primary school days and high school days to help me in becoming an activist against certain cultural practices, and a teacher who helps those who are experiencing the same marginalization. Both subjects allowed me to develop my passion. I want to be a teacher who can create a supportive environment, and this is the positive value I am bringing in from my childhood experiences. Values for equality, voice, sharing, and these memory values I developed are helping me in the novice teacher that I am.

5.4 Conclusion

Writing this chapter has made me understand that there is a link in the stories of my childhood memories. In this chapter, I have analysed both my personal and professional experiences with other scholars. I have used Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) to assist the links between my personal and professional identities. I developed themes that I took from the storied narratives. These themes are a part of stories that shape my everyday lived experiences as a human being

and as a novice teacher. My childhood experiences of growing up in different contexts influence the novice teacher that I am and what I do.

In this chapter, I found the memory of warm, safe, spaces within each context (home and Visual Arts class) where I had a voice. However, I also found the experience of community oppressive values where there was a practice of patriarchy. Moreover, when moving to urban areas an experience of marginalization and alienation was what I found. Both the experiences of growing up in rural and urban areas I had role model figures who were both teachers (grandmother and the former class teacher). They offered comforting space, they showed love to every child around them.

Using Beauchamp and Thomas Teacher Identity Theory (2009) to explore the internal and external forces that shape the self, has made me realize that I have good and bad selves that shape my novice teacher self. There is an inextricable link between my personal and professional identities, as a learner I faced challenges (bullying) in schools and kept quiet for too long, not voicing out my concerns but now as a novice teacher, it allows me space to speak, and even motivate learners about my learner self. As a novice teacher, I speak more about my learner self and my creative self, and how arts helped me to find voice. I use the novice teacher space and position to become vocal, to become visible, and to become an activist. However, the critical learning for me is to recognise my privileged self when growing up and in the novice teacher self I learned to work with beyond privilege in a township school. The novice teacher self allows me to become a teacher who treats everyone equally regardless of their diverse backgrounds. Being privileged limited me and the school I wanted to work in. etc. I have learnt to be more flexible through ongoing learning from my everyday situations and critically reflecting on my choices through this narrative inquiry, so I can be a better teacher in a township school.

My Novice Teacher Self

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter I draw on selected excerpts from my personal stories to respond to my second research question, *how stories prompted by my childhood memories shape my everyday lived practices as a novice teacher teaching in a township school?* In developing the analysis for this question, I have used a collage portrait as a visual analytical tool to assist me in developing the themes. A collage is defined as “the method of cutting and pasting found pictures from widespread print/magazines on a cardboard” (Butler-Kisber 2008, p. 265). The pictures that are in the collage serves as a representation of my novice teacher self and my everyday practices. All the chosen pictures are grouped into two pictures to form themes that represents the construction of my novice teacher self in a Township school.



Fig 20: My novice teacher self

This collage inquiry helped to come up with themes presented in this chapter. The collage inquiry acts as a supportive analytical tool to visually represent the process of drawing out selected experiences of my childhood memories (Van Schalkwyk, 2010). The images in the collage of my everyday lived experiences as a novice teacher has helped me in remembering

certain memories of growing up in the rural environment. According to Pasupathi, Mansour and Brubaker (2007), for people to develop a life story, they must be able to engage in the narrative reconstruction of their past. This chapter is about my everyday lived experiences as a novice teacher in a public township school. I have used visuals to illustrate what I do inside the classroom, outside the school and what I want to do to develop myself – prompted by productive remembering under the following three themes: firstly, cultivating supportive caring relationships and value of care for people and environment; secondly, teaching as a space for cultivating voice through creativity, and thirdly, cultivating non-traditional gendered practices.

Past events are interpreted at different moments in life and then reconstructed again and again in different circumstances (Erben, 1998). Past events do appear in different moments in our lives and as a novice woman teacher who spent the formative years of my life growing up in Ixopo, a rural setting in KwaZulu, Natal, I recall memories of warmth and love that I felt when grandma told stories to me and my siblings, cousins (Refer to fig 1, p. 15: photograph of my grandmother's bed room that I have in my storied narrative.) Sharing stories with my grandmother and my cousins helped me develop respect and trust for myself and others.

This has developed in me the desire to create supportive caring classroom as a novice teacher. I see the need for the children to be happy and be free to express themselves. I want to create a classroom in which learners can feel comfortable and free.

Being free to express oneself is important to learners because most of them are silenced by things we do not know about. Creating a caring environment gives hope to hopeless children and they learn to respect one another as a class. This creates comfortable environments.

6.2 Creating classrooms as safe, supportive spaces

Creating classrooms as safe, supportive spaces where respect and care are experienced are possible. Relationships and love must not be feared or excluded from classrooms but must be recognized as vital to learning (Ritchie & Wilson, 2000). As a novice teacher I am faced daily with learners who can come and speak to me and find help and support. As a novice teacher my values and beliefs are rooted in a close-knit, woman-headed loving family household. As a

teacher, having to teach diverse learners, many of whom do not have stable homes or parents, I chose to be more than a teacher who delivers the content from the textbook.

For some learners, going home meant being head of the family and unloved due to responsibilities they had to take on as children. learners rely on schools and especially teachers for love, care and support. Importantly, schools are their only hope.

Creating classroom conditions that promote healthy relationships amongst teacher and learners is very important (Mokhele, 2006). Some learners only rely on the school and the teachers for help because at home they are faced with abuse, violence and any other kinds of abuse. Learners see the school as their only hope and teacher's need to consider the diverse learners and their needs by cultivating. Additionally, Pithouse-Morgan, Mitchell and Pillay (2012) states that the development of young people as just and nonviolent citizens is an essential aim for most schools.

6.3 Beyond teaching content

In my teaching I try to reach out to everyone in class and making sure that everyone understands what needs to be done using different methods of teaching. The painting (fig.12, p.64) *has inspired me to teach beyond the written and spoken*. The picture of a female which evoke in me the idea of diversity, complexity and the different colors.

6.4 The necessity of sustaining Nurturing Relationships

Teacher-learner relationship in township may be challenging in such a way that children end up taking advantage and not do school work. Learners do this intentionally knowing that when they come crying to me I understand the issues they are going through.

In my class I have about four learners with cases of rape and they come to me and I refer them to the social workers. I make sure that I follow up as to how they are getting assisted. Honestly speaking, some days these challenges faced by learners gets to me, but I feel the need to help and be the mother/ teacher they never had.

As Heikkila (2012) states that childhood school experiences are part of the development of a teacher's identity. My childhood school experience in the rural environment was not an exciting one but I knew that at home I can be safe. My experience of someone wanting to force me to marriage (ukuthwala) left me traumatized and always wanting to help those who might be victims of rape.

Now that I am a teacher, this means that I have the power to help shape the future of these young children it may not be the same as my experiences, but it only takes one person to make a change in the children's lives.

According to Richie and Wilson (2000), caring relationships in schools encourages learners to become invested in composing what is meaningful to them. Teaching is intellectual and emotional engagement, and it requires constant encouragement and guidance (Nieto, 2003).

In grade 8 there is a beautiful girl who sings so beautifully but I discovered that she was raped by her father's friend. Her family did not know because she was afraid to tell them. I called her mother to come to school, took both of them to the police station left them there because I was also afraid for my life. The man is now in jail and the learner is going through counselling.

Relationships with learners sometimes do pose risks but I always make sure that I deal with all the issues faced by learners personally and professionally. As a novice teacher, I find myself struggling to negotiate these different responsibilities and their effects on my emotional well-being.

6.5 What do I do in the classroom

6.5.1 Connecting with learner

Teaching for self-actualisation entails sharing one's own stories with students. it is about creating classroom environments where students might also want to share their own stories (Pithouse-Morgan, Mitchell & Pillay,2012).

Identity is shifting and open to change and part of my learning highlighted for me how my novice teacher self is shifting from being a class teacher into being a mother or big sister figure to learners.

This excerpt is highlighting my critical reflection of the (mother-sister) shifts that I have experienced. This reflection was not productive to because learners also shifted from doing their work on time to not submitting work at all.

In class I have created our warm space where we all feel cared for and supported. As a Tourism subject teacher in grade 10, the topics such as sustainable tourism, responsible tourism, different attractions and different provinces open up opportunities for individual learners to share and discuss different beliefs, food and dress codes:

I asked learners to get into different groups and choose one province that they can do research about. Finding out about the food that people eat in that province, the clothes they wear, the languages they speak and their dance. learners had dress like the people of the province they are presenting, come with food they cooked from home that they going to show us and eat it themselves, the dance moves as well as their languages. This was done in the netball court during the tourism period.

According to Van Laren, Mudaly, Pithouse-Morgan and Singh (2013) playfulness, is an attitude, an atmosphere and a way of doing things, which makes a vital contribution to open ended activities in class, playfulness can also be inspired by learning new knowledge and ways of thinking or doing outside the outlined ‘areas of expertise’.



Fig 21: Tourism lesson on different provinces and their cultures

I have created spaces where learning takes place but also learners do enjoy themselves and show their talents. The school is dominated by Zulu speaking learners who are steeped in Zulu cultural values. But it was surprising to see them dancing and wearing other cultures traditional clothes.

6.5.2 Through teaching tourism, I can use different, creative ways of teaching

Dennis (2012) states that's children become motivated when teachers use different methods that cater for their needs. I also enjoy and look forward to going to class as I am always ready to surprise learners with new ways of learning.

My experience of struggling in English started to influence how I engage with learners, how I teach in tourism is affecting the English teacher because I was lenient to learners who are struggling in English.

6.5.3 Choosing alternative practices



Fig 22: Miss Khumalo in Sotho attire during the presentation of different cultures

It is always interesting and refreshing to work with learners that are co-operating with me and always willing to try new ways of learning. Rather than sticking to the textbook and only talk about what other cultures do, we also make what is written to be orally and practical to accommodate all kinds of learners. Dennis (2012) states that students are more likely to listen and trust teachers when they are honest and open.

Tourism is diverse, it talks about travelling, cultures, environment, attractions and sustaining the nature.

Whenever I went to vacations, I always made sure that I brought back brochures or pamphlets to show them other places that are found in a certain province and showed it to them around the classroom. I also asked them that whenever they went on trips they should bring something for the class to share and talk about which relates to tourism studies. Additionally, giving students an opportunity to communicate in the classroom is another way of showing care (Dennis,2012).

6.6 Teaching as a personal, emotional and social responsibility

Early this year I went to Hluhluwe (Nibela Lake Lodge). As I was still asking myself what I can bring to my learners on Monday. A monkey showed up on my window and this spurred me to think about possible topics. I teach learners about sustaining the nature and protecting animals for future generation to also the beauty in animals and in trees. I always try to instil the love for nature in their heads that there is beauty in animals too, they shouldn't be killed instead they must admire that beauty and take pictures and show us in class.



Fig 23. Morning pictures of a monkey at Nibela lake lodge and flower

I took this picture of a monkey alone first, then I realised that I need to convince my learners that there is beauty in nature. Indeed, this picture amazed most learners in class. I am doing all of this, so they can realise that there is more to life than always chasing and killing the environment and that environment is beautiful in its

own way. I use visuals to teach and tell stories behind those photos that I have taken, I walk around with my laptop showing them and we all have one discussion about those photos.

The above flower serves as a metaphor for being socially responsible and sustaining plants/animals for future generation to also see the beauty of nature. Thus, according to Erickson and Pinnergar (2017), teachers' metaphors can serve as a framework that moves our understanding of teaching forward by making more explicit the intuitive knowledge teachers hold about themselves, their classrooms, and their practice. My childhood experiences become the window to my experiences. I love the nature, and loving and caring relationships, my love for warmth and all these three themes always come into my classrooms.

6.7 Activist teacher

According to Pithouse-Morgan, Mitchell and Pillay (2012), the information that teachers have and their being at a point in time is a product of past events that were shaped by past human action. In the very same vein, such knowledge and personal self-conceptions have potential for change and school teachers have a power to change how learners view the world around them.



Fig 24. Pictures of myself interacting with nature, to show to my learners in class and teach them to be socially responsible

When I teach about responsible tourism I use the textbook examples and pictures but since I am a nature lover, I also practice what is in the textbook and share with the learners in my class.

6.8 Relationships of care

6.8.1 Inside-outside classroom

Relationship of care outside and inside the classroom is very important especially in townships, due to social illnesses, violence, abuse and poverty amongst the community.

On Valentine's Day the 14th of February a learner wrote me a letter and gave it to me. I couldn't help it but cried. Knowing that I did change how she sees herself by just talking to her.

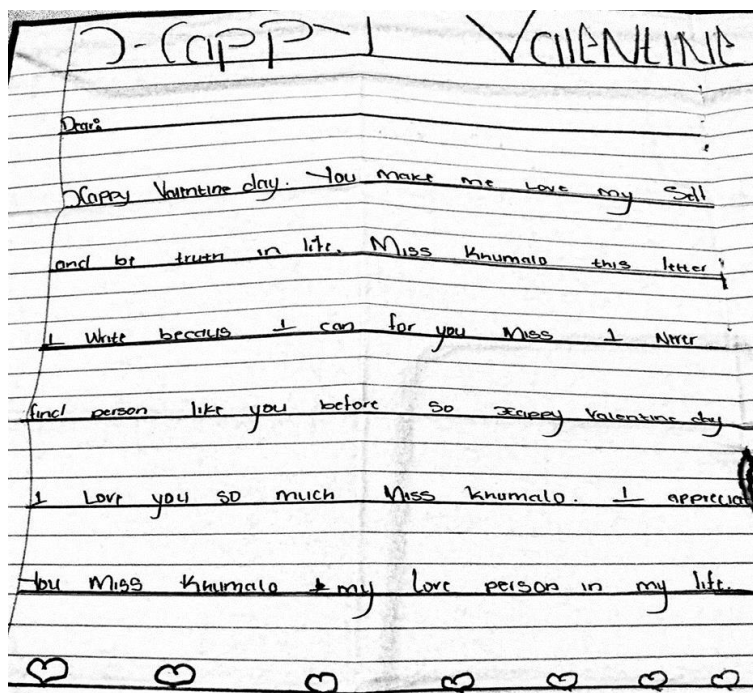


Fig 25: A Valentine's Day letter from a grade 8 child who was raped in 2016 and never received assistance

As a novice teacher in a township school, receiving this letter made me to feel so emotional, because I realised that I was able to change how she felt about herself after being constantly raped by her father's friend. James and Dale (2015) define the feeling of being emotional as a way to communicate feelings to others, which may be manageable but not in every situation, especially when the feeling experienced is powerful. To me this means that being a novice I am given a platform to reshape the minds of the children and how they see themselves in the outside world despite of the challenges they face on daily basis.

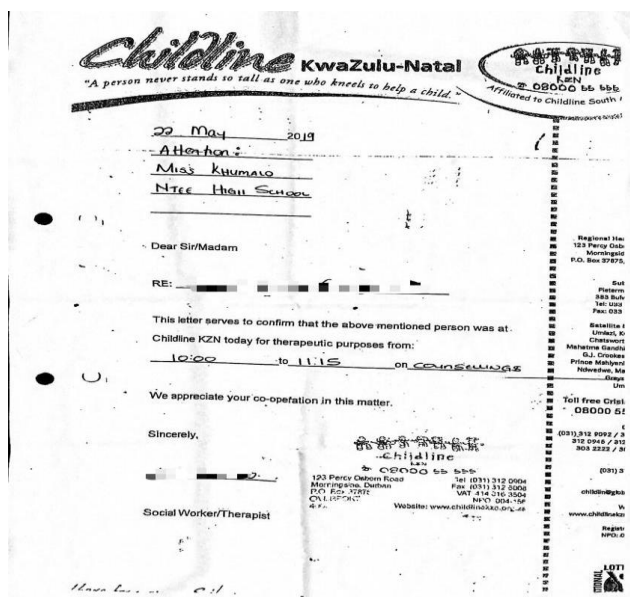


Fig 26: A letter from the social workers to me, regarding one of the children that I referred due to rape cases

My upbringing of a loving family has resulted in me to be a caring person to others and having a giving hand to those learners who are less fortunate. These two examples highlight that as a novice teacher, learners can approach me and speak to me about the challenges they face outside of school. My experience of growing up in a

family that is supportive somehow comes out when learners come to me for help.

In grade 10, I have a boy who is 21 years of age, living with HIV/AIDS. He stays with his grandmother and his two mentally disturbed siblings. They only rely on the grandmother's grant for food and clothes. I took him to a community centre to get help, he is now getting food parcels from the school tuckshop and his family is getting help as well.

Nieto (2003) further states that, teachers need to give continuous attention to the problems and possibilities of their classrooms and schools.

My identity of a mother/sister is something that I need to revise because it is becoming harmful to me, this mother/ sister role is dominating the teacher role.

When I become too much of a caregiver, I lose control over learners, they start seeing me as a sister or a mother.

6.9 Teacher as a role model

I am always willing to help where I see that there is a problem, and I am happy with the results of caring for others, the spirit of Ubuntu is always with me. In grade 11 the IsiZulu teacher came to show me an essay what a child wrote about me. They were given a task to write about the good impact of getting educated and their role model and a learner that I do even teach decided to write about me.

Harris and Anthony (2001) states that “teaching is not something one learns to do, once and for all, and then practices, problem free, for a lifetime, teaching depends on growth and development, and it is practiced in dynamic situations that are never twice the same”. As a novice teacher it is a huge development to be someone’s role model as I am still getting used in the teaching profession.

The essay reads as follows: *Education is important because it takes you from zero to hero, education is the key to success. Education has a positive impact in the whole world, look at Miss Siphesihle Khumalo, she started as a teacher. She did not stop there but continued travelling around, and she is about to pursue her dreams of being ‘Doctor of Philosophy’. She does all of this because she told herself that nothing beats being educated. I learned a lot from Miss Khumalo and I will make sure that my future is also bright like hers. Education will lift me up just like the person that I look up to.*

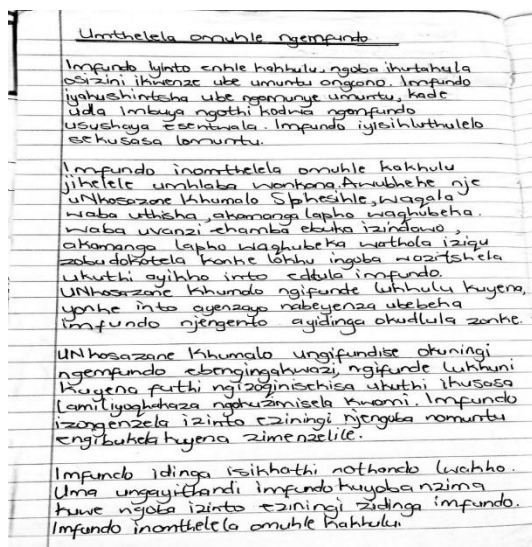


Fig 27: Grade 11 IsiZulu essay about role models (Learners paper)

It has always been my wish and dream to at least change how one sees herself. The aim was to always help learners to understand that there is more to life than to hold on to challenges and that is no fixed way of living, I am glad that some learners do look up to me.

Being a caring novice teacher outside and inside of classroom is mostly influenced by growing up in a supportive and loving family. For me being a role model to some learners shows that as a novice teacher learner are somehow influenced by what I do and how I do things around them.

6.10 Caring for self

According to Pithouse-Morgan, Mitchell and Pillay, (2012 p. 99) “knowing more about ourselves as teachers and teacher educators change us, provokes growth, jolts us out of complacency and sometimes radically, in ways that can seem transformative”.



Fig 28: Picture of my family, the females that inspire me academically

This picture serves as my past memory that encourages me to continue caring for self and developing myself academically, I am surrounded by only females (Mothers) who have shown me that through education one can be anything. Thus, my inspiration comes from home mostly, as I did mention in my personal narrative that I grew up with females (aunts, grandmother and mother).

6.11 Becoming A postgraduate student: A space for my emotional and Intellectual well-being

Becoming a postgraduate student is about my educational development creating a space for my emotional and intellectual well-being. Also, a teacher is expected to be a lifelong learner to keep up with all the changes around the curriculum.

As a novice teacher, I learnt how I invested in the love and caring relationships involves caring for others mostly. However, I do care for myself also and it been working for me. As a 25-year-old novice teacher: I am developing my knowledge through a postgraduate community of educational researchers. Studying has helped me a lot in dealing with the challenges I face daily

as a novice teacher in a township school. I am able to draw on my embodied knowledge as well as what I learn in different articles about certain issues.

6.12 My nature lover self

My love for nature was influenced by my childhood memory of growing up in a rural environment. Nature was all around us and I fell in love with it. I link nature with humans and that is exactly what my grandmother used to do when telling us stories.

Where ever I go, there is this one story that I love sharing with the learners and communities.

A trip that I took with my friends to Drakensberg, was a memorable one. We went hiking on the mountains, after walking for 5 hours we decided that we are taking different routes because we were getting lost. We took different routes back to the hotel, and we arrived there on different times. The motive behind this story is that, one can start a journey with a lot of people but when the going gets tough you end up alone. People may be heading to the same destination but arrive in different times.

I love going to the mountains because it helps me create relationships with the people I travel with. I am a nature lover, which started at a very young age when I used to walk to school in the rural context, I admired nature and it is what I saw every day. I take my experiences of travelling and turn them into stories that have life lesson. As the environment teaches me things, the myths of growing up being told about animals and getting life lessons out of the nature. Nature is useful, and stories are built through nature as I also motivate through and give life lesson through nature.

6.13 A story teller: a space for voice

I teach by telling stories, which is one thing that I learnt from my grandmother at home who used to tell us stories. Sharing stories with my learners in class has led me to speak in public and motivate other learners through storytelling. According to Coulter, Michael, and Poynor (2007) teaching as storytelling makes sense of our world and experience.



Fig 29: First picture, public speaking at Wiggin's community hall, for schools' awards.

Coulter, Michael, and Poynor (2007), states that telling of stories is an old practice, and that it seems almost as natural as using oral language. In native societies storytelling is a very important part of the educational process. Additionally, what makes my stories different is that, personally I could not speak English and I was humiliated, embarrassed and laughed at by my fellow African class mates when I moved to Durban. But it all turned out to be a lesson for many learners, and I now use the very same language that made me to feel marginalised to motivate others and to pass the message across.



Fig 30: Second picture doing public speaking at Ntee High School for their grade 12 awards.

Developing myself academically has been nothing but the best platform for me to be able to share stories and to motivate learners and other teachers as well to engage themselves in the lives of learners to produce loving and caring environment in schools.

Through the stories and motivations that I share with learners is that about going hiking in the mountains is that, there is no set path, nature teaches us that there is no fixed way of doing things, we all get lost sometimes.

Stories are used to pass down beliefs, customs from one generation to the next generation, they are usually used to teach Coulter et al (2007).

My grandmother had no fixed way of raising us, she took her own path, which also made me realise that each person has a choice of choosing a way of living and what works for them. As a novice teacher I am open minded, and I want to do things differently - for me and my learners.

As a novice teacher I am open minded and understand that nothing is fixed. Anything can change at any given time, it could be the way I teach, the way and the way I treat learners. life is complex each person does what works for them.

6.14 Being a non-traditional novice teacher

Growing up with non-traditional gender roles at home has shaped me to be a novice teacher that does not separated roles amongst learners based on their gender.

They all clean their classroom and they are all responsible for picking up litter in their classroom, no particular gender is responsible for keeping the class clean, but everyone does it, regardless of gender.

Whenever learners come across being abused in terms of their gender I always avail myself as a teacher, because I am aware that it happens. Blackstone (2003) further elaborate that gendered roles are structural ways to create environmental constraints and opportunities that usually benefit men more than women. Most schools perpetuate these gendered roles thus as a novice teacher I always act as an activist against women abuse and treat all learners the same.

Most of the challenges that are faced by the grade 8s and 9s is rape. As much as I have never told anyone but whenever these young girls approach me and tell me, I feel their pain and see the need to help with all that I can because I was also a victim of “ukuthwalwa”.

Additionally, Pithouse-Morgan, Mitchell and Pillay (2012) add that the reflecting critically on memories of violence offers a way of developing a commitment to nonviolence and should be involved to measure and build the safety. Helping others in fighting rape, violence and inequalities based on gender is what I love the most and in the communities that we work in, rape is very high, and it only takes one person to be engaged in saving the lives of the innocent children from these gendered roles that are meant to oppress females and gays and lesbians.

Pithouse-Morgan, Mitchell and Pillay (2012) add that when we work with ourselves and others for nonviolence, we confront the many ways in which our social relations have been caught in violence. Thinking about a pedagogy for nonviolence as a novice teacher can open up an awareness of the attachments that we carry, and the difficulties of simply moving on from them.

6.15 Conclusion: lessons about my “selves”

In this chapter, a collage inquiry was used to elicit certain memories about my childhood experiences as well as my experiences now as a novice teacher in a public township school. The themes and stories that were developed in this chapter are answering my second research question which is *“How stories of my childhood experiences shape my everyday lived experiences as a novice teacher”*. Pictures have been used to support the written text about my personal and professional self. My novice teacher development has been influenced productively by my childhood memories and most importantly by the female role models I had at home and school.

Using memory work does change how teaching happens in the township's schools, memory work assists me to reinvest teaching, using different methods to teach which excites most learners and I am always present and available for them if they need an assistant. Storytelling has been very helpful in delivering educational life lessons to learners and they are given a chance to voice out their concerns through drama, arts, music etc. According to Beauchamp and Thomas (2009), identity is dynamic rather than stable, it is a constantly evolving phenomenon, it involves both a person and a context: within a context, teachers learn professional characteristics that are adopted by individuals in unique ways.

In this chapter, I have learned that as a novice teacher taking care of myself is also important, so I can always be the best (lifelong learner) for my learners and create safe, warm, supportive, respectful, and happy spaces for them in the classroom. By using Beauchamp and Thomas's (2009) theoretical framework on understanding teacher identity, I have learned that the expression of multiple identities is possible through a teacher's narrative position, for example, the identity of a caring or a creative teacher.

Through this study, I learned that childhood memories do shape my novice teacher self, the good and the bad experiences. My learning through this research study is that I am a caring teacher because of growing up in certain spaces that promoted caring values (home and Visual Arts class) through relations and voice. I took those values to the workplace, on the other hand, I also learned how childhood memories shape my beliefs as a novice teacher who is quite unproductive. My construction as a mother and sister became fixed and dominated my teacher

role and that compromised my teaching. My childhood memory of being a poor English speaker also shaped how I teach. I was overemphatic with learners who could not write or read English and that compromised my teaching. This narrative offered a critical site for me to learn about my novice teacher self, it provides an ideal space for me to learn about novice teacher constructions, novice teachers are often left on their own to learn, they either go to workshops which includes all teachers or if they are lucky they may have a mentor in school. The kind of learning I experienced thought this master's study was a deep and insightful study that is internally driven. My stories and memories became the tool for me to resist and re-invent myself to become a better novice teacher in the future.

The methods that I used in this study allowed me to develop a representation of the self (multiple self). This was very important because I discovered that as a novice teacher I need to reinvest some of my personal traits which are harmful to my teaching profession.

By exploring my childhood memories, as a researcher I realised that inside the classroom I allow learners to take turns when speaking (turn taking). The methods that I use are similar to my childhood experiences for example, telling of stories as well as having good relationships with learners. Inside the classroom in terms of relationships learners have a respectful and supportive relationship amongst each other, which relates to how my personal life (growing up in a caring family) shapes my classroom environment. Furthermore, what I teach is also shaped by my childhood experiences which is creative arts (paintings). My paintings are telling how I made meanings of my life outside of being a teacher. The need to protect, care and love learners is limiting my professional identity, it is overwhelming my teaching and learners end up taking advantage by coming up with stories and not submitting their work. As a researcher I realised that this kind of caring works personally but professionally it doesn't work.

Outside the classroom I am more like a mother or a sister to the learners. However, as a researcher I am becoming aware of the fact that this mother and sister identity should not dominate the teacher identity. The female role model (everyone playing a mother role in the family) shaped my novice teacher self. As a researcher I have realised that I am not in the work place to play the mother role because it dominates teaching and learning.

Outside of school, I am a lifelong learner and a researcher, I am an activist, speaking about how certain cultural and discourses can be quite conservative and oppressive to a black African woman.

In the next chapter (7) I present a concluding chapter to the whole study.

Chapter Seven

To resist and re-invent myself as a novice teacher

7.1 Introduction

My curiosity to explore my childhood memories of growing up has shaped and continues to shape my everyday lived experiences as a novice teacher working in a public township school. Growing up and attending schools in two different contextual settings-rural and urban and presently working in a township environment, was critical for my learning as a novice teacher. I was curious to explore how my experiences childhood translate and transform my past experiences into my present approaches and ways of understanding and aspirations as a novice teacher. This research exploration offered me an opportunity to understand and open up my beliefs and knowledge that inform the choices I make daily in negotiating the challenges I face in a public township school. Importantly, it offered me a deeper more insightful understanding of how my experiences of growing up in two different contexts and attending schools in two different pedagogical settings, may help me to negotiate the complexity of the educational experience in a township school, were productive.

The early years of teaching are known as the most difficult years for novice teachers, especially those teaching in public schools. It has been revealed that 24% of newly qualified teachers quit teaching within the first years, and 33% leave work after three years (Farrell 2016, p.12). However, research also shows that novice teachers bring with them unique experiences in the workplace. According to Allender and Allender (2006, p.14), these "experiences as students [themselves] are part of our development as teachers. For many teachers, their past experiences as children result in the teachers that they become". They went on to add that these can be good and bad experiences.

Through this research process, I was able to explore and understand the importance of understanding the source of the formation of my novice teacher's personal and professional experiences and meaning making. Making visible my childhood experiences as a site for my teacher learning as a novice teacher was driven by my commitment to care for self, and to develop greater awareness of what informs the way I think, know and act as a teacher so I can always strive to be the best and a lifelong learner. Understanding my commitment to creating safe, warm, supportive, respectful, and caring spaces for my learners in the classroom has been

shaped by my grandmother at home and my teacher (Visual Arts class). Beauchamp and Thomas's theory of teacher identity were useful for exploring my multiple and continually shifting identities through narratives I composed of significant childhood memories evoked by visual artworks that I created as an art student.

Opening up the novice teacher position and the identity of a caring and creative teacher that I was desiring and aspiring to be with my learners in the classroom, was helpful. Recognizing that there are multiple dimensions of my novice teacher identity and the choice to be, and act daily as possible, I needed to become aware of the perspectives I adopted as a novice teacher to negotiate the professional relationships with the colleagues who I work with, and how I want to be known to them and by them. I also acknowledged through this research study the importance of rethinking my understanding of the situations I found myself working in. All of this dimension of my life as a novice teacher involves revising and resisting particular personal and the professional experiences and meanings that have been shaped by my childhood memories.

7.2 Methodological reflections

By using personal narrative inquiry, I was able to go back in time to remember my childhood memories and experiences that shaped and shapes my meaning-making as a novice teacher working in a township school. Beauchamp and Thomas (2009, p. 181) emphasize that stories are means of communicating one's self-image, and in my study, I was exploring the forces shaping my novice teacher identity, and more specifically, how my childhood memories of growing up in different context, shape my novice teacher self in a township public school.

In this study as a participant Duff and Bell (2002, p. 210), narrative enquiry gave me as a researcher the platform to recognize that experiences and people's lives matter. Similarly, for the past few months, writing my personal narrative has made me realize some of the experiences that I never thought I would discover through my exploration of childhood memories, as well as through the stories. It has highlighted the unexpected emotions, feelings, ideas, and beliefs about myself that I did not realize. For example, I discovered that I am a caring and loving person, and these values were inherited from living with my grandmother, but I only realized in the process of this research.

The data from photographs, artefacts, and letter writing enriches the construction of my stories. The analysis of narratives requires one to have the ability to see patterns and relations as well as confusion, to reveal the social world (Wong & Breheny, 2018). My position as a narrative enquirer was to analyse the generated data and understand the personal stories with appropriate literature as well as to the research question and theoretical framework. The generation of data approaches assisted me in re-storying small stories using different themes.

Using these strategies, I was able to produce data that stimulated deep thoughts and feelings about my childhood experiences by using different ways of remembering the past, and my personal and professional experiences. By using photographs, I found that they helped me to reflect on how these spaces cultivated in me particular meanings about schooling, being a learner and positive relationships, I shared with my peers/siblings and teachers. When I looked at the photograph, memories were evoked. Also using memory drawing (art) I was able to show my tragic experiences and as well as my happy memories. Drawings can reveal experiences that one did not want to share as well as the emotions are best described in drawing of paintings (Theron, Mitchell, Smith & Stuart, 2011). I have chosen this method of generating data to help my study since I could not find other relevant pictures of my memories for my narrative inquiry.

Moving into teaching as a career was shaped by both my rural and urban experiences, which involve two female role models. Childhood memory accounts for our early experiences of school that lead to a beneficial improvement in our work as teachers to bring about change in terms of how we learn and teach (Pithouse-Morgan, Mitchell & Pillay, 2012). Becoming a novice teacher with the present realities of teaching and learning in a township public school, means transforming my meaning-making and identity and ideals relational to institutional realities (Rodgers & Scott, 2008). Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) emphasize that personal identity cannot be separated from the professional.

7.3 Troubling the privilege passive self

The key meanings of self as an African girl that my analysis highlighted was the awareness of valuing diversity and difference in class, respecting diversity and negotiating a caring teacher-voice. I want to be known as a good teacher, a teacher who plans, prepares and punctual. I have adopted a Theoretical Framework on understanding teacher identity by Beauchamp and

Thomas (2009) as my analytical lens to my research questions. Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) assisted me in understanding and explaining the process of constructing and negotiating my personal and professional identity as an African woman and my choice of becoming a teacher. This critical reflection of my memories and past experiences was necessary for developing a greater awareness and knowledge of what I am, how I have come to be who I am and what do want to be.

Using Beauchamp and Thomas to explore the internal and external forces that shape the self, has made me realize that I have good and bad selves that shape my novice teacher self. There is an inextricable link between my personal and professional identities. As a novice teacher, I speak more about my learner self and my creative self, as to how arts helped me to voice out my concerns. I use the novice teacher space and position to become vocal, to become visible, and to become an activist. However, the good part of the self is that I was privileged when growing up and in the novice teacher self I learned to work with beyond privilege in a Township school. The novice teacher self, offers possibilities for me to develop my creative, intellectual self as a practice of care for self and my development as caring, connected teacher.

7.4 Resisting and revising my novice teacher practices of care

My novice teacher development has been influenced productively by my childhood memories and most importantly by the female role models I had at home and school. As a novice teacher, I want to teach for understanding, I want my learners to be confident in the subject, but for that to happen I need to be confident in the way I teach. Memory work assisted me to reinvent myself and imagine alternate ways for teaching and learning.

Narratives of childhood memories are tools to learn from so I can change certain things that are shaping me unconsciously. This research helped me to look at those experiences and revise the meanings I took from them. This research helped me to look at the good and bad as well as the fact that my identity is complex, it is open to change. Now I am aware of the mother and sister relationship was dominating my teacher role and I can revisit that now. While I can be caring, supportive and my classroom to be a warm class there are certain boundaries that I need to take.

The need to protect, care and love learners is limiting my professional identity, it is overwhelming my teaching and learners end up taking advantage by coming up with stories and not submitting their work. As a researcher, I realized that this kind of caring works personally but professionally it doesn't work.

Being more like a mother or a sister to the learners can be limiting and unproductive to myself novice teacher self and my learners. However, as a researcher, I am becoming aware of the fact that this mother and sister identity should not dominate the teacher identity. The female role model (everyone playing a mother role in the family) shaped my novice teacher self. As a researcher, I have realized that I am not in the workplace to play the mother role because it dominates teaching and learning.

Outside of school, I am a lifelong learner and a researcher, I am an activist, speaking about how as a woman certain cultural and discourses can be quite conservative and oppressive as a black African woman. The lifelong-learner identity working with different learning communities is critical for my ongoing learning and development as a non-traditional and intellectual teacher and being able to open opportunities for teaching as intellectual work.

7.5 My theoretical position

Understanding my novice teacher identity framed by Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) theoretical framework on understanding teacher identities, my study has revealed that personal identity does shape the professional identity and it is quite unconscious and automatic. The internal forces are very powerful, if they are left un-explored they can be very draining. Through this study, I learned my childhood memories do shape my novice teacher self, both the good and the bad experiences. My childhood memory of being a poor English speaker shaped how I teach. I was overemphatic with learners who could write or read English and that compromised my teaching. The research provided me with an opportunity to understand that I do indeed express and enact care for my learners, and aspect of myself which brings me pride to recall that this is due to my upbringing in certain spaces that promoted caring values (home and Visual Arts class) through relationships and being given voice. I took those values to the workplace. On the other hand, I also learned how childhood memories shape my beliefs as a novice teacher who is quite unproductive. It impelled a need to be conscious about the impact of my past on my identity both personal and professional, a consciousness that became more

apparent as I retrospectively analysed my childhood memories. My construction of self as a mother had become fixed, and thus dominated my teacher role, it was through such a recounting and a reflection that it became apparent that such influence had also propelled me in the direction of being motherly to the neglect of my professional role as a teacher, overly focussing on learners' emotional care to the detriment of their intellectual development.

Through this narrative, I now have an opportunity to revise my novice teacher identity and negotiate the dynamic relational with the social context. Moreover, childhood memories play a critical role in constructions of teacher identity and productive remembering of selected memories of the past is tied interpretatively to the present (Wilson, 2014).

7.6 Implications for Research

It is vital to observe novice teachers' ways of teaching and learning as it may be influenced by certain personal experiences and memories. Also, there are some personal ways of acting that teachers need to revise based on the current learners they teach or current context they teach in. Emotional attachment may lead to a novice teacher's deeper understanding and insight of their pedagogy, what they do, how they do and why they do what they do.

7.7 Policy imperative

For novice teachers having no guidance and mentor support does create a problematic relationship between the policy and personal identity. We often use our craft knowledge to help us negotiate the pressure that we get from the demands of the policies, the restless pressure to manage and discipline learners, a large number of learners in one class, the demands from parents to give attention to one child and the pressure from the department in terms of learner performance.

7.8 Practical imperative

It is important for novice teachers to be mentored or have structures that can help them negotiate the daily challenges that they face, undergo novice teacher's workshop conferences to help them develop professionally. Making from personal identity is automatic in the

workplace but sometimes those personal identities are to be revised as they may also be harmful to the teaching profession.

7.9 Conclusion

Drawing on the Teacher Identity Theory (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009) has been very useful framework through which to retrospectively analyze myself. My Masters journey provided an opportunity for a formal and deep reflection. Using the theoretical lens of Teacher Identity Theory facilitates the understanding that personal identity cannot be viewed separately from one's professional identity.

This narrative offered a critical space for me to learn about my novice teacher self, and about novice teacher constructions. In schools where novice teachers are left without mentors, more responsibility lies upon the inexperienced teacher to perform his or her duties and functions proficiently. I found that through this research I had a remarkable opportunity, to develop an insightful study that contributed to a deeper understanding of self through the recounting and telling of stories which became a tool for me to resist and re-invent myself, the positive ramifications of which I believe can positively contribute to the improved teaching and learning experiences for both me and my learners.

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APPENDIX A

PARTICIPANT DECLARATION

I, Adelaide Makhosazana Sosibo (Full name/s of participant) hereby voluntarily agree to participate in this research study. I confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research study. I have been briefed about the nature of the research study by the researcher in advance. I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the research study at any time, so should I desire. I also understand that the results of this research study will be used for the purpose of the study only, and that my identity will be kept confidential.

I give permission for the use of the following record devices during the group sessions and data production process:

	Willing	Not willing
Audio recording:		
Letter writing- and transcribed data		
photograph- and transcribed data		

Signature of Participant

28/11/2018____
Date

APENDIX B



31 January 2019

Ms Siphesihle Londiwe Pamela Khumalo 213548490
School of Education
Edgewood Campus

Dear Ms Khumalo

Protocol reference number: HSS/0012/019M

Project title: Exploring stories of childhood memories and the novice teacher self in a public township school: A personal narrative inquiry

Full Approval – Expedited Application

In response to your application received 14 December 2018, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application 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.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

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

Yours faithfully


Dr Shamila Naidoo (Deputy Chair)
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

/pm

cc Supervisor: Professor Daisy Pillay
cc Academic Leader Research: Dr SB Khoza
cc School Administrator: Ms Sheryl Jeenaarain

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

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