

**Stories Of Buoyancy And Despondency.**  
**Five Beginning Teachers' Experiences In Their First**  
**Year In The Teaching Profession.**

Submitted by

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## STATEMENT OF SOURCES

This thesis contains no material published elsewhere or extracted in whole or in part from a thesis by which I have qualified for or been awarded another degree or diploma.

No other person's work has been used without due acknowledgement in the main text of the thesis.

This thesis has not been submitted for the award of any degree or diploma in any other tertiary institution.

All research procedures reported in the thesis received the approval of the relevant Ethics/Safety Committees (where required).

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## **ABSTRACT**

This case study research explores the experiences of five beginning teachers within four Catholic secondary schools in Australia. The research employs a qualitative approach framed within an interpretative paradigm, drawing on perspectives of symbolic interaction to interpret interview and journal data. These perspectives are used, in conjunction with a conceptual framework derived from the relevant literature, to interpret the experiences of five new teachers against the relevant data.

The literature typically investigates the stages of teacher development, where the first year is often seen by researchers as a survival year. Key literature themes include the development of self image and the impact school culture has on beginning teachers. There are two other features less often present in the literature but central in this research. One is the life history of the beginning teacher. A second, which is the major notion employed in this study, is that of professional identity and specifically how identity develops once the novice teacher is immersed within the school organisation.

Each teacher was interviewed several times during their first year and each kept a journal. The discussion includes matters of comparison and contrast between the five teachers' experiences. The symbolic interactionist framework seeks to identify the meanings individuals construct of their experiences. These meanings are located from the journal and interview data gathered. Each text is examined both independently, in relation to other texts and in the light of the conceptual framework. A key procedure is to identify critical events which are then analysed and connections made to the experience of other teachers and literature themes.

The key findings of the research include developing a new model for understanding the experience of beginning teachers. The research suggests that the current literature on beginning teachers is limited. It neglects beginning teacher individuality and in particular agency and competency and centrally the dynamic and complex interaction between culture and identity. This research seeks to add significantly to the beginning teacher literature.

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# CHAPTER ONE

## THE RESEARCH QUESTION

*“Becoming a teacher involves a complex negotiation between person and place,  
including students and other teachers”*

*(Bullough, Young & Draper, 2004, p. 367).*

### **1.0. The Intention of this Chapter**

Within this chapter the development of the research question is described and related to the researcher’s own professional experiences. From these experiences this chapter will orientate the research question and demonstrate the importance and significance of studying the experiences of beginning teachers. The conceptual framework which guides this research is introduced and placed contextually. The structure of this research is explained.

### **1.1 Context**

At the heart of this research is the belief that there are many more layers to be exposed and explored in the stories and lives of beginning teachers than is presented in the literature. Much is made of the difficulties facing beginning teachers in their first year in the profession (Ramsey, 2000). Research in the area of beginning teacher induction suggests that “organizational factors related to isolation and loneliness, discipline and classroom management, conflict with colleagues, lack of understanding of students’ needs and interests, difficult teaching assignments, lack of spare time” (Walsdorf & Lynn, 2002, p. 190) are all issues that affect the beginning teacher’s experience and often impact on whether they want to remain in the profession. This research aims to further question and explore this stage, to seek to understand what characterises the first year in the life of a beginning teacher, to further understand what are the concerns, anxieties and pressures faced by those new to the profession are, and to reveal whether these anxieties are an adequate indication of the life of a beginning teacher. The aim is to tell and to interpret the stories of beginning teachers and to uncover how they make meaning of what they are presented with in their professional lives. It is also important that they tell their stories. It is the intention of this research to seek to deeply

understand the professional experiences of beginning teachers so as to determine whether the portrayal of beginning teachers as cited by researchers such as Walsdorf and Lynn (2002) is the complete story. This research will critique the accounts provided by writers in the area of beginning teachers.

The research question grew from the experiences of this researcher, as a beginning teacher and then as an experienced teacher working with and guiding beginning teachers as part of their initial journey and introduction to the profession.

As the researcher travelled along her own professional journey and encountered a variety of educational settings and worked with numerous beginning teachers, the concerns of beginning teachers became a paramount professional disquiet. As Ramsey (2000) in his report on the state of teaching suggests, novices are at the heart of our school system and we need to be mindful of how we induct them. They are far too often low on the list of school priorities.

### **1.1.1 The Research Problem**

The life of this research has its origins in a small country Catholic secondary school well before this dissertation began. It is important to digress in an attempt to understand why the research became an important professional issue and one worthy of research.

The researcher's career began in a school with a population of less than three hundred students, where all staff shared a common work area and there were no more than two classes at any level. It was a school where the Principal taught classes and shared resources with colleagues in the same curriculum area. It was a close-knit professional community where the researcher's sense of professional self-worth was fostered and indeed nurtured by a collaborative and supportive staff. Much time and energy was spent by senior staff to ensure that the researcher's initial teaching experience was as positive as possible. Staff in the same curriculum area met once a week and, in a collaborative manner, shared resources and reviewed ways in which to present material the following week. Assessment tasks were designed together, and advice was sought and given in all areas of classroom discipline. The legitimacy of the researcher as a genuine member of staff was confirmed by the way in which ideas and knowledge were listened to and often put into practice in classrooms. The culture of this school was one which Greenlee and deDeugd (2002) refer to as having a positive professional socialisation process, one which helped improve the quality of teaching overall.

### **1.1.2 Influences on the Researcher**

The researcher's journey through the teaching profession continued until taking up a position as the Head of a Key Learning Area in a large single sex school many miles from the positive, collaborative and supportive work culture of the first school. During this first year as Head teacher six beginning teachers were employed in the same Key Learning Area. The school was a large Catholic metropolitan school dominated by a very masculine leadership style (Schein, 1975; Kawakami, White & Langer, 2000) supported by the dominant sporting culture that pervaded the school.

The time in this role gave the researcher an opportunity to reflect on the experiences of beginning teachers. As a Head Teacher much time was spent working with these teachers, talking through their day, listening to their problems and trying to work through issues together, in a sense trying to give them hope. Greenlee and deDeugd (2002) speak of the disillusionment that overcomes new teachers once they "encounter the reality of the school culture" (p. 71). Much of the discussion within the researcher's faculty was reassuring the beginning teachers that their experience was not one that was common across all schools. Or was it? The researcher was beginning to wonder and question what happened to beginning teachers, what were their experiences. What was the role of leaders and schools in supporting the beginning teacher? What type of support did beginning teachers need and want? How could this support be offered?

The school described above was one where the predominant culture was one of isolation and compartmentalisation (Bullough, 1989; Hargreaves, 1994; Ramsey, 2000). Leaders within the school exhibited the type of leadership that McGregor Burns (1978) described as transactional. It was leadership where little or no relationship between the leader and those being led existed other than what was necessary to complete the task at hand. A leadership act may take place but, as McGregor Burns (1978) states, it is not an act "that binds leader and follower together in a mutual and continuing pursuit of a higher purpose" (p. 20). This made for a school where beginning teachers felt very much alone and were afraid to be perceived as not coping. The culture of the school ensured that beginning teachers did not take risks as failure was seen as a weakness. Discipline was an area of difficulty for many staff, not only beginning teachers, but this posed a particular challenge to beginning teachers. They felt a lack of support from those in a position to help them and often they did not seek help from other staff as the beginning teacher's didn't want other staff to assume they were having difficulties.

The researcher was challenged by these experiences and began to question what the reality was for beginning teachers. The foundations of the research problem and subsequent questions were laid during this time. From these experiences and through the exploration of the research literature in the area of beginning teachers, the research question and subsidiary questions emerged. This research analyses and draws comparisons between the literature reviewed. A model for analysing beginning teacher's experiences is developed through the comparison of the literature.

## **1.2 The Research Question**

### **1.2.1 Major Question**

What are the perceptions of beginning teachers in their first year within the profession and how do their experiences influence the nature of these perceptions?

The following subsidiary questions seek to further clarify and illuminate the key concepts underpinning the major question.

### **1.2.2 Subsidiary Questions**

- How do beginning teachers perceive that their first year in the profession has influenced their view of teaching?
- What impact does the beginning teacher's school play in shaping their perception of the professional world of teaching?
- What do beginning teachers see as the essential elements of being a teacher and how do these priorities contribute to their view of teaching?
- To what extent are the perceptions of beginning teachers influenced by the role of other professionals within the school setting?
- What do beginning teachers see as significant in the development of their professional identity?

To answer and address the major question and the following subsidiary questions, the experiences of five beginning teachers within the Catholic secondary system in Australia were used. These five teachers are situated in various schools in a large regional centre.

### 1.3 The Methodology

To address and explore the research question this study was situated within the interpretist epistemology, often referred to as phenomenology, informed by the symbolic interaction tradition, involving case study research. Each of the five beginning teachers who participate in the study are treated as five separate cases as they have their own unique and interesting stories to reveal (Stake, 1995). An important aspect of this research was to convey with '*thick description*' the beginning teachers' experiences (Stake, 1995). Case study methodology provided the valuable tool with which to achieve this goal. Stake (1995) argued that this type of research is very personal, the subjects are studied in detail and the researcher is encouraged to include their personal interpretations. In truly hearing and understanding the experiences of beginning teachers the case study approach proves itself to be the most effective method of authentically analysing and addressing the research questions.

Open-ended interviews (Burns, 2000) throughout 2002 were conducted with each of the interviewees as well as participant journaling. The process involved in gaining the participation of each beginning teacher will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Three.

The study focused on the interpretation of the experiences of the five beginning teachers. Each of the five beginning teachers were employed in Catholic secondary schools. The research was situated in Catholic schools for a number of reasons. The Catholic education setting was the setting of the researcher's own personal experiences. It is also the setting that was available to the researcher.

Researchers (Dwyer, 1993; Flynn, 1993; McMahan, Neidhart & Chapman, 1997; O'Donnell, 2001) acknowledge that Catholic schools have features that make them distinctly different from other school systems. McMahan, Neidhart and Chapman (1997) cite the Declaration on Christian Education (1965) as stating that what makes the Catholic school distinctive "is its attempt to generate a community climate in the school that is permeated by the Gospel spirit of freedom and love" (p. 14). McLaughlin, O'Keefe and O'Keefe (1996) further state that Catholic schools "are culturally and morally distinctive as educational institutions" (p. 71). These notions of Catholic schooling will be further explored through the review of literature in Chapter Two.

## **1.4 The Value of this Research**

At a time when governments and teaching bodies are concerned about the growing lack of teachers in certain fields and the high rate of attrition (Macdonald, 1999; Preston, 2000) amongst its graduates, an understanding of what beginning teachers are saying about their experiences and what is important to them helps to add to the body of research in this area.

In Australia, “the teaching labour markets represent a comparatively large section of the labour market with a workforce in 2002 of 255,000 representing 3 per cent of the employed labour force” (Webster, Wooden & Marks, 2004, p. 4). Research in the area of beginning teaching suggested that the retention rate of beginning teachers is alarmingly low: “Past NSW statistics indicated one in six teachers exited the profession in the first two years of employment. The UK has seen high numbers of teachers leaving the profession within the first 5 years” (McCormack & Thomas, 2001, p. 2). Studies of teaching in the United States by Ingersoll and Kralik (2004) suggest that “teaching has long had alarmingly high rates of attrition among newcomers. A number of studies have found between 40-50% of new teachers leave within the first five years of entry into the occupation” (p. 2). The statistics from these studies indicate that it is important to hear what beginning teachers are saying about their first years in the profession so the flow of newly qualified teachers leaving the profession can be stemmed. The value of this research is that it adds to the body of knowledge about beginning teachers and their experiences. It analyses their experiences and suggests a model for viewing and understanding the first years of teaching.

This research allows for reflection on what five beginning teachers say about their experiences. It challenges educational leaders and teachers in general to think about the experiences offered and the cultural boundaries placed on the experiences of beginning teachers in their educational setting. This research acknowledges that “craft knowledge of teaching is also influenced by professional discourse” (Bassey, 2003, p. 51). The value of this research lies in its simplicity to promote discourse amongst teaching professionals about beginning teachers and their experiences. It challenges individual teachers and educational leaders to reflect upon the discussion and findings and to listen to the individual stories, and in this way enhance the professional discourse of various educational institutions. Bassey (2003) challenges educational researchers to allow their research to question traditional notions and to contribute to

the maelstrom of ideas, theories, facts and judgments about

education. It should be something that teachers and policy-makers look for, read about, argue over, reflect on and then either reject and forget, or file away in their memory to adapt and adopt later (p. 51).

The research design is influenced by the work of Cole and Knowles (2000). Cole and Knowles (2000) argue that teaching is “a complex and personal expression of knowing and knowledge” (p.1). They argue that educational theory is embedded in the practice of teachers and that teachers are “knowledge holders and developers, not just knowledge users” (Cole & Knowles, 2000, p.1). Importantly this research highlights the importance and value of listening to the stories of beginning teachers and uses their stories for the basis of understanding beginning teachers’ worlds. Cole and Knowles (2000) further argue that:

Teaching is an expression of who teachers are as people, that it is imbued with the beliefs, values, perspectives, and experiences developed over the course of a teacher’s lifetime. In order for teachers to understand their professional lives and work they need to understand the formative as well as the continuing experiences and influences that have shaped and continue to shape their perspectives and practices (p.2).

The value of this research also lies in its detailed exploration of the first year of teaching for the five novices. Through the use of vignettes it offers readers some understanding of what has influenced and shaped the beginning teacher, and how this impacts upon the beginning teacher personally and professionally.

Clandinin and Connelly’s (1995) work highlights the importance of this research. They speak strongly in their research about the importance of hearing the ‘voices’ of teachers amongst educational research. Giving voice to this group adds to the body of literature in this area. Through their voice this research develops a further understanding of what is important to beginning teachers and how schools can them help in this vital year.

Much of the early research on beginning teachers suggested that there were stages of development through which beginning teachers were expected to pass (Fuller, 1969; Fuller & Bown, 1975). Much of this research had a very narrow view of the classroom reality this research attempts to broaden, through the voices of the beginning teachers, the reality of teaching.



The review of literature revealed few, if any, stories of renewal and growth; much of the literature focused on ‘survival’ (Berliner, 1988; Boccia, 1989; Nias, 1989). This research, whilst telling stories of the struggles and difficulties, also presents stories of buoyancy and hope within the profession.

The research will be guided by the following conceptual framework.

### **1.5 The Conceptual Framework**

Through the review of literature on beginning teachers which will be further explored in Chapter Two, five notions were identified as playing a significant role in the development of the beginning teacher. The literature, particularly the work of Fuller (1969) and Fuller and Bown (1975) draws attention to the *developmental stages of teaching*. The later work of Berliner (1988) and Burke and Notar (1986) confirms the importance of acknowledging that there are developmental stages associated with teaching.

*Culture* was also highlighted in the literature as having a significant impact on the experiences of the beginning teacher. Hargreaves (1994), Hallinger and Leithwood (1996) and Deal and Peterson (1999) illuminate the importance of understanding the impact school culture has on the beginning teacher’s experiences. Significant attention within the literature was also given to the notion of *socialisation*. Kelchtermans and Ballet (1999) assert that socialisation is an area of vital concern for the beginning teacher.

A further conceptual notion as highlighted by the literature was the role of *life history* in forming the experiences of the beginning teacher. Sachs (1999), and Sumara and Luce-Kapler (1996) write extensively in the field of life history and its importance in shaping the identity of the beginning teacher.

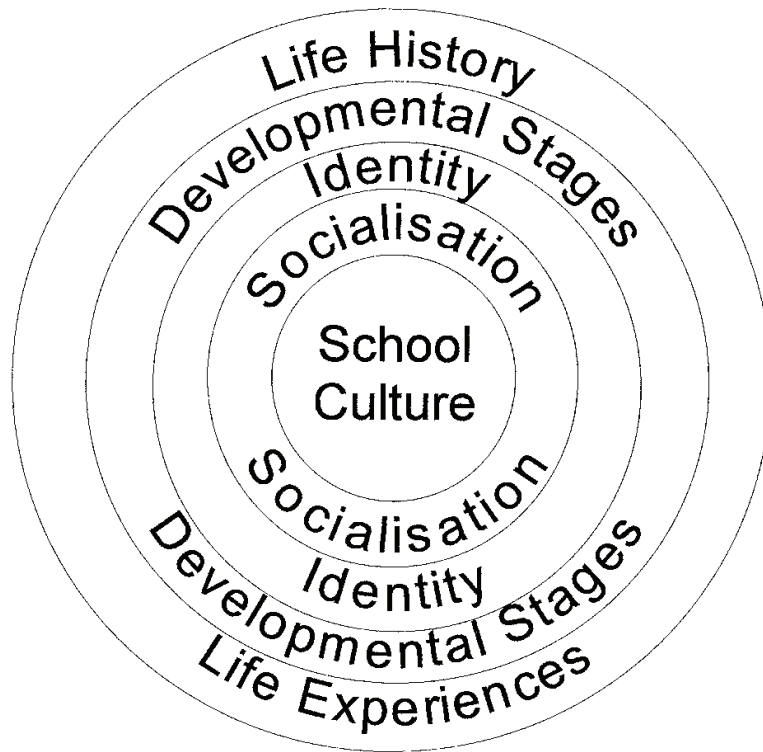
The work of Bronfenbrenner (1979) as cited in Berk (1991) provides a guide for the conceptual model of this research, based on the interconnectedness of social systems that impact on the individual. Gratch (2001) illustrates in her research that complex relationships exist between “internal and external forces in the experiences of beginning teachers” (p. 122). Whilst Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) work was in the area of child development, the model he presented has relevance to beginning teacher development. In Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) model the “environment is envisioned as a series of nested structures. Each layer is regarded as having a powerful impact on children’s development” (Berk, 1991, p. 17).

Bronfenbrenner's (1979) layers are bidirectional and reciprocal, they interact with each other and it is this interconnected relationship that is vital to the conceptual framework model that guides the body of this research. Bronfenbrenner (1979) as cited in Berk (1991) argues that "we must keep in mind that the environment is not a static entity that impinges on the child in a uniform way. Instead, it is a dynamic, ever-changing force in development" (p. 19).

Sumara and Luce-Kapler (1996) argue that teacher development is intrinsically tied to the development of a teacher identity. How this 'develops' is undeniably linked to the culture of the school in which they find themselves. In turn, Stanulis, Campbell and Hicks (2002) argue that the way in which the beginning teachers react and respond to the culture is most certainly linked to their life history and life experiences. Kagan (1992) argues that beginning teachers' expectations of school are determined by their experiences of schooling as a student, which then in turns forms the foundations of their teaching expectations and experiences.

The following diagram provides an overview of the conceptual framework which will guide the work throughout this research. The layers are *bidirectional* and *reciprocal*, all impacting on the development of the beginning teacher.

**Figure 1.1: Overview of Conceptual Framework**



## **1.6 The Audience for this Research**

This research has a variety of audiences; other beginning teachers, school staffs, school leaders and specifically Catholic schools.

### **1.6.1 Other Beginning Teachers**

Whilst the stories told in this research are unique to the five participants, their stories may resonate as being similar to or true of experiences of other beginning teachers reading the research. It is an important intention of the research to share and write about the first year of teaching in order that others in similar situations may be given an opportunity to identify with and acknowledge that they may not be alone. This writing and research contains the voices of beginning teachers.

### **1.6.2 School staffs**

Literature on beginning teachers suggest that colleagues play an important function in the socialisation of beginning teachers. As Bassey (2003) argues, the role of educational research is to inform professional discourse. This research will inform teachers about the role they can play in beginning teacher development and hopefully ignite professional discussion in this area.

### **1.6.3 School Leaders**

Through this research it is hoped that school leaders will gain an insight into the powerful agency of school culture and the role they play as leaders in shaping that culture. It is through the findings of this research that school leaders may develop strategies which could be implemented at the school level to support and further enhance the experiences of beginning teachers.

### **1.6.4 Catholic Schools**

The nature of Catholic schools, in particular Catholic school culture, will be discussed in detail in Chapter Two. However, the setting of this research in Catholic schools highlights some significant questions for this researcher and Catholic school leaders. Not least of these questions is: is working in a Catholic school seen as a distinctive feature that characterises the experiences of the beginning teacher? This research may promote Catholic school leaders to ask themselves this question and may encourage further discussion for all staff working within these schools as to the impact of Catholic schools on the experiences of beginning teachers.

## **1.7 The Structure of the Thesis**

Following this chapter, which establishes the research question, a review of literature is conducted. Chapter Two explores the five elements of the contextual framework highlighting their potential for greater insight into the beginning teachers' stories. The role of school culture on the development of the beginning teachers and how beginning teachers can impact on the school culture is examined. Closely tied to the culture of the school is the way in which the beginning teacher is socialised into that culture. An exploration of the interconnectedness of these notions is conducted. The influence of personal life histories in the development of teacher identity is studied, with attention to the pedagogy and practices of the teacher. The concept of identity is critically analysed in its relationship to teacher development.

Chapter Three describes and justifies the qualitative research method of case study used. The nature of the interviews and participant journaling is discussed in detail, and the procedures involved in this data gathering are explored. The way in which the data is analysed and discussion generated from the data is also revealed. In addition Chapter Three highlights how the symbolic interactionist approach to research allows the research question to be fully addressed. The interpretist approach and its use in actively interpreting the meaning the beginning teachers make of their world is linked to the methodology.

The discussion and interpretation of the data are the primary foci of Chapters Four through to Eight. Using the conceptual framework as a guide these Chapters will tell the individual research stories of the five participants. Explanations and interpretations of their experiences will be offered in reference to the conceptual framework. Chapter Nine presents general concepts and themes relevant to all participants. A revision of the initial conceptual framework is also provided. Chapter Nine offers a model for looking at and understanding how beginning teachers make meaning of their experiences from the findings of the research. Questions for future research are also posed as general conclusions are developed from this research.

# CHAPTER TWO

## LITERATURE REVIEW

*“Indeed, critics have long assailed teaching as an occupation that “cannibalizes its young” and in which the initiation of new teachers is akin to a “sink-or-swim,” “trial-by-fire” or “boot-camp” experience”*  
(Ingersoll & Kralik, 2004, p. 2).

### **2.0 The Intention of this Chapter**

The following review of literature focusing on beginning teachers and their experiences identifies and further illuminates the importance and relevance of the five conceptual elements of the conceptual framework identified in Chapter One. The literature review focuses on the impact of these notions on the beginning teacher’s experiences within the school setting.

The following literature review is not intended to be a comprehensive study of all the literature on beginning teachers as this is as vast and as varied as the teachers themselves. It is intended, however, to highlight the five conceptual themes of developmental stages of teaching, culture, socialisation, identity and life history.

Each of these concepts are individually discussed and evaluated in relation to their effect on beginning teachers’ experiences. Whilst each concept is discussed individually, the connection between concepts is also drawn.

The five key conceptual notions identified within this study give a focussed lens through which to view the beginning teachers’ experiences.

### **2.1 Developmental Stages of Teaching**

#### **2.1.1 Introduction**

Like any young professional entering the work force for the first time, novice teachers have much to learn about their practice. Whilst they have learnt a great deal about the career they are about to enter through their pre-service training, to a large extent the job is learnt in the

classroom and at the school level (Boccia, 1989; Bullough & Young, 2002). The literature suggests that the first years are an important phase of a young teacher's career, and this phase warrants further discussion and analysis. An understanding of what researchers have said about the developmental stages of teaching, and in particular beginning teaching, is important within the context of this study as it helps the researcher and reader to further understand how and why the beginning teachers interpret events the way they do.

The following discussion seeks to explore and clarify the work of early stage theorists. The literature suggests that there are certain stages that apply to all beginning teachers. Much of the early research in this area was purely quantitative in methodological design, mostly using questionnaires.

### **2.1.2 The Stage Theorists**

Early research literature on the growth and development of beginning teachers was constructed using a stage theory approach. Most notable in this area is the work of Fuller (1969), and later Fuller and Bown (1975) followed by Berliner (1988). Richardson and Placier as cited in Conway and Clark (2003) stated that Fuller's model is "perhaps the most classic of stage theories in that it was meant to be relatively invariant, sequential and hierarchical" (p.465). Researchers using this approach believe that there are distinguishable stages that beginning teachers pass through in a linear motion to reach their final destination of accomplished teacher. Fuller (1969) asserted that there were three distinguishable stages. The first stage involved 'survival' issues, for example classroom management and behaviour. The second stage was categorised by task concerns for example not knowing appropriate teaching strategies and not having enough time to prepare. The third and final stage was concerned with impact on students; teachers in this stage are concerned about their impact on the students' learning. Berliner (1988) expanded on Fuller's (1969) three stages and asserted that teachers progress through five stages of development: novice, advanced beginner, competent teacher, proficient teacher and expert.

The initial or the novice stage has been the centre of much research, and literature abounds on this developmental phase of the beginning teacher. Much of this work has been synthesised in the work of Burke and Notar (1986), who draw attention to several studies that addressed the first stage of development. In their discussion of other research in the area of beginning teacher literature Burke and Notar (1986) highlight Burden's (1982) work and Unrah and Turner's (1970) research where both sets of research identifies the early years of teaching as

being dominated by problems of classroom management and classroom organisation. Burke and Notar's (1986) review of research literature also indicated that 'survival' was a metaphor used to categorise the beginning years of teaching by researchers, Burke and Notar (1986), noted that Burden (1982), Katz (1972) and Watts (1980) all used the notion of survival in their research.

The above authors' categorisation of the beginning years of teaching as a 'survival' stage reinforces Fuller's (1969) contention about the first stage of teacher development. The use of 'survival' as a metaphor for the first years of teaching is one that has been applied heavily by these early writers. Whilst metaphors allow for a powerful understanding of the experiences of first year teachers, the use of just 'survival' leads to a very narrow view of beginning teachers. The 'survival' metaphor suggests that the beginning teacher's first year is a constant struggle and one where only the strongest emerge. The use of this metaphor suggests that the story of the beginning teacher has only one outcome or one dimension.

Conway and Clark (2003) criticise literature on beginning teachers for its "unduly pessimistic understanding of teachers and teaching" (p.470). They further contend that this "stance privileges concerns and anxieties over novice teachers' aspirations and hopes. Much research on prospective and novice teachers has concentrated on teacher anxieties and concerns rather than on their aspirations" (Conway & Clark, 2003, p.470).

Fuller's (1969) research cannot be disregarded as it has influenced many other educational researchers (Berliner, 1988; Gunstone, Slattery, Baird & Northfield, 1993; Boccia, 1989; Nias, 1989) and it is supported by numerous other studies, in particular Kagan (1992). Fuller's (1969) research, as discussed earlier, was limited in its approach and design. Presupposing the negative overtones inherent in the 'survival' metaphor Fuller (1969) used a 'concerns' approach in her questionnaire. The research required pre-service teachers to list in order of priority their concerns about teaching before entering the classroom. It is not surprising then that Fuller's (1969) research identified the beginning stage as one filled with anxieties. From this research Fuller (1969) developed a model of teacher development that was linear in nature.

Kagan's (1992) review of forty empirical studies on models of teacher development reinforced the earlier research of Fuller (1969) and Berliner (1988), and the assertion that teacher development is linear. Kagan (1992) states that the 40 studies reviewed in her article "yielded remarkably consistent themes that partially confirmed and elaborated Fuller and



Berliner's models" (p. 130). Kagan (1992) further states that "the model of teacher development that I inferred from the 40 learning-to-teach studies validates and elaborates Fuller's and Berliner's models" (p. 161).

Kagan (1992) makes an interesting observation about the beginning teacher's shift from themselves to the pupils. The shift noted by Kagan (1992) is what Fuller (1969) signifies as a move into her second stage of development. It is the suggestion of Kagan (1992) that it is important for beginning teachers to focus on themselves, to conceptualise who they are as a teacher, and to construct a meaningful self-image in their teacher role before they can then move on and further develop their teaching strategies. Beginning teachers need to have a clear image of themselves as teachers before they can grow. Kagan (1992) asserts that "indeed, without a strong image of self as teacher, a novice may be doomed to flounder" (p. 147).

Kagan (1992) further argues that the initial inward focus of beginning teachers is necessary as they need to reconstruct and adapt a self-image as teacher before they can progress. Kagan (1992) sees this initial reflection and self awareness as positive and necessary. Kagan (1992) asserts that "this idea differs from Fuller's (Fuller & Bown, 1975) implication that the novice's initial focus on self is a weakness or inadequacy that is best shortened or aborted" (p. 161).

Kagan (1992) further states that it is only after beginning teachers resolve their self image as a teacher that they can move on to academic tasks and student learning. Kagan's (1992) suggestion that the process of reflecting and developing a teacher self image is vital to the development of the beginning teacher, poses questions for this research to address. Is the development of a teacher identity and image important to beginning teacher development?

### **2.1.3 Linear Development**

Martin, Chiodo and Chang (2001) question the methodology used in much of the early research on beginning teachers, particularly the research suggesting beginning teacher development is linear.. They argue that these "research studies were conducted using questionnaires with little or no classroom observations or discussions with teachers" (Martin, Chiodo & Chang, 2001, p.55). Most research in this area has been in the quantitative field

until recently when Martin, Chiodo and Chang (2001) used a qualitative methodological approach. Kagan's (1992) research was based on a literature review of empirical studies which was largely all qualitative research.

Martin, Chiodo and Chang (2001) suggest that caution should be used when trying to apply developmental stage theory to beginning teacher development. They argue that the "length of experience may not be a predictor of teacher maturity and development" (p. 57). They go on to cite other researchers who caution against the application of linear stage development theories, particularly given the nature of the research: "Bullough and Baughman (1993), Nimmo, Smith, Grove, Courtney and Eland (1994) suggest caution with the use of stage theories. They maintain that life is not as neatly segmented as the themes in the stage theory suggest" (Martin, Chiodo & Chang, 2001, p. 57). The work of Martin, Chido and Chang (2001) poses interesting questions for this research which are explored in greater detail in relation to the experiences of the five beginning teachers. These researchers question whether beginning teacher development progresses in a neat linear fashion. Observations concerning the nature of beginning teacher development will be made of the five participants within this study.

Martin, Chiodo and Chang (2001) contend that throughout their study the beginning teachers within their research shifted fluidly through the various stages of development depending on the situation they were faced with. As Martin, Chiodo and Chang (2001) state about their participants, "concerns for management and discipline did not disappear for our two teachers though. They simply became part of the mix of the teaching throughout the day, week, and year" (p. 58). They also cite other research that supports the notion that teacher career cycles and indeed development is cyclical. Martin, Chiodo and Chang (2001) use the work of Fessler and Christensen (1992) to support their contentions. Fessler and Christensen (1992) made the observation that "the career cycle of teachers may not be unidirectional. Instead, it represents an ebb and flow with teachers moving in and out of positions in the cycle in response to professional experiences, as well as personal and organizational influences" (Martin, Chiodo & Chang, 2001, p.60).

The non unidirectional nature of teacher development is also supported by Sitter and Lanier (1982) as cited in Gilles, Cramer and Hwang (2001). "Sitter and Lanier (1982) found student teachers did not experience these phases in a particular order but worked through them concurrently" (p. 89).

Literature from the Professional Development sphere provides an interesting insight into the developmental stages of teachers. Whilst Fessler (1995) is primarily concerned with ‘mature’ teachers or ‘non beginning teachers’, much insight into the developmental stages of teachers can be gained from Fessler’s (1995) work. Fessler (1995) criticises the earlier work (Unruh & Turner, 1970; Gregorc, 1973; Katz, 1972) as not recognising that teachers continue to grow and develop throughout their career cycle. Fessler’s (1995) model suggests a model of development different from earlier designs. Fessler (1995) states that the model, “rather than positing a linear progression from one step to the next, presented the view that environmental influences create a dynamic ebb and flow, and teachers respond by moving up, down, and through various stages” (p. 175). The significance of Fessler’s (1995) work is that it acknowledges that teachers move in and out of career stages in response to the environmental conditions they find themselves in, personally and professionally.

Conway and Clark’s (2003) examination of Intern teacher development both supports and challenges Fuller’s (1969) developmental model. Their findings are supportive of the research of Fessler (1995). Through their research they found that the Interns in their study were concerned with tasks and the impact that they as teachers had on students as Fuller (1969) noted. However, they also cited that “in addition to this outward journey Interns also engage in a progression toward greater self- awareness/self knowledge and subsequently made efforts at greater self-organisation and self-development – a journey inward” (Conway & Clark, 2003, p. 470). These findings also support Kagan’s (1992) work that teacher development was intrinsically linked to identity and self-image.

#### **2.1.4 Conclusion**

The findings of Fessler (1995), Martin, Chiodo and Chang (2001) and Conway and Clark (2003) support the position that teachers continue to grow throughout their career. Their growth is seen in the progress of their teaching practices, but it is also an intrinsic personal growth and maturity of their ‘teacher’ self, and redefining what and who this is (Kagan, 1992). Teacher self-actualisation and development of a teacher identity is vital to teacher development and is a fluid process (Kagan, 1992). This is further explored and discussed later in this chapter under the subheading of *Identity*. Ramsey (2000) states that no teacher “should have to work in an educational environment where they cannot grow and develop as a professional practitioner, or indeed where there is no expectation that they will” (p. 85). Ramsey is alluding to school culture and the impact this can have on the development of

beginning teachers. The impact of school culture on the beginning teacher will be further explored in the following section.

## **2.2 School Culture**

### **2.2.1 Introduction**

Identifying and analysing school culture allows for a different conceptual lens for viewing the experiences of beginning teachers. Sergiovanni and Starratt (1993) argue that “culture leads one deeper into the life of the school, into the tacit world of beliefs and norms, into the realm of meaning and significance” (p. 97). Through the concept of culture schools are no longer viewed as mechanical organisations that have no historical reasoning behind the way they function. An understanding of culture gives an insight into the functioning and interaction of those people involved in the organisation. Cultural theorists (Schein, 1997 and Gronn, 1999) introduce theories of culture within the organisation which set the parameters in which culture interacts. Hallinger and Leithwood (1996); Fullan and Hargreaves (1991); and Deal and Peterson (1999) apply theories of culture to the school setting. Culture “entails donning a new set of theoretical lenses for viewing administrative practice” (Hallinger and Leithwood, 1996, p. 100). Hargreaves (1994) argues that the cultures of teaching give meaning and identity to teachers, and support them in their work. The following review of literature, whilst broadly examining what researchers and writers say about school culture, will also analyse the notion of Catholic school culture as distinctive from the broad category of culture, as the setting of this research is within Catholic schools.

Often beginning teachers believe that they understand the discourse of schooling because they have served twelve years as a student observing the process. This is what Lortie (1975) as cited in Sabar (2004) referred to as “the ‘apprenticeship of observation’ – which also shapes their perspective of what goes on in the school” (Sabar, 2004, p. 5). Beginning teachers bring with them an ‘understanding’ of schooling that they have formulated through their past school experiences. Sabar (2004) argues that “even if the school that novices enter as teachers seems similar to the school they attended as pupils, the reality is different. The language may be the same but the discourse is not. Their new role as teacher causes them to perceive things differently” (p. 5).

### 2.2.2 Cultural Theory

Schein (1997), writing about organisational culture suggests that culture encompasses all the experiences that are shared between individuals within an organisation. Describing organisational culture, he (1997) notes that:

Culture basically springs from three sources:(1) the beliefs, values, and assumptions of founders of organizations; (2) the learning experiences of group members as their organization evolves; and (3) new beliefs, values, and assumptions brought in by new members and leaders” (p. 11).

Hallinger and Leithwood (1996) note that "cultures can be inferred from the values, norms, expectations and traditions that describe human interaction within the system" (p. 105).

Deal and Peterson (1999) use the classic organisational theory of culture and apply it to the school setting. School culture is “unwritten rules and traditions, norms, and expectations that seem to permeate everything: the way people act, how they dress, what they talk about or avoid talking about, whether they seek out colleagues for help or don't, and how teachers feel about their work and their students" (Deal & Peterson, 1999, p. 3). Kardos, Johnson, Peske, Kauffman and Liu (2001) concur with Deal and Peterson’s (1999) definition; they state that it is “the distinctive blend of norms, values, and accepted modes of professional practice, both formal and informal, that prevail among colleagues” (p. 252). These definitions provide a reference point for the researcher when trying to define the prevailing or dominant culture within a particular setting.

The dominant culture within the school setting clearly gives a guide to the beginning teacher and helps them to understand how things are done around here or how things should be done around here. Schools, however, are complex organisations and often have more than one culture, they have subcultures that exist within the various social groups that make up the school as an organisation. Hargreaves (1994) refers to an example of where these subcultures can lead to a negative working environment and have detrimental effects on student learning. Hargreaves’ (1994) term for these subcultures is balkanized cultures. Hargreaves (1994) argues that a balkanized culture is one where teachers neither work in isolation from the rest of the staff nor do they work with the whole school staff. The major characteristics of balkanized cultures are of staff working in close knit groups that are difficult or impossible to enter; they have a recognised identity and provide their members with an identity, and

importantly they serve to prompt the self interest of their members but do not act on behalf of the whole staff (Hargreaves, 1994).

The dominant culture of a school can explain why and how certain decisions are made, and can help explain why certain courses of action are taken. Sergiovanni (1987) further asserts that:

All schools have cultures, but successful schools seem to have strong and functional cultures aligned with a vision of quality schooling. Cultures serve as a compass setting steering people in a common direction; it provides a set of norms defining what people should accomplish and how, and it is a source of meaning and significance for teachers, students, administrators, and others as they work (p. 59).

Sergiovanni (1987) makes some very broad assumptions within this statement. There is the assumption that all people want to travel in the same direction, and that the direction travelled is the best route and the one that will achieve the best outcome. Can a new compass bearing be made and then followed? Is this original path working for everyone within the organisation and is everyone in the organisation, as Sergiovanni (1987) would have us believe, following this path without questioning where it is leading? The dominant culture is often challenged by the growth of sub-cultures within the organization.

### **2.2.3 Catholic School Culture**

The broad conceptual framework of school culture as described by authors cited above applies to all schools and hence Catholic schools, however, researchers (Flynn, 1993; McLaughlin, O’Keefe & O’Keefe, 1996; O’Donnell, 2001) argue that Catholic schools have features within their culture that make them distinctly different from non-Catholic schools. The literature in the area of Catholic school culture is often very aspirational with authors making claims that Catholic school culture is a culture dominated by a sense of community and belonging (Flynn, 1993), and the inherent spirituality (O’Donnell, 2001) within the school.

The literature on Catholic school culture places significant emphasis on values and spirituality being embedded within the community’s culture. Grace (1995) identifies the concept of community and highlights its importance in distinguishing the Catholic school from the State school. Grace (1995) states that Catholic schools are informed by “an inspirational ideology” which the author believes makes them “qualitatively different from public (state) schools” (p. 159). Grace (1995) asserts that this inspirational ideology “celebrates the primacy of the

spiritual and moral life; the dignity of the person; the importance of community and moral commitments to caring, social justice and common good” (p. 159). Groome (1996) also reinforces this notion of community and explores it further by stating that the environment of a Catholic school needs to “reflect community, not simply as an ideal taught but as a value realised” (p. 115).

O’Donnell (2001) contends that “values are the basic ‘building blocks’ of culture” (p. 38). In support of this she states that the core values of a Catholic school are “respect for the individual, truth, and the environment; forgiveness and reconciliation; commitment to service; love of God and others; justice and compassion; and a love of prayer, worship, and community” (pp. 24-25). It is important then, she contends, in acknowledging the values of Catholic schools that “school leaders and teachers consider the values, beliefs, and patterns of behaviour that constitute the lived reality of the school’s culture” (p. 40).

Flynn (1993) argues that the Catholic school has a “unique challenge to offer to its students, staff and parents the richness of meaning and faith which is to be found in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. He further states that “life or ‘koinonia’, is what any truly Christian community, such as a Catholic school, is all about” (Flynn, 1993, p. 56).

Flynn (1993), however, sounds a warning for reading literature on Catholic school culture and refers to his own (1993) work in stating that many of the values and attributes noted by researchers of Catholic school culture are often the idealistic notions of what the culture should look like not the actual values practised within the school. He (1993) states that these idealistic notions form the basis of his research but is mindful that the reality may be something very different.

Bryk et al. (1993) as cited in O’Donnell (2001) claim that Catholic schools are very deliberate in determining and recognising the type of culture that the schools wants to portray and schools employ “strategies and approaches that are consciously and deliberately used by key members of the school culture to transmit and integrate the contents of the founding traditions” (p. 194). The work of Bryk et al. (1993) portrays a picture of Catholic school life dominated by its culture, a picture that poses questions for this research to further explore. What are the claims of Catholic schools regarding their culture and what are the practices? Does the school’s Catholicity impact on the beginning teacher’s experiences?

#### 2.2.4 The Impact of School Culture on the Beginning Teacher

Research in the area of beginning teachers suggests that school culture is an important influence on the beginning teacher. It affects whether beginning teachers thrive and grow within the organisation or leaves the profession that they have just entered. As Hargreaves (1994) states, “culture carries the community’s historically generated and collectively shared solutions to its new and inexperienced membership” (p. 165). An awareness of culture and its impact is important in helping understand how schools operate; it also gives the researcher an insight into what type of school culture would best support the beginning teacher. Kardos, Johnson, Peske, Kauffman and Liu (2001) support this theory when they write about the concept of professional culture. They provide a very concise view of the way in which professional culture has a direct impact and bearing on the beginning teacher. Kardos et al. (2001) state that:

Although, every school does not have collegial staff relations or a strong professional community, each does have a professional culture that influences new teachers’ induction into that school. A school’s professional culture may endorse hard work, ongoing learning, and frank critiques of pedagogy, or, at the other extreme, it may tolerate minimal effort, rote reliance on past practice, and strict enforcement of classroom privacy. The professional cultures into which new teachers are inducted are critically important because these early years not only confirm new teachers’ choice of occupation in life but also lay a base for future professional development (p. 252).

There are very close links between culture and teacher socialisation. Socialisation as an individual concept impacting on beginning teachers will be discussed in greater detail later in this chapter. The link between the two concepts is important to note and is a prominent feature of the literature reviewed. Hargreaves (1995) draws links between culture and socialisation stating that they are intertwined concepts that act together. Hargreaves (1995) emphasises that relations with colleagues are critical factors in the socialisation and development of teachers. These relations are key components of the culture of teaching.

According to Hargreaves (1995):

The form of teacher cultures consist of the patterns of relationship among members of these cultures. It is through the forms of the teacher culture that the contents of these cultures are realized, reproduced, and redefined (p. 85)  
As cited in (Gratch, 2001, p. 122).



Stanulis, Campbell and Hicks (2002) reinforce Hargreaves' (1995) assertion that the culture of the school setting acts as the catalyst for socialisation. They do, however, suggest that the beginning teacher can either conform to or resist the dominant culture; "it makes sense that the school culture becomes one of the most critical sites of socialisation as teachers struggle to conform or to resist within the cultural context of the school" (Stanulis, Campbell, & Hicks, 2002, pp. 47-48).

This internal struggle that many beginning teachers find themselves grappling with can be attributed largely to what Veenman (1984, p. 143) describes as the 'reality shock,' 'transition shock,' 'Praxisschock', or 'Reinwascheffekt'. This concept is used to describe how the ideals beginning teachers form during teacher training are more often than not; not met by the reality of the classroom situation (Veenman, 1984, p. 143).

Stanulis, Campbell and Hicks (2002) make the point that it is the school culture that has the largest influence on moulding developing beginning teachers, their beliefs and actions. School culture goes deeper than just affecting the beginning teacher's beliefs and actions that it impacts greatly on the development of their teacher identity. Stanulis, Campbell and Hicks (2002) state that "scholars have long reminded teacher educators that the school culture plays a far more significant role in the shaping of a novice teacher than does university preparation" (p. 61).

Williams (2002) contends that the impact of school culture on the beginning teacher can act to maintain and reinforce the status quo of the educational setting. Williams (2002) argues that "newly appointed teachers bring with them a potential to effect improvement and reform in schools, but are inhibited from doing so because of the 'regimes of truth' perpetuated by traditional school cultures" (pp. 10-11). Williams (2002) asserts that beginning teachers bring with them new ideas, enthusiasm and potential to positively impact on the school environment in which they have entered. It is how the culture of the school interacts and impacts on the beginning teacher that determines whether this potential will be realised. Or conversely whether the culture of the school will result in 'the anguish of compromise' which Khamis (2000) describes, as cited in (Williams, 2002, p. 10), where beginning teachers compromise their strongly held notions and conforms to the dominant culture in order to 'fit in' and to be accepted.

Sabar (2004) provides an interesting perspective through which to view the beginning teacher. Sabar's (2004) research compared the beginning teacher to migrants and used the migrant metaphor as a reference point in the discussion of the impact of culture on the beginning teacher. Sabar (2004) says:

Novice teachers are strangers in the sense that they come from one normative system – the teacher education institute – with a clear set of norms of behavior, and try to enter another one – the school – whose norms are unfamiliar and different from theirs. They want to belong to the in-group which is often a cohesive group of teachers with accepted norms and habits. The knowledge they come with is often contradictory or irrelevant to the knowledge they need in order to cope when concrete problems arise in the school (Sabar, 2004, p. 5).

Sabar's (2004) use of the migration metaphor for beginning teachers is one that accommodates the portrayal of the beginning teacher as a positive contributor to the school. This is in contrast to the 'survival' metaphor used by the stage theorists, particularly Fuller (1969), which saw the beginning teacher as being deficient and requiring constant help. Sabar's (2004) work in fact presents us with a notion that the school may well in fact be lacking or missing valuable knowledge without the contribution of the beginning teacher.

Khamis (2000) as cited in Williams (2002) further supports Sabar's (2004) contention that the culture of school and the staff members challenge the values and norms of the beginning teacher. It cannot be disputed that beginning teachers are inexperienced and often lack the practical expertise to deal with situations for the first time but it certainly raises the question as to whether this is not the only 'story' to be heard from beginning teachers, a question that this research will address in relation to the experiences of the five beginning teachers.

Walsdorf and Lynn (2002) argue that often the cultures of schools do create tensions for beginning teachers as they realise that the dominant culture is not one that they understand nor feel comfortable within. Walsdorf and Lynn (2002) cite examples of where novices are pressured to conform "unfortunately, in some cases feedback offered by colleagues and mentors pressure the novice to conform to the norms and expectations of the school even though they may not match their own philosophies" (Walsdorf & Lynn, 2002, p.192).

Whilst Bullough (1989) demonstrates an understanding of the impact of school culture on the beginning teacher, he also challenges the beginning teacher to find their place within this

setting, a place that is respectful of the ‘self’ of the individual’s values and beliefs, yet acknowledges the values and norms of the school. Bullough (1989) argues that “in this setting the novice teacher must negotiate a place that is personally and professionally satisfying, as well as institutionally acceptable, which is difficult even in the best of circumstances” (p. 5). This supports the argument of Stanulis, Campbell and Hicks (2002) that beginning teachers can either conform to or resist the prevailing culture. It is to this tension that the culture of the school provides that many writers and researchers have attributed to the growing attrition rate of beginning teachers (Bryk, Camburn & Louis, 1999; Kardos, Johnson, Peske, Kauffman & Liu, 2001; Williams, Prestage & Bedward, 2001; Williams, 2002; Mael, 2003).

### **2.2.5 Categories of School Cultures**

Ramsey (2000) in his report on the state of teaching in New South Wales paints a dramatic picture of the culture that can exist in some schools:

Reference was made in the advice received to ‘closed’ and cynical school cultures. Advice was provided which went so far as to describe some cultures as ‘toxic’, often apparently shaped by entrenched and unresponsive teachers at middle management level. Information was also provided about instances where induction for teachers in their first appointment consisted of advice from executive staff, particularly head teachers in secondary schools, to forget most of what they had learned in their university course about professional practice (p. 85).

Ramsey (2000) highlights the type of school culture that quickly dampens the enthusiasm of the beginning teacher and in many cases isolates them from their colleagues.

The literature makes distinctions between the types of culture and whether these cultures have positive or negative effects. For example ‘collaborative school culture’ is a term that is used throughout the literature to describe a school environment that supports and nurtures the beginning teacher. Much of the literature makes the distinction between a collaborative school culture and cultures of isolation.

### **2.2.6 Collaboration Versus Isolation**

Hargreaves (1994) “characterises collaborative teacher cultures as, typically, involving working relationships between teachers and their colleagues that tend to be spontaneous,

voluntary, development-orientated, pervasive across time and space and unpredictable” as cited in (Williams, Prestage & Bedward, 2001, p. 255).

Hargreaves (1994) goes on to contrast collaboration with a culture of “individualism which may take a number of forms: constrained individualism arising from administrative or other situational constraints; strategic individualism as a calculated concentration of effort in response to the daily contingencies of the work environment; and elective individualism as a preferred way of working, a principled choice to work alone, all or some of the time” as cited in (Williams, Prestage & Bedward, 2001, p. 255). Walsdorf and Lynn (2002) argue that beginning teachers may work alone as suggested by Hargreaves (1994), but it is not always their choice or their preferred option, yet the culture of the school forces these working conditions on the beginning teacher. Walsdorf and Lynn (2002) state that although “they should feel free to ask, many become concerned that seeking assistance for classroom problems might be viewed as a sign of incompetence” (p. 192). As Kelchtermans and Ballet (1999) contend “opportunities to share concerns with colleagues or to discuss didactical questions are a very important working condition to beginning teachers” (p. 10). They are describing a culture of collegiality and collaboration.

Ramsey (2000) writes of a “strong culture of professional development at the school level” (p. 63) where more experienced staff members mentor and support beginning teachers. The model he describes also supports and acknowledges the importance of collegiality and collaboration. He states that “during the Review strong support was expressed for the concept of mentoring, the idea of a collegial relationship based on professional responsibility, the experienced for the less experienced” (Ramsey, 2000, p. 63). This notion of professional support is yet another model of a collaborative school culture.

Little (1982) as cited in Kardos et al. writes of the distinction between collaboration and isolation and suggests that it has important implications for teachers and students alike. Little (1982) suggests that isolated teachers get very little feedback and support on their work, and their value within the organisation. Bullough (1989) explains that a culture of isolationism is almost to be an expected working condition of teachers. It is Bullough’s (1989) belief that “teachers do not expect to interact. The role of teacher is built around the norm of an individual teacher working with an individual class separated from other teachers and other classes, autonomy, therefore, is closely associated with teacher isolation (Bullough, 1987, Bullough & Gitlin, 1986)” (p. 12).

Bryk, Camburn and Louis (1999) give collaborative school culture another label; they call them professional communities. They describe this as “schools in which interaction among teachers is frequent and teachers’ actions are governed by shared norms focused on the practice and improvement of teaching and learning” (Bryk, Camburn, & Louis, 1999, p. 753). Whilst the name is different the concept and theory is similar to the definition provided by Hargreaves (1994) and the ideal hoped for by Ramsey (2000). Bryk, Camburn and Louis’ (1999) concept of professional communities emphasises the core concepts of Hargreaves’ (1994) collaborative teacher culture. Like Hargreaves (1994), Bryk, Camburn and Louis (1999) state that within professional communities staff share resources and expertise and they are genuinely engaged in striving towards school improvement. The concept of professional communities as argued by Bryk, Camburn and Louis (1999) supports the recommendations made by Ramsey (2000) for developing collegial relationships which support all members of staff.

Bryk, Camburn and Louis (1999) emphasise that “cooperative relationships are a critical component of a productive workplace” (p. 755). They further explain that “real collaboration involves shared work. In an advanced professional community, teachers collaborate on schoolwide projects and are broadly engaged in school improvement efforts. Such activities foster the sharing of expertise as faculty members call on each other to address the core problems of practice (Little, 1982, 1990). Collaborative work also increases teachers’ sense of affiliation with each other and with the school, and it heightens their sense of mutual support and responsibility for effective instruction” (Bryk, Camburn & Louis, 1999, p. 755).

### **2.2.7 Contrived Collegiality**

The authors cited in this paper agree that collegiality and professional communities where resources, time and support are valued commodities is the preferred working model for a successful school and one where the beginning teacher can develop. Hargreaves (1994) as cited in Williams, Prestage and Bedward (2001) warns however, against contrived collegiality where leaders step in and artificially mandate a ‘collegial setting’. Hargreaves (1994) views the concept of contrived collegiality from a micropolitical framework and as such he criticises this form of leadership mandated collaboration. He states that often leaders have agendas and system mandated requirements that must be completed, and a way of ensuring this work is completed is through contrived collegiality where time and space are provided to the teachers by the leader. Hargreaves (1994) is suspicious of this, stating that it is inflexible and

inefficient. Hargreaves (1994) argues that this form of collaboration, particular to his research, does little to empower the individual teacher, nor does it encourage ongoing genuine collaboration between staff.

Day (1999) is not as critical as Hargreaves of the process of contrived collegiality. It is Day's (1999) belief that this situation, whilst not ideal, may in fact act as "a bridging process towards more collaborative cultures in providing added opportunities for development" (p. 81). Day (1999) argues that if teachers are given time and space to meet and work together this is a positive step towards the encouragement of collaboration between staff.

Kardos et.al. (2001) and McCormack and Thomas (2003) are not as sceptical of the process as Hargreaves (1994) and speak out more strongly in defence of structured support for beginning teachers. They suggest that it is through these structures and support mechanisms that a sense of belonging and collegiality takes place. McCormack and Thomas (2003) state that beginning teachers "need structured support that provides encouragement, respect and assurance to help them experience success and expand their capabilities" (p. 137). Kardos et al. in their (2001) study of novice teachers further defend the need for structures to be put in place that nurture an environment and culture of collegiality and collaboration. They found that when:

New teachers were inducted into and socialized by integrated professional cultures, there were organizational structures such as mentoring arrangements and curriculum planning sessions that supported their induction. These new teachers spoke of being united with their colleagues in the pursuit of a common mission. Such shared purpose had not emerged accidentally or spontaneously but had been deliberately built  
(Kardos, et al. 2001, p. 17).

Lortie (1975) also argued for deliberate frameworks and procedures to be put in place to nurture the beginning teacher. Lortie (1975) comments on structured induction programs: "Without a deliberate induction, it is not easy for a new teacher to interpret the professional culture of a new workplace" as cited in (Kardos et al. 2001, p. 4). Whilst these programs are not ongoing and quite often very short-lived Lortie (1975) argues that they set in place the opportunity for professional relationships to open up, and indeed an opportunity for continued, genuine collegial support and collaboration.

### **2.2.8 Leadership and Culture**

Literature in the field of leadership is vast and varied (Greenfield & Robbins, 1993; Sofield & Kuhn, 1994; Sergiovanni, 1996; Schein, 1997) in its content. Much of the early work was in the area of organisational leadership and did not particularly focus on leadership in the educational field. McGuinness (1992) acknowledges that the educational setting is very different from other organisations and as such the leaders of such settings require different skills. Educational leadership literature often distinguishes the educational leader from the leaders of other organisations by their vision or purpose. McGuinness (1992) makes the point that it is the educational leader's attention to the culture of the school that makes them distinctly different from the organisational leader. McGuinness (1992) writes that "the educational leader is more concerned with developing an organisational culture which is directed towards developing and improving the institution" (p. 7).

Duignan (1997) supports McGuinness' (1992) contention that educational leaders are different from organisational leaders and one of the key functions of the educational leader is that of determining the nature of the culture of the school. Duignan (1997) states that the key to educational leadership "is to unlock the potential and talent in a way that encourages sharing and the transformation of individual learning communities" (p. 9). Duignan (1997) sets out the type of culture he believes school leaders should be creating and maintaining within their schools. Wallace (1995) further adds that school leaders play a critical function in the development of cultures (p. 16).

Thomas (1997) states that the Principal of a school has the "leadership responsibility of calling both staff and students to grow personally and professionally by providing them with the opportunity and freedom to do so" (p. 108). Thomas (1997) states that effective Principals permeate a culture of empowerment within their schools where staff and students contribute to decision making in areas in which they have knowledge. He further suggests that Principals are responsible for maintaining a collaborative school community.

Crowther, Kaagan, Ferguson and Hann (2002) argue that teachers should also be seen as leaders within the school setting, and that the model where Principals are the only source of leadership is outdated. A better way of looking at leadership and indeed leadership that determines and permeates the culture of the school is by looking at the potential individual teachers have to transform schools and educational practices (Crowther, et al. 2002). Further to their contention is that all teachers are potential leaders but the context and the culture of

the school may influence the ability of teachers to research this potential practices (Crowther, et al. 2002). They state that “teacher leadership is real, it is grounded in authoritative theory, it is distinctive, it is diverse, and it can be nurtured” (Crowther et al., 2002, p. 35). The work of Lingard, Hayes, Mills and Christie (2003) supports the contentions of Crowther et al. (2002). Lingard et al. (2003) argue that leadership should be found and built throughout the school; it is not the sole responsibility of the Principal. They further argue that an important role of the Principal is to permeate leadership throughout the school. Lingard et al. (2003) challenge traditional notions of leadership which is top down leadership, lead by the Principal. They contend that it is possible to “lead from the center rather than the top (Louis et al. 1996), and to stretch and disperse leadership across different tasks and people within schools” (Lingard, et al., 2003, p. 53).

The importance of teachers as leaders in the work of Crowther et al. (2002) is that they see teacher-leaders and all members of the school community as contributing and building the culture of the school. They challenge the notion by early researchers that it is the Principal as leader that is responsible for the culture of the school. They cite an example from their research (2002) where the Principal of one of their research schools suggested that teacher-leaders are the “guardians of our culture” (Crowther et al., 2002, p. 46). The work of the Crowther et al. (2002) is closely linked to the socialisation of teachers within the school setting, which is discussed in detail in the following section of this research. The potential offered by the concept of teacher-leaders is an area which provides reflection and an opportunity for this research to further explore. For example can beginning teachers provide leadership? Can ‘ordinary teachers’ offer a lead in supporting beginning teachers? The research of Crowther et al. (2002) has implications for this research as it questions what role teachers play in determining the culture of the school and indeed what impact this has on the experiences of the beginning teacher.

### **2.2.9 Conclusion.**

Cultural theorists such as Schein (1997) argue that culture encompasses all experiences shared between individuals particularly within organisations. The complexity of the school organisation is compounded by the dimension of culture. Hargreaves (1994) suggests that within schools there are many different sub-cultures that exist. Authors such as Flynn (1993), O’Donnell (2001) and Grace (1995) identify characteristics which they argue should prevail within a Catholic school culture, notions of community and spirituality. Flynn (1993) questions whether these notions are aspirational rather than achieved.



Crowther, Kaagan, Ferguson and Hann (2002) contend that all teachers within the school setting are responsible for setting the cultural tone of the school. Researchers such as Hargreaves (1995), Stanulis, Campbell and Hicks (2002) further contend that not only do all teachers play a role in determining the culture of the school but that there is indeed a link between culture and socialisation. Sabar (2004) contends that school culture can challenge and confront the values of the beginning teacher. These writers acknowledge the close ties between culture and socialisation.

## **2.3 Socialisation**

### **2.3.1 Introduction**

The literature suggests that teacher socialisation plays an important role in the development and growth of the beginning teacher. Kelchtermans and Ballet (1999) contend that much of the research on beginning teachers concentrates on problems associated with classroom management and teaching (Veenman, 1984) and that little attention is given to the fact that “beginning teachers also become members of an organisation. Nevertheless this organisational socialisation constitutes an essential task for teachers as much as their classroom teaching” (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 1999, p. 106).

Kelchtermans and Ballet’s (1999) research on the beginning teacher literature asserts that there is a void in the literature in the area of teacher socialisation. They further state that the area of socialisation is a vital area of concern for the beginning teacher. Understanding how the organisation operates often provides the beginning teacher with one of their most difficult tasks upon entering the profession. Teacher socialisation is closely linked to teacher identity which will be discussed later in this chapter where the links between identity and socialisation will be explored.

Researchers (Jordell, 1987; Zeichner & Gore, 1990) argue that how beginning teachers respond and interact within this social circumstance plays an important role in their participation within the organisation. Ingvarson and Greenway (1984) point to the intimate interaction between socialisation and culture by suggesting that researchers such as Hargreaves (1994) have used the “notion of socialisation to describe the occupational culture of teachers” (Ingvarson & Greenway, 1984, p. 46).

### **2.3.2 Teacher Socialisation**

Sabar (2004) draws a link between the culture of the school and the direct effect this has on the socialisation of the beginning teacher. “The cultural difference between the teacher education institution and the school, and the inconsistency between the knowledge the novice teacher comes with and that is needed in the new environment increase the feeling of strangeness. These differences between their expectations and the reality are major causes for the novice teachers’ sense of depression and turmoil (Conway, 2001; Ezer & Sabar, 1992). They also greatly affect the processes of desocialization and resocialization (Bar-Yossef, 1986) that novices undergo in their first year of teaching” (Sabar, 2004, p.6). Sabar’s (2004) research indicates that culture and teacher socialisation are intimately linked.

Research in the area of teacher socialisation seeks to understand how teachers become part of the teacher culture that dominates the school, and what constitutes membership of the teaching fraternity of the school and the wider teaching community; “teacher socialization research is that field of scholarship which seeks to understand the process whereby the individual becomes a participating member of the society of teachers (Danziger, 1971)” (Zeichner & Gore, 1990, p. 329). Hargreaves (1994) reinforces the importance of teacher socialisation in influencing the actions of beginning teachers. He states that “what they do in terms of classroom styles and strategies is powerfully affected by the outlooks and orientations of the colleagues with whom they work” (p. 165).

Zeichner and Gore’s (1990) research examines and reviews competing research paradigms of teacher socialisation which have risen from different intellectual traditions. The table on the following page summarises and highlights the areas their review of literature identified as influencing teacher socialisation and the researchers making the assertions.

**Table 2.1: The Influences on Teacher Socialisation**

<b>PRETRAINING INFLUENCES</b>	<b>PRESERVICE INFLUENCES</b>	<b>SOCIALISATION IN THE WORKPLACE AND CULTURE</b>
Teachers bring to teacher education a set of predispositions (Stephens, 1967).	General education and academic specialisation courses completed outside schools, departments and colleges of education (Feldman and Newcomb, 1969; Nucci and Pascarella, 1987; Pascarella, 1985).	Socialising role of students (Pollard, 1982).  Influence of the ecology of the classroom (Pollard, 1982).
Teacher socialisation is affected by the quality of relationships teachers have as children with important adults. That becoming a teacher is to some extent a process of trying to become like significant others (Feiman-Nemser, 1983).	Methods and foundations courses usually completed within education units (Feldman and Newcomb, 1969; Nucci and Pascarella, 1987; Pascarella, 1985).	Influence of other teachers (Pollard, 1982).
Teacher socialisation occurs largely through the internalisation of teaching model during the time spent as pupils (Lortie, 1975).	Field-based experiences usually carried out in elementary and secondary school classrooms (Feldman and Newcomb, 1969; Nucci and Pascarella, 1987; Pascarella, 1985).	Local social context (Hatton, 1987).  Broader social context or community pressure (Care and Lightfoot, 1979; Gracey, 1972; McPherson, 1972).

Jordell’s (1987) early research in this conceptual area suggested that teacher socialisation was the process by which those new to the profession ‘become’ a teacher. Within this framework he encompassed teaching strategies, ways of acting and behaving within the classroom, and the organisation as all outcomes of the socialisation process. He suggested that “the structural influences at the classroom level, which are determined by structures at the institutional and societal levels, are of major importance, and that the influences from other persons in the systems should not be over-estimated” (Jordell, 1987, p. 165). He argued that the way beginning teachers acted and behaved was determined by events that occurred in the classroom. Jordell (1987) further argued that students played a very important role in teacher socialisation. This is consistent with the findings of Nias (1986) who suggested that students play an important role in teacher socialisation and development of identity.

Jordell's (1987) research, like Zeichner and Gore's (1990) work on this topic, reviewed the work of other researchers in the area. He cites examples of authors that support his concept of the high degree of teacher socialisation attributed to students and classroom interactions and this is supported by Zeichner and Gore's (1990) findings. Jordell (1987) writes that authors such as "Hanson and Harrington (1976) maintained that students define the teacher's role, and define it in a specific way: They expect a teacher who teaches like most teachers. Similar views were held by Davies (1983) and Musgrove and Taylor (1969)" (Jordell, 1987, p. 169). He goes on to say that "there is considerable agreement among researchers in many countries that students are of major importance in the socialization of teachers" (Jordell, 1987, p. 169).

Jordell's (1987) research suggests that students can challenge the beginning teachers' behaviour and, as such, students act as social regulators and reinforce the status quo, particularly in regard to pedagogy. Zeichner and Gore (1990) support this concept of students playing a considerable role in the socialisation of teachers. The "significant role of pupils on the socialization of teachers is supported both on logical grounds and by empirical evidence. Haller (1967) and Doyle (1979) argue, for example, that the important role of pupils in teacher socialization is understandable given the typical isolation of teachers from their colleagues and supervisors and given the transitory and invisible nature of the learning process" (Zeichner & Gore, 1990, p. 339). Interestingly Larson (1986) as cited in Zeichner and Gore (1990) notes that the influence of students in the socialisation process becomes more significant as teachers develop and become more aware of students' needs, and as they become more concerned with pupils as the teachers progress developmentally.

Jordell (1987) does, however, acknowledge in his review of teacher socialisation literature that other teachers do play a role in teacher socialisation. He suggests that "possibly the best understanding of the role of colleagues in the socialization of new teachers would be to consider them as a 'confirming' source of influence – they do not primarily influence beginning teachers directly, but take part in their socialization as persons who participate in the validation of experiences in the classroom" (Jordell, 1987, p. 171). He substantiates his argument by commenting that beginning teachers only rarely "observe other teachers' teaching, or are observed by other teachers" (Jordell, 1987, p. 170). It is his suggestion that beginning teachers however, heavily rely on the comments and support of other teachers. It is through discussion with other teachers that beginning teachers can seek explanations of student behaviour, gain feedback on classroom practices and support in all areas of their general teaching pedagogy. Jordell (1987) writes that:

It is within the freemasonry of the staffroom that what may be situationally necessary becomes acceptable and finally taken for granted. The socially constructed world of the classroom needs validation by others who inhabit the same world – the reality of the world is sustained by conversation with significant others (p. 171).

Jordell's (1987) findings suggest that professional identity has a cognitive dimension that includes a professional schema that is partially constructed from the views of significant colleagues. The role of '*teacher talk*' in supporting and reinforcing the dominant culture as Jordell (1987) suggests should not be undervalued. His research argues that as beginning teachers seek reinforcement and support they are also gaining an insight into how other teachers in the school operate and work, and often these actions and behaviors are transferred to the beginning teacher, particularly if the novice believes that the teacher giving the advice is an exceptional teacher.

Gratch (2001), in contrast to Jordell's (1987) earlier research, argues that colleagues are 'critical' in the socialisation of beginning teachers and supports her argument with the research of other authors in this field. Gratch (2001) argues that "previous research in the area of teacher socialization has reflected the critical role of socialization experiences and teacher relationships in the retention of teachers and in the on-going development of quality teachers (Hargreaves, 1995; Bullough & Baughman, 1993; Kagan, 1992; Staton & Hunt, 1992; Zeichner & Gore, 1990)" (Gratch, 2001, p. 121).

Gratch (2001) also acknowledges that there are external influences on teacher socialisation as well as acknowledging that the life history of the beginning teacher plays an important role. Zeichner and Gore (1990) as cited in Gratch (2001) state in their work that researchers need to be mindful of the "uniqueness and commonality" (p. 122) in the socialisation of teachers. Gratch (2001) argues that this "requires recognizing the influence of external forces, and also looking beneath these forces and listening to teachers' life histories in order to understand the socialization experience of individual teachers" (p. 122). The importance of life history in socialisation is also acknowledged by Zeichner and Gore (1990). They categorise it as 'pre-training' influences as indicated in Table 2.1. The importance and influence of life history on the beginning teacher is discussed in greater detail later in this chapter.

Kelchterman and Ballet (1999) also argue that teacher socialisation is largely determined by the culture of the school and not only the classroom setting. They argue that “we assume that the experience of the induction period is to an important degree determined by the organisational contexts and working conditions beginning teachers have to work in and as such not only or even not primarily by problems at the classroom level” (Kelchterman & Ballet, 1999, p. 3).

### **2.3.3 Teacher Socialisation and the Status Quo**

Hoy and Rees (1977) state that “secondary schools in general began almost immediately to mold neophytes into roles devised to maintain stability” (as cited in Zeichner & Gore, 1990, p. 330). They argue that as beginning teachers are socialised into the school setting their actions and behaviours are modified to fit the context they have entered. Zeichner and Gore (1990) acknowledge, however, that there may be conflicting patterns of behaviour within the one educational setting this reiterates the suggestions within the literature (Hargreaves, 1994) that school have multiple cultures:

Given that teachers in a given school work under generally similar conditions, collegial influence is probably closely tied to the common circumstances that teachers face in the structural characteristics of schools and in the ecological conditions of classrooms. It is also clear, however, as studies by Carew and Lightfoot (1979) and Metz (1978) have shown, that several diverse ‘teacher cultures’ often exist even in a single school and that teachers may often face conflicting pressures by colleagues to influence them (Zeichner & Gore, 1990, p.339).

Kelchterman and Ballet (2002) take the interactionist approach to teacher socialisation and as such they argue against the passive nature of socialisation where the beginning teacher is moulded by and conformed to the dominant school culture. They conceive teacher socialisation “not simply as passively sliding into an existing context, but rather as an interpretative and interactive process between the new teacher and the context. In this mutual interaction, socialisation means that the beginning teacher is influenced by the context, but at the same time in his/her turn affects the structures in which s/he is socialised” (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002, p. 106). They go on to note that Bullough and Knowles (1991) contend “individuals are never passive receptors of social norms or of presented content; they always remake them in some fashion” (as cited in Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002, p. 106). This view of socialisation acknowledges the important role beginning teachers can play in influencing and shaping the school culture they have entered.

This view of beginning teachers playing an active role in their socialisation and as such impacting on the culture and nature of the school is supported by the research of Crow (1987). Crow's (1987) research concluded "that teacher education candidates were active agents in their own socialisation through the perspectives they brought with them to teaching and through their acceptance or rejection of values and beliefs they encountered in their teacher education programs" (as cited in Carter & Doyle, 1996, p. 127). This contention also supports Sabar's (2004) use of the migrant metaphor where the beginning teacher is seen as actively interacting within the school setting. Fuller's (1969) metaphor of survival where little or no interaction is suggested is further challenged.

#### **2.3.4 The Role of Mentoring in the Socialisation of Beginning Teachers**

The value of mentoring as a process for supporting beginning teachers has been widely acknowledged by research literature (McCormack & Thomas, 2003; Veenman, De Laat & Staring, 1998; Williams, 2002). Mentoring can be seen as a valuable attribute of the socialisation of beginning teachers. It is also the contention of this research that teacher-leaders (Crowther *et al.*, 2002; Lingard, *et al.*, 2003) have a valuable role to play in supporting and informally mentoring beginning teachers. Lawson (1992) as cited in Veenman, DeLaat and Staring (1998) argue that the importance of mentoring and other supportive colleagues is well documented throughout the beginning teacher literature.

Mentoring is a term that is used throughout the literature as a process of helping beginning teachers in their professional development. Veenman, DeLaat and Staring (1998) argue that mentoring is the development of a personal relationship between the novice teacher and the experienced teacher. They further state that inherent in this personal relationship are the notions of "mutual respect and trust" (p. 414).

McCormack and Thomas (2003) state that mentoring helps the beginning teacher build confidence and reflect on their practice. Veenman, DeLaat and Staring (1998) support McCormack and Thomas' (2003) research in this area. McCormack and Thomas (2003) assert that mentoring plays an important role in promoting "increased self-reflection and problem solving capacities, pick-up practices from partners, increased confidence and self-esteem, reduced feelings of isolation" (p. 415). Interestingly Veenman et al (1998) also suggest that the mentor can benefit from the mentor-novice relationship. They suggest that the mentor can gain "deeper insight into current practices" (p. 415).

Gratch (1998) within her research makes the point that the mentor relationship and the outcomes of mentoring need to be further researched. She cites a study conducted by the National Center for Research on Teaching and Learning (NCRTL) at Michigan State University (1992) where it is suggested that the idea that mentors improve beginning teachers classroom practice is a myth (p. 221). Gratch (1998) further argues that the (NCRTL) research suggested that “the presence of mentors does not in and of itself guarantee that teachers will become more skilled at teaching or more thoughtful about their work that they would without mentors” (p. 221). Williams (2002), however, suggests that if a beginning teacher can “attach to, or be mentored by, an understanding and patient experienced teacher, the feeling of being isolated and alone can be minimised” (p. 9).

### **2.3.5 Conclusion**

The above research suggests that whilst beginning teachers face the challenge of finding their place within the school setting they are also slowly adding to the landscape of the school organisation. In addition to the school ‘story’ beginning teachers play an interactive role in teacher socialisation. Woods (1981, 1984) and Nias (1984) as cited in Nias (1986) “have claimed an even stronger role for the individual, suggesting that the professional socialisation of teachers must be understood as an active process in which individuals seek to preserve, within the school and the profession, their sense of personal identity” (Nias, 1986, p. 3).

## **2.4 Identity**

### **2.4.1 Introduction**

Melucci (1996) suggests that how we identify and perceive ourselves is determined by how we interpret events in our past, and this then has ramifications for the way we behave in the future or where we see ourselves in the future. Melucci (1996) states that:

While we remain aware that the future is born of the past, it is equally true that the past is also continuously shaped by the future. Whenever we confront the possible - as in planning for the future - when we make a decision that anticipates the action to come, the past is re-examined, amended, and given a new meaning. Thus we continually rewrite our own pasts and that of the world. Our memory is selective and reconstructs history and biography according to a project for the future (p.12).



Melucci (1996) argues that identity is not stagnant nor is it an isolated concept, it is situated contextually. This understanding of identity suggests that its development relies on a constant re-evaluation of actions and past events which allows for a prediction or refinement of events in the future. Whilst Melucci (1996) was not writing in the education spectrum, his model can be applied to the development of identity for the beginning teacher. Orr (1992) as cited in Elbaz-Luwisch (2004) states that “knowledge of a place – where you are and where you come from – is intertwined with knowledge of who you are” (p. 388). Orr’s (1992) statement then suggests that beginning teachers forge their sense of identity by integrating the experiences they have already had with the situation they find themselves in at the present.

This emphasis upon the refinement and development of individuals’ sense of who they are, a sense of ‘self’, is derived from the tradition of symbolic interactionism and the writing of Mead (1934). Mead (1934) as cited by Nias (1986) “and others, such as Cooley ([1902-1983]) and Thomas (1980), have argued, the self is both a social product, shaped by the response of others and an independent actor capable of innovating, initiating actions and reflecting upon them” (p.3). The work of Mead (1934) helps us understand that “teachers enter the professional community having appropriated and assimilated the world views of their many communities” (Graham, 1998, p.2). Melucci’s (1996) ‘project for the future’ is the construction of ‘self’ and the building of an identity. The ‘project’ for the beginning teacher is the building of a teacher identity or gaining a sense of ‘self’ as teacher.

Graham (1998) expands on the work of Mead (1934) to further explore the importance of understanding ‘self’ and its relevance to teachers and teaching. Graham (1998) states that:

George Mead (1934) draws a useful distinction between the self as subject, the "I" and the self as object, the "me." The acting self, the "I," responds to the attitudes of others and acts as a conscious, intentional agent, whereas the objective self, the "me," is the internalization of the organized set of attitudes of the generalized others. The "I" then, challenges the traditions embodied in the "me." Identity, on the other hand, is something continuously being negotiated from particular positions in the time/space dimension. The "I" challenges the categories provided by others and constructs itself against these cultural traditions (p. 2).

Teacher identity has recently been the focus of many researchers in the area of education (Doyle, 1996; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999; Carter & Doyle, 1999; Sachs, 1999). The development of teacher identity is embedded in the life history of the teacher (Sumara & Luce-Kapler, 1996), the culture of the school (Sachs, 1999) that they have entered and the

impact this culture has on their socialisation. Sumara and Luce-Kaper (1996) state that teacher 'self' identity is also connected to professional identity. The development of the wider 'self' identity takes place in the smaller context of professional teacher identity (Beijaard, Meijer & Verloop, 2004).

Zembylas' (2003) research into teaching links teacher and 'self' emotions to identity. Zembylas (2003) also argues that teacher identity is deeply attached to how teachers constructs and reconstructs interactions they have within the school setting and further states that historical interactions play an important role in the formation of teacher identity. Importantly he suggests that, for the construction of teacher identity to occur, the individual needs to have a good understanding of themselves and their historical and institutional context.

#### **2.4.2 Professional Identity**

The literature in the area of teacher identity noted that when studying beginning teachers and the development of their professional identity it is important to acknowledge that the individual also belongs to a collective group, the teaching fraternity which also has an identity. In the last decade, teachers' professional identity has emerged as a separate research area (Sumara & Luce-Kaper, 1996; Graham, 1998; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999; Bullough & Young, 2002; Marsh, 2002; Sikes & Everington, 2003; Beijaard, Meijer & Verloop, 2004). The research suggests that as with any profession teachers have multiple identities related to the contexts in which they find themselves. Belonging to the collective of teachers gives the beginning teacher one facet of their continually emerging professional identity. Whilst belonging and associating with the collective of teachers, beginning teachers also have their own personal 'teacher' identity.

The notion of professional identity is used by Sachs (1999) to refer to a set of attributes "that are imposed upon the teaching profession either by outsiders or members of the teaching fraternity itself" (p. 4). Sachs further states that this identification through the commonly held attributes "provides a shared set of attributes, values and so on so that enable the differentiation of one group from another" (p. 4).

Sachs (1999) defines the collective notion of professional identity. The beginning teacher is immersed within these professional constraints and boundaries which are recognisable by others within the organisation and the broader community as belonging to the fraternity of teaching. Graham (1998) would further extend Sachs' (1999) work in suggesting that in the

construction of identity the “I” would challenge the boundaries and constraints built around the notion of a collective teacher identity and use these boundaries as a guide for constructing a personal professional identity.

Identity is formed through social interactions and is constantly evolving; identity “is not something one has, but something that develops during one’s whole life. Mead used the concept of identity in relationship with the concept of self; he described in detail how the self is developed through transactions with the environment” (Beijaard, Meijer & Verloop, 2004, p. 107). These contentions have implications for this research. They pose the interesting question of how the interactions and experiences of the beginning teacher play a role in the formation of identity.

Wenger (1998) as cited in Sachs (1999) argues "there is a profound connection between identity and practice. Developing a practice requires the formation of a community whose members can engage with one another and thus acknowledge each other as participants” (p.5). Sachs (1999) is suggesting that to identify oneself as a teacher there are important common practices and behaviours that are the norm within the group. It is through the socialisation of the teacher that these practices are passed on. These behaviours then in turn can be recognised by those within the group as belonging to the group. Thus these behaviours and actions then connect those members of the group who behave in the desired way (Sachs, 1999).

Within the broader communal context of ‘teacher’ identity the personal ‘self’ identity of the beginning teacher is developed and re-contextualised. Whilst the broader professional teacher identity as portrayed above is important in situating the beginning teacher’s ‘self’ identity, it will not be further illuminated within this study. The review of literature will focus further on the individual teacher identity and how it is cultivated within the broader context of the collective professional identity. It is acknowledged that individual teacher identity grows out of the collective grouping of teachers with their recognisable attributes and values.

Sumara and Luce-Kapler (1996) argue that “becoming a teacher involves more than transposing teaching skills onto an already-established personal identity: it means including the identity “teacher” in one’s life. Beginning teachers must negotiate at least three teaching identities: those they bring with them into teacher education, those they develop while doing university course work, and those they develop during student teaching practicums” (p. 65).

Nias (1986) suggests that beginning teachers often have not explored this notion of teacher identity. She makes an interesting observation from her longitudinal study of teachers in England that whilst “my interviewees had well-defined views of themselves as people with particular standards, principles, personalities, needs, this did not also mean that they saw themselves as teachers” (Nias, 1986, p. 9). Sumara and Luce-Kapler (1996) argue that beginning teachers cannot compartmentalise their various identities and keep their personal identity separate from their professional identity. Their personal identity already forms the basis for the professional identity and conversely the professional identity begins to impact on the overall make-up of personal identity. A sense of who they are is moulded not only from life history but from the meaning that beginning teachers are making of their professional interactions.

### **2.4.3 Construction of Identity**

Connelly and Clandinin (1999) have worked extensively in the area of ‘shaping professional identities’. Their work is situated in the narrative paradigm. They acknowledge, like authors before them (Melucci, 1996; Sachs, 1996; Nias, 1986), that identities are shaped by events of the past. Connelly and Clandinin (1999) argue that identities have histories. They further argue that:

They are narrative constructions that take shape as life unfolds and that may, as narrative constructions are wont to do, solidify into fixed entity, an unchanging narrative construction, or they may continue to grow and change. They may even be, indeed, almost certainly are, multiple depending on the life situations in which one finds oneself. It is also common to think that people are somehow or other different people at work from who they are at home or at a social gathering, with their children, and so on. The identities we have, the stories we live by, tend to show different facets depending on the situations in which we find ourselves. This is no less true for teachers in their professional knowledge landscapes. Different facets, different identities, can show up, be reshaped and take on new life in different landscape settings (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999, p. 95).

Sumara and Luce-Kapler (1989) concur with the arguments of Connelly and Clandinin (1999). Sumara and Luce-Kapler (1989) suggest that teachers will mould and change their identity in accordance with the ‘professional landscape’ they find themselves working in. Connelly and Clandinin (1995; 1999) use the metaphor of ‘landscape’ to discuss and describe the various cultures and subcultures within a school. They argue that the professional landscape of the school also has a significant bearing on the development of teacher identity. It is also their

contention that beginning teachers internalise and construct their own position within these landscapes; they add that schools consist of multiple landscapes. In their research (1995) they cite the example of two beginning teachers: one a substitute teacher and the other with a permanent teaching position. Connelly and Clandinin (1995) infer that the beginning teachers position themselves in the professional knowledge landscape according to their interactions within the various schools. How both these teachers position themselves is very different and related to their different contexts but importantly Connelly and Clandinin (1995) argue that “their active positioning of themselves as time passed had dramatic consequences for their sense of identity as teachers” (p. 107). They go on to argue that because the teacher that had the permanent position “made the school story his own he became confirmed in his identity as a teacher” (Connelly & Clandinin, 1995, p. 107). This was not the case for the substitute teacher and as such she had difficulty forming a teacher identity as she didn’t feel as though she belonged to any one professional landscape.

Connelly and Clandinin’s (1995, 1999) work confirms the interconnectedness of school culture and the formation of teacher identity. They acknowledge, however, that identity is constantly being constructed by the individual from past experiences and present interactions within the professional landscape. Sumara and Luce-Kapler (1996) concur with the findings of Connelly and Clandinin (1995, 1999) that suggest that there is a close relationship between personal and communal identity. Sumara and Luce-Kapler (1996) state that “a sense of personal identity cannot be subtracted from a sense of communal identity; the sense of self alters as social relations and situations change. Moreover, the memories of past selves change when we view them in relation to new experiences” (p.65). As Melucci (1996) argues we ‘rewrite’ our past according to the present landscape and our present identity is formed only after new meaning has been given to the past to confirm the present context.

Pollanahorne (1988) as cited in Kelchtermans (1993) supports Connelly and Clandinin’s (1999) use of narrative to construct identity. Pollanahorne (1988) also suggest that narrative gives us a way of constructing identity that leads to Melucci’s (1996) project for the future, a way of constructing a future identity, one which we want to ‘become’. Pollanahorne (1988) as cited in Kelchtermans (1993) states that:

We achieve our personal identities and self concept through the use of the narrative configuration, and make our existence into a whole by understanding it as an expression of a single unfolding and developing story. We are in the middle of our stories and cannot be sure how they will end; we are constantly having to revise the plot as new events are added to our lives.

Self, then, is not a static thing nor a substance, but a configuring of personal events into a historical unity which includes not only what one has been but also anticipation of what one will be (p. 447 -448).

Beijaard, Meijer and Verloop's (2004) research involved reviewing literature from 1988 – 2000 concerning professional identity. They analysed twenty-two studies and synthesised much of the literature in this area. They comment that most researchers saw professional identity as “an ongoing process of intergration of the ‘personal’ and the ‘professional’ sides of becoming and being a teacher” (p. 113). They further stated that being a “teacher is a matter of the teacher being seen as a teacher by himself or herself and by others; it is a matter of arguing and then redefining an identity that is socially legitimated” (Beijaard, Meijer & Verloop, 2004, p. 113).

Not only does the work of Beijaard, Meijer and Verloop (2004) reinforce the belief that teacher identity is shaped by the culture and context of the school, it is also a matter of being perceived as a teacher by others that then gives, in the eyes of the beginning teacher, authenticity to the identity. Beijaard, Meijer and Verloop (2004) believe that many of the studies had far too great an emphasis on the personal and underestimated the contextual element that plays a part in the formation of professional identity. Beijaard, Meijer and Verloop (2004) cite Reynolds (1996) to support their argument. Reynolds (1996) emphasized “that what surrounds a person, what others expect from the person, and what the person allows to impact on him or her greatly affect his or her identity as a teacher. She noted that the teacher's workplace is a ‘landscape’ which can be very persuasive, very demanding, and, in most cases, very restrictive” (Beijaard, Meijer & Verloop, 2004, p.113). Reynolds (1996) acknowledges that the individuals makes choices about what they ‘allow’ to impact on them and they actively construct their identity from their landscape. They make decisions about what influences their identity. Connelly and Clandinin (1999) also support the argument that the school environment has an important influence on shaping the professional identity of teachers. They see schools as a landscape of “interacting stories that bear directly on teacher identity and, by association, on teacher satisfaction with their work”(Connelly & Clandinin, 1999, p. 100).

Researchers such as Bullough (1990) suggest that the acknowledgement of the formation of a teacher identity is often not reflected upon, nor consciously developed in beginning teachers until they begin working in their first school. Bullough (1990) as cited in Kagan (1992) states

that the “problem of finding oneself as a teacher, of establishing a professional identity, is conspicuously missing from most lists of beginning teachers’ problems”(Kagan, 1992, p. 162). Kelchtermans and Ballet (2002) as cited in Bullough and Young (2002) offer a reflection on why teacher identity may be overlooked in the initial stages of teaching, but why it becomes important to the beginning teacher. They argue that:

Being a teacher and in particular a beginning teacher implies far more than a merely technical set of tasks that can be reduced to effectively applying curriculum knowledge and didactical skills. The person of the teacher is inevitably also at stake in these professional actions ... When one’s identity as a teacher, one’s professional self-esteem or one’s task perception are threatened by the professional context then self-interests emerge. They always concern the protection of one’s professional integrity and identity as a teacher  
(Bullough & Young, 2002, p. 418).

Nias (1989) takes a more pragmatic approach and argues that the development of a professional identity is vital to the continuation in the profession. Nias (1989) as cited in Carter and Doyle (1996) pointed out that “not all teachers incorporate an occupational identity into their self-image, those who do not, either leave the profession or lose interest in it” as cited in (Carter & Doyle, 1996, p. 130).

Stanulis, Campbell and Hicks (2002) would challenge Beijaard, Meijer and Verloop (2004) and argue that teacher identities are deeply entrenched in life histories more than the context within which teachers are situated. Stanulis, Campbell and Hicks (2002) argue that:

Integral to an emerging teacher identity is the belief that self-as-teacher images are deeply embedded within personal histories which includes powerful images from family and school experiences (Knowles & Holt-Reynolds, 1991). Knowles and Holt-Reynolds argue that it is important to understand the personal histories that guide teachers’ lives in order to understand students’ development as teachers, for what they ‘learned in the past and what they live and learn today becomes a history they reference for their living and learning tomorrow’  
(p.47).

#### **2.4.4 Conclusion**

The research argues that identity is a process “involving constant negotiation among different parts of the self, among different times of the self, and among the different settings or systems to which each of us belongs” (Melucci, 1996, p .49). Markus and Wurf (1987) state in Kelchtermans (1993) “people combine their different self-representations in a ‘current

autobiography’, ‘a story that makes the most coherent or harmonious integration of one’s various experiences’” (p. 447). The literature indicates that whilst reflection on teacher identity is often overlooked by the beginning teacher (Bullough, 1990) it is a fundamental process in the continued development of the beginning teacher (Bullough & Young, 2002). Sumara and Luce-Kapler (1989) and Connelly and Clandinin (1999) suggest that the beginning teacher’s identity will be moulded to a large degree by the school landscape by which they are surrounded. However, as Stanulis, Campbell and Hicks (2002) argue beginning teacher identity is closely linked to and determined by life history.

## **2.5 Life Histories**

### **2.5.1 Introduction**

Much of literature researched on the life history notion was written from the methodological framework of narrative inquiry. This term and approach is used by researchers such as Goodson (1992, 2003) and Dhunpath (2000) as a methodology for educational research. It is through an understanding of the writing and research in this methodological field that a greater understanding and application of life history as relevant to this research is gained. An understanding of what authors in this field say about the value of life history as an approach to research gives an insight into the impact of life history as related to the beginning teacher. By considering the knowledge and wisdom of the authors in this methodological area a greater understanding can be gained of the lives and practices of the beginning teachers.

### **2.5.2 Life History as a Methodology**

The use of teachers’ life histories as a methodology is a growing area of qualitative research. Smith (2001) lists a number of researcher who have employed a life history approach as a basis for understanding teachers and their work “Bullough, 1989, 1994; Day, 1993; Kelchtermans, 1993a, 1993b; Knowles, 1994; Knowles & Holt-Reynolds, 1994; Woods, 1985, 1987)” (p. 112). Smith (2001) further states that the research areas of professional development and teacher change have highlighted the significance of life history. Some researchers working in this area are noted by Smith (2001) as being “Butt, 1984, Denicolo & Pope, 1990; Goodson, 1992a, 1992b; Huberman, 1993; Pajak & Blase, 1989; Zeichner, Tabachnick, & Densmore, 1987” (p. 112).



Muchmore (2002) adds that during “the last decade, there has been an increasing interest in the use of life history ... to study teacher thinking and teacher development” (p. 1).

Richardson (1996) argues that literature in the area of personal experiences is growing as it is vital in understanding “how one approaches teaching” (p. 105). Clandinin (1986) as cited in Richardson (1996) further suggests that “personal experience is encoded in images that affect practice” (p. 105). Richardson’s contention explains why this has become an area of interest to researchers who are trying to gain a better understanding of teachers and teaching practices. An understanding of where one has come from - Melucci’s (1996) concept that our future is ‘born of the past’ - gives an insight into how and why different teachers attend to the task of teaching in the manner that they do. As stated earlier, teachers’ life histories are fundamental to the development of a teacher identity and as such are worthy of research and attention particularly within this research context.

Life history as a methodology is embedded in the belief that to fully understand the story and experience of teachers the researcher needs to understand the lived experiences of the teachers, not only in their school life but all aspects of their life. Bullough (1998) states in Sikes and Everington (2003) that to fully “understand educational events, one must confront biography” (p. 394). Writers who use this method of research contend strongly that life histories have a powerful bearing on the practices of teachers in their classrooms and as such need to be explored to better understand the teachers’ working lives. Teachers’ working lives are not isolated from the ‘self’ of the teacher which is constructed by history and life events. Kagan (1992) argues that the life stories of teachers help explain “that the practice of classroom teaching remains forever rooted in personality and experience and that learning to teach requires a journey into the deepest recesses of one’s self-awareness, where failures, fears, and hopes are hidden” (p. 164). Goodson (1992) further contends that “life experiences and background are obviously key ingredients of the people that we are, our sense of self. To the degree that we invest our ‘self’ in our teaching, experience and background therefore shape our practice” (p. 116). Life histories are at the core of identity.

Importantly for this research the authors writing and using life history as a methodology point out the significance of understanding the impact past events have on the practices of teachers. This is the context in which life history is used within the conceptual framework informing the research.

### **2.5.3 The Importance of Teachers' Life Histories**

Authors in the area of life history believe in the significance of attempting to understand the whole life of the teacher as this then gives the researcher an understanding of how and why teachers behave in the way they do. This approach would profess that to disregard the life history of teachers would be to neglect much of the research story. Goodson (1992) as cited in Dhunpath (2000) states that it is critical that we understand who the teacher is as a person because the nature of teaching is so personal. Dhunpath (2000) further asserts that “when we begin by examining the educator’s work in the context of his/her life, we find that the educator is not simply a practitioner but a striving useful person with a unique history, which impact on his/her work. It would be reasonable therefore, to consider the social dynamics, which have shaped the life” (Dhunpath, 2000, p. 548).

Smith (2001) argues that teachers’ “beliefs develop throughout their lifetimes and are influenced by a variety of factors, including events, experiences, and other people in their lives (Knowles, 1992). Teachers’ life experiences and background affect what they believe, and consequently, how they teach (Clark, 1992)” (Smith 2001, p. 112). James (2002) concurs with this argument and suggests that “their life experiences prior to formal teaching, including the experience of being students themselves – inform their understanding of teaching as a career”. Further to this James (2002) cites Knowles (1992) as stating that “teachers’ biographies significantly influence their orientation to teaching and what they do in their classroom” (p. 171). Henry (1998), as cited in James (2002), studied the lives and practices of five black teachers. This study highlighted the importance and significance of the educational and life experiences of these five black teachers. These experiences influenced and dramatically impacted on the actions of these teachers in and outside their classrooms. Their experiences were dominated by notions of race and gender.

Cremin (1976) as cited in Dhunpath (2000) argues that whilst life history is important and plays a role in shaping the identity of the teacher, the teacher, because of their personality and identity, also has an impact on the educational institution to which they are a member. This supports the assertion of Carter and Doyle (1996) that in acknowledging life history researchers are acknowledging that “from the new perspective of personal agency, this technical view of teaching and teacher development has been challenged by an emphasis on personal voice and empowerment and a view of the teachers him – or herself both as a source of practices and indeed, as an educative medium” (Carter & Doyle, 1996, p. 120). They argue

that through recognising life history as playing a role in the identity of the teacher then the individual teacher because of their uniqueness is an active agent within the school setting.

Knowles, Cole and Presswood (1994) write about ‘personal history’. They argue that we all have personal histories that are interesting and rich. These personal histories include experiences of learning, formally within the school setting and informally for example through family interaction. It is from these experiences that the teacher then interprets their current educational setting (Knowles, Cole & Presswood, 1994).

#### **2.5.4 Conclusion**

The research of literature in the area of life history suggests that to ignore the impact of life history on the beginning teachers’ stories is to ignore most of the story. The writers in this area further contend that background is important to understanding how and why teachers behave in the way they do within the educational setting. Beginning teachers come to the school setting with preconceived ideas about issues of “race, ethnicity, gender, and class. Like any other preconceptions, these thoughts and attitudes will play out in your actions and practice as a teacher” (Knowles, Cole & Presswood, 1994, p. 84).

### **2.6 Chapter Conclusion**

This chapter used the conceptual framework by which the research question is addressed to examine the literature covering beginning teachers. The question asks: What are the perceptions of beginning teachers in their first year within the profession and how do their experiences influence the nature of these perceptions? The literature was analysed by means of the five predominant discourses which are seen to play a significant role in shaping the experiences of these teachers. The discussion of the literature has clearly demonstrated that the identity of beginning teachers is an issue worthy of new research. The literature suggested that identity is shaped by all the encounters and interactions of the beginning teacher (Connelly & Calndinin, 1999; Sachs, 1999). It is through their perceived identity that beginning teachers make meaning of who and what they are within the school setting (Carter & Doyle, 1999). The literature pointed to the notion that the life history of beginning teachers impacted on their teacher identity development (Sumara & Luce-Kapler, 1996).

Many early writers in the area of beginning teacher development contended that there are linear stages of development (Fuller, 1969). This will be further explored through the experiences of the teachers involved in this research.

The literature further extrapolated that a beginning teacher's world is not one existing in a vortex, it is shaped and sculptured by the culture and nature of the school in which they are working (Hargreaves, 1995). The impact and the nature of school culture will be further investigated within the realms of this research.

This chapter outlines through the literature the important interconnectedness of all five concepts in the conceptual framework. In the following chapter an explanation of how these concepts identified through the literature and the questions arising from the conceptual framework are addressed.

# CHAPTER THREE

## METHODOLOGY

*“If we are to understand social life, what motivates people, what their interests are, what links them to and distinguishes them from others, what their cherished values and beliefs are, why they act as they do, and how they perceive themselves and others, we need to put ourselves in their position and look out at the world with them. Their reality may not be our reality, or what we think theirs is”*  
(Woods, 1996, p. 38).

### 3.0 The Intention of this Chapter

Researchers and writers of every tradition can bring with them to their study a set of epistemological assumptions, ones that they are often not even aware of holding. These assumptions and values are important and form the foundation of all research. This research finds its foundations in the Weberian tradition which asserts that to understand the world of others and to make meaning of this world the researcher needs to “get inside the heads of those being studied” (Travers, 2001, pp. 7-8). This research uses the interpretivist epistemology framed in the symbolic interaction tradition to address the research questions. The interpretivist methodology provides the tools for answering the research question. This methodological approach allows the researcher to gain a close up and detailed study of the participants. It allows for the exploration of how beginning teachers understand and make meaning of their actions. It also makes allowances for and explores the role of context in shaping the experiences of the beginning teachers.

As shown in Chapter Two, the literature on beginning teachers is vast. However, much of it treats beginning teachers as a collective group and studies them using a quantitative methodology. Examples of this research can be found in the earlier work of Fuller (1969), and Fuller and Bown (1975). By contrast, this research seeks to hear what individuals are saying and how the individuality of their school impacts on their experience. To achieve this understanding, this research is situated in the interpretivist and qualitative research epistemology, using the case study approach with open-ended interviews as the predominant research tool. The beginning teachers were also asked to keep a journal of their experiences

and these were used as a tool for the further gathering of data. The work of Doecke, Brown and Loughran (2000), Greenlee and deDeugd (2003), and Clandinin and Huber (2003) provide examples of qualitative research using the case study approach, which allowed them to obtain greater depth and personal understanding of beginning teachers. It is precisely such a detailed and personal account that this research aims for as it seeks to make meaning of the beginning teacher's world through both a recount and an analysis of their own comprehensive accounts.

This chapter explores the overall approach and the methods used for gathering and interpreting the data and discusses the validity and reliability of this data.

### **3.1 The Methodology**

This research employs a qualitative approach situated within the interpretive framework. The term qualitative research began to be used during the 1960's to broadly categorise field studies that are conducted outside the area of anthropology. Writers such as Travers (2001) and Bryman (2004) define qualitative research by the research methods used. Travers (2001) cites five main methods employed by researchers within this tradition: observation, interviewing, ethnographic fieldwork, discourse analysis and textual analysis. These descriptions are consistent with Bryman's (2004) categorisation. McEwan and McEwan (2003) argue that to "others (e.g. Fleischer, 1995; McLauren, 1998), qualitative research is a philosophical or political perspective that drives a research agenda in the activist tradition of Freire (1970/1993)" (p. 76). Merriam (1998) argues that qualitative research is categorised by five characteristics: use of participants' insights and perceptions; interaction between the researcher and the participant; fieldwork; grounded theory; and descriptive reporting. This research has these characteristics as described by Merriam (1998) embodied within it. The data collected through the journal recollections allows for the insights and perceptions of the participants to be captured and analysed. The interview process allows for constant and personal interaction to take place between the participant and the researcher. In keeping with the importance Merriam (1998) placed on descriptive reporting in qualitative research, this research uses the participants' own words to convey the importance of what is being described.

There is a fundamental division in research methodology between the positivist or the traditional scientific approach and the interpretivist. The positivist approach assumes that

“data must yield proof or strong confirmation, in probability terms, of a theory or hypothesis in a research setting” (Burns, 2000, p. 3). Burns (2000) further argues that researchers working in the positivist framework aim to “formulate laws to account for the happenings in the world around them, thus giving them a firm basis for prediction and control” (p. 3). Researchers working within the interpretivist framework take a different view of understanding knowledge. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) argue that researchers working in the interpretivist framework view knowledge as more subjective “based on experience and insight of a unique and essentially personal nature” (p. 6). Woods (1996) argues that this approach is often criticised because it is believed that “it is unable to theorise the larger system and to see how the ‘everyday’ is affected by it” (p. 48). Woods (1996) counters this argument by stating that “although this might be a legitimate criticism of some studies, it is not an essential feature of this approach” (p. 48). Cohen et al. (2000) argue that researchers who adopt the positivist approach to the social world will usually apply quantitative methodologies such as “surveys and experiments” (p. 6) to answer their research question. In contrast Cohen et al. (2000) state that researchers using the interpretivist framework will apply a qualitative approach to their research question using methods such as “participant observation and personal constructs” (p. 7).

Some authors, for example Travers (2000), Cohen et al. (2000) refer to an alleged methodological chasm between qualitative and quantitative research which they claim has divided the academic world since the conception of the qualitative methodology. The fundamental difference lies, however, between positivist and interpretivist research approaches, and not between quantitative and qualitative modes (Merriam, 1998, pp. 4-5). Travers (2001) suggests that the debate has its historical beginnings with the research and writing of Durkheim and Weber. Durkheim’s work argued that sociology should be concerned with large scale ‘macro’ processes or phenomena which can be measured in a scientific way. Qualitative research has long been criticised for only having ‘micro’ applications to the small group being studied. In contrast, Weber’s (1958) notion of *Verstehen* took an interpretivist approach and contended that the study of human behaviour requires an intricate understanding of those being studied, noting that we can only describe and appreciate different view points, not scientifically categorise them. Weber’s (1958) work implies as Cohen et al. (2000) state that an understanding of the participant is based on experience and insight and that knowledge of a subject is not “hard, real and capable of being transmitted in tangible form” (p. 6).

Interpretivist research, and qualitative research in particular, by virtue of its exploratory nature, has the goal of generating knowledge of human experience, perhaps in fresh ways that open up new understandings. Stake and Kerr (1994) as cited in Woods (1996) state that “research has the power to stimulate thinking as much as express conclusions” (p. 58). They further state that “if portrayed in a problematic way it can provoke us to think differently” (p. 58). Further to this understanding of qualitative research is Stake’s (1995) argument that “qualitative research tries to establish an empathetic understanding for the reader, through description, sometimes *thick description*, conveying to the reader what experience itself would convey” (p. 39). Within this research the participants’ speak for themselves and communicate directly with readers what they said; their own words are used to maintain a thorough understanding of what is being described throughout the data analysis. The literature and in particular the conceptual model is used to interpret the data and to draw out deeper meaning from the data. McEwan and McEwan (2003) argue that the qualitative researchers try to give further clarity to their research by constantly focusing on “explaining and interpreting what they observe, hear, and read” (p. 78).

The symbolic interactionist tradition encourages the development of a detailed understanding of the world of those being researched. Woods (1992) argues that in interactionism social reality is seen as constantly being redefined and reconstructed through all interactions within the social world that people live in. Whilst using the participants’ words, this research also interprets and makes meaning of these words using the conceptual framework described in Chapter One as a guide for much of the interpretation.

As stated earlier, the fundamental division in research exists between positivism and interpretivism rather than between qualitative and quantitative research. Hammersley (1989) and Silverman (1993) argue that it is possible to combine qualitative and quantitative methodology when studying the social world and that writers need to take care not to ignore one tradition in favour of the other. As Burns (2000) succinctly argues, “quantitative and qualitative methods may appear to be opposites derived from different philosophies, yet both are legitimate tools of research and can supplement each other, providing alternative insights into human behaviour” (p. 294). In the context of this particular research, the qualitative approach allowed the research questions to be more fully explored by allowing the participants to identify what was important to them and what impacted on their experiences.



In following Weber's (1958) *Verstehen* view of social research it was the intention of this research to hear what a small group of beginning teachers were saying about their experiences in their first year of teaching using the case study approach. Crowl (1993) supports this notion of qualitative research and argues that, characteristically, qualitative research attempts to describe behaviour or events exhibited by individuals or a group. Crowl (1993) states that "qualitative studies focus on the particular documents or persons under investigation; it is not the researcher's intent to generalize the findings to some larger population" (p. 7). Maxwell (1996) argues that qualitative studies are "not only interested in the physical events and behaviour that is taking place, but also in how the participants in your study make sense of this and how their understandings influence their behaviour" (Maxwell, 1996, p. 17). This research, whilst describing events that are important to the beginning teacher, interprets how these events impact on the experiences of the beginning teacher.

In keeping with Woods' (1996) concept of a qualitative researcher, this research sought to understand the social interaction of beginning teachers and to hear how they constructed their world. Woods' (1996) argument states that because "social interaction is constructed by the people engaged in it, one should try to see it from their point of view and appreciate how they interpret the indications given to them by others, the meaning they assign to them, and how they construct their own action. In addition, because this is a process, it must be sampled over time" (p. 39). Qualitative methodology allows the researcher, in Woods' (1996) words, to "grasp a sense of social flux" (p. 46). This symbolic interactionist tradition guided much of the work in the data gathering stage. As Woods (1992) writes "symbolic interactionism typically deals with small-scale, everyday life, seeking to understand processes, relationships, group life, motivations, adaptations, and so on" (p. 365). The symbolic interactionist approach allows the researcher accommodate structural elements such as class, gender and ethnicity, which often are overlooked and ignored in positivist research methodologies.

Becker and McCall (1990) argue that people tell stories in their everyday life and they construct meaning from the stories they tell, therefore they reinterpret the situation they are explaining. Becker and McCall (1990) contend that this everyday story telling has "parallels in symbolic interactionist enquiry in that it provides a way of moving further along the track of letting subjects tell their own narratives. They do it all the time. It is a matter of sitting back and letting the world happen – with a tape recorder or video camera running" (p. 257). Neuman (2000) challenges the notion of the researcher just 'sitting back and letting the participant tell the story'. Neuman (2000) argues that the role of the interpretivist researcher

is to develop an understanding of the social world that is being described and to “discover how people construct meaning in natural settings. An interpretivist researcher wants to learn what is meaningful or relevant to the people being studied, or how individuals experience daily life” (p. 71). This is done by getting to know the participants and the particular social setting. Becker and McCall’s (1990) notion of story telling as a research tool is useful to apply to the descriptions given in the interview stages by the beginning teachers. However, the researcher, as Neuman (2000) argues, also tries to find deeper meaning in these descriptions, which is done within this research during the analysis phase.

Bryman’s (2004) caution to researchers about not losing sight of what is being studied and the further suggestion that there is the “possibility that the researcher will be able to see through the eyes of only some of the people who form part of the social scene but not others, such as people of the same gender” (p. 280) is a caution that this researcher was mindful of throughout the data gathering stage. Stake’s (1995) notion of ‘*empathetic understanding*’ as a tool for reporting and recording the data was one that helped the researcher address Bryman’s (2004) concerns. Stake (1995) argues that is through the rich description of events that the researcher can establish an empathetic understanding for the reader of the participant’s experiences. The researcher employed a case study method, this approach allowed the researcher to further deepen the level of empathy and understanding of the participants’ experiences. Within this research the participants’ accounts are used to convey their experiences. The use of these detailed accounts acquired through the case study method, also addresses Bryman’s (2004) concerns of not always being able to see through the eyes of all participants as the stories are told by the participant using their construction of meaning for that particular event.

### **3.1.1 Case Study**

Case study methodology is most strongly associated with the areas of anthropology and sociology. The number of writers in this field is continuing to grow. Two of the most notable are Yin (1993, 1994) and Stake (1995) who write extensively in the field of case study research. Stake (1995) writes of the *critical uniqueness* of the case study methodology, suggesting that readers are drawn to the sense of uniqueness as they read the stories and experiential accounts of the case. Burns (2000) further argues that “case studies are focused on circumstantial uniqueness and not the obscurities of mass representations” (p. 326). It is this *uniqueness* that this research wanted to capture through the retelling of the critical events as told by the participants. Recognising the uniqueness of case study research is important as

it acknowledges the complexity of the environment in which social interaction takes place. Burns (2000) argues that every case “is embedded in historical, social, political, personal and other contexts and interpretations. Clean data sanitised by control in experimental techniques are not true to life” (p. 326). Tellis (1997) states that the “quintessential characteristic of case studies is that they strive towards a holistic understanding of cultural systems of action (Feagan, Orum & Sjoberg, 1990). Cultural systems of action refer to sets of interrelated activities engaged in by the actors in a social setting” (Tellis, 1997, p. 4). Stake (1995) reinforces this notion of the uniqueness: “qualitative case study research seldom proceeds as a survey with the same questions asked of each respondent, rather each interviewee is expected to have had unique experiences, special stories to tell” (p. 65). Bryman (2004) concurs with Stake’s (1995) argument that the value of case study research is that it elucidates unique features.

Case study research does have its detractors. Burns (2000) writes that “case study accounts can be decried as subjective, biased, impressionistic, and lacking in precision” (p. 384). He further states that “many research investigators regard the case study method with disdain, viewing it as a less desirable form of inquiry” (Burns, 2000, p. 379). The major concern for Burns (2000) with this type of research is the role of the researcher, as he believes that it is almost impossible for the researcher’s views and biases not to be reflected in the findings. He does, however, go on to say “what is forgotten is that bias can also enter into the conduct of experiments” (Burns, 2000, p. 474). Stake (1995) contends that the strength of case study research lies in its truly personal nature and in its ability to obtain the “descriptions and interpretations of others” (p. 64). Stake (1995) further adds that “qualitative case study is highly personal research. Persons studied are studied in depth. Researchers are encouraged to include their personal perspectives in the interpretation” (p. 134). Cohen et al (2000) support this notion by stating that the one significant hallmark of case study research is that “the researcher is integrally involved in the case” (p. 182).

Burns (2000) suggests that a second concern with case studies is that they “provide very little evidence for scientific generalisation” (p. 474). Burns (2000) continues to state that it “has been a common feature of literature critical of the case study method to assume that generalising theory is the only worthwhile goal” (p. 474).

Traditionally, case study research is concerned with the detailed study of a single event, community, organisation, or person. Gillham (2000, p. 1) argues that case study research is

usually the study of an individual case but multiple cases can be studied. Multiple case studies usually compare and contrast individual cases. This research involved five individual cases which were used both to reveal the individuality of the experiences and also to compare and contrast data.

### **3.2 Validity and Reliability or Authenticity and Truthfulness**

Neuman (2003) defines validity as “the match between a construct, or the way a researcher conceptualises the idea in a conceptual fashion, and a measure. It refers to how well an idea about reality ‘fits’ with actual reality” (p. 179). The extent to which an instrument measures or gives the researcher the information that they are after is the traditional view of validity. Bryman (2004) cites LeCompte and Goetz (1982), and Kirk and Miller (1986) as researchers who try to employ the same scientific terms and meanings of validity and reliability to their qualitative research. However, Maxwell (2002) cautions qualitative researchers against using positivist notions of validity. Maxwell (2002) citing Wolcott (1990) states that “understanding is a more fundamental concept for qualitative research than validity” (Maxwell, 2002, p. 39). Guba and Lincoln (1989) argue for the need to replace positivist notions of validity in qualitative research with the notions of ‘*authenticity*’ and ‘*trustworthiness*’. Neuman (2003) takes this idea further: “Qualitative researchers are less concerned with trying to match an abstract concept to empirical data and more concerned with giving a candid portrayal of social life that is true to the experiences of people being studied” (p. 185)

Critical to the analysis within this research is the interpretation of the participants’ experiences. The following writers offer ways in which the researcher interprets the participants’ experiences. Blumenfeld-Jones (1995) as cited in Woods (1996) writes of *fidelity* which, “like a painting, is about capturing a likeness of the subject of study. Such a likeness is not something that can be portrayed by simple photography, but requires construction, scene setting, mood inducing, character composition. It will not be a complete picture – that is impossible – but it will present an important aspect in a striking form” (p. 58). Such a portrayal requires the researcher to be truthful to the portrayal of characters within the research. The researcher can remain truthful to the participants through the use of triangulation and member checking which will be described in detail further in this chapter. The use of the participants’ own words within the interview situation and also their written words can also help to ensure a truthfulness about the interpretation of the data.

The notion of validity has not been rejected within this research, however, as a foundation Guba and Lincoln's (1989) notions of authenticity and truthfulness and Blumenfeld-Jones' (1995) concept of fidelity act as a guide to validity. This research was '*truthful*' to the stories of the beginning teachers and represented their stories as they were told to the researcher, with the researcher's interpretations, in line with the tradition of symbolic interactionism. Eisner (1991) as cited by Woods (1996) writes about the "ability to craft text so that what the observer has experienced can be shared by those who are not there" (p. 58). This research tells the stories of those interviewed in such a way that independent readers may gain an understanding of what the first year of teaching was like for each interviewee. It is truthful and authentic to the stories that were shared in that it uses many of the participants' own words to capture their experiences.

Denzin (1989) writes about methodological triangulation as an internal validity check. This approach was employed within this research. Burns (2000) argues that "a commonly used technique to improve the internal validity is triangulation. Triangulation may be defined as the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspects of human behaviour" (p. 419). Methodological triangulation was applied in this research by the use of two data gathering tools: open ended interviews and participant journaling. Participants brought their journals with them to each Interview and salient points from the journals were addressed and expanded upon in the interview. This allowed the researcher to question and further reveal what had been written; it also allowed the beginning teacher to reflect upon and interpret what had been stated. At consequent interviews, points made in the journals were readdressed. The journals gave focus to events that had occurred before the interview took place and also allowed the researcher to have a better understanding of events that were being discussed at the interviews as they were deeply personal and reflective accounts of events.

Further to methodological triangulation was the use of member validation or respondent validation (Bryman, 2004) throughout the stages of data gathering. After each participant was interviewed, a copy of the transcript was sent to them for checking and comment. Each beginning teacher was sent a draft copy of the discussion chapter and their comments and replies were incorporated into the completed version. As such this allowed the participant to validate the writing for its authenticity (Guba and Lincoln, 1989). The practice of sending each participant copies of transcripts and eventually drafts of the discussion chapters is supported by the work of Bryman (2004) who states that the "establishment of the credibility

of findings entails both ensuring that research is carried out according to the canons of good practice and submitting research findings to the members of the social world who were studies for confirmation that the investigator has correctly understood that social world” (p. 275).

Reliability within traditional research frameworks requires the ability of the study to be replicated with the same results occurring. Burns (2000) is critical of ethnographic studies because of the lack of reliability attached to the methodology. He argues that problems “of uniqueness and idiosyncrasy can lead to the claim that no ethnographic study can be assessed for reliability” (Burns, 2000, p. 270). Bogdan and Biklen (1992) as cited in Cohen et al. (2000) challenge Burns’ (2000) notion of reliability. Biklen (1992) states that “qualitative research reliability can be regarded as a fit between what researchers record as data and what actually occurs in the natural setting that is being researched, i.e. a degree of accuracy and comprehensiveness of coverage” (Cohen et al., 2000, p. 119). Cohen et al. (2000) citing Guba and Lincoln (1985) state that “dependability involves member checks, debriefing by peers, triangulation, prolonged engagement in the field, reflexive journals and independent audits” (p. 120).

The reliability of this research was addressed through the numerous member checks of transcripts and subsequent drafts of the discussion chapter. All interviews were recorded on audio tape, and the researcher took notes throughout the interviews, recording observations and highlighting interesting issues as they arose during the interview. These notes were then used in conjunction with the audio tape to construct the transcripts. Importantly the researcher’s University supervisor read some of the transcripts and provided valuable feedback on the subsequent direction of further interviews. In this manner the research maintained dependability (Guba & Lincoln, 1985). This was achieved via the feedback provided by the beginning teachers on the draft discussion chapters and transcript interpretations.

### **3.2.1 Generalisability or Translatability and Generativity**

The generalisation of case study research is an issue of great contention and one to which much time has been devoted by writers critiquing the area of case study research (Silverman, 1997; Burns, 2000; Bryman, 2004). The inability of case study research to be generalised is often seen as its greatest weakness. Generalisation is traditionally linked to external validity.

Stake (1995) argues, however, that the “function of research is not necessarily to map and conquer the world but to sophisticate the beholding of it” (p. 43).

External validity and generalisability of research both have their foundations firmly planted in the positivist approach to research. Schofield (2002) states that the traditional thinking and writing on the issue of generalisability of research lies in the early work of Campbell and Stanley (1963) who stated “external validity asks the question of generalisability: To what populations, settings, treatment variables, and measurement variables can the effect be generalised?” (Schofield, 2002, pp. 171-172).

Stake (1995) clearly argues that the place of case study research is not to be generalised, that indeed the real business of case study research is particularisation. Stake (1995) argues that we should

take a particular case and come to know it well, not primarily as to how it is different from others but what it is, what it does. There is emphasis on uniqueness, and that implies knowledge of others that the case is different from, but the first emphasis is on understanding the case itself (p.8).

The importance of case study research for Stake (1995) lies in its ability to fully understand and describe the one case being studied. Yin (1994), however, argues strongly for the importance of theory and suggests that the purpose of a case study is to test or prove a theory or develop a new theory, as such case studies should be able to be generalised.

Schofield (2002) succinctly summarises themes found in writers who have written on the concept of generalisability and these summaries are useful in their application to this research. Schofield (2002) states that writers have replaced the notion of generalisability with other terms: Guba and Lincoln (1981, 1982) write of *fittingness*, and Goetz and LeCompte (1984) write of *translatability* and *comparability*. Each of these terms acknowledge the individuality of case study research and acknowledge that through *thick descriptions* of each case readers can make informed decision about whether conclusions from one study can be useful in understanding other sites and situations (Schofield, 2002).

This research follows five beginning teachers as they work through their first year in the teaching profession. Each teacher is treated as an individual case. These teachers are by no means representative of all beginning teachers. As Stake (1995) suggests, they are important

because of their uniqueness. The discussion chapters seek to give *thick description* to their experiences making links to the conceptual framework and as such explores some commonalities between the participants and their experiences. These descriptions by their very nature could lead the reader to make further comparisons of their own and translate the stories to other beginning teachers' experiences. The research account plays the role of *generativity* by stimulating understanding and further research in the area of beginning teachers.

### **3.3 Interviews**

Mason (1996) makes an excellent distinction between researchers being data generators and researchers as data collectors. She suggests that the qualitative researcher cannot be a completely neutral collector of information. This is in contrast to the positivist view of data collection. Researchers using the positivist approach would argue that the reliability and validity of the research are compromised if the interviewer interacts with the interviewees (Burns, 2000, p. 362). Mason (1996), however, states that the researcher is actively engaged in the research process and in the generation of information. The researcher actively constructs meaning from this knowledge and information. Mason's (1996) work means that the interview should be a vital form of data generation where the interviewer has the opportunity to interact with the participant. The way in which the interview is conducted should ensure that the necessary information is gathered. Tuckman (1972) as cited in Cohen et al. (2000) states that the interview allows access to what is inside a person's head; makes it possible to measure what a person knows; what a person likes or dislikes, values and preferences; and what a person thinks and their attitudes and beliefs (p. 268). Stake (1995) writes of qualitative research being highly personal research, and whilst he is not directly writing about the Interview this can be said of the interview process. Cohen et al. (2000) state that it is "crucial to keep uppermost in one's mind the fact that the interview is a social, interpersonal encounter, not merely a data collection exercise" (p. 279).

Fontana and Frey (1994) state that interviewing is one of the most "powerful ways we use to understand our fellow human beings" (p. 361). Interviewing as a tool is inevitably an interactional situation where the participant, through the inquiry of the researcher, can "impart masses of information about themselves" (Ackroyd & Hughes, 1992, p. 102). Crano and Brewer (2002) argue that the interactive nature of the Interview, whilst being its biggest strength, is also its major drawback and may lead to bias in the data gathered. Interviewees



may feel as though they have to answer questions in a certain way to please the researcher. They may indeed try and give an answer that they think the researcher wants to hear. This can also occur in where respondents write answers that they think the quantitative survey data researcher wants.

Fontana and Frey (1994) advise that it is vital for the researcher conducting unstructured interviews to develop a rapport with the participants. This rapport they argue will lead to the ultimate goal of the unstructured Interview namely a greater understanding of the participant. A “close rapport with respondents opens doors to more informed research” (Fontana & Frey, 1994, p. 367). Fontana and Frey (1994) also suggest that gaining the trust of the participant is vital before they will disclose personal and detailed information, the information that may well be at the heart of the research. This influences the nature of disclosure and discussion between the participants and the researcher.

Bryman (2004) argues that the qualitative, unstructured interview has become a prominent method of research within the feminist research framework. He highlights four areas that make this method of data gathering attractive to feminist researchers: a high level of rapport between interviewer and interviewee; a high degree of reciprocity on the part of the interviewer; the perspective of the women being interviewed, and a non-hierarchical relationship. Whilst not using the feminist framework as a basis for this writing, these points resonated for the researcher and they were present during the interviews. The researcher tried to maintain an atmosphere throughout the interview process where the integrity of the participant was maintained in a professional relationship where both the interviewee and the interviewer’s comments were listened to and valued. The researcher developed a professional rapport with the participants where both the experiences of the researcher and the experiences of the participant were revealed and discussed. Freedom to disclose when feeling safe with the researcher, and perhaps as a result discover new meanings of experience, is important in the interpretivist tradition. Denzin (1989) as cited in Fontana and Frey (1994) remarks on “those interactional moments that leave marks on people’s lives have the potential for creating transformational experiences for the persons” (p. 369).

The unstructured and open-ended interview allows for the full exploration of themes and concepts that are important to the participant (Cohen et al., 2000, pp. 272-273). Researchers become part of the research tool in that they are truly interactive in the process of gathering meaningful and interactive data that is important to the participant. If the task of this research

is to make meaning of the beginning teachers' world, then the open-ended interview is a powerful vehicle to carry the beginning teachers' stories. Burns (2000) argues that the open-ended interview or the in-depth interview should take the form of a conversation between the interviewer and the interviewee. Burns (2000) says that the conversational manner of the unstructured interview allows the researcher in an unobtrusive manner to gather the "informant's perception of themselves, of their environment and of their experiences" (p. 425). Burns (2000) further states that this type of interview should be "free flowing conversation, relying heavily on the quality of the social interaction between the investigator and informant" (p. 280). He does suggest that the interviewer can subtly redirect the interviewee if they, in their conversation, stray too far from the research questions. However, Cohen et al. (2000) argues that an unstructured interview should allow the respondent to express their feelings as "fully and spontaneously" as they choose (p. 273). Burns' (2000, p. 280) suggestion that the interviewer should redirect the participant may then stifle the interviewee's willingness to spontaneously and fully explore concepts as they desired.

### **3.3.1 The Participants**

The researcher spoke to all the beginning teachers at each of the schools involved in the research, as a collective group and explained to them the general research aims and objectives, and the commitment required in the research. After speaking to them collectively and outlining the research, individuals were contacted about their willingness to be involved in the research. Five participants volunteered from a group of ten across six schools.

The five participants included three females and two males. The sample of beginning teachers was random in the sense that they were not chosen for particular characteristics; they volunteered to be involved in the study. The only criterion imposed upon the participants was that they were beginning their first full-time year of teaching.

The five participants were diverse in their trained teaching areas and their individual backgrounds. Only one of the five entered the teaching profession directly after completing a teaching degree. Two others worked in industry before the school workplace, and one worked as a casual teacher for twelve months before taking on a permanent position. One of the five participants completed further academic degrees before entering the school workplace.

### **3.3.2 The Interview Procedure**

Each of five participants was interviewed four times throughout the course of the academic school year. One participant was interviewed three times due to unforeseen circumstances. The interviews took place at the end of each academic term. Each interview was approximately one hour in length. All interviews were conducted using an unstructured, open-ended interview method (Cohen et al., 2000, p. 289). Each interview session began with the same type of open-ended question. An example of this is as follows: “Could you tell me some of the things that have been happening to you this term and how the term has progressed for you?”

The first open-ended question acted as a spring-board for further discussion, and the initial response of the participant usually highlighted an issue or concern they wanted to talk about. There was not a standardised list of questions that the interviewees were asked, but the conceptual framework acted as a guide to the direction the interviews took. It was important, however, to hear their unique experiences and special stories (Stake, 1995) without the researcher unduly influencing the content of the interviews. The information that the beginning teachers shared was pertinent to their experiences and relevant to the research story. At times, clarification was sought on issues mentioned by the participants.

At each interview, the participants brought with them their professional journals and at times throughout the interviews some of them would refer to what they had written. They often used the interview time to clarify what they had written or used the journal as a prompt to discuss important issues.

### **3.3.3 Analysis of the Interviews**

#### **The Transcripts**

Whilst writers acknowledge that transcripts are an important and vital part of the interview process, they also acknowledge that transcribing interviews is a costly and time-consuming exercise (Cohen, et al, 2000). Many writers who discussed the topic of transcription suggested that the process could be outsourced. Cohen et al. (2000) acknowledge that transcribing is a crucial step and one which needs to be approached with caution. They (2000) state that the “problem with much transcription is that it becomes solely a record of data rather than a record of a social encounter” (p. 281). This problem was addressed in two ways.

Firstly, whilst it was time-consuming, the researcher chose to transcribe the interview data. This allowed for detailed and intimate knowledge of the transcripts. Valuable nuances and insights were noticed that may have been lost if the transcripts had been outsourced. This also gave the researcher the chance to begin an initial analysis of the data. Bryman (2004) states “there are grounds for making analysis an ongoing activity, because it allows the researcher to be more aware of emerging themes that he or she may want to ask about in a more direct way in later interviews” (p. 332).

Secondly, whilst using a tape recorder to record the spoken words, the researcher also made notes throughout the interviews, recording subtle body language and unspoken gestures that were pertinent to how information was conveyed. These notes were used to supplement the transcripts and enrich the data gathered. When the researcher began analysing the transcript data, as themes emerged the notes made during the interviews were used to make meaning of what was being said. At times, these notes enabled the researcher to bring the words of the transcript alive and enrich the words by drawing on non-verbal cues.

As stated earlier, in conjunction with the above procedures, all completed transcripts were sent to the participants via electronic mail and their amendments were asked for. This procedure took place four times over the course of the year. These amended transcripts were the final transcripts used for analysis.

#### Analysis of the Transcripts / Interviews

Much of the writing on analysis of interview data is positivist in approach. For example, Miles and Huberman (1994) as cited in Cohen et.al. (2000) suggest the use of coding to label and sort data. This method of data analysis attempts to maintain the neutrality of the researcher and the objectivity of the analysis. However, Fontana and Frey (1994) argue that the place of the researcher in interactive and open-ended interview research should not be a neutral one. They contend that the voice of the researcher should be heard and that the data should not be ‘sanitised’ as the researcher was an interactive member of the data gathering process. Fontana and Frey (1994) state that more “recently, sociologists have come to grips with the reflexive, problematic, and, at times, contradictory nature of data and with the tremendous, if unspoken, influence of the researcher as an author (see Dickens & Fontana, 1994; Gertz, 1988)” (Fontana & Frey, 1994, p. 372). Scheurick (1997) takes a postmodern approach to interviewing and the analysis of data gathered. Scheurick (1997) argues that during the interview stage “meaning and understanding shift, in large and small ways, across

people, across time and across situations” (p. 62). For Scheurick (1997) this has implications for the analysis of interview data. He states that the conventional “positivist view of interviewing vastly underestimates the complexity, uniqueness, and indeterminateness of each one-to-one human interaction” (p. 64). Scheurick (1997) states that the conventional coding of interview data removes the humanness from the data gathered, as “it simply serves to hide the overwhelming absent presence of the researcher and her/his modernist assumptions” (p. 63).

The position taken in this research was between the strictly positivist approach of Miles and Huberman (1994), and Fontana and Frey’s (1994) and Scheurick’s (1997) postmodern approach. The work of Burns (2000) was used as a guide to the data analysis. Burns (2000) states that the “purpose of analysing the data is to find meaning in the data” (p. 338). He states that the data needs to be organised in such a way that comparisons and contrasts can be made. As the transcripts were read and re-read, common themes were grouped together and meaning was sought through the words that appeared in the themes. Burns (2000) describes this type of analysis as content analysis. This process allows the researcher to examine text for meaning. However, Burns (2000) does caution that there is a “problem of hidden meaning, of reading between the lines, and we will never know whether our reading between the lines is what the informant was meaning” (p. 339). To address Burns’ (2000) concerns, the participants were asked to comment and give feedback to the researcher on the interpretation of their words.

As the interviews progressed, emerging themes and foci were noted. As suggested by Burns (2000), a system of grouping themes according to how they addressed the overall research question was used. The themes were sorted and categorised using the conceptual framework developed from the literature as a guide. This framework formed the basis for further exploration of the transcripts and the data. Initially the participants’ words tell the story. Using the conceptual framework to guide interpretation, the analysis chapters use many direct quotes from the journal and interviews to discuss significant events and concepts.

### **3.4 Referencing From the Transcripts**

In the discussion and analysis chapters where direct quotes from the transcripts are used as part of the analysis, the following referencing system is used to clarify from which transcript the quote originates. After the quotation, the participant’s pseudonym is cited in brackets,

followed by the interview number and the page number from the transcript where the quotation appears. Due to the large volume of data generated from the interviews of five participants over a twelve month period, the transcripts are not included as part of the appendices of this thesis. These transcripts are held in accordance with the Australian Catholic University data storage guidelines.

Throughout the transcripts, the participants talk about actual events and people from their workplaces. To ensure the anonymity of the people discussed, the researcher has used pseudonyms for these people.

### **3.5 Journals**

Burns (2000) writes about the use of journals in ethnographic research, and the discussion is applicable to this case study research. He states that diaries can be often used prior to interviews as this “record provides a basis for further questions that explore job-related activities in more depth” (Burns, 2000, p. 439). He further suggests that the use of diaries in combination with interviews is a most valuable research tool, particularly if observation is too obtrusive. This was the manner in which the journals were used within this research. Stake (1995) suggests that the study of documents as a supplement to interviews allows for “unexpected clues to be uncovered” (p. 68). A further understanding of the world of the participant can be gained through the use of journaling.

Participants were asked to keep a reflective journal of their experiences. For the most part, the majority kept the journals, using great detail. The most effective use of the journal was that it provided stimuli for the participants during the interview process. At times it was a reminder of events that the participant wanted to discuss at the interview.

At the end of the four interviews, the journals were collected and used to compare and contrast what had been said at the interview. At times, the journal clarified issues or highlighted an issue that was of particular concern. The journals worked to supplement the information gathered through the interviews. Common themes that appeared in the journal data was matched and compared to the interview data. Within the analysis and discussion chapter, the direct quotes from the journals are used to reinforce themes apparent within the interviews.

In the discussion and analysis chapters, direct quotes from the journals are used as part of the analysis as discussed above. Every effort is made within these chapters to reference thoroughly using the date the journal entry was made. At times, however, the participant did not write the date on their journal entry. Where the date has been provided within the journal, it is noted in the referencing. If there is no date within the journal, the date is absent in the referencing.

### **3.6 Ethical Considerations**

The overall Catholic governing body of the schools where the research was conducted was contacted to obtain an ethical clearance to conduct research in their schools. In addition to the Catholic Education Office permission, permission was also sought from each individual Principal at the school level.

Once permission had been given to work in the individual schools, the Principals introduced the researcher to their beginning teachers. At these initial meetings, the beginning teachers were spoken to as a collective within the individual schools. The intention of the research was explained to them. In these initial meetings any general questions were answered about the research. It was explained to them that participation in the study was voluntary. The voluntary nature of the research participation is in line with current Australian Catholic University ethical guidelines.

Two days after visiting each school, individual teachers were contacted and asked if they would be willing to be involved in the research. After individuals had expressed interest in being involved in the research, the researcher organised to meet with them again on an individual basis to fully explain the nature of the research and complete all the necessary participant consent forms.

Each participant received at these second meetings a Participant Information Letter outlining the nature of the research, their involvement in the research and their rights (see Appendix i). They were also given an Informed Consent form (see Appendix ii) which they, along with the researcher, signed. Both parties have a copy of this document.

After each interview, the participants were sent a copy of the transcript via electronic mail to read and edit as they saw necessary. They could add or delete material as they felt

appropriate. Very few alterations were requested by the participants. At all stages throughout the writing and data gathering process, the participants had the opportunity to comment on what was being written and have input into the final draft. As such the researcher tried to remain authentic to each participant (Stake, 1995).

The confidentiality of each participant was maintained through the use of pseudonyms. Adherence to the Australian Catholic University guidelines for safe storage of data was also an important procedural process.

### **3.7 Chapter Conclusion**

Within an interpretive framework, the world of five beginning teachers was explored. The key issue throughout the research was to explore the issues and concerns that were important to the beginning teachers as they saw them within the school context and also using the conceptual framework as guide. The method employed was that of case studies using open-ended and unstructured interviews as the predominant tool for gathering data. The beginning teachers also kept a journal outlining their experiences. Five participants volunteered to be part of the research from a pool of ten beginning teachers.

The writings of Stake (1995), Burns (2000) and Tellis (1997) guided the design of the research and in particular gave direction to the generation of a case study. The work of Maxwell (1996), Guba and Lincoln (1989), and Blumenfeld-Jones (1995) helped the researcher conceive and achieve a level of trustworthiness, authenticity and fidelity, and in particular guided the research in terms of remaining true to the words of the participants. Cohen et al. (2000) in conjunction with Fontana and Frey (1994) gave detailed guidance for the data analysis and final preparation of the discussion chapter.



# CHAPTER FOUR

## ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

*“Beginning teachers face many harsh realities during their first years of teaching and are often forced into situations where they are required to masquerade as experts”*

*(Waldsorf & Lynn, 2002, p. 190).*

### 4.0 The Intention Of This Chapter

The focus of the analysis chapters is to analyse the experiences of the five beginning teachers and to give meaning to their experiences. As explained earlier, for manageability in the reading of the analysis each of the five stories are compiled in separate chapters. Travers (2001) suggests that case study work is to understand the reality that those being studied make of their world. This study is intending to see the world of beginning teachers from their perspective (Travers, 2001) and interpret this world using the symbolic interactionist framework (Mead, 1943; Blumer, 1950; Woods, 1996). For much of the following chapters the words of the beginning teachers from the interviews are used to highlight the experiences. However, these accounts are interpreted using the conceptual framework highlighted in Chapter One as a guide to analyse the discourse amongst the literature on beginning teachers. Clandinin and Huber (2002) contend that “(T)eachers’ stories, their narratives of experience, are both personal – reflecting teachers’ life histories – and social – reflecting the milieu, the contexts in which teachers live” (p. 161).

Each story is set amongst the individual school background which makes each experience unique, yet there are many common threads and themes which are drawn together in this chapter and further explored in Chapter Nine. As Stake (1995) alludes to, this research is interested in these beginning teachers for “both their uniqueness and their commonality. We seek to understand them. We would like to hear their stories” (p.1).

### 4.1 The Individual Stories

The format of the following discussion takes every individual teacher and analyses each experience separately against one or more elements of the conceptual framework. Through the use of headings attention is drawn to the significant concept as it affects the experiences of

the beginning teacher being discussed. Not every story will be analysed highlighting each of the five conceptual notions as this would be tedious and there are obvious overlaps in the relevance and importance of the concept between the five stories. Pertinent experiences which illustrate the importance of the concept for the beginning teacher's interpretation of their social world will be elucidated.

## **4.2 Jane**

*“Term One has finally come to a close – it was a great, enjoyable but challenging experience. For me, the teaching aspect was very rewarding – it was great to be respected by most students and being a new teacher, it was good to feel recognised and acknowledged by most of the students in my classes. When the students start to ask you questions and look to you for guidance, I started to feel a definite sense of belonging within the school community.”*  
*Jane writing in her journal, 12<sup>th</sup> April, 2002.*

### **4.2.1 Introduction**

Jane's decision to move into teaching was one made with a lot of care. She didn't go into teaching as a natural progression from her university degree; she was offered a scholarship to complete a PhD in her chosen area. Jane decided that she wanted to teach. She came to teaching with a very strong academic background, with a desire to do well in all areas of her life. Her position within the school was a contracted position for twelve months. Jane was enthusiastic and excited about the prospect of teaching, seeing herself as very dedicated to her profession and she continually expressed a desire to 'do well'. Jane was by her own admission a very hard worker.

Jane's concerns initially were characterised by those issues that researchers (Burke & Notar (1986); Gilles, Cramer & Hwang, 2001) have catalogued as the 'survival stage', namely, concerns about discipline, respect from students, fear of the unexpected occurring in her lesson and contact with parents. Jane in her journal notes “discipline slips, lunch time detentions, following up work not handed in and dealings with parents” (Journal, 12<sup>th</sup> April, 2002) were all aspects that “were starting to detract from the enjoyment of teaching” (Journal, 12<sup>th</sup> April, 2002). Jane's discussions focused on these areas of concerns, particularly in her first term of teaching.

#### 4.2.2 Developmental Stages of Teaching

Whilst Jane expressed concern for those issues fundamentally categorised by researchers as lying within the survival stage she quickly moved from this beginning stage to what Fuller (1969), the classic stage theorist would label the third stage, concern about impact. In April she notes in her journal that “handling all those other things that go with teaching – student matters” were of paramount concern for her, a concern that lies in Fuller’s (1969) survival stage. In her journal on 25<sup>th</sup> May she notes “I am working on better ways to give students quality feedback”, in her writing she is concerned about her impact on students, Fuller’s (1969) third stage. As discussed in the review of literature in Chapter Two, Chiodo and Chang (2001) challenged the traditional notion that stage theorists present. They asserted that development was not fixed, that the being teacher moved fluidly through the various stages as situations arose. Throughout Jane’s interviews and journal entries it was observed that it was possible to be in the ‘survival’ stage yet be aware of the needs of students and how to best address them. Throughout the year she experienced various situations that fell into all three identified stages. This is congruent with Martin, Chiodo and Chang’s (2001) research. They reported that participants in their three year study of beginning teachers moved from one stage to the next at any given time, depending on the circumstances in which they found themselves. Capel’s (1998) study of newly qualified teachers also concurs with this finding and refutes Fuller’s (1969) unidirectional progression through the different stages.

Whilst Jane’s primary concerns were those that could be categorised as ‘survival’ notions, she was, from the early interviews, concerned about her individual students and their classroom experiences. She reflected on the type of lessons she delivered and how as a teacher: “I had to become more flexible and think about what they are going to learn, to improve their learning” (Jane, Interview 2, p. 11). She went on to say: “Like I want to make sure with the students that they understand their work. So if I don’t go over it after an activity or something, well I think how do I know that they understand it?” (Jane, Interview 2, p. 11).

Jane started to express these concerns about student learning as well as her impact on student learning in the early interviews. However, at the same time as she was very clearly focusing on individual student outcomes she still saw discipline during these lessons as a major issue. How and when to discipline students formed a major part of her reflection on her teaching. She was, however, supported by her staff in her endeavours to discipline students. Writing about her faculty in her journal, Jane says “they offer support and advice” (Journal, 26<sup>th</sup> April,

2002). The culture prevailing in Jane's school was one of support. She was encouraged to begin to develop her teaching through the supportive interaction of faculty members

### 4.2.3 Culture

Jane's development as a teacher was promoted by the nature of her school and how she sees her place within the organisation. She identified many levels of support within the school.

About her faculty colleagues she says:

We don't have a bad word to say to each other, in the holidays we get together to do some work and have a BBQ at our head teacher's house. So outside of school too, it is good to know that you have got that support there from them as well, there are people you can talk to, that they are always very willing. I think if I wasn't in that situation it would be hard if you didn't have a relationship with the PE staff and overall staff it would be a lot different.

(Jane, Interview 2, p. 12).

Of the Deputy Principal and Principal she asserts:

Our Deputy Principal and Principal are always there if there is an issue or concern. But you have got your support network. If you have a problem you can just ask them and they are not going to say 'don't you know that, why don't you know that?' because they are just really supportive. I found if, probably I hadn't had that support then maybe I wouldn't enjoy it.

(Jane, Interview 3, p. 13).

Jane's experience of her school and in particular her colleagues was important to her, and it was given significant time in each of our interviews and throughout her journal writing. The importance she placed on these interactions may be explained by Kardos, et al. (2001).

Beginning teachers are eager to succeed in their schools and they look to other teachers as sources of input for how they should interact with students, how to deliver content in the classroom and they even look to colleagues for guidance on how to behave and what to say in meetings (Kardos et al., 2001, p. 250).

When questioned where she thought this support stemmed from, she responded: "I think probably our Principal, when he set everything up I think. He seems a very positive person, he seems very focused on the staff, he doesn't seem to be focused on himself and gaining all the glory or power or good responses for himself" (Jane, Interview 3, p. 14). She goes on to cite an example where the staff had been working hard to prepare their documentation and teaching materials for a systemic school review. After the review the Principal gave staff a thank-you note accompanied by gifts that were individualised. She reflects that "they

recognised you as an individual as well, not just working as part of a team” (Jane, Interview 3, p. 14).

This was important to her and symbolises the culture of the school. It also formed the foundations for Jane’s interactions with other staff and how she became involved in the organisation. She, because of her positive and supportive experiences, quickly felt as though she belonged legitimately to the organisation and that she was responsible to it and for it. She retold a story of parental interaction where she was placed in an awkward position; the parent was questioning another staff member’s actions toward their daughter. The student was in Jane’s home room so the parent had contacted her. She says: “I think it is important in turn that they’re supporting you, you need to make sure you give them the support as well” (Jane, Interview 3, p. 14). In this situation Jane demonstrated maturity and a sense of team work and collegiality. She defended the staff member’s position as she saw that this was her role and she believed that she would be given this same support in a similar situation.

The environment Jane described is one Birkeland and Johnson (2002) would argue supports and nurtures the beginning teacher. Birkeland and Johnson (2002) contend that “while the Principal’s approach goes a long way in creating a supportive atmosphere, the ways teachers interact with each other ultimately shape a school’s professional culture” (p. 20). It is within this environment that Jane’s professional identity has developed.

#### **4.2.4 Identity**

Kelchtermans and Ballet (1999) state that developing a “socially recognized identity as a proper teacher is a highly valued working condition for any beginning teacher” (p. 6). Jane refers to an example of this recognised identity. During the year, she was asked to present work she had completed at University level at a conference interstate and she had to take a day off work to get to the conference. The day before she left at a staff meeting “the Deputy stood up and said, ‘we wish you luck and we are very proud of you’. I got support from the staff which is really good” (Jane, Interview 2, p. 12). Kelchtermans and Ballet (1999) assert that “professional relationships within the school are extremely important to beginning teachers in order to develop a positive self esteem” (p. 7). The fact that Jane felt good about her place in the school and about her job, is largely determined by the nature and culture of the school. This supportive collaborative culture (Hargreaves, 1994) is one which lays the foundation for the forming of Jane’s teacher and ‘self’ identity.

One point that Jane continued to refer to throughout the year was that of appearing young particularly when she had to deal with parents. Of particular concern initially for her were parent teacher interviews. She says:

I wasn't going to let parents over run me but I found it was hard being a young teacher, they would know that you are young, just by looking at you. And they would be thinking well who is this person telling me what to do with my child?  
(Jane, Interview 3, p. 3)

Jane struggled with the idea of her identity as a teacher and the legitimacy of her position within the school. She saw her youth and her youthful appearance as being a barrier to professional dialogue with the parents. As she states:

It was really important that I needed to be definite with the parents and at times I found that hard because probably being a younger teacher a lot of the parents are older than me and I was brought up that you have to respect your elders and things like that, I found it probably difficult at times. Probably the other teachers could just come out and say I would assume that would be probably their experience as well, to just come out and say just what needed to be said to the parents. I found that I had to be a bit more tactful being a new teacher and probably a younger teacher.  
(Jane, Interview 3, p. 1)

The preoccupation with perception and appearing young is an important concern and one that demonstrates the level of anxiety and vulnerability Jane experienced in her first months as she strove toward a greater understanding of herself as a teacher, her professional identity and the legitimacy of herself as teacher. Goodson and Cole (1993) as cited in Peeler and Jane (2003) explain this as part of the developmental phase of the beginning teacher. Goodson and Cole (1993) state in Peeler and Jane (2003) as beginning teachers “develop a teacher identity they redefine the role of teacher and interpret self in new ways. Initial discomfort, confusion and low self-perception slowly transform as levels of comfort increase” (p. 3).

Jane continues to say “having contact with parents helps you develop. You learn what to say and how to handle things” (Jane, Interview 2, p. 9). As the year progressed Jane's apprehension and concern about dealing with parents lessened. It was as Peeler and Jane (2003) suggested as she became more confident in her role as teacher. Confidence for Jane was a characteristic she worked hard on and one that she felt was important to develop. How she presented herself to staff and in particular to students in her classroom was important.

The appearance of confidence and having everything under control was important to Jane  
She says:

Sometimes you feel very intimidated. I think sometimes you want to appear confident but on the inside you think I don't feel very confident at all. Like I know the first couple of weeks teaching some people said to me you appear very confident and I said believe me on the inside I am thinking oh, I hope everything goes well. I am not very confident; I have to make sure I am prepared. I can't go into a lesson not knowing what I am teaching.  
(Jane, Interview 2, p. 2).

Kelchtermans and Ballet address these feelings of self doubt expressed by Jane stating that during "their first years in the job, teachers heavily invest in the development of their self confidence as teachers. The judgement (assessment) by significant others plays a central role" (p. 6). This was true of Jane's experience. Jane was encouraged in all areas of her teaching by her Principal, Faculty Head and fellow colleagues, and it was important to her, as she made mention of this support during every meeting we had. Throughout the interviews Jane's confidence in herself as a teacher grew. Much of this can be attributed to the supportive and collegial environment in which she was working, which will be analysed in greater detail further on in the discussion.

Jane continually remarked how "I like going to work, I like, I enjoy my teaching, but you know when you get someone there that you can have a laugh with or whatever, that's been good." (Jane, Interview 2, p. 12). And in a later Interview "I enjoy school life, I enjoy going to school I think not only because, not only because of the people I work with, I formed some really good friendships with other teachers here. But also just going to school and seeing the kids' reactions" (Jane, Interview 3, p. 9). She did, however, face daily conflict and turmoil within herself about who she was as teacher. She questioned who or what was her teacher persona and how this identity moulded with her personal identity away from the classroom and away from the school. Bullough, Young and Draper (2004) believe that "becoming a teacher involves a complex negotiation between person and place, including students and other teachers" (p. 367). The findings from this research suggest that it involves an intricate knowledge of oneself and comfortably meshing the private self with the professional self.

Jane supports this idea as she reflects on her first term of teaching:

Yeah I found that probably first term or so for me it has been hard for me to develop. Like at home it doesn't matter, well it does matter you are probably more at ease in your own environment how you come across. Generally like you are a loving and gentle

person, but at school it is hard sometimes because you are new at a school you can't. If you come across that way the students might think that you don't have, you are trying to establish in your classroom discipline strategies and rules and things like that. But at the same time you have also got to show them that you are understanding and things like that.  
(Jane, Interview 3, p. 11).

To resolve this struggle with who she was in the classroom and how students perceived her was important to Jane as she wanted to be liked, but more importantly she wanted her classroom to be well structured and one where students were learning. These two notions seemed to Jane at times incongruent. Clement and Vanderberghe (2001) as cited in Bullough, Young and Draper (2004) argue that "teachers place the relationship with their pupils at the very core of their profession" (p. 376). They go on to say that "beginning teachers discover, however, that establishing such relationships is more difficult than they first thought" (Bullough, Young & Draper, 2004, p. 377). Whilst this was difficult in the beginning for Jane, her turmoil or inner conflict comes from a sense of losing her identity as she states "you are probably besides being a teacher you are also an ordinary person" (Jane, Interview 3, p. 11). This search for 'who am I as teacher' or search for identity is one which Connelly and Clandinin (1999) believe plays a vital role in the stories of teachers, and teachers throughout their teaching lives strive to answer. From the beginning of Jane's teaching experience she has worked towards constructing a picture of who she is as a teacher. She gives an example of how she wants to be seen particularly by parents in her journal, "you don't want to be seen as too harsh" (Journal, 9<sup>th</sup> August, 2002).

Jane had an image of how she wanted to be perceived by the students: "I like to be seen as a teacher that just doesn't snap when they do something little" (Jane, Interview 3, p. 8). She states later in the interview: "umm so I, you like to be seen as reasonable, but at the same time you don't want to be seen, they need to know their limits" (Jane, Interview 3, p. 8). She continues to say: "I just want to be seen as fair in their eyes" (Jane, Interview 3, p. 8). To Jane it was important how the students saw her, what type of teacher they thought she was. This at times predetermined the activities and interactions in her classroom. Zeichner and Gore's (1990) argument that students play a significant role in teacher socialisation is certainly clearly demonstrated by Jane's behaviour and comments. Jane asserts: "You know you would look pretty silly if you were trying to do something with students and it didn't work" (Jane, Interview 3, p. 15). These concerns were expressed early in her teaching year and did not seem to dominate her conversation later in the year. Much of this can be



attributed to her feeling comfortable with her 'place' within the school and also linked to her growing sense of identity. A journal entry she makes on the 29<sup>th</sup> November clearly illustrates her growing sense of identity and her sense of 'place' within the school, "I feel I have grown in my teaching. I can feel there is more of me coming through in my teaching" (Journal, 29<sup>th</sup> November).

#### **4.2.5 Conclusion**

Jane's development and growth as a teacher can be charted throughout her interviews. She expressed anxiety and concerns about issues that one would expect to associate with a beginning teacher: discipline and classroom management, stress over the workload, queries on how to mark and assess papers, apprehension at having to deal with parents but importantly Jane successfully negotiated her way through many of these hurdles. Her journey through the first year of teaching was made less tumultuous due to the positive, supportive and collegial nature of the school environment in which she worked. Jane's sense of herself, her identity as a teacher blossomed as the interviews and year progressed, due largely to the fact that she felt as though she was a legitimate part of the school teaching staff and that she was a valued member of the community. She speaks positively of her experiences, and the way the staff accepted her and valued what she added to the school. For Jane the role that those in leadership positions played in her transition from novice to first year teacher was an important and valuable one. She was provided throughout the year with many positive role models and supportive colleagues who guided her through the obstacles she encountered. The role the Principal and Deputy Principal played in her growth and development is one that should be acknowledged. Jane received many personal affirmations of the job that she was doing from both the Principal and Deputy Principal, this was important to her and acted to reinforce her commitment to the school and teaching itself. This affirmation from the school leaders also validated her teacher identity. This sense of self worth and belonging is a vital part in the transition of a beginning teacher and certainly played a determining role in Jane's continued growth. The culture of Jane's school fostered the development of her emerging teacher identity.

How Jane perceived herself as a teacher and interpreted her teaching experiences was influenced by the culture of the school. She experienced difficulties in areas of classroom management early in her teaching role and she questioned her legitimacy as a teacher. These experiences however, did not dominate her first year and the way she interpreted this year as she was given support and nurtured throughout the year. She was made to feel a valuable

member of the school community and as she continued to grow and develop this sense of belonging deepened. She had a very positive self image that was foster by the environment in which she worked.

# CHAPTER FIVE

## ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

### 5.0 Anne

*During the holidays I was quite excited about my new job and keen to be organised for what I was teaching. Most of my friends had already been given their timetables and a copy of the programs for each of their subjects – but I didn't really know what I would be doing.*

*Anne writing in her journal.*

#### 5.0.1 Introduction

Anne worked in industry for two years before she entered teaching after completing a Diploma in Education. Anne is an organised, methodical and well-planned teacher who, throughout her interviews, exhibited a high level of reflection on her practice and demonstrated eagerness to present quality lessons. She spoke enthusiastically about lessons she taught and the new ideas she tried to enhance student learning.

Anne's teaching position was initially as a replacement position, replacing a staff member on maternity leave for six months. Anne's story allows us to view the beginning teachers' narratives from an interesting perspective, that of a non-permanent beginning teacher. Her position as a replacement teacher was only for a semester. She moves from this replacement position to casual teaching. Anne has blocks of casual teaching at the same school as Jane. Anne's different experiences at both schools give a fascinating insight into the function and importance of school culture with particular reference to staff social interaction. It is an aspect of beginning teaching that is worthy of discussion. The initial discussion centres on her six month replacement position.

Her first interview highlights themes of professional isolation and loneliness, a sense of vulnerability, lack of collegial support, and a culture that perpetuated and supported the further growth of these negative experiences. Much of Anne's initial teaching experience was one of 'survival'. McCormack and Thomas (2003) highlight two fundamental areas of

concern for beginning teachers, into which many of Anne's anxieties and issues can be categorised. McCormack and Thomas (2003) state that within the Australian context:

The Review of Australian Teacher Induction (NSW DSE, 1992, cited in Khamis, 2000) classified the problems faced by beginning teachers into two broad categories: the teaching processes and the general socialisation of teachers. If these problems are left unattended, the professional growth and development of these teachers can be impaired and in the extreme lead to an early career exit (pp. 125-126).

Anne faced issues throughout her six months that led her to question whether she would return to the school the next day, let alone continue in the profession. She states in her journal after a particularly confronting situation with a staff member that "I came home and cried my eyes out and stressed out" (Journal entry). The many negative hurdles Anne was faced with during her initial introduction to teaching often overshadowed the very real and positive professional growth that occurred in her classroom practice. In her journal Anne notes that "I really enjoy my time in the classroom most of the time. I am still learning every minute, but I am mostly enjoying the learning experiences" (Journal entry). Anne worked hard to cater for the needs of the variety of students she encountered in her classrooms and she recounted many stories of success.

### **5.0.2 Socialisation**

Much of Anne's anxiety and many of the tensions she felt may be attributed to the lack of preparation on behalf of the school in establishing processes which enabled the school year to commence smoothly. As Waldsorf and Lynn (2002) comment, this is important in maintaining staff morale - the school structures and processes are vital to the positive work environment. Waldsorf and Lynn (2002) further contend that "a positive and supportive environment will reinforce, reward, and encourage teachers; a crisis-filled environment will not" (p. 190). As she put it "our first term here was a real shocker" (Anne, Interview 1, p. 4). There was a new person involved in writing the timetable for the beginning of the year and a new computer program was being used. At the beginning of the year teaching loads and class allocations had not been finalised, and staff and students had clashes on their timetable. Some classes due to these problems had two different teachers teaching them the one subject. This was the case for Anne, as she shared one of her classes with another teacher. She mentioned difficulties in finding a time to meet with the person she was sharing with and the fact that neither of them felt that they were responsible for the class. The timetable problems were compounded by the fact that no textbooks were available for the first few weeks of the school

year as they had not arrived at the school. Whilst these obstacles can be overcome they certainly make for a very unsettled beginning to the year and stretch staff resources. The availability of class text books lessens the pressure placed on the beginning teacher and helps them as they prepare classes, and try and set structures and routines in place within their classrooms.

The timetable problems were also compounded for Anne as she was underload in the initial timetable. She explains how this causes further tension for her amongst some staff:

Even with my timetable I was quite underload with the first one and when other teachers knew that, instead of just saying, 'Oh yeah, well you are new you need time to prepare', they were saying 'I'm over load, that's not fair, how come it works out that way?' So there was a bit of yeah .... Nastiness I think coming out.

(Anne, Interview 1, p. 1).

She goes on to say that other teachers were coming up to her and saying "everyone is not normally like this, everyone is usually supportive" (Anne, Interview 1, p. 1). Other staff suggested that this lack of support was "because of all the stress" (Anne, Interview 1, p. 1). Anne reserved her judgement about this and said she would have to wait and see next term if things changed. For Anne the timetable difficulties highlight a common theme throughout her interviews, one where she feels isolated and unsupported by her colleagues. This isolation becomes a major contributing factor to Anne's growing unrest and self-doubt about her abilities as a teacher. Researchers have highlighted the impact of isolation on beginning teachers and state that:

Even though teachers are in a setting densely populated with children and adults, they often experience feelings of isolation and loneliness, particularly psychological loneliness (Breeding and Whitworth, 1999; Gasner, 1999; Halford, 1998). They join faculties wherein friendships and social groups are already formed, and the cultural norms and shared history of the school are unknown to them (Brock and Grady, 1995; Sergiovanni, 1995) (As cited in Walsdorf and Lynn, 2002, p. 191).

Walsdorf and Lynns' (2002) argument presents a similar notion of the experiences of beginning teachers to the analogy of migrant used by Sabar (2004) to explain the difficulties beginning teachers have entering a culture they have very little understanding and connection with. Kelchtermans and Ballet's (1999) micropolitical approach to studying beginning teachers' transition into school life illuminates the difficulties many beginning teachers have in 'teacher socialisation' within the school organisation. They argue that negotiating and

‘surviving’ this area of school life is just as vital as classroom and pedagogical concerns: “this organisational socialisation constitutes an essential task for teachers as much as their classroom teaching” (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 1999, p. 2). This is certainly true of Anne’s experience.

From my time spent with Anne two stories stand out as critical events in shaping her professional identity and certainly they impacted on her self-confidence within the organisation. They impacted on how she perceived herself as a teacher. The first event clearly demonstrated a lack of support and understanding of the vulnerability of beginning teachers. The nature and way this incident occurred also demonstrated a lack of professional courtesy and respect from an experienced member of staff and it placed Anne in an awkward position as it was done in front of students. She reflected: “Well I have had a few nasty things happen” (Anne, Interview 1, p. 11). Anne questions the relevance of retelling these stories, however, they are important to her as they dominate her journal writing and much of the interview time. These experiences clearly impact on her experiences and her interpretation of the teaching world in the first weeks of entering the profession. They leave her with feelings of despondency and at times despair. Her interpretations of the events are deeply personal. Whilst it is lengthy, the following extract is important in understanding the interpretation and impact these events had on Anne. Anne begins hesitantly:

There is a message board out there. It is for when classes are going to be out on excursions, just as a reminder kind of thing.

And I was organising a liturgy, for Easter, and I had a Year 9 group who were involved and they were coming out for a practice. So I wrote a little thing on the board because they would be out of class for the practice and another teacher came in and told me off about it, because I didn’t realise that only the Deputy could write on those boards. But I had seen everyone writing on them. So it wouldn’t have occurred to me that you can’t because I had seen other people writing on them, I thought that was the way to do it. I wasn’t told that you can’t use that whiteboard.

It was the way she did it. I was talking to students and she comes up to me and said, “I need to talk to you.” It was really obvious that I was about to get in trouble. I didn’t want the students to see so we went into a staffroom and there were other teachers there. And she just yelled at me like you would yell at a student, and I felt like so bad and she kept saying “Don’t you ever do something like that again, don’t you know that you are not supposed to do that?” I just apologised a million times. Instead of her just saying “That’s OK you are only new, don’t do it again”, she said

“Do you know how much trouble you have caused?”  
 I started to go oh my god I have caused lots of trouble and I thought I had no intention of doing the wrong thing. She was still saying, “Don’t you ever do that again,” as she left. Then I started to think please don’t cry and then another teacher who I at first was thinking why are you still standing here I am really embarrassed couldn’t you pretend to do something. Because as she started he moved behind me and I was thinking, this is so embarrassing. Anyway as soon as she left he said, “Come with me” and took me into another staffroom and said, “Don’t listen to a thing she says, she is like that. I was about to step in and say excuse me that is no way to talk to other staff members.” I was thinking that I was so glad that he was there. And then he said “I think that she has got it in for you.” I didn’t know what to say. I felt really bad and it ended up that I was talking to the Deputy about something else and I said that I was sorry about all the trouble that I caused yesterday, writing on the board. And he said, “What?” and basically said there hadn’t been any trouble. He said that yes it was a written policy that says that you are supposed to tell the Deputy about it but it wasn’t any big deal. I felt better then because I thought that it had come from him.  
 (Anne, Interview 1, pp. 11-12).

This incident was a critical event in Anne’s formative weeks at the school, and clearly demonstrated the power struggles and the type of culture dominating the school. They were very disturbing to Anne and clearly demonstrate what Kelchtermans and Ballets’ (1999) study of beginning teachers in Flanders concludes, that when the beginning teachers’ sense of self and self worth are undermined and under attack they question their ability as a teacher.

Kelchtermans and Ballet (1999) state that:

Being a teacher and in particular a “beginning” teacher implies far more than a merely technical set of tasks, that can be reduced to effectively applying curriculum knowledge and didactical skills. The person of the teacher is inevitably also at stake in these professional actions ... When one’s identity as a teacher, one’s professional self esteem or one’s task perception is threatened by the professional context, then self interests emerge. They always concern the protection of one’s professional integrity and identity as teachers  
 (p. 6).

An important issue that researchers identify in the area of beginning teacher socialisation is the lack of interaction between teachers, particularly professional dialogue about practise. This often leaves beginning teachers with a lack of feedback on their performance and this is an area that discussions with Anne emphasise. Veenman, De Laat and Staring (1998) note “opportunities to interact with peers or obtain support and assistance from experienced

teachers, however, are often lacking” (p. 2). They go on to comment that studies within the Dutch Education system suggest that “two-thirds of beginning secondary school teachers are not observed teaching and do not receive feedback with regard to their teaching practices from experienced teachers and/or the school principals” (p. 3). The value of feedback within the socialisation of beginning teachers cannot be understated. Huling-Austin (1992) as cited in Veenman, De Laat and Staring (1998) makes a very important point that relates closely to Anne’s experience: suggesting that “beginning teachers should teach in areas that they are clearly prepared for, be given frequent opportunities to share and solve problems with other first year teachers, and receive feedback based on actual observation in the classrooms” (p. 4). Anne’s view of her teaching situation and her perception of herself as a teacher changed dramatically through a critical event in her early teaching life. This particular experience gave her back much-needed confidence in herself as a teacher, lost as a result of her current working environment.

The positive influence and nature of interacting with a supportive staff member becomes a reality for Anne, it changes how she teaches one of her classes dramatically and clearly highlights as Veenman, De Laat, and Staring (1998) suggest the importance of such interaction. Anne had been teaching a class with five students who had special needs. A support staff member was allocated to this subject with Anne some time well into the term and Anne expressed: “It was great!” After she got used to having another person in the classroom with her she began to really enjoy working with the support person and made very good use of her expertise, but also used her to gain feedback on her own teaching and the success of the lesson. Anne states that she “would ask if she thought, especially her little kids, if they had understood what I had done, or if she thought I needed to write on the board more points or less or more talking that kind of thing” (Anne, Interview 2, p. 5). Anne spoke enthusiastically about this opportunity to share ideas and have someone critically review what she was doing. It also proved to provide Anne with much-needed positive reinforcement of the job she was doing in her classroom. Anne comments that this “was good actually” (Anne, Interview 2, p. 5).

During these discussions Anne was much more positive about herself as a teacher and what she is doing in the classroom. This interaction gives her the chance to gain a professional insight into her classroom pedagogy, it came at a time that was critical in her development. As Woods (1996) writes, “social life is composed of many transactions. Schemes of interpretation become established through use but require continued confirmation by defining



acts of others” (p. 33). Through Anne’s previous interactions with staff members she was beginning to doubt her ability and question teaching as a profession. However, this much needed positive interaction changes Anne’s perception of herself. Anne comments on how she felt about being given an opportunity to critically reflect on her practice:

I was scared at first but once I woke up to the fact that she was an asset in there it was good. Especially when she talked to me afterwards. I could ask ‘do you think he understood’. One of them who is not really a confident reader volunteered to read in the class once and I was so glad she was in the class to hear that. It was good to have someone to talk to about it as well.  
(Anne, Interview 2, p. 5).

### 5.0.3 Culture

The following incident highlights the type of critical culture that was prevalent within Anne’s school. Anne retells a story where her Head of Faculty, the same person that has been allocated as a support person to Anne, comments on how Anne is dressed. Anne explains what happened:

It wasn’t fun but that afternoon another teacher came up to me to say there had been complaints about what I had been wearing. That has all been sorted out now but at the time I just didn’t want to come back.  
(Anne, Interview 1, p. 13).

In her journal she goes on to say “I hid in my classroom and carried large folders around if I had somewhere to go. I was so embarrassed” (Journal entry).

As a result of these interactions Anne was further isolated from her colleagues. She by her own admission stayed in her classroom for days, during recess and lunch marking and preparing as she didn’t feel as though she could go into the staffroom. The staffroom itself presented those new to the school with its own anxieties. Anne explains the complexities her staffroom presented:

There is a bit of clique in the staffroom and I don’t even think that it is. But the way that they are set up in the lunchroom there is one circle with younger people I guess you would say and there are the older people. It is still really hard to sit in that circle at lunchtime and recess and even if you do you are not included in the conversation. They don’t, on their own everyone is really lovely but as soon as they get into those two groups it is really, really hard. All the new people have said you can sit up there for an entire lunchtime and not anyone says anything to you.  
(Anne, Interview 1, p. 11).

Greenlee and deDeugd (2002) argue that this type of school culture, one of isolation and competition, and unresolved tensions does not support learning. Bullough, Young and Draper (2004) further contend that “when challenges to beginning teachers’ sense of self are abundant, severe and insistent, they experience ‘transition shock’, ... and may find themselves in what Fuller characterised as the ‘survival stage’ of learning to teach” (p. 382). These experiences certainly forced Anne to question her commitment to the teaching profession. It was not the experience that she thought she would encounter, at times the culture and nature of her working environment made it difficult to ask questions and seek help.

Whilst these critical incidents were unrepeated they demonstrated a wider problem within the school where Anne perceived support was not forthcoming and that teachers were encouraged to work on their own with little sharing of resources and time. The importance of colleagues in the support of beginning teachers is highlighted by Birkeland and Johnson (2002). New teachers they assert “look to their colleagues for advice and ideas to help them through the first months on the job” (p. 20).

Anne believed before she entered the profession that it would be one of openness and an environment where resources and time would be shared particularly in helping those new to the school. Anne highlights the lack of support and collegiality within her school and questions why this culture prevails:

The other teachers, I have approached all of them,  
the ones that are teaching year 9 Geography and History.  
I keep on saying can you give me some help and they are all,  
yeah that is fine you come and see me whenever you need  
some help. But then when I actually do they are like yeah,  
maybe later, like they have got other things to do obviously,  
but then I feel bad to go back then, because I think, this is  
the third time and maybe they are trying to just fob me off so...  
I don't know. Whenever I have done a worksheet for  
History I put it on the other Year 9 History teachers' desks,  
that's the first week I started, I thought that's what everyone  
did. Nothing was coming back and I thought what are they  
all doing for their classes and I saw someone in  
the actual photocopy line who had Year 9 and I said,  
“Oh are you doing that for Year 9 History?” And they said,  
“Would you like a copy?” I said thanks. I don't understand  
why they don't do that. I guess now I am starting to  
think I am not going to give them a copy because they aren't  
giving me a copy. I think it is strange that when I am a  
first year out, everyone should know that I am not going  
to have anything to start with. So it would be nice to have

some help.  
(Anne, Interview 1, p. 7).

McCormack and Thomas (2003) identified teaching process as an area of concern which is effected by the culture of the school. Anne describes situations where she is asked to teach outside her trained teaching area, where she received little or no support. Anne interprets the culture of the school as one that leaves its beginning teachers to struggle on their own without structural support. Anne worked for much of her time in isolation. Ramsey (2000) in his report on teaching in Australia as cited in McCormack and Thomas (2003) stated that beginning teachers are “often required to teach outside their subject area of specialisation with little guidance and encouragement. These expectations he considers are inappropriate and states ‘the tradition is that as a beginner you cope; not a tradition any profession should accept’” (McCormack & Thomas, 2003, p.126). What Ramsey (2000) calls a tradition was interpreted by Anne as the dominant culture of the school, ‘the way things are around here’. Williams (2002) also cites authors who concur with Ramsey’s (2000) position. Auchmuty (1980) raised concerns about induction stating that “beginning teachers should not be placed in schools or assigned to teach classes for which they are not prepared. The matter of being placed in unsuitable schools or having to teach outside their qualified subject area was also revealed and discussed in Ingersoll’s study on teacher attrition (2002)” (Williams, 2002, p. 11).

Anne goes on to say how it is important for her as a teacher to feel confident with the content. She explains why she is ‘struggling’: “with teaching it, with being, feeling confident enough with the questions that they are going to ask. Because even I go through the textbook and plan what I am going to do when I get in there and if one of them asks a question (hesitant laugh).” (Anne, Interview 1, p. 7). She feels as though if she doesn’t know the content this will cause her problems with students doubting her ability and questioning her credibility as a teacher. This is also closely linked to identity through her sense of self efficacy. Anne feels inadequate as she expects herself to be competent in all areas, even subjects for which she is unprepared for. This leads her to doubt her professional identity.

As mentioned at the beginning of Anne’s story she moves from her initial school on which much of the discussion so far has focused, to the same school as Jane. Her experiences at this school clearly reinforce the importance of school culture and the direct impact it has on the beginning teacher’s identity and self confidence. Edgar and Sedgwick (2003) argue that “our

‘selves’ are constructed, uniquely, in each distinct social interaction” (p. 395). Anne explains how her new staffroom is designed and how this immediately gave her a sense of belonging, “I just felt really welcomed” (Anne, Interview 2, p. 7).

She goes on to highlight a particular event which is important in understanding the significant nature of culture and also how leaders can guide school’s culture in either a positive or a negative path. From this interaction Anne begins to believe in herself as a teacher, her self confidence is restored. She recounts a story which highlights the importance of leaders in setting the school culture:

I had an issue with one Year 7 boy ...I hadn’t taught the class for about 25 minutes because I had been dealing with him and I sent him to the office. I went up to the office after school and Deputy was there and he said ‘Oh you did the right thing, thank you for doing that, actually I have got some paperwork for you to do. Don’t worry about Sean, all the teachers have issues with him and it is up to him whether he is going to have a good day or not.’ And he said speak to some of the other staff who teach him because don’t feel like you couldn’t handle him, they had tried all the strategies in the book and he was just one of those ones that you can’t work out. And then I went back to my desk and the Principal came over to me and I thought oh he is going to come over and tell me some strategies I should have tried and he said ‘I just wanted to know if you wanted to have a chat about Sean. You did the right thing sending him out.’ And he said to me, ‘Do you want to talk to any of the other staff that have got him?’ I just thought this is amazing they were all so nice and supportive about it.  
(Anne, Interview, 2, p. 7).

Anne’s reaction and interpretation of this incident is important. She was clearly not expecting this type of support as it was not apparent at her last school, and as a result she was in her own words ‘amazed’. Although amazed more importantly she was made to feel as though what she was doing as a teacher was the correct procedure and that she was handling a difficult situation well. Both the Principal and Deputy made this very clear by pointing out that other staff had difficulties when dealing with this student, this was assuring for her. She was also given some additional options in the form of other staff members who could share some of their strategies with her. The school leaders validated her judgment: a sharp contrast to the authoritarian and paternalistic attack on her judgment in the ‘writing of a notice on the board’ incident at her first school. Beginning teacher’s professional identity is built upon such positive validation. Greenlee and deDeugd (2002) argue that new teachers:

need people that care to provide support, not more policy.

Ultimately, it is the principal and experienced teachers, as advocates for beginning teachers, who provide the necessary help for novices to survive and thrive. The culture of the school must support professional dialogue, collaborative planning, and peer coaching rather than closed doors and solitary practice” (p. 72).

During this interview in second semester, Anne was clearly much happier about the school she was working in, and continually recounted stories of how she felt she belonged and that as a professional she was supported. Her demeanour was very different during this interview. She was not questioning herself as a teacher and whether she wanted to stay in the profession but she was enthusiastically described classroom events and teaching strategies. Her conversations during this time were peppered with exclamations of: “It was great”. For Anne it was important to feel as though she belonged and that she was a valuable member of the school community.

#### **5.0.4 Conclusion**

As Anne’s interviews progressed there was a distinct change in her ability to adapt to situations, she was beginning to sound very comfortable and confident in her ability within the classroom. She was not as concerned by teaching outside her trained teaching area of expertise. Much of this can be attributed to the friendly, supportive and collegial environment she encountered in semester two at Jane’s school. It is when she begins working in this school that many of these changes are noted. Anne’s experiences clearly highlight the importance of a supportive culture and how the culture of a school impacts on all other areas of the teaching experience. Anne’s experiences highlight the impact culture has on the way staff interact and treat each other. Culture can determine whether staff work together to achieve the best possible student outcomes or whether it is a workplace filled with insecurities and individuals working in isolation, unwilling or unable to help each other.

Knowles et al. (1994) discuss the notion of learning to teach and learning to be a teacher.

They suggest that learning about teaching involves:

two distinct but obvious interconnected phenomena and processes: (1) learning how to teach and (2) learning about how to be a teacher. The first process involves developing an understanding of self, students, subject matter, pedagogy, curriculum development and subsequent activities, strategies, and techniques associated with facilitating students’ learning. The second process has to do with coming to grips with the scope of roles, responsibilities, and ways of acting and thinking as emerging professionals

(p. 3).

It is the contention of this research that learning to teach, and importantly learning to become a teacher, can only develop fully and in a positive manner in a school where this growth is nurtured. Knowles et al. (1994) do not acknowledge that this knowledge of self as a teacher can be delayed and retarded if beginning teachers are not given the supportive environment in which to explore their professional development. Not every school and every leader recognises that beginning teachers face a variety of challenges and need the support of their school. The absence of this support can have disastrous and long-term effects on the quality of teaching and learning provided by the beginning teacher. Fullan and Hargreaves (1991) argue that the failure to recognise the "special needs and contributions of beginning teachers can also have a disastrous, lasting impact on their motivation and confidence to become good teachers and good colleagues" (p. 28).

Much of Anne's initial experience was not characterised by classroom management issues but by concerns relating to the culture and socialisation within the organisation. This is congruent with Kelchtermans and Ballet's (1999) assumptions that "the experience of the induction period is to an important degree determined by the organisational contexts and working conditions beginning teachers have to work in and as such not only or even not primarily by problems at the classroom level" (p. 3). For much of her first year this forms the basis of her interpretation of herself as a teacher and her teaching world.

# CHAPTER SIX

## ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

### 6.0 Peter

*I think a lot of it was finding the balance and adjusting to a new school, a different system which I wasn't used to. And what I expected to be out there when I went into the teaching force or education system. So it was just a matter of finding where I was at and I mean that it's funny because I am like, towards the end of this year I am pretty comfortable and happy with what is going on. I have adjusted to the school and the clientele and allowed for those changes.*

(Peter, Interview 4, p. 3).

#### 6.0.1 Introduction

Peter did not enter a full time teaching position the year after he graduated from University. He was given the opportunity to enter teaching as soon as he graduated, he was targeted as part of an accelerated placement scheme and was guaranteed a position before many other beginning teachers. However, was unsure whether he wanted to enter the teaching profession and he was heavily involved in coaching and was hoping to secure a job in this area. The first year out of University saw Peter work as a casual teacher. He moved into a full-time, permanent teaching position in his second year out of University. It is in this stage that interviews with Peter began.

Peter is a highly motivated teacher who places a lot of pressure on himself to deliver quality lessons and as such has high demands and expectations of his school and work environment. From the beginning of the interviews Peter expresses busyness within his daily professional and personal life that continues throughout the year. Peter is very heavily involved in his swimming coaching which is on most mornings and afternoons. He has almost a forty minute drive from his home to his school, so this adds to the external pressure he feels. As a high achiever who demands much of himself as a teacher, his experiences at times cause internal conflict and anxieties. From the beginning of the year he is busy trying to set in place many

programs and ideas within his faculty and is involved in many extra-curricular programs within the school. He teaches in the TAS (Technological and Applied Studies) Key Learning Area and he finds that he needs to constantly update his knowledge of different computer software programs. Therefore he is often teaching himself different software packages. During the year Peter also tries to set up lunchtime activities within his area to help students. In addition to these school-based activities he decided mid-way through his first semester of teaching that he wants to complete a Masters Degree.

### **6.0.2 Life History**

Peter faces many challenges throughout his first year and many of them are often foreshadowed by his own experiences of school. His perception of school and the school experience is measured by his own experience. It gave the researcher an important insight into Peter's teaching experience and his expectations of himself as a teacher, and his expectations of school in particular school culture. Throughout the interviews Peter uses his school experience as a measuring tool for all that he encounters in his beginning year. In our initial interview Peter illustrated the importance his own school history has in creating his identity as a teacher:

It was just so different to as in different just everything er as in the students' application and ways of doing things compared to what I had done in my own schooling. Where I went to school was a good school, it is one of the best and so on and you know you try and fit your expectations into the school.  
(Peter, Interview 1, p. 1).

At times throughout the interviews Peter expresses an expectation of students, of other teachers, and as he calls it, of administration that is often not met, he feels let down as a result. Interestingly, as the year progresses, Peter modifies his beliefs and expectations to conform to the cultural norms of the school. Symbolic interactionists write that "our attitudes and patterns of behaviour are shaped according to the people around us" (Edgar & Sedgwick, 2003, p. 395-397).

Many of Peter's experiences could be classified as praxis shock. This phenomenon is discussed at length by Veenman (1984). Veenman (1984) argues that the transition from "teacher training to the first teaching job could be a dramatic and traumatic one. In English and German literature this transition often is referred to as the 'reality shock,' 'transition shock,' 'Praxisschock,' or 'Reinwascheffekt.' In general, this concept is used to indicate the collapse of the missionary ideals formed during teacher training by the harsh and rude reality



of everyday classroom life” (p. 143). It is the contention of this research that the ‘reality shock’ that Veenman (1984) describes goes further than just the classroom experience; it is also concerns the reality of the school as an organisation. For Peter this is an important aspect of his first months. As shown in the previous extract from Peter’s interview transcript before he entered the reality of teaching full-time he had ideals and expectations of what the school experience would be like based on his past experiences and his life history. Peter states that:

There is a side to teaching where kids want to learn, like they want to learn how to do these equations and so on. And then there is another side where you have to try and teach or baby sit or like just you know, to just to stay in school and learn life skills. So it’s just, yeah interesting in that sense. It opened my eyes to the real world I guess. (Peter, Interview 1, p. 1).

Peter struggles with the ‘reality’ of the school setting for much of his first semester. In particular he finds his physical working environment is contrary to the one he imagined he would encounter. The type of work practices set in place within his faculty also cause concern for Peter, as he believed that the faculty would work collegially and as a team in preparing common curriculum and in particular setting goals for the faculty as a whole. He states in his journal that “I feel our department lacks support or guidance for all TAS teachers” (Journal, 4<sup>th</sup> April, 2002). As previously discussed this was also Anne’s expectation.

As one would expect, classroom management and discipline are issues that he reflects upon throughout his first year, which is consistent with much research literature on beginning teachers (McCormack & Thomas, 2003; Ramsey, 2000; Veenman, 1984; Capel, 1998; Bullough, Young & Draper, 2004; Veenman, De Laat & Staring, 1998) . He is aware of these issues and is consistently striving to make his classroom a place of positive learning. He faces various hurdles in this area, mainly in the form of the attitude of his students to learning. In his journal he reflects that he is “annoyed with students – lack of motivation and work ethic” (Journal, 3<sup>rd</sup> April, 2002). This is often an attitude that is incongruent with Peter’s own experience of learning.

Peter finds that his expectations and ideals are constantly challenged by the school, students and other staff members. This proves to be an area of difficulty for him where his values are challenged on a daily basis. Peter is questioned further about how this affects him and he goes on to say:

Well it is kind of disappointing because as I said where I

went to school was a good school, it is one of the best and so on and you know you try and fit your expectations into the school and I think kids should have their shirts tucked in, hair nice, and things like that. And that's not how it is at the school so not to worry about it.  
(Peter, Interview 1, p. 7).

### **6.0.3 Culture**

Gordon and Maxey (2000) would argue that “providing beginning teachers with basic supplies, curriculum materials, and a prepared classroom with adequate furniture is a first step toward supportive induction” (Gordon & Maxey, 2000) as cited in (Greenlee & deDeugd, 2002, p. 66). Gordon and Maxey's (2000) major premise is that physical resources are an aspect of support which can be given to the beginning teacher. Support can be viewed as interpersonal, conversations about teaching and developing relationships or as Gordon and Maxey (2000) see it structural, teacher's workloads, classroom and staffroom facilities. Support is closely linked to the type of culture existing within the school.

One of Peter's fundamental concerns throughout the year was that of resources and allocation of classroom space. This concern is very closely related to the issue of management and discipline as it is very difficult to maintain interest and student involvement in lessons that have been constrained by lack of space and resources. The classroom environment can shape the behaviour and attitude of students thus making students more difficult to engage and manage. This is certainly Peter's experience. Peter's teaching subject area is very specific in its demands and requirements. Peter was often left without equipment or the classroom space to teach his lesson, which at times caused many tensions. It meant that he had to carefully modify what he was teaching and at times negotiate with other staff members to use 'their space or classroom'. Often he was restricted in what he could do because staff were unwilling to share resources and space.

The adequate preparation of space and resources would seem fundamental to the teaching of any subject and if that subject was offered by the leaders of the school within the curriculum it should be supported by having at least an adequate teaching space. Greenlee and deDeugd (2002) state that new teachers are “generally surprised and frustrated at not having even basic tools to succeed in their work. Gaining access to needed curriculum materials and teaching resources should not be a challenge” (p. 66).

Peter states:

I am finding resource wise again it just umm it makes things a little bit hard. Well I guess some of the difficulties is that doing design and technology, doing Year seven and eight design and technology, generally you are given a workshop or some kind of ... yeah workshop to do your projects! Where I am given a normal classroom I mean it's a little, it makes it a little bit hard.  
(Peter, Interview 2, p. 7).

The lack of space and resources is a focus of many of the interviews and this is understandable as it is at the core of Peter's teaching. He also finds practical problems with his computer classes where often only three computers are working when he has a class of twenty students. He highlights these problems in his journal "still annoying having computers not working properly, eg. Passwords, accessing network files etc." (Journal, 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2002).

These environmental factors all have an impact on Peter's teaching and his enthusiasm, as he spends a lot of time trying to devise other ways to teach his subject to get around the lack of adequate teaching space. Peter begins to interpret this lack of resources and his difficult working environment as an acknowledgement by school administrators that he and his subject are not valued and important. Peter's resource and classroom situations are compounded by the fact that he feels as though he is working in isolation. This isolation and lack of collegial support can be seen on two levels in Peter's conversations: one in the area of working together as a faculty and the other when dealing with student discipline matters. "To me I would like team work" (Peter, Interview 2, p. 11). He further reveals the importance he places on having a cohesive and supportive team working together in his journal reflections "I'm really pushing to have the subject really organised amongst the computer teachers" (Journal, 6<sup>th</sup> May, 2002). He describes a situation that demonstrates the lack of collegiality, where he is setting an exam with another staff member teaching the same subject. I question him and ask if he then sits with the other teacher and prepares the exam together. Peter's frustrations are revealed:

NO!! (laughs) That was what I wanted to do. I wanted to sit together. We briefly sat together and said I have covered this and this and this. And he said "Alright you do the multiple choice and I will do the practical." And so we did that and he had a quick look at what I had written down. I had kind of expected to do an exam differently, where you would sit down and on paper you cover all the points you have done and what the other class have done.  
(Peter, Interview 2, p. 11).

Peter is clearly disappointed by the way this process took place, and this is consistent with his experience of how the faculty is administered and how it runs. It is a source of frustration for him and one which he did not think he would encounter. It is clearly not an environment that supports him as he develops as a teacher. Peter is noticeably looking for more direction and guidance from his faculty and in particular his faculty head. Peter notes in his journal that he feels as though he has to help and support the faculty head or otherwise things will not get done: “had to help John organise classes for next term. I get the feeling I will need to help John so that our faculty will be some kind of organised organisation” (Journal, 11<sup>th</sup> April, 2002).

Further examples of disillusionment concerning support from staff fill Peter’s discussion in the second interview. Manuel (2003) suggests that when “new teachers perceive they are not well supported in their management effort by colleagues, including the school Executive, they rapidly become disillusioned about the efficacy of the school infrastructure” (p.148). Incidents where Peter has referred students on to senior teachers as a result of poor behaviour, he has felt at times that they have not been followed up. As a result Peter questions how he disciplines students and the futility of him following the school rules as he sees they should be implemented. Peter’s reaction to these incidents certainly supports Manuel’s (2003) contention. Peter states that: “sometimes I send a few kids to the year master, which I don’t think has really been followed up at all. So there isn’t any point making threats with these kids as they just laugh” (Peter, Interview 2, p. 12).

Peter finds not only is there a lack of support in areas of classroom discipline but he finds there is conflict between the standards he expects in regard to general student behaviour around the school and the students wearing correct school uniform, to what other staff will tolerate. These discrepancies often cause unwanted conflict and as a result Peter soon adjusts his standards to those around him.

The adjustments that Peter makes to ‘fit in’ are what Khamis (2000) as cited in Williams (2002) calls the ‘anguish of compromise’ where:

“the newly appointed teacher finds themselves in conflict with the prevailing administrative, professional and social culture of the school they are appointed to (p.6). Energetic, enthusiastic, full of idealism and what ‘could be’, the newly appointed teacher is embroiled in a culture of conflict, often faced with a lack of support, time or resources to implement their potentially effective practice. Consequently beginning

teachers must learn to adapt their teaching to ‘fit in’, and compromise their level of expectation of themselves and their pupils in order to reduce the discrepancy between what is ‘ideal’ and what is ‘realistic’ in various circumstances (Khamis, 2000, p. 7).”  
(As cited in Williams, 2002, p. 10).

#### **6.0.4 Socialisation**

Peter experiences the realities of socialisation in the cultural climate of the school environment through his various interactions (Zeichner & Gore, 1990). Peter experiences this at many different levels within the school culture, in the classroom, his physical environment, that fact that he is forced to compromise on standards of student dress and playground behaviour. He compromises because as he sees it he doesn’t want students to have an “image of you that you are some kind of nark on uniform” (Peter, Interview 1, p. 7). Not only is he concerned about the image he is portraying to students he is also pressured by other staff to conform through advice they give. Peter goes on to say that: “Other teachers have said ‘just step back a bit and relax, don’t worry about uniform because it is just making trouble for yourself really’” (Peter, Interview 1, p. 7). Peter’s understanding of how other staff members and students perceive him as a teacher are important factors in determining how he acts and behaves within the organisation. Bullough, Young and Draper in their 2004 study of a one year teaching internship program note that intern or beginning teachers expressed concerns about having to discipline students or a class as this could “result in that class or student not liking the intern as a person” (Bullough, Young & Draper, 2004, p. 371).

Peter eventually decides that it is better to compromise on what he believes are important principles of dress and behaviour as it helps him develop better relationships with students, which then enhances his classroom experiences. These compromises weigh heavily on him and he often comments throughout our interviews how the school is “different” from where he went to school and his expectations.

Talking about implementing and enforcing school rules Peter observes,

What I am finding is you may push it and push it, but then if it’s not being pushed by other people like from higher then you aren’t getting anywhere I’m finding. Same with the uniform policies and so on. I realised what I expect is here (he raises his hand high to his head) but other people at the school might expect or the standard of the school is here (indicates a level at waist height) so instead pushing it. I have to put up with it. You want a nice friendly environment, presentable school that you work in.

(Peter, Interview 1, p. 7).

### **6.0.5 Conclusion**

Peter's life history leaves him with certain expectations and when these are not met by his workplace he finds himself facing inner conflict which challenges him to reconstruct his own personal identity and image of self working within new boundaries.

Peter succinctly verbalises what he sees as the fundamental issue for beginning teachers: "As a first year you want guidance, you really need that" (Peter, Interview 1, p. 8). Peter makes a decision at the end of the school year to leave his school and take up a teaching position at an independent private school. This new school is perceived by Peter to be similar to the school he attended as a student and as such for Peter this seems like a more attractive workplace. He expects to find in this new school, values and attitudes that support his own notions about what students, staff and schools should really be like. Peter eventually finds that he cannot reconcile his expectations of school and the reality of his workplace. Peter's life history acts as a dominant catalyst for the way in which he interprets the experiences of his first year of teaching.

# CHAPTER SEVEN

## ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

### 7.0 Brad

*I think the biggest thing from the start of the year having been to Uni, done a trade and things, I suppose I was a bit apprehensive about whether I had done the right thing.*

*Sitting back now I guess the fact is I have really enjoyed my year, I have really enjoyed teaching and I am happy with the decision I have made.*

(Brad, Interview 4, p. 8).

#### 7.0.1 Introduction

Brad was familiar with the school and the community that he entered for his first teaching position as he was an ‘old boy’ of the school and he had grown up in the area; his siblings had also attended the school. He had also completed a practicum at the school as part of his pre-service training. Brad states that: “I went to school there, and I did a prac there so I knew the school reasonably well” (Brad, Interview 1, p. 1).

Like Anne, Brad did not begin his working career as a teacher, and he did not attend university straight after completing High School. For four years he worked as an apprentice. He sees this as an advantage as it has given him invaluable ‘worldly’ experience and it also gave him another dimension when interacting with the students. Brad’s teaching job was not a permanent position. Brad acknowledged that this uncertainty about permanency impacted on him: “The fact that if there is a chance of being full-time there you try and do a good job to impress them I guess” (Brad, Interview 1, p. 10). By our third interview Brad has been told that he has a permanent job at the school, which, as he explains removes “the big question mark.” He adds “I can just go on with it. These are my classes now” (Brad, Interview 3, p. 8). There is a change in Brad’s perception of his classes, and a shift in how he talks about and relates stories about his classes. He takes ownership of the students and the classes: as he sees it they are his now and he is not just the caretaker minding them for a returning teacher. Throughout our remaining interviews Brad expresses a deep sense of belonging to the school community and community of staff, he also a great sense of teacher identity. His permanency

gives him a sense of identity within the staff, it changes the nature of the relationships he develops and the expectations he has of his classes.

Brad is a hard working and diligent teacher who puts pressure on himself to provide students with quality lessons. One distinctive feature throughout the interviews with Brad was the fact that he was constantly appraising his lessons and reviewing what he had delivered with attention to how he had delivered the information. He was very concerned with the type of lesson he had taught and wanted very much to give his students a variety of learning experiences that optimised their individual potential. This reflection on practice is more prevalent in later interviews as he becomes more comfortable in his role as teacher. This is congruent with Fuller's (1969) notions of developmental stages of teaching.

### **7.0.2 Socialisation**

The experience of teaching for Brad in his first year is a very positive one, one which illustrates the importance of having a significant colleague providing 'mentoring' and professional support. Brad's experience also demonstrates the importance and value of teacher-leaders a concept highlighted by Crowther, Kaagan, Ferguson and Hann's (2002) in Chapter Two. He faces many of the tensions and dilemmas that characterise the 'survival' stage of beginning teaching but this stage is eased by the implementation of a mentoring program within the school. The school developed a pilot program where they set up a mentoring system for beginning teachers. Brad gains valuable support and help from this program, and speaks very highly of it and it contributes to his positive outlook and self confidence as a teacher.

At times, however, he feels as though he gets very little support from other staff members. In his journal he reflects that he "feels comfortable with those I work with, but sometimes feel like I am getting little support, ie. Setting assessments, school procedures, examples of previous assessments" (Journal, June, 2002). This will be discussed further as his story evolves. As Brad describes it he meets with a colleague, who works outside Brad's faculty area, once a fortnight to discuss events of the previous fortnight. Brad explains his colleague's role: He just gives ideas and feedback about things I am doing in the classroom" (Brad, Interview 1, p. 4). He was questioned further about how this helped him settle into his new role. He says it is:

Just someone to talk to I guess. He is out of the faculty as well, not that I have a problem talking to people in the faculty, but it is always good to get, not that you get much feedback, but to



get some ideas off someone out of the faculty, someone a bit different. With different ideas, he might be able to see things from outside the square.  
(Brad, Interview 1, p. 4).

Brad acknowledges that his mentor “seems to reinforce what I have been doing” (Brad, Interview 2, p. 14). . He gives examples of their discussions and how his mentor provides support:

He usually starts off by saying ‘How is everything going?’  
If you have any dramas you just talk about it and basically how you would handle it and what to do. And he would say that was pretty good or did you think about it this way, maybe some alternatives.  
(Brad, Interview 2, p. 14)

Greenlee and deDeugd (2002) argue that “quality mentoring can provide the professional support new teachers need to assist them in their new careers” (p.70). Meeting with his mentor provides Brad an opportunity to fill the feedback void that he felt was apparent once entering a school as new teacher.

Yeah it is more the fact that he is just saying you know you are going good just keep it up. Because you are going from like I said from having your every lesson reviewed to no feedback at all. So I guess it helps fill that void a little bit.  
(Brad, Interview 2, p. 14)

Brad summarises concisely the problems faced by all of the beginning teachers in this study in relation to gaining feedback on their performance in the classroom. Each beginning teacher interviewed acknowledged that they would like more feedback on what they were doing in their classroom and how they felt this was lacking.

Basically as I said you come from prac where you’ve got somebody sitting in the back of your classroom, well sometimes a supervising teacher and sometimes a lecturer would come along. So you have got one to three people sitting in the back of your classroom and then just giving you constant feedback. Then you go from that to nothing. And as I said you don’t really know... am I doing that right? You go from one extreme to the other where you get nothing.  
(Brad, Interview 1, p. 7).

Brad spoke on several occasions about wanting feedback about his teaching as it was valuable during his teaching practicum experience, but there is little or no opportunity for this in the school setting. Veenman et al. (1998) reinforce this belief: “opportunities to interact with

peers or obtain support and assistance from experienced teachers, however, are often lacking” (p. 2). Huling-Austin (1992) as cited in Veenman et al. (1998) suggest that beginning teachers should “receive feedback based on actual observation in the classroom” (p. 4). Veenman et al (1998) are suggesting that beginning teachers have a supportive colleague observe their classes and give feedback according to what they observed. Veenman et al’s (1998) observations clearly demonstrate the nature of socialisation that takes place in the school setting. Teachers rarely observe each other’s practices in the classroom.

### **7.0.3 Developmental Stages of Teaching**

Brad’s major concerns and tensions early in his teaching were focused on classroom management of appropriate behaviour. This is consistent with much of the stage theory literature on beginning teachers (Veenman, 1984; Walsdorf & Lynn, 2002; Martin, Chiodo & Chang, 2001; Giles, Cramer & Hwang, 2001).

Whilst these tensions of classroom discipline are never far from the surface of Brad’s teaching, he made a valuable observation about teaching in his first interview. He said that he was finding it difficult to fit in all the other requirements of him as a teacher other than teaching. Neve, in her initial interviews, expanded on this notion. This will be explored in greater detail in the next chapter during the analysis of Neve’s experiences. Brad gives examples of writing and preparing exams, marking papers and assignments, and lesson preparation. He states that often he was staying up until one or two o’clock in the morning trying to meet all these commitments. Then he feels as though his lesson delivery is not as it should be because he is so tired. In his journal he reflects that he spent “a lot of time doing programs and preparing lessons ... felt really bad letting classes down” (Journal, May 2002). Walsdorf and Lynn (2002) acknowledge that this is a reality for beginning teachers: “Outside the classroom teachers spend many hours with clerical work, lesson planning, and evaluation of student work. In fact, beginning teachers rank these added demands some of the most difficult burdens to face” (p. 194). They further acknowledge that these clerical tasks are set amongst trying to negotiate the, at times, difficult landscape of the classroom.

### **7.0.4 Identity**

Brad’s identity as a teacher is often very different to the image that other staff members have of him. Because he is a mature-aged beginning teacher it is often assumed that he is coping well with the demands of a novice teacher. By his own admission he states that he doesn’t like to give the perception that he is not coping or that he has questions to ask as this may be

seen as a weakness. In the last interview Brad asks if he can read a point from his journal. He read: “Sometimes you feel like, they (other staff) think you know everything, like they just assume that you know everything, you feel funny if you have to ask a question. You know if it is really basic” (Brad, Interview 4, p. 9). Walsdorf and Lynn (2002) suggest that at times beginning teachers “are often forced into positions where they have to masquerade as experts” (p. 191). They go on further to state that beginning teachers should not be put in the position to be made to feel as though they are incompetent if they seek assistance (Walsdorf & Lynn, 2002).

### **7.0.5 Conclusion**

Brad’s experience in the first year is a very positive one where he frequently evaluates and reflects on his practice. He is critical of himself and pushes himself to achieve goals that he has set. His sense of identity and positive teacher self-image is enhanced by the positive and supportive school culture he describes as supporting him. Brad was already familiar with the culture and nature of the school before he began teaching there. The culture was very familiar to him as he attended the school as a student and had already taught there on his teaching practicum. Brad’s experience is in contrast to that of Peter’s where the culture of the school was very different to Peter’s experience of school as a student and he is challenged by the new culture. This was a very important feature of Brad’s positive assimilation into the school. He was able to concentrate on his classroom teaching and refine his skills in a supportive and familiar environment. Brad did not experience the type of ‘praxis shock’ that the culture and environment of a school can impose on other beginning teachers. Nor was he faced with the intricacies of being socialised into an environment which challenged his preconceived notions of schooling. His expectations of schooling come from the very setting that he was working in.

# CHAPTER EIGHT

## ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

### 8.0 Neve

*When you are new it is not so much that you are new, it is that you are faced with a room full of sixteen year olds on your first day by yourself. On pracs you always had someone with you and they always prepare you and tell you what should be expecting.*

(Neve, Interview 1, p. 2).

#### 8.0.1 Introduction

On the surface it would appear that Neve's story follows the traditional notion of a beginning teacher. She left school to enter a teaching degree at University. Upon completing her University degree she moved into her first teaching position. Neve's life experiences are dominated by experiences in the educational setting. However, Neve's story provides the foundations for more closely understanding and appreciating the importance of developing a teacher identity in order for the beginning teacher to continue to grow and develop as a professional. Her story also captures the underlying assertion throughout this research, that too often the analysis of beginning teachers' stories are incomplete. Much research on beginning teachers focuses on the struggle for 'survival' without acknowledging that beginning teachers can also positively contribute to their school settings. Finally, Neve's story forms a stepping stone to issues further discussed and illuminated in Chapter Nine. The statement by Neve at the beginning of her story highlights a comment also made by Brad that beginning teachers as soon as they enter the school setting have no-one giving them feedback about their teaching, unlike when they were pre-service teachers. Chapter Nine provides an alternative to this situation through the work of Bullough, Young and Draper (2004).

#### 8.0.2 Identity

Neve is an enthusiastic member of her staff and is, throughout each of our interviews, very positive about teaching and being a teacher. In her journal Neve writes "I love teaching here. All the staff (well most of them) are really friendly and will help you whenever you ask them" (Neve's Journal). Her story, however, is scattered with vignettes of self-doubt and

questioning, particularly concerning classroom management and discipline issues which I believe are closely related to the development of her teacher identity. This will be explored in greater detail in the following discussion.

Unlike the four interviews held with each of the other participants Neve met with the researcher three times. It was difficult to negotiate a final interview date and time with her due to her busy schedule. At each of the meetings the interviews were relatively short compared to those of the other interviewees. Neve in the beginning was nervous and hesitant about being interviewed. As the interviews progressed she relaxed and more readily shared her experiences of teaching. Much of her early reluctance in the interviews could be attributed to her initial self doubt and the fragility of her early image of herself as a teacher. Much of Neve's initial time spent talking is about what it means to be a teacher and how she still cannot believe that she is a teacher. In her early months as a teacher she still has images of herself as a student rather than a teacher. Her self image and lack of teacher identity poses many issues and problems for her as she attempts to find her place in the school and the classroom. The development of a teacher identity for Neve is important and it develops throughout her first twelve months of teaching.

She states in our first interview that initially

I felt like I was still a student. I didn't feel like one of the staff yet. I knew I was a staff but it still spun me out when I could call someone by their first name instead of Mr So and So and Miss So and So.  
(Neve, Interview 1, p. 13).

Writers such as Sumara and Luce-Kapler (1996) acknowledge that 'becoming' a teacher involves more than merely applying a set of technical skills learnt in pre-service programs. They assert that for many beginning teachers 'becoming a teacher' is a process whereby they 'unlearn' or disregard already formed notions of identity and self. They learn that they have to disregard behaviours and attitudes that do not conform to the notion of teacher that other staff and students have within the context of the school setting in which the beginning teacher finds himself or herself. To explain this notion they use the phrase "un-becoming a teacher" (Sumara & Luce-Kapler, 1996, p. 11). Their work can be applied to Neve in the context of her understanding of herself. Before Neve could conceptualise herself as a teacher and then act as a teacher she had to disregard all former notions and understandings of herself as a student.

In the beginning she finds classroom management and discipline very difficult. Much of it by her own admission is because she is “too friendly” and “wants the students to like her” (Neve, Interview 2, p. 6). She remembers what it was like to be a student and finds the transition to teacher difficult. This in turn impacts on her classroom management.

Neve’s journey of teacher identity continues for much of the first half of the year. She speaks of a significant turning point in her classroom environment when:

In a sense now I realise that I am the boss of them (the students) not just one of them. I think I more or less when I started I felt I was just a student teaching students. I didn’t feel like I was a teacher teaching students, where as now I am.  
(Neve, Interview 1, p. 5).

Bullough’s (1991) observes in Kagan (1992) that beginning teachers need to “possess clear images of themselves as teachers before growth could occur” (p. 146). Kagan (1992) further asserts that beginning teachers that don’t have a clear image of themselves as teachers are “doomed to flounder” (p. 146). Neve clearly describes events particularly within her classrooms that are difficult and often require help from year level coordinators or head teachers. She reflects during the interviews on these events and observes that perhaps many of them occurred because of how she acted within the classroom. She admits that she “wanted the students to like her” (Neve, Interview 1, p. 5) and many of her actions were as a result of this. This is consistent with the findings of Bullough, Young and Draper (2004) who within their study of Intern teachers asserted that many Interns expressed concern “that having to discipline a class or a student would result in a class or student not liking the intern as a person” (p. 371). They contend that for beginning teachers or Interns how they are perceived by their students is important in the development of their positive teacher self image.

### **8.0.3 Socialisation**

Neve perceived that there was a necessity for her to act in a certain way to be accepted by the students but initially how she presented herself as a teacher or the type of teacher she presented made discipline and management within her classroom difficult. Neve worked hard to maintain a level of discipline and management in her classrooms that she was comfortable with. Nias (1986) states that in the early months of teaching beginning teachers have to “behave as pupils and colleagues expected” (p. 10). Nias (1986) goes on to further assert that for many beginning teachers this is the process of learning to *act* as a teacher. For Neve her struggle comes from her initial uncertainty of how a teacher should *act*. Socialisation in the

school setting quickly affirms and dictates her behaviour and actions particularly in the classroom. Kelchtermans and Ballet (2002) in their study of teacher socialisation conceive that teacher socialisation is an interactive process, teacher socialisation is not simply “passively sliding into an existing context, but rather an interpretive and interactive process between the new teacher and the context” (p. 3). This is true of Neve’s experiences as she interpreted how she saw other teachers behave and used this behaviour as a guide to her own interactions with students.

Neve’s teacher identity developed as she reflected on her interactions with others in the school context. Sumara and Luce-Kapler (1996) concur that “coming to know oneself occurs during the process of being in relations with others” (p. 4). Neve gains affirmation of her status as a teacher largely through her interactions with the students she teaches. She states in our last interview that:

I think when you first start you are more nervous about how you come across to the kids. But now you know what type of person you are and what type of teacher you are and you can focus your energies on actually helping the kids.  
(Neve, Interview 3, p. 2).

As Marsh (2002) argues individuals construct their identities from the “discourses that are made available to them, they simultaneously create possibilities and constraints for the identities of those with whom they are in a relationship” (p. 335). Similarly Neve constructed an identity as teacher that was reinforced by those around her in the school context.

#### **8.0.4 Active Agency in Socialisation and Culture**

Finally, as stated in the introduction to Neve’s story, her experiences in the first year of teaching highlight a key feature often missing from literature on beginning teachers, the contribution beginning teachers can if allowed make to their school. Whilst Neve experienced many of the ‘traditional’ beginning teacher anxieties and concerns particularly in the area of management and discipline as well as initial shock at the range and diversity of tasks required of teachers, she was also very positive and continually enthusiastic about teaching. She spoke enthusiastically about her subject area and the type of activities it lent itself to exploring in the classroom. Neve was in an extraordinary position as she was a female teaching in the predominantly male area, of woodwork and applied technologies area, which in itself presented the students with a different and interesting perspective. She was also very competent and conversant with many of the new computer programs and packages available

as this was her major area of study at University. As such Neve could have been a wealth of knowledge and a valuable resource to many staff members that she noted had little or no knowledge in the information technology area. She was, however, provided with little opportunity within her school to demonstrate many of her skills. As Capel (1998) disappointingly observes, schools are “largely unaware of their new teachers’ strengths” (p. 395).

Neve cites an example of where she is discouraged from implementing a different teaching method:

The teachers were saying DO NOT do group work, never ever do group work, it just doesn’t work. I mean you get out there and you have all these new ideas and you think I am going to do this and I am going to do that and this role play. And they (older members of staff) are out there going no it won’t work. And you think what is the point? You know what I mean spending all that time learning about it. With a shy laugh and grin she adds: “I tried group work. It went fine.  
(Neve, Interview 3, p. 5).

In Kardos et al’s (2001) description of school culture they state that often in schools that are well established “a new teacher’s views and contributions may be excluded” (Kardos, Johnson, Peske, Kauffman, & Lui, 2001, p. 253). In Neve’s experience not only are her views excluded but she is discouraged from implementing many innovative classrooms practices. Puk and Haines’ (1999) research, whilst focusing on school curriculum and instruction, makes suggestions that are pertinent to Neve’s situation and this research in general. They suggest that beginning teachers could, if allowed, play a vital role in reconceptualising classroom instruction. Their work highlights the important role beginning teachers can play in schools. However beginning teachers are far too often overlooked as a source of innovation and revitalisation because of their lack of perceived experience. Puk and Haines (1999) argue in the context of school renewal that:

There has been much research on the role of teacher education and the nature of the beginning teacher but seldom have beginning teachers been examined as possible solutions to the problems of implementation. It is assumed that they are inexperienced and therefore lack the background to be considered integral to addressing the problems of reconceptualization. This may in fact be a faulty proposition  
(p. 542).

Neve herself provides the vital link to capturing her experiences. She sees her many classroom experiences as part of the expected norm in the journey for beginning teachers to



establish themselves within a school. She is a vibrant young teacher who demonstrates throughout each of our interviews that she wants to participate fully in all areas of the school community and offers her support to many extra curricula activities. She relates stories of different teaching practices and activities tried in her classroom. Some work but others, she reflects, need refining. Her spirit and enthusiasm is at the very core of the other side of the beginning teachers' story that is too often missing from beginning teacher research. Puk and Haines (1999) in their writing challenge schools and leaders to recognise the value of beginning teachers and to make the most of the expertise of novices.

### **8.0.5 Conclusion**

Neve's story concludes with her words which add a challenge to school leaders and educational researchers to listen and hear the positive and passionate voices of beginning teachers and to recognise the positive contributions they can make to their school setting.

It is excellent and I really, really love it umm that is about it.  
If it keeps going the way it is now it is just really good. I am just happy ... I have never had a full time job before and I have gone straight from High School to Uni to full time work and I am twenty two. Like it is a long time, it is my whole life-time and it is the first time that I have got a full time job. It is excellent, I love teaching, I love waking up in the morning and going to school.  
(Neve, Interview 3, p. 6).

## **8.1 Analysis and Discussion Chapter Conclusion**

These analysis and discussion chapters have explored each of the five beginning teachers' stories and experiences in their first year of teaching as revealed to the researcher through their journaling and shared interviews. Each beginning teacher's experiences have been contained as an individual analysis. Some comparison between each of the experiences has been made when points and issues have been highlighted as important to more than one of the participants. In particular Jane and Anne's experiences were connected to highlight the significant impact of culture on the beginning teachers' experiences and indeed their interpretation of teaching.

Each of the five stories highlight how the culture of a school influences the beginning teacher's story. One teacher in particular entered a school where the culture was one of isolation and eventually led her to seriously consider not returning the next day or indeed ever to teaching. Contrary to this story was a school that demonstrated a supportive and collegial

culture where the beginning teacher grew and developed as a result of the support given throughout the year.

The way in which the beginning teacher's attached meaning to certain experiences within their first year was analysed by the researcher using the interpretivist framework. Through this framework the researcher tried to make meaning of the beginning teacher's interpretations of their interactions. It was through these interactions that the construction of a teacher identity evolved. Woods (1996) reminds us that "much activity is symbolic, involving construction and interpretation, both within the self and between the self and others" (p. 32). The construction of a teacher identity was pivotal to the continued development of each of the five participants. The development of identity occurred in different ways for each of the five beginning teachers. Their identity was influenced by their life experiences and past history, the significant relationships developed within the context of the school and importantly the socialisation of the teacher into the culture of the individual school.

Each of the beginning teachers brought with them to their schools their own unique expectations of teaching and what they thought it would be like to be a teacher working in a school, these expectations were shaped by their previous contact in educational settings and their life histories. Each of the stories illuminates the important impact a teacher's life history has on their interpretation of their school and their teaching experience.

The traditional notion of beginning teachers in the 'survival' phase of their working life as explored by Fuller's (1969) research is observed to be present for each of the five participants throughout various stages during the year. They do, however, move in and out of this stage in a cyclical motion and seem to return to it as new and confronting situations are presented to them. The 'survival' phase was not reverted to as often when beginning teachers were in a supportive and collegial environment. This was particularly evident in one of the stories.

The researcher is conscious that the events chosen to be described and analysed in the context of this chapter were at the discretion of the researcher. It was, of course, impossible given the space and constraints of this thesis to retell every incident and event from the volumes of data gathered throughout the interview stage. This discussion has tried to remain *authentic* and *truthful* to the experiences and stories of the beginning teachers through the *thick descriptions* of those events portrayed within this chapter (Stake, 1995). It was the intention of the

researcher to take the reader into the centre of the beginning teacher's experience (Geertz, 1973) as cited in Denzin (1994, p. 504). The text was intended to be vital as Denzin (1994) states a "vital text invites readers to engage the author's subject matter" (p. 504). In this case the researcher was inviting the reader to *hear the voices* of the beginning teachers.

The following chapter highlights some commonalities and themes that are prevalent across the stories. It readdresses the research question and attempts to apply the model for interpreting the experiences of these five beginning teachers. In conclusion it offers some suggestions and recommendations for schools in supporting and nurturing one of their most valuable assets; the beginning teacher.

# CHAPTER NINE

## Findings and Conclusions

*“Voice animates thinking, produces thought and enables the thinker to stabilise and expand her thought (Tarule, 1996, p. 279). The failure to articulate their voices can leave beginning teachers uncertain as to their own epistemology of teaching and floundering to articulate a self-as-teacher identity”*  
(Stanulis, Campbell, & Hick, 2002, p. 46).

### 9.0 The Intention of this Chapter

The previous chapters retold the stories of the five beginning teachers highlighting issues for each individual, analysing and discussing these stories with reference to the conceptual framework informed by the relevant literature. This chapter seeks to highlight general concepts that shed significant light on the beginning teachers' development. This discussion aims to further enhance the lenses for viewing the world of beginning teachers. This chapter also intends to strengthen the voices so what they are saying can be heard and understood.

The analysis of the interview and journal data has led to a development of the initial conceptual framework into a new model of understanding how beginning teachers view and interpret their world. It provides a framework that acknowledges the reference points the beginning teachers used to construct meaning from their various interactions within the school.

Furthermore, it is the intention of this chapter to provide recommendations that could lead to greater enhancement of the development of other beginning teachers. These recommendations come from the analysis and interpretations of the experiences of the five beginning teachers in this study. It is important to remember that their experiences are unique to them, yet some of what they have retold may resonate for school leaders, teacher-leaders and especially for other beginning teachers in relation to their own school situation. The stories presented in this research may well give hope and understanding to other beginning teachers as they begin their journey of the teacher-self relationship.

Finally to conclude, the research returns to the research question. What are the perceptions of beginning teachers in their first year within the profession and how do their experiences influence the nature of these perceptions?

## **9.1 Introduction**

As previously stated, the five stories presented in this research are unique with individual nuances and characteristics. Stake (1994) as cited in Mertons (1998) warns readers and certainly researchers not to try to find similarities with other cases as this will cause the researcher and reader to “lose that which is unique about this case” (Mertons, 1998, p. 167). Stake (1994) goes on to emphasise the “intrinsic interest in each case as being important” (Mertons, 1998, p. 167). It is the intention of this case study research to value the uniqueness of each case.

It is not the intention of this chapter to detract from the important features of this case study research by making generalisations that devalue the individual’s unique experience. The intention in the following discussion is to highlight some areas of commonality identified between the participants. The way in which each participant has interpreted and indeed processed these identified features is where their uniqueness lies.

## **9.2 Findings**

### **9.2.1 Introduction**

The background and life history of the participants had a great impact on how they either identified or struggled to identify with the culture of their school. Their life history affected all areas of their socialisation within the context of the school setting.

The second fundamental acknowledgement from each of the beginning teachers within this research was their search for a ‘significant other’ within the school setting. Much of the research literature on beginning teachers uses the term mentor. The development of rapport and a close working relationship with a colleague or colleagues played an important role in the establishment of the beginning teacher within the organization (Jordell, 1987, p. 170). The participants sought out within the social setting of the school a ‘significant other’ who helped them make meaning of the new ‘world’ they had entered.

As has been acknowledged previously in this research, early research literature (Fuller, 1969) states that beginning teacher development is linear. This is not fully supported by the experiences of the five beginning teachers in this research.

The major finding of this research was the importance each of the beginning teachers placed on developing their teacher identity. A sense of self as a teacher was fundamental to each beginning teacher's development and indeed their emerging story.

### 9.2.2 Life History

One of the significant findings of this study was the impact the life histories of these teachers had on their expectations of themselves and their students. Within the broad heading of life history is the powerful notion of school experiences. Knowles and Holt-Reynolds (1991) as cited in Carter and Doyle (1996) argue that novice teachers "use their past experiences as students to construct a virtual world where they can explore predictions about what their own teaching might look like" (p. 127).

The personal history, specifically the school experiences, that these teachers carried with them into their new career was an important measuring stick for the way they perceived themselves as teachers and for their whole experience as beginning teachers. Furthermore, all five participants used their experiences of school, and in particular how they viewed themselves as students, as benchmarks for judging student behaviour within their current classrooms. Cole and Knowles (2000) as cited in O'Brien and Schillaci (2002) remind us that our personal history impacts daily on how we behave professionally, as they contend it comes "with us daily to our professional practice" (p. 25).

Knowles, Coles and Presswood (1994) argue that the reality shock beginning teachers experience as they enter teaching is often caused by the fact that they have preconceived ideas of what school, and in particular what students, will be like that do not fit the present day reality. Hollingsworth (1989) as cited in Knowles, Coles and Presswood (1994) points out that one of the biggest discrepancies between the ideal and the reality is the belief that "students they will encounter will be like *they* were as students" (p.108). This appeared to be common for all five participants within this research and it is this reality that most of them struggle to understand and reconcile. The recognition and acknowledgment by the beginning teachers that their students were not like them when they were students provided one of the greatest struggles for each of the participants.

Jane explores the perceived divide between her and her students because of the different attitudes towards schooling, attitudes which she finds difficult to understand because of her school experiences as a student. Jane reflects that:

I think that is one of the hardest things, kids who don't want to be there. I have always found it hard because at school I was just brought up you are at school you do the best that you can and that was just it, don't even think about misbehaving (Jane, Interview 2, p. 14).

She acknowledges that it is difficult to work with and encourage students who she feels are not trying to achieve. The level of achievement of her students, for Jane, is measured against her own experiences.

Peter's life history plays a critical role in his sense of self as a teacher and what he perceives should be happening at his school. He is often disappointed by the perceived lack of standards at his present school compared to the standards he has brought with him from his own school experiences. Peter's life history forms the framework from which he views all his teaching experiences. Peter's values and beliefs from his past experiences are so fully entrenched and powerful that he seeks to find a school setting that continues to support his preconceived notions. As Peter perceives it, he cannot continue to work in a school that challenges his notions of education which have been formed by his past experiences.

The importance of the life history of beginning teachers merits explicit attention by leaders within schools. Beginning teachers often use this as a reference point for their own behaviour as a teacher and gauge their success and value as a teacher from their past experiences. Peter's past experiences were a constant source of reference for him and at times caused internal conflict which then determined the path he would take as a teacher in the new, unfamiliar setting. Peter's life history is a powerful force in shaping his perceptions about school and influencing his teacher identity. As already mentioned it is so powerful that he leaves his school at the end of the year to find employment at a school similar to where he went as a student.

Since the expectations that beginning teachers have of their first school experience is shaped by their history, this history can set up beginning teachers for disappointment when their expectations are unrealistic and the reality is not what was expected. Beginning teachers act as meaning makers who inevitably use expectations, as an interpretative grid, to make meaning of their experience, forming and re-forming their identity. Greenlee and deDeugd (2002) state that the gap

between beginners' expectations of what a school should be and their assignment during the first year of teaching creates stress in the novice educator (Gordon & Maxey, 2000). During the first year, many teachers

find their dreams of being a beneficial presence in the lives of students quickly fade in the cold reality of the classroom (Greenlee & deDeugd, 2002, p. 68).

Brad who had worked in industry before entering teaching acknowledges that his industry experience has shaped who he is as a teacher. Brad suggests that his non-teaching experience gave him an opportunity to develop relationships with students who may well not foster relationships with other teachers, students who most teachers do not get on with. His experiences were also different from those of the other beginning teachers interviewed. As stated earlier in Chapter Seven, he began teaching at the same school that he went to as a student and also completed his teaching practicum at the same school. Formed at that school, his expectations of school and of the teachers and students in the school to a large degree were met. He didn't share much of the anxiety and tension the others expressed. This was due to the fact that Brad was familiar with the culture of the school and his expectations as predetermined by his school and life experiences were met.

Each of the participants in this study demonstrated the powerful agency of life history in shaping responses to situations encountered inside and outside the classroom. Clark (1992) as cited in Smith (2001) points out, teachers' life experiences "affect what they believe and how they teach" (p. 123). Not only do the life history of beginning teachers determine their actions as teachers but as Knowles (1992) cited in Carter and Doyle (1996) further argues life history plays an influential role in formulating the identity of the beginning teacher. Carter and Doyle (1996) assert that this "identity or image of self as teacher, is carried into practice settings and influences in profound ways the coping and problem solving decisions and actions of beginning teachers" (p. 127).

Initially, all five participants used their experiences of school as a point of reference, particularly in the classroom and during interactions with students. Thus in a sense the beginning teachers through their use and recall of their own personal experiences perpetuate the status quo of the classroom. Beginning teachers, teaching as they were taught, can fail to initiate current educational pedagogy within their classroom setting. Carter and Doyle (1996) express the difficulties in breaking this cycle, when they state that in order "to break this cycle teaching candidates must come to understand their institutional biographies and how these personal histories impede their ability to transform classroom life" (p. 128).



The beginning teachers in this research were initially confronted and challenged by the conflict arising from the discrepancies between their realities of school compared to their life history recollections. In the case of Peter, this caused considerable internal conflict and to a large degree Peter felt as though he was “selling himself short”. He was disappointed that he had to compromise his values and beliefs in order to function successfully within the social context of his school. As discussed in Chapter Six, for Peter this conflict could not be resolved as his long held values and beliefs of school from his experiences as a student were too powerful.

For the others, it was through personal reflection and guidance from ‘significant others’ that they interpreted and developed a framework which guided their behaviour to suit the particular school context.

### **9.2.3 Teacher Leadership, ‘Significant Other’**

This research identified two major areas within the school organisation where support through teacher leadership can be found operating for beginning teachers. One mechanism for supporting the beginning teacher lies in practical support, for example supplying equipment and ensuring classrooms are adequate. The second area is emotional support, for example teacher-leaders listen to areas of concern raised by beginning teachers and offer suggestions and ideas that help address the concern. This second area of support forms an important role in the socialisation of the beginning teacher. The review of literature in Chapter Two identified socialisation as an area that had a great impact on beginning teachers’ development and on their growing sense of teacher identity. Zeichner and Gore (1990) in their review of socialisation literature, as discussed in Chapter Two, identified the important influence of other teachers in the socialisation of the beginning teacher. The following discussion focuses on the development of collegial and professional relationships with a ‘significant other’. This involves a relationship that, as Veenman, DeLaat and Staring (1998) point out, is built on mutual respect and trust. A major finding of this research was that this type of relationship was fundamental to the continued development of the beginning teacher. Each of the beginning teachers in this study actively sought to find in their work environment a colleague whom they could trust and rely on for emotional, pedagogical and practical support and advice.

The term mentor has been widely used in beginning teacher literature to describe a program, usually formalised, where beginning teachers are given support from an experienced

colleague (Ramsey, 2000; Kardos, Johnson, Peske, Kauffman & Liu, 2001; Greenlee & de Deugd, 2002; Williams, 2002). Not all schools provide this opportunity and further as Martinez (1994) argues in McCormack & Thomas (2003) “not all mentor-beginning teacher relationships are effective or appropriate” (McCormack & Thomas, 2003, p. 134). Whilst much of the literature used in this analysis is borrowed from research on mentoring, the term ‘significant other’ will be used throughout the following discussion. Within this research, not all of the beginning teachers had a school appointed mentor yet they all sought out a ‘significant other’ to provide them with support.

Consistent with much of the literature on beginning teachers which focuses on the value of mentors in the continued development of the novice, this research supports the importance and value of a mentor. The work of Crowther et al. (2002) in the area of leadership clearly demonstrates the role other teachers and members of staff can play in supporting the beginning teacher.

Within each of the stories retold in this case study, the role a significant colleague played in the development of the beginning teacher was vital. Each of the five participants searched for a colleague who would provide them with support, advice, feedback and positive reinforcement for the job they were doing. Four out of the five found a person on staff who satisfied these needs. In two cases the schools had a formalised ‘mentor’ program in place. The other three beginning teachers who worked in schools without the formalised programs found someone on staff that they used as a mentor.

As already discussed, beginning teachers can find themselves isolated from their colleagues and in a new world which does not meet with their expectations, providing them with a ‘*praxis shock*’ (Veenman, 1984, p. 143). It is within this context that they begin to search for an ally, a supportive colleague who will help them as they seek to make meaning of their experiences. Most of the support the five participants sought in the early stages of their teaching was in the areas of classroom management and curriculum issues. It is in these areas that Gratch (1998) argues that socialisation literature

identifies a norm discouraging teachers from telling a peer to do something different in the classroom (Newbury, 1977). Schools exist in which teachers support one another and may socialise out of school, but even in these cases, teachers avoid talking about instructional practices (Biklen, 1983; Feiman-Nemser & Floden, 1986; McPherson, 1972; Silver, 1973) (Gratch, 1998, p. 220).

This environment of isolation and discouragement of reflective discussions concerning instructional practices was one which each of the beginning teachers felt a need to overcome. To that end, they sought a colleague who would willingly talk about pedagogy and share experiences that aided them in their practice.

As interactionist literature argues, beginning teachers are in a social world where they are “continually adjusting what they do in light of what others do, so that each individual’s line of action ‘fits’ into what others do” (Becker & McCall, 1990, pp. 3-4). What Becker and McCall (1990) are describing is the notion of the beginning teacher as ‘meaning making’ within this social context. As such they seek out ‘significant others’ who they believe demonstrate exemplary teaching strategies and are a role model whom they believe is worthy of following and seeking advice from. Beginning teachers are looking to ‘fit in’ within the school yet also develop their own identity as a teacher.

The findings of this research suggest that the ‘significant other’ is vital in assisting beginning teachers as they present an avenue by which meaningful professional dialogue about teaching can occur. Williams et al. (2001) as cited in Bullough, Young and Draper (2004) argue that these conversations about teaching are the most important actions a mentor can take to encourage the beginning teacher. They also suggest that this dialogue furthers the mentor’s own professional development in regards to teaching (Bullough, Young & Draper, 2004, p. 390).

Peter, as described earlier, found it very difficult in the beginning to merge the reality of his school with his preconceived ideas of what schooling should be like based on experiences in his school as a student. In his first teaching school, Peter found that many of the staff told him to “relax” and “not worry about it”. This challenged his very notion of self and confronted his values. For much of his first term he felt isolated and alienated from the staff because of these conflicting values. Interestingly, Peter identified a member of staff who joined the school later in the year as a Head of Faculty as “my inspiration”. He stated that “I could go to him and share stories and ask advice” (Peter, Interview 4, p.6). This man gave Peter the much sought after companionship and collegial support that was missing from his other colleagues.

The lack of structured support that Peter felt was missing in his school was compensated by the relationship he developed with this 'significant other'. He relied on his senior colleague for advice in the areas of marking and assessment, and by his own admission he modelled his teaching on that of this colleague. Peter also states that he supported him in "managing stress". Thus, Peter had a mentor who gave him much needed support and feedback on his teaching. This man was by Peter's own admission a person that was "on the same wave length" (Journal, 31<sup>st</sup> May) as him. Gratch (1998) cites examples of many researchers who believe that "working with an experienced teacher will help shape a beginning teacher's beliefs and practices" (p. 220). The researchers Gratch cites include Cochran-Smith, 1991; Feiman-Nemser, 1983.

Brad, through his mentoring experience, felt supported and many of his actions within the classroom were reinforced and validated through discussions with his mentor. He was also encouraged to reflect on his teaching and during the times he met with his mentor he was required to articulate many of his teaching processes. As argued by Veenman, DeLaat and Staring (1998), through these meetings with his mentor "considerable professional growth" (p. 415) took place in Brad's first year. Professional, supportive and caring mentoring can help nurture the positive teacher identity of the beginning teacher.

By contrast, Anne's experiences of her first school highlight what happens to beginning teachers if they do *not* find a 'significant other' within their school setting. Anne's story emphasises what the lack of support and collegiality can do to the self confidence and personal growth of the beginning teacher. This is a significant finding of this research and clearly demonstrates that attention needs to be paid to a program of careful socialisation of beginning teachers. Anne's school, like Brad's, had a mentor program in place but Anne was given a mentor who was initially "hard to catch" and Anne spent little time speaking with her. Her mentor was the Head of Faculty and, as McCormack and Thomas (2003) point out from their research in "secondary schools, the appointed mentors were often executive teachers with many other administrative responsibilities or teachers from other faculties who had little specialist knowledge to assist the beginning teacher" (p. 134). This was certainly the case for Anne. The development of a positive relationship with her mentor was further hindered by an incident where Anne was made to feel that she was wearing inappropriate clothing. After this comment from her mentor, Anne stated "I didn't ever want to see her". As a result of this incident, no positive, trusting relationship could be formed where power was shared (Veenman, DeLaat, & Staring, 1998). The continued lack of professional support for Anne

had a significant impact on her belief in her own ability as a teacher. Anne cites an example where she continually asked for guidance from her mentor in developing a marking schedule, but she felt as though she was given very little, which led to self-doubt. “I was so stressed out by the end of it. Because I am not very good at marking essays. I read each essay a couple of times and try and see how many marks to give them, that kind of thing” (Anne, Interview 2, p. 3). Odell and Huling (2000) as cited in Greenlee and deDeugd (2003) state that “much of the success of a mentorship programme depends on the beginning teacher being able to regard the mentor with trust and as one who cares” (p. 70). Anne felt as though she had no-one on staff whom she could trust and in particular who cared. The relationship between Anne and her mentor was compromised by incidents where her mentor demonstrated a lack of caring and empathy for Anne. Anne’s experience demonstrates the necessity for mentors to be carefully selected if this is a formalised procedure implemented by the school. It is also vital that mentors understand the critical role they play in the development and formation of the beginning teacher’s identity as part of their positive professional development. The ‘significant other’ relationship is one which needs careful planning and nurturing. School leaders need to be allow time within the structured school day for the cultivation of this relationship.

Anne’s comments are poignant when she says “it is really difficult when you are new to a school; you don’t know what is right and what is wrong and really you are looking to people to be supportive” (Anne, Interview 3, p. 8). The evidence here suggests the development of a significant relationship with a supportive colleague is critical in the development of the beginning teacher and indeed beginning teachers seek out this type of relationship. Experienced teachers and leaders need to be mindful of providing the opportunity for beginning teachers to critically reflect on their practice in an honest, supportive and caring environment. The continued positive development of novice teachers’ identity relies on the opportunity to find a suitable ‘significant other’.

#### **9.2.4 Developmental Stages of Teaching**

The findings of this research suggest that the early findings of stage theorists such as Fuller (1969) and Fuller and Bown (1975) have value but are far too narrow in their view of beginning teacher development. The nature and categories of teacher development as highlighted by the stage theorists in Chapter Two are relevant and represent some of the concerns of the beginning teachers in this study. As explored in Chapter Two, Fuller (1969) and Fuller and Bown (1975) suggest that beginning teacher development progresses in a

linear fashion. This is not fully supported by the experiences of the beginning teachers in this study. The experiences of the beginning teachers in this study highlighted the cyclical nature of beginning teacher development. One of the most significant indicators of this cyclical development was that, whilst the participants in this research expressed that they were worried about individual student learning and the impact that they as teachers were having on this, Fuller's (1969) third and final stage of development, most were still concerned about classroom management and discipline, Fuller's (1969) first stage. These findings are contrary to stage theorists' contentions that beginning teachers must move through the first stage before they can reach the final stage.

Fuller's (1969) work and indeed that of many of the early researchers on beginning teachers as cited in Chapter Two use the metaphor of survival to categorise the experiences of beginning teachers. From the experiences of the beginning teachers in this research, this metaphor provides a restricted view of the experiences they encountered. Fuller's (1969) research was based on interviewing pre-service teachers and getting them to identify areas of concern before they had entered the classroom. Whilst the notion of 'survival' was a reality for some of the experiences encountered for the participants of this research, it did not dominate their interpretation of their experiences. Their first year in the profession was not one always influenced by 'struggle' and 'survival' as authors suggest (Fuller, 1969; Fuller and Bown, 1975; Burke and Notar, 1986). It was also a time characterised by excitement and eagerness, a time where the beginning teachers entered the classroom with hope, optimism and full of new initiatives, which they enthusiastically implemented.

### **9.2.5 Identity**

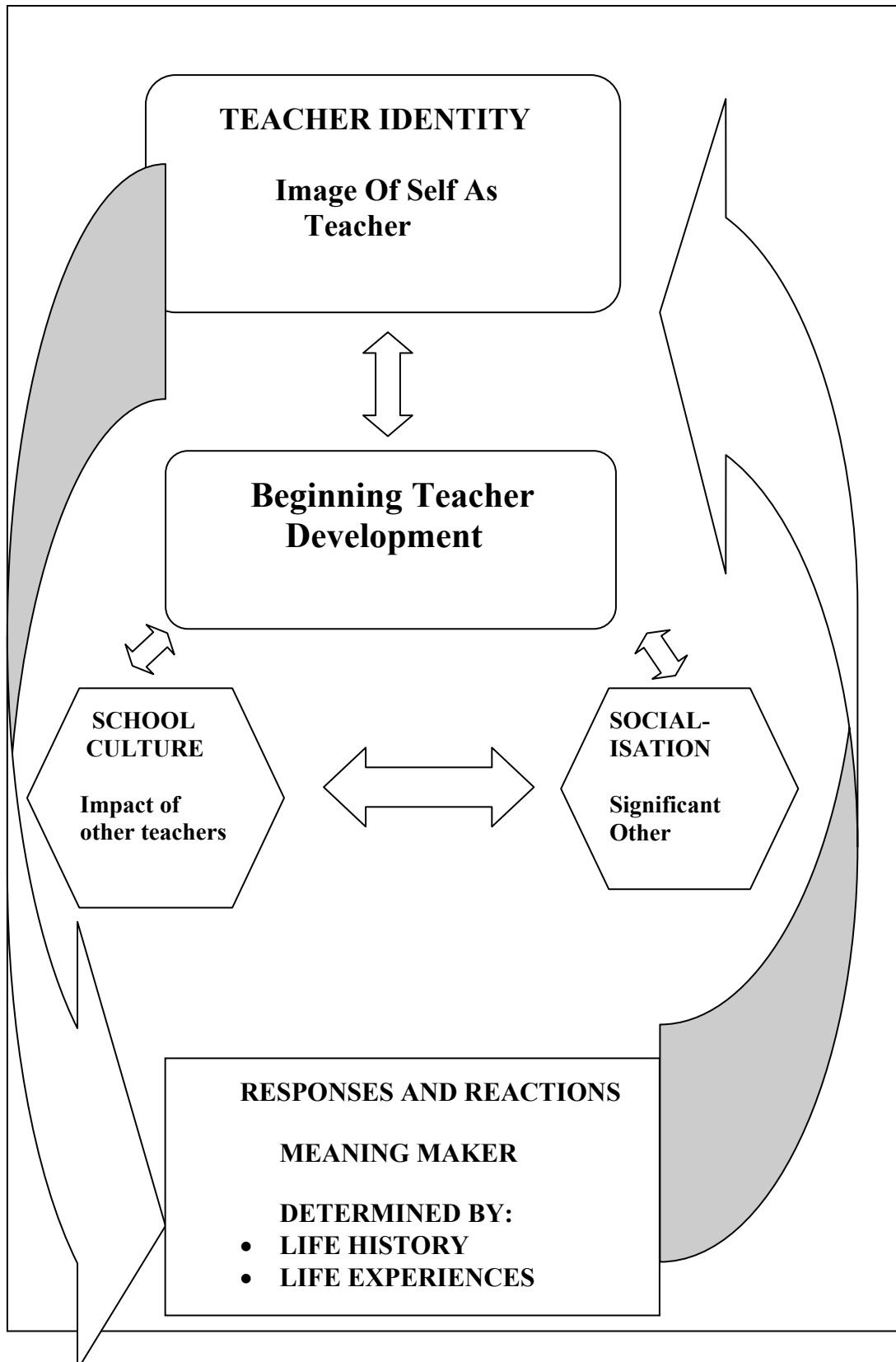
The major theoretical construct of this research is that identity is at the core of all interactions and interpretations of experiences by the beginning teacher. The first year of teaching is characterised by a search for and establishment of a teacher identity as well as a re-defining of a broader 'self' identity. The importance of identity is illustrated by the following diagram and developed further in the discussion that follows.

### 9.3 A Model For Viewing The Beginning Teacher

The model on the following page presents the image of the teacher-self as a powerful concept at the core of all the beginning teacher's actions and interactions. This model is based on the literature and the findings of this research.

Figure 9.1

**Construction of Beginning Teacher Identity**



The model argues that, at the core of beginning teacher experience, is the beginning teacher's activity as a meaning maker who interprets new experiences, in the light of expectations formed from life history, to construct and re-construct a professional identity. The core understanding and argument incorporated in this model is that the establishment of a *teacher identity* is fundamental to the continued development of the beginning teacher.

School *culture* plays a vital role in formulating identity. The culture of the school impacts on beginning teachers by presenting them with a set of norms and social constraints which other members of the community conform to and act within. The culture shapes the nature of all social interactions and sets the professional expectations within the school context. The actions and behaviours of beginning teachers are determined by the way they interpret this culture. The beginning teacher can either choose to conform to the established culture or conversely the beginning teacher can resist the culture of the school. *Socialisation*, as an induction into school culture, also plays an important formative role in the construction of identity. Socialisation teaches beginning teachers the way the members of the school community interact with each other and the support they give (or don't give) to one another. Beginning teachers are not passive receptors of socialisation; they are active agents (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002). As such, beginning teachers have the potential to reshape, or at least contribute to, school culture.

The way in which they relate to school culture and participate in the socialisation process is determined by their *life history*. In particular, beginning teacher's interpretations of their school reality is shaped by their life history.

Thus, teacher *identity* interacts in complex ways with *culture*, *socialisation* and *life history*. As Melucci (1996) notes, identity is highly fluid and is continually evolving and redeveloping as the beginning teacher interacts with and reinterprets social interactions within the school setting. The construction of a teacher-identity is at the core of the beginning teacher's experiences.



## **9.4 Recommendations**

The following recommendations are presented in the light of these findings. Manuel (2003) suggests that the teaching profession is unique in its treatment of its new members in that the beginning teacher must take on all the roles and responsibilities of an experienced teacher, with few if any allowances made for the newness of the beginning teacher. Ramsey (2000) also notes that no other profession has such high expectations of their newest members so early in their introduction to the job.

### **9.4.1 To School Leaders**

School leaders play an essential role in setting the cultural environment of the school, influencing how staff interact with each other and whether teachers work together in a collegial way or whether a culture of isolationism pervades the school. Greenlee and deDeugd (2003) argue that school leaders and experienced teachers play a key role in

helping to ensure the socialisation of new teachers in the school context and in the profession. As activists for beginning teachers, the experienced teacher and the school Principal are visible models of excellent practice as well as persistence, hope, and enthusiasm (p. 67).

It is the responsibility of the school leader to build a culture that supports socialisation and a culture that keeps beginning teachers buoyant and not despondent. An honest and open culture that supports the new ideas of beginning teachers and others should be encouraged. Williams (2002) argues for a further understanding and acknowledgment by school communities of the potential of the beginning teacher. Williams (2002) states that “newly appointed teachers have the potential to effect school improvement and pedagogical reform” (p. 16). Williams (2002) argues that beginning teachers are inhibited from effecting change because of the “existing regimes of truth about successful teaching” (p. 16) that exist in schools. Williams (2002) contention is that far too often school communities believe that it is only through experience that a teacher can be knowledgeable. This view devalues the contribution of the beginning teacher. The following are recommendations that would assist in promoting the buoyancy of beginning teachers.

#### **9.4.1.1 Basic Requirements to Start the School Year**

Beginning teachers are met with a range of complex issues and concerns from the moment they enter the school grounds. Negotiating and finding their way around the school should be made as easy as possible. Finding basic classroom supplies and resources should not be difficult. Their classrooms should be adequately and appropriately furnished for the type of

teaching that is going to take place in the space. It is unreasonable to expect a beginning teacher to teach in a curriculum area that is not adequately supported with tools and a teaching space that acknowledges its special requirements. School leaders are responsible for addressing this before the beginning teacher gets to the school. If subjects are part of the school program, then leaders have a responsibility to effectively resource them.

School leaders are responsible for ensuring that the start of the school year is as smooth as possible for all teaching staff and students (Ramsey, 2000; Greenlee & deDeugd, 2003). Issues of timetables and class allocations are all matters that should be finalised before staff and students return to school. Ramsey (2000) supports these recommendations in his call for better beginning teacher induction. Ramsey (2000) states that the induction period, the way in which the beginning teacher starts the school year, “is a major test of the extent to which employers, school leaders and the profession are interested in and committed to the quality of teaching in schools” (p. 62).

#### **9.4.1.2 Teaching Assignments**

Leaders also have a responsibility to ensure that beginning teachers are not given the most difficult classes in the school and if, in extreme cases, this is the case that they are supported in their teaching. Too often, and it was the case in this research, beginning teachers are either given difficult classes or they are asked to teach outside their trained curriculum area. These allocations are stressful and difficult for any teacher but they place extra demands on the novice who has to teach content with which they are unfamiliar. Beginning teachers should not be placed in this position and leaders have a responsibility to ensure that this does not occur.

#### **9.4.1.2 Structures to Support the Development of a Significant Other**

Organisational structures need to be implemented to allow time in the busyness of the school day for beginning teachers to meet with a mentor or significant other. The allocation of time not only supports the beginning teacher but also implies that the work of the teacher leader as a significant other is valued by the organisation. Teacher-leaders working in the area of mentoring need to be supported and carefully chosen to ensure the success of the relationship.

#### **9.4.2 To Teacher-Leaders**

Teacher-leaders are another link to the success and development of the beginning teacher. The findings of this research suggest that the notion of teacher-leaders as outlined by

Crowther et al. (2002) provides the link that supports and nurtures beginning teachers in their first year. The challenge to teacher-leaders is to realise their potential and the role they play as supportive colleagues. They are the key to nurturing the development of beginning teachers. All teachers within the school organisation have the potential to be teacher-leaders and as such have a responsibility to support beginning teachers. Teacher-leaders and Principals also have a role to play in valuing the contribution beginning teachers can make; they should not dismiss beginning teachers because of their lack of experience.

#### **9.4.3 To System Leaders**

Bullough, Young and Draper (2004) evaluated a program run by the Brigham Young University in United States. The University selects one hundred of its students in their final year to be part of an intern program. This is an alternative to the traditional student-teaching program. The Interns teach full-time in a school and they receive half-pay and full benefits. One experienced teacher in the school is given time release to act as a mentor for every two Interns. This program holds promise and indeed offers an alternative to the traditional student-teaching programs. Bullough, Young and Draper (2004) reported that the Interns' experience of their first year "departed in important ways from that commonly reported in the research literature, a literature primarily based on studies of novice teachers learning to teach with minimal support" (p. 389). Bullough, Young and Draper (2004) argue that the Interns felt more "connected to the schools and to the faculties with which they worked" (p. 389).

Whilst there are considerable monetary and administrative constraints in implementing a program of this nature, certain characteristics of it are worth attempting. Respectful, carefully implemented and monitored mentoring programs could achieve the same outcomes.

Experienced staff need to be given time to meet and work with beginning teachers.

Beginning teachers should not be given a full teaching load, at least in the first semester of teaching. They need time to prepare and to reflect on their teaching. In this time, they should have access to a mentor who is willing to advise, guide and who fully appreciates the needs and concerns of beginning teachers. A reduced allocation for both the mentor and the beginning teacher is desirable so that meaningful dialogue and support are consistently available.

#### **9.5 Some Notable Silences Within the Research**

Early in Chapter One the researcher questioned whether working in a Catholic school is seen as a distinctive feature that characterises the experiences of beginning teachers? Analysis of

the data revealed that none of the five participants explicitly identified or named the Catholic context of the school in any of the research interviews. The researcher will offer several explanations for this absence. One explanation is that the beginning teachers had no other full time teaching experiences. As a result, the culture of the school and the Catholic context of the school was seen as the 'norm' and not worthy of note in their interviews. Secondly, the beginning teachers had many other issues they saw as priorities and fundamental to their day to day functioning within the school setting, so the Catholicity of the school and its influence was not acknowledged as it was not relevant to their specific needs. They were more concerned with classroom applications. The researcher may have also played a role in the absence of a data relating to the influence of Catholic context of school life as it was a notable absence from the researcher's questioning of the beginning teachers. The researcher did not specifically identify the Catholic nature of the schools in which the beginning teachers were working as an issue to discuss during the interviews. This could further explain its absence.

There is, however, one critical incident where the implicit nature of the Catholic context and its influence on the beginning teacher could be questioned. Was one of the influences in Peter's decision to leave his school due to the Catholic culture of the school? It is a question that is not answered and cannot be answered by this research but is worthy of reflection. Peter attended a private independent school as a student and at the end of his first twelve months returned to this same system.

The influence of Catholic school culture on the beginning teacher is an area worthy of further research and development.

This researcher acknowledges that a large silence exists within this research concerning the gender, age and ethnicity of each of the beginning teacher participants. It is recognised by the researcher that each of these characteristics may have had a significant influence on the beginning teacher's interpretations of their experiences and the meaning that they made of these experiences. However, it was not the intention of this research to explore these notions and their impact. There is a place for further research to be conducted to address these areas.

## **9.6 The Significance of this Research. A Voice Given to Beginning Teachers**

The significant contribution of this research is that it acknowledges the voices of beginning teachers which are so often ignored within the school setting. Stanulis, Campbell and Hicks (2002), quoted at the beginning of this chapter, stated that if beginning teachers fail to

articulate their voice they are then left unable to develop a teacher-as-self identity. The failure by schools to recognise the potential of beginning teachers is a failure to give voice to beginning teachers. Williams (2002) contends that the perceived inexperience of new teachers by “bureaucrats, principals, colleagues and parents should be of great concern to the education community” (p. 15). Williams’ (2002) research calls for schools and educational communities to re-evaluate their perceptions of the experiences and contributions beginning teachers have to offer. Beginning teachers have invested time and energy in their teacher development at the graduate level; they enter schools with knowledge that should not be undervalued and dismissed. The experiences and voices of the five beginning teachers in this research has led the researcher to recognise the potential of beginning teachers.

Multiple metaphors for viewing beginning teachers have been used throughout the research literature which have been revealed through the discussions of this research. Often the notion of ‘survival’ is used to describe the experiences of beginning teachers. As earlier acknowledged, the findings of this research suggest that the ‘survival’ metaphor is limited. It offers a narrow view of the experiences of the beginning teacher; it is a negative view which limits our understanding of the beginning teacher. The notion of survival focuses our attention on the beginning teacher as deficient. Sabar’s (2004) migrant metaphor offers a view of resilience, a model where, amidst strangeness, the beginning teacher plays a positive role within the school organisation. Sabar’s metaphor acknowledges that beginning teachers are entering a different cultural context from the one in which they had previously been working amongst, yet like migrants, beginning teachers are often skilled and bring with them needed expertise. Beginning teachers, like migrants, process and interpret their experiences of the new land; they are meaning makers. Sabar’s metaphor offers hope.

The findings of this research support Sabar’s positive and hopeful view of the beginning teacher. The beginning teachers within this research were buoyant; they offered a fresh enthusiasm to the school organisation. As Neve enthusiastically stated “ I love teaching, I love waking up in the morning and going to school” (Neve, Interview 1, p. 14). The metaphor of buoyancy offers a notion of the beginning teacher helping to keep the organisation positive and uplifted. The voices heard in this research suggest that this metaphor is one worthy of attention.

## 9.7 Conclusion

Five beginning teachers have been given a voice amongst the research literature through the interpretation and retelling of their stories. Their stories have highlighted the fundamental importance of the careful meshing of past and present realities in the development of teacher identity. Through these stories, a new understanding of beginning teachers has been developed which recognises that beginning teachers' stories are more than just stories of survival, they can be refreshing stories of beginning teacher agency. The impact and interpretation of the beginning teachers' experiences within this research was largely reflected in the development of a positive teacher identity within the culture of the school. Other teachers, 'significant others', within the school setting played a fundamental role in determining the way the beginning teachers saw and interpreted the experiences they encountered. Within a supportive, collegial environment, the beginning teachers had positive experiences that enhanced their development and impacted on their classroom experiences. In schools where isolation was the dominant culture, the experiences of the beginning teachers were ones of loneliness and seclusion where problems were compounded and often unresolved.

The experiences of beginning teachers are to a large extent formed and moulded by those around them. Beginning teachers interpret their experiences set amongst the backdrop of the culture of the school. The school culture and, to a large degree, the life history of the beginning teacher guides the way in which experiences are interpreted and given meaning. These stories give hope yet they also challenge all within the educational setting to hear what is important to beginning teachers.

## Appendix i



AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY

INFORMATION LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS

TITLE OF PROJECT: **TELLING THE STORIES OF BEGINNING CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS: IMPLICATIONS FOR SUPPORT**

NAME OF STAFF SUPERVISOR: DR NEILL USTICK  
NAME OF STUDENT RESEARCHER : MEAGAN McKENZIE  
AND NAME OF PROGRAMME IN WHICH ENROLLED: Doctorate of Education

You are invited to participate in a research project that is working with teachers in Catholic secondary schools in the Wollongong area, who are in the first year of their teaching experience. The study seeks to tell the stories of beginning teachers such as yourself. You will be asked to talk and write about your experience, including your successes and difficulties, and the various factors impacting on your life. The study is endeavouring to gain a better understanding of the whole lives of beginning teachers, including their interactions with their colleagues and the ways in which the structures and systems of the school setting influence the continued positive development of beginning teachers.

The information is being gathered in two ways: 1) through interviews, 2) journal entries of participants. Each participant will be involved in three or four individual interviews. Each interview will occupy a total of approximately 60 minutes. You will be invited to choose a time and place that suits your circumstances. As well as the interviews, which allow free speaking in an informal way, you will be required to keep a journal of your teaching experiences throughout your first year. This journalling allows you to develop their ideas more formally and reflectively.

From sharing in the Interview you can expect to gain a clarification of your own experiences in your first year of teaching and articulate more clearly the meaning of your participation in the organisation you are part of. The journal entries will enable you to personally reflect on your experiences and to participate in a reflection on your practice. When you read the final paper you will be able to locate your experience and learning against others in similar stages of their careers. You will also be contributing significantly – in a new way that allows the voices of actual teachers to be heard – to the body of knowledge in literature about the needs and attributes of first year teachers so as to assist leaders and school planners to be more informed and to provide more targeted support in this area.

You are free to withdraw consent and to discontinue participation in the study at any time without giving any reason.

All results will be kept confidential. In reporting and recording data pseudonyms will be used and places will be disguised.

Any questions regarding this project should be directed to the Supervisor, Dr Neill Ustick, School of Education, ACU, Signadou Campus, PO Box 256, Dickson, ACT 2602 or the Student Researcher, Meagan McKenzie, email [jchaffer@bigpond.com](mailto:jchaffer@bigpond.com).

As a participant in this study you will be given a full copy of the paper as it is completed.

This study has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee at Australian Catholic University.

In the event that you have any complaint or concern about the way you have been treated during the study, or if you have any query that the Supervisor and Student Researcher has (have) not been able to satisfy, you may write to the Chair of the Human Research Ethics Committee care of the nearest branch of the Research Services Unit. [

Chair, HREC  
C/o Research Services  
Australian Catholic University  
Locked Bag 4115  
FITZROY VIC 3065  
Tel: 03 9953 3157  
Fax: 03 9953 3315

Any complaint or concern will be treated in confidence and fully investigated. The participant will be informed of the outcome.

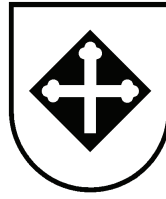
***If you agree to participate in this project, you should sign both copies of the Consent Form, retain one copy for your records and return the other copy to the Investigator or Student Researcher.***

Yours sincerely,

.....

STUDENT RESEARCHER  
MEAGAN McKENZIE





## Australian Catholic University

### CONSENT FORM

TITLE OF PROJECT: **TELLING THE STORIES OF BEGINNING CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS: IMPLICATIONS FOR SUPPORT**

NAME OF STAFF SUPERVISOR: DR NEILL USTICK

NAME OF STUDENT RESEARCHER: MEAGAN MCKENZIE

I ..... *(the participant)* have read *(or, where appropriate, have had read to me)* and understood the information provided in the Letter to Participants. Any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this activity, realising that I can withdraw at any time. I agree that research data collected for the study may be published or may be provided to other researchers in a form that does not identify me in any way.

NAME OF PARTICIPANT: .....  
(block letters)

SIGNATURE .....

SIGNATURE OF STUDENT RESEARCHER: .....

DATE: .....

## Appendix iii

Australian Catholic University  
Brisbane Sydney Canberra Ballarat Melbourne



### Human Research Ethics Committee

#### Committee Approval Form

**Principal Investigator/Supervisor:** Dr Neill Ustick Canberra Campus

**Co-Investigators:**

**Student Researcher:** Ms Meagan McKenzie Canberra Campus

**Ethics approval has been granted for the following project:**

Telling the stories of beginning Catholic high school teachers implications.

**for the period:** 3 April 2002 to 31 December 2003

**Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) Register Number:** N2001.02-19

**The following standard conditions as stipulated in the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans (1999)* apply:**

- (i) that Principal Investigators / Supervisors provide, on the form supplied by the Human Research Ethics Committee, annual reports on matters such as:
  - security of records
  - compliance with approved consent procedures and documentation
  - compliance with special conditions, and
- (ii) that researchers report to the HREC immediately any matter that might affect the ethical acceptability of the protocol, such as:
  - proposed changes to the protocol
  - unforeseen circumstances or events
  - adverse effects on participants

The HREC will conduct an audit each year of all projects deemed to be of more than minimum risk. There will also be random audits of a sample of projects considered to be of minimum risk on all campuses each year.

Within one month of the conclusion of the project, researchers are required to complete a *Final Report Form* and submit it to the local Research Services Officer.

If the project continues for more than one year, researchers are required to complete an *Annual Progress Report Form* and submit it to the local Research Services Officer within one month of the anniversary date of the ethics approval.

Signed: .....

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. L. ...", written over a dotted line.

(Research Services Officer, Strathfield Campus)

Date: .....

17/01/2005

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