

**AN INQUIRY INTO THE PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY FORMATION OF EARLY CAREER
ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS IN RURAL SETTINGS OF THE PROVINCES OF
MPUMALANGA AND LIMPOPO**

by

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DECLARATION

I declare that the dissertation hereby submitted to the University of Limpopo for the Master of Arts has not previously been submitted for a degree at this or any other University, that it is my own work in design and execution, and that all materials contained therein have been duly acknowledged.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my immediate family and all other extended family members. A special feeling of gratitude goes to my grandmother, Sponono Annah Ngomane who always gave me words of encouragement and a firm push to study further in order to make it big in the academic world. My parents, Simon Msana and Lindiwe Msana who supported me, emotionally, financially and spiritually at all times and not forgetting my sisters; Yolanda Msana and Samkelisiwe Masilela whom with no possible doubt, always believed in me.

To my spiritual father, Pastor O.M Ntimane, my church members and all my friends who have supported me through thoughts and prayers, I am forever grateful.

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ABSTRACT

Research on professional identity of teachers began to be considered as important in the nineties. Through research in this area, educational researchers and educators saw an opportunity to help them understand a number of occurrences and behaviours inside the classroom, schools and within the broader community of schools. Identity was not only considered as a great concern to educators but also to educational leaders and decision makers. The reason that identity research became so crucial in education was because of the way in which the nature of schools was changing. Educational researchers saw the need to understand how teachers were able to adjust and cope with the changes occurring and how they impacted on the teacher's sense of self. A growing realisation that, language is at the centre of all learning activities has recently led to a continued growth in research within the terrain where English is a medium of instruction. This study contributes knowledge in the field of professional identity formation among rural teachers of English second language (ESL) or appropriately referred to as English First Additional Language (EFAL) in the South African schooling setting.

It is believed that when a person tells a story, they always include a selection of remarkable experiences hence I have used a narrative research design because it has potential to bring authenticity, ownership and accuracy of the story, since the researcher has to make sure that the data provided is legitimate. This design seems to be more appropriate, looking at the fact that the study collects data through interviews. The participants were able to narrate their individual stories and experiences. The participants in this study are four EFAL located in rural high schools of Limpopo and Mpumalanga Provinces. In terms of teaching experience, they all have a minimum less than one year and maximum of three years. The teachers in this study are appropriately referred to as Early Career Teachers (ECTs). For gender balances, the focus was on four females as well as four males but unfortunately there were five females and three males who each have previously studied at various universities in South Africa. Grounded theory was used to analyse the data collected because, according to Suddaby (2006), this theory contributes insights into self and how people interpret different phenomena.

This study brings forth an understanding of how ECTs of EFAL form their professional identities in their field of work. To the research community, this study will help fill the gaps that were left out by other studies conducted before that may be similar to this one. It will give more clarity on the kind of identity portrayed by ECTs of EFAL in schools and the sort of environmental influences that impact on the formation of professional identity of

English First Additional Language teachers in rural settings.

It seems that, when EFAL teachers engage themselves in reflection they get to know themselves best as professionals as this impacts greatly in an EFAL classroom. This is in response to the narratives given by the participants that their reflections changed the attitudes of their learners. This could mean that the change in learners' attitude serves as a huge factor in the PI formation of EFAL teachers. Therefore, I have discovered that the influence of the learner in helping EFAL teachers form their PIs allows the teachers to portray the following identities: personal, social and role identities (as explained in chapter 2). I have also found that story telling is very much useful when one aims at learning another person's life.

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CHAPTER ONE: GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Early career teachers are often confronted with the task of forging relationships between old and new strands of their professional identities (PIs). Succeeding at this process facilitates the development of a secure and satisfying professional sense of identity. Research in applied linguistics indicates that the attainment of an integrated identity helps language teachers to transition into and find satisfaction within the teaching profession, teach language effectively (Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2013), and nurture language teachers' self-development (Miller, Morgan & Medina, 2017).

In addition, Miller, Morgan and Medina (2017) indicate that attaining a cohesive identity better prepares language teachers to champion educational reform. Meanwhile, research (for example, Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2013) also suggests that accessing this array of benefits can be difficult. As teachers seek to integrate their roles with other discourses that contribute to their sense of self, they may encounter identity conflicts that work against a sense of identity cohesiveness. Hence, Buchanan (2015) reveals that encountering such conflicts can lead to emotional turmoil and stunted professional growth, even leading some language teachers to leave the teaching profession altogether.

According to the *Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy* (2007) the term professional identity (PI) was originally invented in business. It was expected that each and every member of an organisation pass the assigned identity level by attending formal training sessions and conforming to the identity standards set by their organisation. Since identity in education is conceptualised in a different way, PI in teacher education cannot be easily defined. It can depend on the ways in which teachers view reality. For this reason, a group of researchers define such PI as a continuous process where the personal and professional selves of individual teachers are gradually merged into a single self that results in the becoming and being of a teacher (Goodson & Cole, 1994; Samuel & Stephens, 2000; and Volkmann & Anderson, 1998). However, some view PI as simply an issue of how teachers describe themselves as an occupational group, or how teachers perceive the roles they play or the

characteristics of their profession (Beijaard, Verloop & Vermont, 2000; Gaziel, 1995; and Moore & Hoffman, 1988). Other researchers (for example, Clandinin & Connelly, 1996 and Connelly & Clandinin, 1990) regard PI as made up of many sub-identities that come alive as teachers narrate the story of their lives in order to make sense of their personal and professional selves.

Research on teacher professional identity (TPI) began to be viewed as of vital importance in the 1990s. Educational researchers and educators saw this as an opportunity to help them understand a number of occurrences and behaviours inside the classroom, schools and within the broader community of schools (Gee, 2001). Not only was identity considered as a great concern to educators but also to educational leaders and decision makers. The reason that identity research became so crucial in education was the way in which the nature of schools was changing. According to Vesanto (2011), it is important to understand how teachers are able to adjust and cope with the changes occurring and how these impact on their sense of self. Another reason that prompted and motivated TPI research was the possibility of providing necessary data on issues that would help with decision-making processes (Vesanto, 2011).

Varghese, Morgan, Johnston and Johnson (2005) claim that teachers and educational researchers can reach an understanding of teaching and learning only by pursuing ways of getting to know themselves. Hence, they conclude that of paramount importance in the endeavour to understand their place in their chosen career, educators need to have a vivid idea of who they are, including knowing about the roles they play, the people who are of importance to them, the notion that they have about learners and themselves as professionals, and the values that they believe are required for teaching and learning, as well as engage critically throughout their lives with their own selves and their own identities.

Simon-Maeda (2004), expresses the view that second language (SL) teachers' identity features stem from a continuously changing network of personal, social, and cultural circumstances. In the same tone, Varghese *et al.*, (2005) elaborate by suggesting that, in order to understand clearly the complexity of a teacher's PI, a multiplicity of theoretical approaches is of prime importance. That is, the identity of a teacher in the field of English second language (ESL) teaching is most easily understood through an analysis of its characteristics, for example:

1. Identity as multiple, shifting and in conflict;
2. Identity as crucially related to social, cultural and political contexts of teaching the language;
3. Identity as being constructed, maintained and negotiated primarily through discourse related to the field.

Hence, one can argue that teaching ESL (normally known in the South African setting as English First Additional Language, or EFAL) is of great importance, since English is recognised as a global language. Nyenyeni (2016:12) states that “hundreds of teachers have created spaces within which to construct their identity as good teachers”. Thus, the motive of the study is to explore the PI formation of EFAL early career teachers (ECTs) from a narrative perspective. Accordingly, this proposed study will focus on the lives of eight (8) EFAL ECTs by recording the stories and experiences of how they form their PIs.

1.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM

Although research on TPI began to gain prominence in the 1990s, the development of TPI in EFAL is a relatively new and emerging research arena (Varghese, Morgan, Johnston & Johnson, 2005; Williams, 2007; Zacharias, 2010). According to Varghese *et al.*, (2005), this research can be traced back to two relatively independent lines of thinking on language TPI. One line of thinking is associated with the explorations of teacher knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes that have placed the EFAL teacher at the centre of research attention. The second line of research focuses on the socio-cultural and socio-political aspects of the EFAL TPI, as, for example, race, gender, and social status, which have also played a role in the development of TPI. In this line of research, marginalisation, the position of non-native speaker teachers, the status of language teaching as a profession, and the teacher–student relationship have also emerged as essential research interests (Varghese *et al.*, 2005). The roots of TPI research originate in a variety of research interests in applied linguistics and general educational research, such as teacher knowledge/teacher cognition, teacher beliefs, professional development, and reflective practice. Hence, according to Varghese *et al.*, (2005), these research areas can be considered precursors of TPI research because they have investigated important aspects that influence development identity among teachers.

Writing in 2004, Atkinson indicated that investigations into the professional identity formation of ECTs of the English language had not yet received scholarly attention. To the best of my knowledge there is still no evidence of empirical studies in TPI formation of rural EFAL teachers. Furthermore, for many ECTs who teach EFAL, their initial years of teaching may be the most challenging as they begin to see themselves as effective or actual English language teachers (Atkinson 2004). A decade later, Nel, Muller and Lebeloane (2014) indicate that these teachers have to develop a new identity that is relational to their rural context, which in South Africa is, according to Manyike (2014), the predominant learning environment where English is taught as a second language.

The identity issue associated with learning a new or foreign language is one of the major problems that ECTs may come across, consciously or unconsciously (Ochs, 2008). For as long as these teachers are faced with this kind of challenging situation, it will be exhausting or even exasperating for them to impart the required knowledge to the learners in the years ahead of teaching in the field of English. This could mean that their learners in the EFAL classroom may be unable to identify themselves as competent and proficient users of the English language.

This study seeks to investigate how ECTs of EFAL in rural settings form their TPI.

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

1.3.1 Aim

The aim of the study is to investigate the professional identity formation of Early Career English First Additional Language teachers in rural settings in the provinces of Mpumalanga and Limpopo.

1.3.2 Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study are to:

- Establish how training as an EFAL teacher contributes to early career teachers' professional identity formation;
- Document professional development initiatives that support EFAL teachers' professional identity formation in rural settings;

- Determine the sort of environmental influences that impact on the formation of professional identity of EFAL teachers in rural settings;
- Describe how early career teachers of EFAL in rural settings form their professional identity.

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study will help to bring understanding of how ECTs of ESL form their professional identities. For researchers in this area of study, the findings of the proposed research will fill a number of gaps: this study will give more clarity on the kind of identity formed by ECTs of ESL and how they compare to that of an established PI of an English teacher as portrayed by studies such as Atkinson (2004), Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) and Dvir (2015). In terms of teacher training, this study is significant in that it seeks to point out some valuable considerations advocated by the specifications set by the *Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications (MRTEQ) Policy* (2015: 5). MRTEQ (2015) proclaims that teacher education and, by implication, language teacher education should be aimed at ensuring that the higher education system produces teachers with a high grasp of pedagogical and content knowledge. MRTEQ (2015) also provides a basis for the construction of core curricula for initial teacher education, as well as for continuing professional development (CPD) programmes that accredited institutions must use in order to develop their programmes leading to teacher education qualifications. Hence, one of my objectives is to establish how training as an EFAL teacher contributes to the ECT's professional identity formation. This is also in line with the *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS)* (2011: 4-6), which aims at facilitating the transition of learners from education institutions to the workplace, especially when one considers learners that may in future be trainee EFAL teachers.

1.5 OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

Definitions of four concepts that form a major part of the discussion that is expected to ensue from the proposed study are provided below:

1.5.1 Early Career Teacher (ECT)

For the purpose of this study, the concept ECT shall cover a range of English teachers who have recently graduated from higher education institutions to those who have less than five years teaching experience.

1.5.2 English First Additional Language (EFAL)

The process of teaching or learning English as a second language or as a language that is additional to a home language; hence, it is also referred to as English Second Language (ESL) in this study.

1.5.3 Identity

For a successful discussion, the proposed study shall adopt the definition of identity by Bernstein and Olsen (2009). This definition regards identity as denoting who one is as an individual or what a person is; it is composed of different characteristics and traits.

1.5.4 Teacher Professional Identity (TPI)

For the purpose of the proposed study, TPI is understood as constructed by the individual in the flow of discontinuous events and includes ways in which individuals as agents strive to maintain a stable understanding of themselves in shifting contexts (Heikkinen, 2002).

1.6 CHAPTER OVERVIEW

This dissertation is presented as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction

In Chapter 1, the background to the study is discussed and the research problem is identified. The significance of the study and the broader context are justified. In addition, the reasons for conducting the specific study and the aim of the research are provided.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The literature review provided an overview of recent literature worldwide focusing on the different alternative assessment methods available.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The relevant method and design is identified and discussed in detail. Ethical considerations are also discussed by considering the integrity of teachers in the working environments.

Chapter 4: Presentation, analysis and Interpretation

Chapter 4 focuses on the presentation of the research findings and an analysis of the data. The research findings relating to the acceptable or not acceptable alternative assessment methods are discussed.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and recommendations

Finally, in Chapter 5, conclusions are drawn and the recommendations resulting from the study are discussed by providing a theory on how ECT of ESL best form their professional identities in rural settings.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This study captures the ECT teachers' experiences of becoming and being ESL teachers in the rural settings of Mpumalanga and Limpopo. Particularly, this chapter emphasises the meanings of English language teachers' experiences, ESL teacher candidates, and ESL practitioners in relation to their identity construction and reconstruction, and highlights the effects of cultural, linguistic, social, personal and interpersonal elements on their professional identity formation. This chapter also describes the multitude of obstacles ECT of ESL overcome in developing the power of their TPI. It is as much a study about pain, frustration, struggle and challenges as it is about accomplishment and hope.

The contributions to the thought and practice of English teacher education as a result of this study are three-fold. First, I hope the attention I give to the stories of ESL teacher identity formation of the eight ECT teachers will highlight the need for ESL teacher preparation programs to include and emphasise development opportunities for ECTs. Second, the witness of the eight ESL ECTs' teaching lives and the experiences of professional growth will open possibilities for ECT teacher candidates in the teaching profession. Finally, the themes emerged from this study will provide an initial framework for future research in ESL.

2.2 RESEARCH ON IDENTITY

Many educational researchers have adopted a variety of theoretical positions such as sociocultural, poststructuralist and feminist perspectives to study identity focusing on various aspects of identity, such as linguistic identity, cultural identity, national identity, gender identity, and professional identity, to name just a few (Lu, 2005). Even the most theoretically sophisticated researchers would have problems navigating their way through the inadequate constructs used to study identity, or developing an integrated perspective out of the diverse movements contributing to this discourse (Cummins, 1996; Norton, 2000; & Wenger, 1998). In this chapter, I use the term "identity" to mean "how a person understands his or her relationship to their world of work, how the relationship is constructed

across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future” (Norton, 2000). To bring out ESL early career teachers’ experiences in relation to multiple identities, I will have to analyse cultural and linguistic identities from the teachers’ experiences, and examine their professional identities as ECT of ESL teachers in relation with other teachers that have been long in the career within the context of rural schooling. According to Norton (2000), two perspectives would be relevant for my study: experience on professional identity formation and language and identity.

First, experience on professional identity formation provides a framework to examine identity from a person’s daily experiences and interaction with others (Connelly & Clandinin, 2000; Dewey 1938; Wenger, 1998). Second, relationship between language and identity challenges the impact of language ideology on a person’s identity (Cummins, 1996; Norton, 2000). Although these perspectives may emphasise different aspects and issues on identity, they might reject the assumptions of identity as static, unitary, and discrete, and share some basic assumptions about identity as multiple, conflicting, unfixed, and evolving.

With these two perspectives, this study will provide an opportunity to understand the threads that both bind and separate the lives of ECT of ESL by exploring the meanings of early career teachers’ experiences at home and in school, as well as the various relationships they forge in and out school, and their hopes and dreams for life beyond school. Through critically examining the meaning and experiences of these eight ECT of ESL, I hope to expand understanding of the complexities of the lives of ECT of ESL, and at the same time explore their professional identities. In particular, I will examine the experiences of these eight ECT of ESL who come from different provinces, attended different schools and teach in different public rural schools. I explain the meanings they constructed of their learning experiences in English language classrooms, and their relationships with family members, peers, and colleagues. One may come to a conclusion that relationships with our family, friends, and teachers affects how one develops different kinds of choices, different kinds of futures for themselves, and different interpretations of success.

2.3 LANGUAGE AND IDENTITY

Recently, there has been a growing body of literature focusing on the relation between language and identity. Much research has focused on identity construction of language learners who speak other languages (Clarke 2008; Kanno & Stuart 2011; Varghese 2011; Sayer 2012; Dagenais 2012; Menard-Warwick 2013; Cheung, Said & Park 2015). A number of recent articles have examined the role of learners' social and cultural identities in learning English, and have documented the belief that identities shape the ways in which people make sense of the world and influence how they perform their daily practices (Hall, 2002; McCarthy, 2001). For example, Norton (2000), Bourdieu (1997), Weedon (1997) and Cummins (1996), have highlighted the importance of understanding the personal, socio-psychological investments of adult immigrant women in learning ESL in conceptualising the relations between power, identity, and the learning of language. After teaching six months of ESL courses, Norton went on to study five of the women participants over a period of twelve months. The women were asked to keep records of their interactions with Anglophone Canadians and to write diaries in which they would reflect on their language learning experience in the home, workplace, and community. Through the participants' journal writing, Norton's study reflects the participants' multiple identities as immigrants, mothers, wives, workers, and learners in relation to language learning in which he found a complex relation among social identity, personal investment, and language learning.

Drawing upon Halliday's (1985) sociocultural theory of language, Morgan's (1997) study focuses on the relationship between second language learners' identities and intonation teaching practice. Reflecting upon his teaching practice as a teacher-researcher in a community-based adult ESL classroom in Toronto, Morgan's study describes a particular language lesson on intonation and suggests that "social power and identity issues seemed to facilitate greater comprehension of sentence-level stress and intonation as strategic resources for (re)defining social relationship" (pp 431). These studies reveal that identity becomes one of the significant constructs in second language education research; however, much of the research mentioned above focuses on second language learners. Prevailing paradigms of second language research have for decades not treated questions of teachers' professional identity as a central issue in the process of language teaching and in the theories of language teacher education (Medgyes, 2000). There is a scarcity of

research demonstrating a comprehensive understanding of the dynamic relationship between teachers' linguistic and professional identities and language teaching. There is a particular need for investigations on ESL ECTs who came from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds who bring a set of prior beliefs about teaching and learning which has been shaped by their experiences and observation as learners in their home countries.

The traditions of language teacher education rooted in general educational inquiry have emphasized the learners' language acquisition process, teaching techniques and pedagogy. Lagging behind by almost a decade, language teacher education has begun to recognize that teachers, apart from the method or materials they may use, are central to understanding and improving teaching of English. Researchers and practitioners in language teacher education have begun to recast concepts of who language teachers are, what language teaching is, and how language teachers learn to teach (Freeman & Johnson, 1998). As language learners learn from many sources within learning environments and among learning elements, teachers play a major role in facilitating learners' learning processes. Freeman and Johnson (1998), argue that in defining the knowledge base for language teachers, teacher educators must focus not only on students as learners of language, but also on teachers as learners of language teaching. The knowledge base of language teacher education must account for how individuals learn to teach and for the complex factors, influences, and processes that contribute to teachers' identities.

It has been argued that the social identity of ECTs is not fixed but is, rather, shaped by social attitudes toward ECTs that, in turn, influence the role of ECT teachers in the ESL classroom (Duff & Uchida, 1997; Mcnamara, 1997; Tang, 1997). Scholars in the field of general teacher education urge teacher education programs to understand the perspectives and experiences from teacher candidates of diverse backgrounds as the basis for designing teacher education programs that will prepare them to be successful in teaching (Au & Blake, 2003). It is particularly crucial, however, for teacher educators to understand ECTs' challenges and issues, to recognize ECTs' need for acceptance, and to acknowledge their unique contribution in the field.

2.4 BECOMING AN ENGLISH SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHER

There is no fixed recipe or set formula to prepare one to become a teacher. Pre-service courses can only guide students for entry into the field of teaching; they cannot fully prepare future teachers. According to Wiggins (2007:36), 'excellent teacher education programs provide students with experiences from which they can construct their own understandings of music, education, and music education'. By providing a range of teaching and learning opportunities within the course, students have 'a clearer image of the kind of teacher they want to be' (Conkling, 2007:44).

Most teacher education courses provide core units in the areas of education (curriculum, assessment, reporting, diversity, special needs), pedagogy units that focus on discipline subjects/specialist areas (for example, music education), compulsory school placement and elective units that comply with the preparation of teaching. It is well known that teacher preparation courses can only begin to prepare teachers for their profession as 'learning to teach is a process that continues throughout a teacher's career and that no matter what we do in our teacher education programs and no matter how well we do it, at best we can only prepare teachers to begin teaching' (Conkling & Henry, 1999:22). In a recent study in Australia, Swabey, Castleton and Penney found that 'time is a perennial and internationally recognised problem for teacher education courses' (2010:31). They further point out that teacher education courses are just an entry into the professional community and that there is not enough conclusive evidence available regarding the quality of teacher education programs, even though courses provide beginner teachers with the skills, knowledge and understandings required for teaching.

When students enroll into a teacher education program, they begin their journey into the profession and start to 'act' and 'think' like a teacher. Students have their own individual beliefs and attitudes that will impact on their identity as a teacher. The concept of identity, argues Beauchamp and Thomas (2009:175) is a complex one: 'even a cursory examination of the literature reveals that there is much to understand if one is to appreciate the importance of identity in teacher development'. Pre-service teachers are often influenced by their own experience of schooling as to what is good practice, coupled with what they experienced at university and on school placement (Joseph, 2010). During their teacher

education course when they go out on school placement they become 'aware of a shift in their roles, from students to teachers' (Campbell & Brummett, 2007:52). Not only do they get the opportunity to link theory to practice (Henry, 2001), they also have to think on their feet (Joseph & Heading, 2010). Pre-service teachers draw on their university courses to inform their practice as they carve out their own identities as teachers. They include personal knowledge and beliefs about themselves as future educators. It is up to the individual student to make the most of the available background and experience, and the ability to do so will vary. Joseph and Heading (2010) argue elsewhere that the art of learning how to teach and its process shapes one's teacher identity. They further point out that one's formation of becoming a teacher impacts on one's identity as a teacher. It is not within the scope of this paper to explore the length and breadth of ideas and issues that impact on teacher identity; rather, the authors agree that over time a teacher's professional identity can shift and change due a range of factors. Beauchamp & Thomas are among those researchers who have explored and written about identity development, formation, building and creation. Each term, they suggest, 'adds a slight nuance to questions that could be posed about the nature of progress through a teacher's career' (2009:178). These aspects are not reported on here: instead, the initial repertoire of teaching competencies and the range of music experience are discussed as an aspect shaping identity.

Joseph (2011), declares that teachers use reflective narrative discourse as a way to shape their identity. According to Beauchamp & Thomas, 'the narratives of teachers about themselves and their practice, as well as the discourses in which they engage, provide opportunities for exploring and revealing aspects of the self'. Through such storytelling they express their identity.

2.5 PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY OF EARLY CAREER TEACHERS OF ENGLISH SECOND LANGUAGE

Teachers' identities involve both the ways in which teachers perceive themselves (as teachers) and the ways they portray themselves to their students (Schutz *et al.*, 2007). These identities continuously change, evolve, and emerge as teachers transact among social historical contexts over the course of their teaching lives (Cross & Hong, 2009; Hong, 2010; as well as Zembylas, 2003). This construction and reconstruction of their identities is

based not only on the continually changing self-knowing of teachers, but also on teachers' continually changing perceptions of the profession itself. Thus, what teachers know about themselves, their perception of the characteristics and nature of the teaching profession, and their beliefs about their roles are all interrelated in forming and transforming their teacher identities. A key aspect of teachers' changing identities revolves around the emotions associated with the teaching process. For example, Nias (1996) indicated that teachers invest their "selves" in their work. This investment includes emotional episodes that provide salient evidence regarding one's evolving identity commitments. During emotional transactions, teachers' emerging identities not only influence their actions and emotions, but their actions and emotions also influence their professional identity formation.

In English language class, teachers may feel frustrated when students' performance did not reach teachers' academic goals for their outcomes, especially given that performance in English is important for students' academic careers. In this situation, teachers might reconsider their teacher identity, by asking themselves: "can I do good job as an English teacher?" On the other hand, teachers may experience enjoyment or pride, when they see their students being successful while explaining difficult vocabulary items using the words they learned in class, without giving up. These successes might provide teachers with an opportunity to reinforce their identity as English teacher. New teachers begin with beliefs and goals about their students and the roles they will be "playing" as a teacher (Cross & Hong, 2009; Van Veen & Slegers, 2009; Hong, 2010; Schutz *et al.*, 2012). These beliefs and goals can range from being useful to not useful and yet they act as reference points or standards used by teachers to judge what happens during classroom transactions. For example, students' actions and reactions may be compared to idealized versions of how students "should" act in the classroom (Flores & Day, 2006). When students' behaviors are in line with teachers' perceptions of how the classroom should be and are associated with pleasant emotions and those salient identities may be strengthened. However, when there is a discrepancy among a teacher's current identity beliefs and what is actually occurring in the classroom, there is the potential for those identities to be challenged, resulting in potential changes in those identities (Schutz *et al.*, 2007; Cross & Hong, 2009). When students are compliant, it confirms pleasant emotions about being respected. When students are defiant, frustration can lead to doubt about emergent teacher roles. Thus, it is important to keep in mind that it is difficult to separate teachers' professional identities from

teachers' emotional experiences, how they display those emotions, and the contexts in which those emotions arise (Schutz *et al.*, 2007). In language education, Varghese and colleagues (2005) argue that, "in order to understand language teaching and learning we need to understand teachers: the professional, cultural, political, and individual identities, which they claim or which are assigned to them" (p. 22). As mentioned, recently researchers have investigated language teacher identity. For example, Miller (2009) "places identity and discourse at the heart of language teaching and learning" (p. 172). Yet, teacher identity related to English language learning has received little attention by researchers (Varghese *et al.*, 2005; Reeves, 2009; Farrell, 2011).

Existing studies have heavily focused on novice teachers (e.g., Amin, 1997; Varghese *et al.*, 2005; Park, 2007; Farrell, 2012), while scholars have paid little attention to the identity of experienced language teachers. Consideration of language teacher identity for both novice teachers and experienced teachers is important in professional development since their identities are fundamental to the beliefs, assumptions, values, and practices (Farrell, 2011), which will be also crucially taken into the preservice teacher training. In particular, the issue of teacher identity in relation to English language learners may need to be considered differently compared to other subject areas, given that English language learners may be a more heterogeneous group (Reeves, 2009). Recently, Farrell (2011) categorized three main clusters in professional role identities of English language teachers: *Teacher as Manager* (Attempt to control everything that happens in classroom), *Teacher as Acculturator* (Helps students get accustomed to life outside class), and *Teacher as Professional* (Teachers dedicated to their work; take it seriously). Probably the identities of, *Teacher as Manager* and *Teacher as Professional*, can be applied to teachers of all subjects. However, the role identity of *Teacher as Acculturator* is something that may make English language professionals somewhat unique (Farrell, 2011). In addition, Duff and Uchida (1997) describe language teachers as cultural workers, because teachers "play a key role in the construction of the learners' views of their homes; their understandings of unfamiliar belief systems, values and practices; and their negotiations of new social relationships" (Hawkins & Norton, 2009: 32) for students who just come into their new school and new community. In essence, the role of "*Teacher as Acculturator*" is not just for the long-term educational needs of their students but also the short-term entry into a new culture – a role that teachers of other subjects may not feel as acutely. As such, it is evident

that in order to understand English language teaching and learning as well as to help students learn their target language (English) more effectively, understanding teachers in the first place is essential. In order to understand teachers, we should have a clear perspective of who they are: “the professional, cultural, political, and individual identities which they claim or which are assigned them” (Varghese *et al.*, 2005: 22). In other words, we have to pay attention to comprehend how language teachers shape their identities among others in their teacher education program, and with students in their schools and classrooms (Varghese *et al.*, 2005).

2.6 PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY OF ENGLISH SECOND LANGUAGE IN SOUTH AFRICA

Most ESL qualified teachers begin their initial teacher education programmes with various images of teaching and themselves as teachers. These initial images, largely developed during their schooling experiences, are crucial in determining their attitudes towards teaching, their understanding of teaching, their professional beliefs and their classroom practices (Flores, 2001; Wideen, Mayer-Smith, & Moon, 1998). The extent to which these early experiences in schools as well as other factors impact on teachers’ concepts of self (professional identity) and their teaching practice depends on how they view themselves as teachers before they begin teaching, and whether or not this is challenged or ‘shattered’ by the context of their preparation. Professional identity formation and development are individual maturation processes that begin before and during one’s training for the profession, evolve during entry into the profession, and continue to develop as the practitioner identifies with the profession. The formation of ECT professional identity during this crucial period (pre-service to beginning teacher phase) can generally inform the pre-service teachers if they are suited to the profession of teaching ESL (Schempp, Sparkes & Templin 1999).

Drawing from the fieldwork conducted by Harley (2009) and that of Kristiansen (2008), they found that the two teachers that were their participants did not match policy expectations. However, they displayed something that over and above was expected of them. Kristiansen (2008) proves this by elaborating on how the teachers in his study would refer to learners “their children”, taking over the unprescribed role of being parents to these learners. Moreover, Kristiansen makes a suggestion that, “other ways which could help teachers,

especially black teachers in developing a professional identity could be an increased remuneration and a more balanced resource allocation to under privileged schools. She believes that an indegenisation of the country's curriculum and a more stable resource foundation for black teachers may increase their capacity to reflect on the professional identity.

The focal point in this chapter is how the English Second Language Teachers teaching in rural parts of Mpumalanga and Limpopo are empowered to develop their professional identities in accordance with new demands they come across at schools.

Amongst other topics, this chapter sets out to discuss on the concept of the professional identity of early career teachers of ESL in South Africa. In South Africa, the poor English proficiency of many of teachers has often been advanced as a reason for maintaining the status quo of the language policy. However, it is imperative that the cycle of poor English models, poor learning and poor teaching should be short-circuited, but this process will require genuine creative thinking'.

According to Wenger (1999), when we reify ourselves, this is when we negotiate meaning and become part of what we do, thus our identity is formed by what we do on the daily basis. Consequently, the way that we perform in our community of practice gives us a sense of belonging, which could make ECTs to behave in a particular way because of the context they are in. For example, when South African ECTs go to rural schools for the first time, it may be a difficult experience because the rural school contexts differ from the urban context in terms of management, teachers, learners, environment and resources. But as they interact with rural school learners, teachers and the environment, they make meaning of the rural schools context through identity negotiation and hence influencing their individual identity. The work of identity negotiation and meaning making may presumably make ECTs feel part of the new rural school community, a factor which may be paramount in their initial teaching experience.

2.7 PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY OF EARLY CAREER TEACHERS IN RURAL SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

In May 2013, a group of Wits school of Education (WSoE) student teachers were taken for a rural teaching experience (RTE) in Mpumalanga with the aim of exposing them to conditions of teaching in rural contexts. This project served to offer support to student teachers who intended to practice in the rural schools of Mpumalanga (Nkambule, 2015). In the process, identity challenges associated with rural teaching experience were identified and hence generated knowledge that could be used to deal with such identity challenges faced by student teachers. This could have ultimately encouraged student teachers to remain and operate in rural schools context. This student teacher support project by Wits School of Education is similar to the Student Teacher Rural Experience Program (STREP), developed by Western Australian Department of Education and Training (DET), to support student teachers who wish to do their teaching practice in rural districts with the view of working in rural areas (Lock, 2008). This background therefore forms a basis for this subtopic in terms of ascertaining the perceptions and the challenges with teacher identity formation of early career teachers as they prepare themselves for their first time actual teaching experience in a rural school context.

In short, this information above links directly with the four objectives of this study. Hence I saw the relevance of bringing it forth with the intention to reveal the connection. Firstly, this study seeks to establish how training as an EFAL teacher contributes to ECTs' professional identity formation. Having said that, the WSoE project aimed at exposing student teachers to conditions of teaching in rural contexts. As these student teachers were exposed to rural teaching conditions, this will now help me as a researcher to have an idea on how such ECTs (then student teachers) were able to form their PI and also establish how such trainings contributed to the identity formation of these ECTs with the conditions they were exposed to in rural settings.

Secondly, another objective of this study is to document the professional development initiatives that support EFAL teachers' PI information in rural settings. Studies by Nkambule (2015) and Lock, (2008) introduced me to these two initiatives that support EFAL teachers' PI formation, that is; the Wits School of Education student teachers that were taken for rural

teaching experience in rural contexts. This was very similar to the second initiative which is the Student Teacher Rural Experience Program (STREP) aiming to support student teachers who wished to do their teaching practice in rural districts with the view of working in rural areas. These are the two, amongst other initiatives that this study will document as initiatives that support EFAL teachers' PI formation.

The third objective that is to be achieved in this study is to determine the sort of environmental influences that impact on the formation of professional identity of EFAL teachers in rural settings. Early Career Teachers are at a risk of preceding their personal identities during the process of negotiating their rural identities in relation to rural context. This could happen as they encounter unfamiliar situations in rural schools during the course of their teaching experience, like having to interact with teachers and the learners in rural schools. The connection to rural school contexts helps them to develop a new form of identity which is referred to as rural ECTs' identity, which may be different from their urban or township background (Nkambule, 2015). Rural teacher identity is an instrumental aspect of ECTs' in the rural teaching environment. This is because it helps them to appreciate conditions in rural context in order to carry out their work. This study is yet to find out how the impacts of teaching in rural environments influence the formation of professional identity of EFAL teachers. Worthy to note is that, in any given school context, teacher identity is paramount. Firstly as Nkambule notes, in classroom management and building teacher-learner relationships, secondly, in fitting in rural school set ups. When this happens it is likely to make ECTs' to be successful in achieving their desired objectives. This is supported by Palmer's (1998) assertion that, teachers who engage themselves in teacher identity development will survive in the profession longer as compared to those who do not. It is for this reason that ECTs' need to work on their identity formation in order to teach in rural schools context. ECT identity in rural context relates to their innate perception of rurality in general and the rate at which they can adapt to rural conditions. As Wenger (1999) ascertains, ECTs need to create a connection between them and the rural schools to function properly in those schools. This implies that if such connection fails, it may cause an identity challenge ECTs during the process of finding themselves in rural schools.

The last objective of this study is to describe how early career teachers of EFAL in rural settings form their professional identities. According to Sharplin (2002), the rural school

environment is likely to inflict further pressure on the ECTs ability to negotiate their identity as they come to terms with what customarily happens in rural schools. In addition, it is significant to note that ECTs have idealised negative preconceptions about rural schools especially those who do their schooling and teacher training in urban areas, this is likely to have a potential negative effect on their experience in rural areas (Sharplin, 2002). Sharplin further maintains that, ECTs need to be provided with an opportunity to establish connections between themselves on one hand and the teachers, learners and the community members in rural schools context on the other hand. This will improve their identity negotiations and possibly take away their fear of social dislocation, which may in turn assist them to adapt to conditions in rural schools.

As noted earlier, negotiating teacher identity for ECTs in rural schools is challenged by a number of factors which can be generalised into the following categories, internal factors that are patent with the school environment, the staff and students and external factors that are related to the society where the schools are located (Emerging Voices, 2015). Recent model on rural education by Lock (2008), Sharplin (2002), Emerging Voices (2015) Masinire, Maringe and Nkambule (2014) and Masinire (2015) outline the significance of teacher training institutions to train student teachers with the view of rural teaching. They demonstrate the effectiveness of such teacher training programs especially for student teachers that plan to practice in rural schools. This is done at the expense of practical issues in rural schools such as identity challenges of ECTs.

In view of this, it is also important to understand that education in rural areas presents complex challenges that go beyond the teacher training done at institutional level such as teachers' attitude towards work and the discipline of learners in rural schools. This necessitates academic research on such challenges as mechanisms that could help to solve practical educational problems faced by ECTs (Nkambule, 2015). As noted earlier, recent studies on rural education have shown that curriculum designers need to put in context the educational challenges of rural schools in the process of designing and implementing curriculum paradigms (Emerging Voices, 2015). It is important to note that teacher training in educational institutions is based on curriculum implementation policies and availability of resources in urban schools. This kind of teacher training based on the urban context, might have created an impression to ECTs whilst still student teachers that

situations are similar even in the rural context. This preconception possessed by student teachers on rural schools is bound to create anxiety and stress to ECTs as they find situations different when they start working in rural schools.

Rural schools and urban schools are located in different contexts which may make ECTs to be challenged when they move from urban context to conduct teaching experiences in rural schools. In most instances, training institutions follow established curriculum in the process of training teachers which do not always recognise the differences between rural and urban context. For instance, teacher training institutions may need to make explicit the challenges of teaching in both rural and urban context. This implies that, with implicit knowledge about teaching practice contexts, student teachers who are required to conduct teaching practice in rural schools as a requirement for their degrees may face challenges in connecting to the rural context and hence it may influence the ECT's professional identity development.

Teacher Professional Identities is a legitimate area that can help researchers better understand the conditions under which these teachers work and the complexities of the dimensions of TPI, it will also contribute in exploring effective factors that contribute to the formation of English TPIs.

2.8 IDENTITY OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS AS MULTIPLE, SHIFTING AND IN CONFLICT

Simon-Maeda (2004), expresses that Second Language (SL) teachers' identity features stem from a continuously changing network of personal, social, and cultural circumstances. In the same tone, Varghese, Morgan, Johnston and Johnson (2005) elaborate that in order to clearly understand the complexity of a teacher's self, a multiplicity of theoretical approaches is of prime importance. That is; the identity of a teacher in the field of English language teaching is easily understood through an analysis of its characteristics, for example:

1. Identity as multiple, shifting and in conflict.
2. Identity as crucial related to social, cultural and political contexts.
3. Identity as being constructed maintained and negotiated primarily through discourse.

Akkerman and Meijir (2011), in their recent research named parallel kinds of characteristics of typical teachers' identity definition that is: the multiplicity of identity, its discontinuity and its social nature. They also noted the addition of the aspect of agency from the definition by Beijaard *et al.*, (2004) which indicated that identity is formed through the activity of the individual, from these authors we get an understanding that PI is a shifting concept; it strives towards stability, continuity and individuality. Akkerman and Meijir (2011) indicate that these assumptions do not provide a full picture of the phenomenon therefore it appears to be impossible to maintain a complete decentralised idea of identity for one to understand how PI develops and how individuals are able to maintain a sense of self through time.

Hence, Ruohotie-Lyhty's study (2013), committed to a narrative definition of PI which seeks to understand how continuity is constructed by the individual in the flow of discontinuous events and how individuals as agents strive to maintain a stable understanding of themselves in shifting contexts (Heikkinen, 2000). She therefore draws a principal understanding, that the concept of PI in relation to a language teacher is a tool through which individuals make sense of themselves in relation to context and other people (Coldron & Smith, 1999; Maclure, 1993). This includes the teacher's hold of themselves as professionals. Maclure (1993), also pointed out in Chang-kredl and Kingsley's study that identity can as well be regarded as a resource through which people "explain, justify and make sense of themselves In relation to others and to the world at large". Moreover, Ruohotie-Lyhty clarified that although identity formation is always partly dependent on actual circumstances, the narrative understanding of language teacher identity formation also recognises the role of human agency in the construction of identities (Beijaard *et al.*, 2004). Again, the concept 'PI' in relation to English language teachers is understood as not being stable but rather as a continuum that is and reconstructed through social contacts, it occurs through interpretation and reinterpretations of their experiences (Burns & Bell, 2011).

According to Atay and Ece (2009), identity shapes the way human beings see themselves and the way in which they respond to the world they live in. The two scholars reach an understanding that identity is formed in social, cultural, religious and political contexts. It does not only build the conception of the self but also how individuals interpret the self in social context within one's inner group and the society at large. Mercer (1990), ascertains that as a result of the social, cultural and political mechanisms that function in every domain

of life, identity leads people to question and reconstruct their possible ways of existence in a given society. The process of questioning identity in people seems to never end because identity always presents itself as an experience of unsureness and doubt.

2.9 IDENTITY OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS AS RELATED TO SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND POLITICAL CONTEXTS OF TEACHING LANGUAGE

The English Second Language teaching industry is not culturally, politically, socially, or economically balanced or equitable; rather, in the international sphere it plays a powerful role in the construction of roles, relations and identities among teachers and students (Pennycook, 1994). Below, I elaborate briefly on Identity of English Language Teachers in relation to Social, Cultural and Political contexts.

2.9.1 Identity as related to Social Contexts

Sociocultural theories argue that the way in which human consciousness develops depends on the specific social activities in which people engage. Nevertheless, in order to understand human learning or higher cognitive development, one must look at the social activities that the individual engages in and see how they reappear as mental activities in the individual (Vygotsky 1978; Leont'ev 1981). In educational practice as in other dimensions of social life, identities and beliefs are co-constructed, negotiated and transformed on an ongoing basis by means of language (Hall, 1995). One important point is that identity related to social context is not fixed but depends on the particular group setting in which one finds oneself. The role that language plays in social practice is central to social theories. In particular, according to Pennycook (2001, 2010) how language is implicated in the ways in which social class, race, sexuality, ethnicity and linguistic identity are formed and reformed through human relationships, especially in terms of how power and injustice are enacted in both social and institutional arrangements and the ideological discourses that support them. This could mean that knowledge and knowing depend on a sort of social positioning that is constructed in different social, physical and cultural contexts.

2.9.2 Identity as related to Cultural Contexts

The role that language plays in social practices is central to social theories. In particular, according to Pennycook (1989, 2001) language is implicated in the ways in which social

class, race, sexuality, ethnicity and linguistic identity are constructed and reconstructed through human relationships, especially in terms of how power and inequality are enacted in both social and institutional arrangements and the ideological discourses that support them. This could mean that knowledge and knowing depend on a sort of social positioning that is constituted in different social and physical contexts. This subtopic depicts the formation of professional identity of ESL teachers as normative and lifelong, as emerging out of and through experiences in cultural contexts: as teachers in classrooms and schools, as participants in professional teacher education programs and later, as teachers in the settings where they work and the community in which they belong.

2.9.3 Identity as related to Political Contexts

According to Wenger (1998: 263), opening up of identities is one of the concerns of education in its deepest sense and at whatever age it takes place, this includes “exploring new ways of being that lie beyond our current state”. They continue to note that education is not merely formative but rather transformative and also maintain that issues of education should be addressed first and foremost in terms of identities and modes of belonging and only secondary in terms of skills and information. Mayer (1995:5), argues that learning to teach can be learning of skills and knowledge to perform the functions of a teacher or it can be developing a sense of oneself as a teacher. In the former, one is ‘being the teacher’, whereas in the latter, one is ‘becoming the teacher’.

2.10 IDENTITY OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS CONSTRUCTED THROUGH PEDAGOGICAL CONTENT KNOWLEDGE

Loughran, Berry and Mulhall (2012) define Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) as an academic concept or theory that signifies an interesting idea. This idea comes from the belief that teaching should consider delivering more than the subject content knowledge to learners and that learning should be more than absorbing information for later use. PCK embodies the knowledge that teachers gain through their experience and it also covers how teachers teach a particular content in a particular way that will increase the understanding of learners. PCK may be similar for certain teachers and different for some. It is an expertise with individual habits and differences that are motivated by content, experience and the teaching context. Nonetheless, PCK is a foundation for teachers’ professional knowledge and proficiency.

According to Varghese *et al.*, (2005), among many applied linguists, for a very long time language teachers were seen as technicians who needed merely to “apply” the right methodology in order for learners to acquire the target language. As classroom-based research became popular, it became increasingly obvious that classrooms are in fact very complex places in which simplistic cause-effect models of teaching methodology were inadequate (Allwright, 2006) and (Nunan, 1988). A great deal needed to be understood within the classroom. In particular, their research reveals that the teacher plays a huge role in the constitution of classroom practices; thus the teacher became the focus of research attention. Initial explorations of teacher beliefs, knowledge, attitudes and so on (Johnson, 2006 & Woods, 1996) also made it clear that such attributes could not be seen atomistically but that it was teachers’ whole identity that was at play in the classroom. This line of thinking, then sees teacher identity as a crucial component in determining how language teaching is played out. At the same time, a separate line of research was beginning to explore the sociocultural and sociopolitical dimensions of teaching (Kubota, 2001; Norton 1997; Pennycook, 1994, 2007).

As believed by Liu (2013), for the past two decades, pedagogical content knowledge has been a focus of research literature of teacher knowledge and teacher identity. In the United States for example, due to a growing number of immigrants, ESL has always been an important course for English Language Learners (ELL) because good English is a pathway to academic success and great job opportunities for English Language Learners (Liu, 2013). It is for the same reason that Liu states that statistics show that the number of English Language Learners in the U.S public schools is on a constant increase. Between 2004 and 2005, about 5.1 million which makes up 10.5 percent of U.S student population were English Language Learners, 73 percent of large urban school districts were in urgent need of English Second Language Teachers. (Hall, Quinn & Gollnick, 2008). Those who teach ESL feel somewhat frustrated and unconfident because of the lack of adequate professional knowledge and professional identity (Karabenick & Noda, 2004). Due to shortage of narrative studies in the literature of ESL dealing with teacher identity (Liu, 2013), those who are involved in teacher education have little understanding about the identity formation of ESL teachers. To explore this, my study is a narrative account of the formation professional identity by ESL teachers. I believe that by exploring and portraying the pattern and development process of ESL PI, this study can evoke or better yet, bring out more research on this area. I also believe that, eventually through the foundations laid by this

study the ESL teacher education fraternity will gain insights to improve South Africa's professional standards which, among others are: learner development, learner differences and content knowledge, to name a few.

2.11 THE ROLE OF THEORY

A number of theories relevant for studies in TPI exist. For example, in order to understand teaching and learning, we need to understand teachers and in order to understand teachers we need to have a clearer sense of who they are. The professional, cultural, political and individual identities assigned to them. This was mentioned or rather initiated by Casanave and Schecter (1997), in their collection of autobiographical narratives of language teachers and also supported by Varghese, Morgan, Johnston and Johnson (2005: 22). All in all, one can conclude that identity is increasingly being regarded as an important factor determining how teaching and learning are played out in school and in classrooms

A central assumption in recent research on language teaching is that it encompasses more than the effective use of a repertoire of specific technical knowledge and skills (Benson, 2013). Teaching is a complex process that is also influenced by teachers' perceptions and judgements, which are coloured by teachers' cognitions: concerns, beliefs, opinions, meanings, etc. (see for example, Clark & Peterson, 1986). These cognitions are organised in what we call the "personal interpretive framework", the lens through which teachers perceive, give meaning to and act on their work situation in the school (Kelchtermans, 1993:447).

His study on experienced teachers' professional development revealed that two main interwoven domains can be distinguished in the personal interpretive framework: a set of conceptions about oneself as a teacher; the professional self and a personal system of knowledge and beliefs concerning teaching and being a teacher; the subjective educational theory.

Building on earlier research, Kelchtermans (1993; 1994) distinguishes within the professional two self-dimensions and five components. The retrospective dimension refers to conceptions about the self as they appear if one looks back from the present to the past. This dimension is further differentiated in a descriptive and evaluative component that corresponds, respectively, with the self-image, the self-esteem, the job motivation and the

task perception. The prospective dimension becomes clear if one looks ahead to the future from the present. This corresponds to the future perspective (Kelchtermans, 1993).

Intrinsically linked to TPI is the teacher’s subjective educational theory. This ‘professional know-how’ is often implicit or only partially conscious for teachers. Therefore such theories are often referred to as ‘implicit theories’. Through reflection, however, these cognitions can be evoked and stated explicitly. Examples of elements in the subjective theory of primary school teachers are: “children in primary schools are not mature enough to work in small groups” or “when the weather is breaking, children are always restless” (Kelchtermans, 1993: 448).

In this study, I focus on ECTs, their subjective theories and their professional selves. The underlying assumption is that understanding the subjective theories and the professional selves of ECTs is essential to understand how their professional identity is formed.

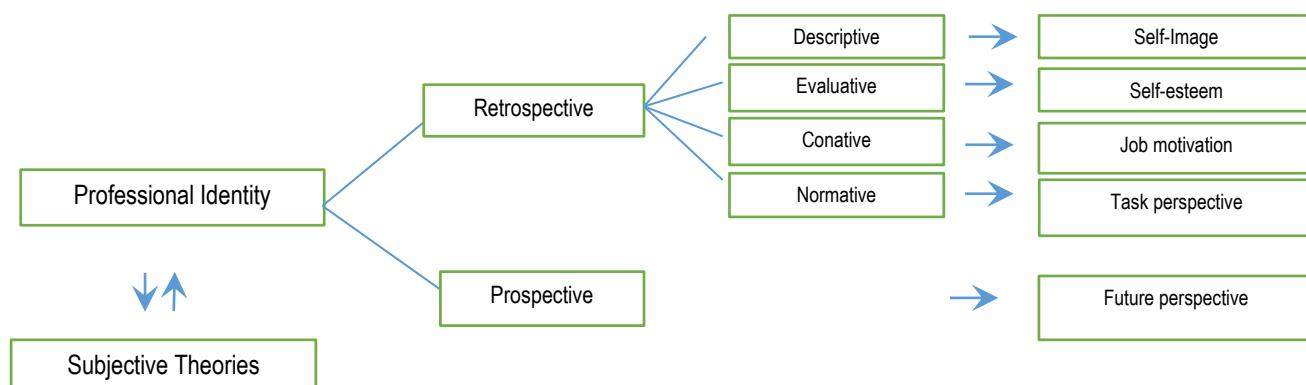


Figure 1: Dimensions and components of the professional identity (Adapted from Janssens and Kelchtermans, 1997).

2.11.1 The Dimensions and components of TPI and how they enhance language teacher effectiveness

Day (2004), emphasises the importance of exploring teachers’ identities and how they influence their effectiveness. According to Khalid (2015:307), based on his literature observation, dimensions of identities still remain debatable. On his study, he noted that researchers had various ways of looking at teacher identities. He quotes a number of scholars who identified the dimensions of teachers’ identities in previous research studies and how these sets of identities affect teachers’ effectiveness.

In his findings (Khalid, 2015) notes that all categories of teachers' general identities seem to be closely related to each other. To illustrate the interconnections between the dimensions of teachers' identities, he developed a casual network (adopted from Miles & Huberman, 1994) which he later named 'potential network'. The outcome of his process was to develop a potential causal model with causal connections among them drawn from multiple-case analysis. Through different streams of the model he shows that teachers' ages relate to their professional life phases and in return, their professional life phases determine what roles or positions the teachers have in their schools. He believes that when teachers feel that they have important roles in their schools, their sense of motivation to improve and become more efficient increases and this, according to him is found to be accompanied by greater job commitment. One indicator of such commitment was teachers taking part in formal and/or informal professional development. In other streams of his model he illustrates other factors that contribute to teachers' level of motivation and satisfaction with their jobs apart from teachers' roles in their schools.

From his analysis, Khalid identifies three main external factors, which are: support from colleagues, feedback from learners and support from administration. These factors were found to have an influence on how teachers perceive their competency in teaching; which could be interpreted as 'when teachers received positive feedback from their students they perceive themselves as more competent. This feedback could also influence their need to improve in cases where teachers feel that their students are not satisfied with the way they conducted a class, this need to improve grows larger (p.311).

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The study is located within a qualitative research approach. The research took place in Mpumalanga and Limpopo Province, at rural villages in Nkomazi and Capricorn Districts. It employs a narrative inquiry based on eight life stories. According to Bruner's theory (1987), "the meaning that individuals assign to their reality impacts on Identity being formed subjectively. Narrative research design is appropriate to this study in that, as indicated on my literature review; academics such as Beijaard, Meyer and Verloop (2004), state that the contribution of life stories in research to the study of Professional Identity has been recognised as growing rapidly. This study will therefore be addressing the life stories of early career teachers of ESL from different Higher Education Institutions of learning to better understand how these teachers develop their PI's. To maintain anonymity of the Universities and schools, pseudonyms will be used instead of the real names of the institutions.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

This study design was framed by a narrative inquiry similar to Burns and Bell (2011) as well as Golombek and Johnson (2004). Narrative design was developed by Clandinin and Connell in the 1990's with influence from increased emphasis on teacher reflection. For Clandinin and Connelly (1990), narrative designs are used when individuals are willing to tell their stories, when a researcher wants a close bond with participants, when writing in a literary way and also when reporting personal experiences. According to Clandinin and Connelly (1990), narrative research design has potential to bring Authenticity, Ownership and accuracy of the story, since the researcher has to make sure that the data provided is legitimate. This design seems to be more appropriate, looking at the fact that the study collects data through interviews. The participants are able to narrate their individual stories and experiences.

3.3 SAMPLE

The sample in this study consisted of eight educators offering English as a second language in various schools in Nkomazi and Capricorn Districts (Mpumalanga and Limpopo). For gender balances, the focus was on four females as well as four males. Unfortunately there are more females and less males due to the fact that there were not enough males in this field which seem to predominate as explained in Emery's theory that women who teach English as a Second language outweigh men (2013).

The reason for choosing teachers from the two provinces is to cover the rural context provided by these two provinces as widely as possible. This is because, according to Patton (2002), it is important for qualitative studies to interview different participants until you have saturated your field of interest, that is, until you are not hearing anything new. Each participant narrates their personal experiences during the interviews. The aim of using different participants from different universities is to have an understanding of their individual experiences resulting from the different methods and approaches they acquired and are currently using for teaching the English language in class.

The sampling technique used was as follows: A statement that explained the research project was sent to various schools in Nkomazi and Capricorn Districts, Mpumalanga and Limpopo provinces. In the explanatory statement, the three conditions were clarified: (1) the participant should be interested and willing to participate, (2) they should have a minimum of five years teaching experience and (3) they must have studied at various universities in South Africa. Some principals recommended potential participants for the research project whereas some participants came forward on their own as soon as they heard about the study. However, all participants participated according to their own will, none of them were forced or instructed to do so. A total number of 10 participants were recruited and interviewed. The names of the schools are concealed through pseudonyms to avoid revealing information that might illuminate the identity of the participants. This will be noted under the section that addresses Anonymity. The first five participants were from

Ndlovu Primary School, Dlakadla Secondary School, Ingwenyama Combined School, Thokoza Primary School and Zenande Combined School from Mpumalanga Province. The other five were from Hosana Primary School, Mathobela Primar School, Shumani Secondary School, King Mbedzi High School and Kgosi Malatjie Combined School from Limpopo Province. Each participant came from a different school, there were no instances where I had two teachers working for the same school. Among these participants, 3 studied at University of Limpopo (UL), 2 from University of South Africa (UNISA), 1 from University of Zululand (UNIZULU), 1 from Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), 1 from University of Venda (UNIVEN), 1 from Witwatersrand (WITS), 1 from University of Pretoria (UP). Upon meeting the teachers, I therefore had a five minute discussion with each teacher to familiarise myself with them and their willingness to participate. In view of each teacher's strengths and weaknesses, I decided to recruit all the teachers as formal participants of the study. After completion of the interviews, I chose to use recordings of eight participants which I believe were most appropriate for my results. The eight teachers provide equal representations of the diverse higher institutions of learning. The participants are newly employed teachers with very little experience of teaching English as a second language. Their experiences range from 1-5 years of teaching. Some of the teachers have achieved a Bachelor's degree in Education, a degree in Languages and Communication (English Studies and Media Studies) and a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE). All these teachers have studied English in their primary and high schools; as a result they constructed their identities by social learning such as a company of friends, teachers and classmates in schools.

3.4 METHOD FOR DATA COLLECTION

In this study, I collected data through interviews. Interviews were conducted for collecting the narratives of the participants (their stories, personal experiences, etc.). They are undeniably the most common source of data in qualitative studies (Merriam, 2001). McNamara (2009) specifies three different types of interview: the informal conversation approach; the general interview guide; and the standard open-ended-questions approach.

In the informal conversational approach, the researcher does not ask any specific types of questions but rather relies on the interaction with the participants to guide the interview

process (McNamara, 2009). The general interview guide is viewed as more structured than the informal conversational interview, although it can also be flexible (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2003). The other type of interview uses standardised open-ended questions. According to Gall *et al.*, (2003), the standardised open-ended interview is extremely effective in terms of the wording of the questions. The face-to-face arrangement is most common, but occasionally group interviews and focus groups are conducted. Nonetheless, in this study, data has been collected using standardised open-ended-questions interviews. This was motivated by the fact that it enabled participants to contribute more detailed information about the discussion subject, and it aided the researcher to probe further. With such interviews, I was able to ask all the participants the same questions, but as Merriam (2001: 247) indicates, “the order of the questions, the wording, and the type of follow-up questions may vary considerably” depending on the nature of responses given during the interview session.

3.4.1 Interviews

According to Merriam (2001), interviews should be considered as “conversations with a purpose.” There are two ways to conducting interviews. Face-to-face or via phone. While in today’s digital world, people are less likely to conduct face-face interviews, the probabilities of accuracy are always less likely once you can not view the person and their expressions when they answer. I collected data using face-to-face interviews to gather in-depth information about my research topic. Merriam argues that interviews are a scientific way of talking and taking note of people and are unique way to gather data from individuals through conversations (Merriam, 2001). It is advisable that I remember that my views about the topic are of least importance. The interviewee or participant is the primary data source for my study. Interviews are ways for participants to get involved and mention their views freely. Additionally, the interviewees were able to discuss their perception and interpretation with regard to the given situation. It was their expression from their point of view. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000:267) explain “... the interview is not simply concerned with collecting data about life: it is a part of life itself, its human embeddedness is inescapable”.

3.4.2 Standardised open-ended-questions

McNamara (2009), ascertains that Open-ended questions allow participants to incorporate more information, including feelings, attitudes and understanding of the topic. This enabled me to gain access to the participants' true feelings. Closed-ended questions, due to the simplicity and limit of the answers, might have not offered the participants choices that really reflect their real feelings. Closed-ended questions also do not allow the respondent to clarify that they do not understand the question or do not have an opinion on the difficulty. According to McNamara, open-ended questions cut down on two sorts of response error; participants are not likely to forget the answers they need to choose from if they're given the prospect to reply freely, and open-ended questions simply do not allow participants to disregard listening to the questions and just answer the questions with all identical answers (such as answering with a "no" on every question). Because they permit for obtaining extra information from the respondent, like personal information (background, age, gender, etc.), interviews that use open-ended questions are often used more readily for secondary analysis by other researchers.

3.5 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

The following instruments were used to collect data in this study. During the process, I used an audio recorder as a primary instrument for data collection. The use of a digital recorder is regarded as the most common method of recording interview data because it has the advantage of securing the entire verbal part of the interview for later transcription and analysis (Locke, Silverman & Spirduso, 2010). Although some participants were nervous to talk while being recorded, this uneasiness normally disappeared in a short time. The advantage is that some participants loved to hear themselves speak, so if need be or upon request, I played back the recording for them to confirm previous responses and also to serve as motivation to them as they seemed happy to listen to themselves.

Paterson (1994), who suggests that interview participants might be intimidated by the presence of the researcher or by simply being aware that they are being part of a study: participants recognise that their experiences, opinions, actions and attitudes they share with the researcher are being listened to and watched, which they might be evaluated or judged by another person. Therefore, it is within their best interest to try to present

themselves, their experiences, their opinions, their actions and their attitudes more favourably. The concept of an individual wanting to present himself or herself within the best possible way is further complicated when these experiences, opinions and actions are recorded because most participants could be even more cautious about what they reveal and share during interviews or interactions. Nonetheless, To obtain the very best possible quality of data during interviews, researchers are advised to use strategies to control all affecting factors. Among these strategies is prolonged engagement with participants, especially before interviews occur, or conducting multiple interviews with the very same participant (Sherman, 2001). Both strategies helped me familiarise the participants and myself with one another and build mutual trust. I found this to be particularly important especially when it is a one-off interview, because it allows the researcher to develop a skill to form trust during a relatively short space of time. I therefore allow time before interviews to open up to participants something about myself and create a sense of being known. Although audio and video recording offer much, they can also affect the data quality, therefore it's imperative that an alternate method like note-taking is taken into account if there's any idea that the data are going to be significantly affected.

On that note, I also used notebooks, narrative field logs, and a diary, in which I recorded the participants' reactions, concerns, and speculations. This also improved strongly the development of my practical writing skills.

3.6 DATA MANAGEMENT

For data management, I adopted the seven steps recommended by LeCompte and Schensul (1999:37-40) in their guide. Hence, I followed their steps as follows:

- I kept copies of important materials that I used for data collection,
- I made field notes of all the events that happened in a chronological order,
- Each interview was labelled using a suitable theme or record number so that it is easy to identify,
- I developed a file for research data management where all hard copies used during the data collection process are kept,
- Recorded interviews are backed up on a flash disk and a hard drive,

- For data that will not be appearing on my field notes, I used the audio recorder so that there will be no data missing,
- During analysis, when listening to each interview, I also used the field notes for comparison and review.

LeCompte and Schensul (1999: 37- 40) believe that their proposed steps can be used for analysing data manually and electronically. In other words, by using these steps, one is able to “tidy up” qualitative data.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS

Qualitative methods are used to analyse data using grounded theory (GT) as advocated by (Glaser 1978; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Grounded theory is believed to contribute insights into self and how people interpret different phenomena (Suddaby, 2006). GT helps in developing categories which are anchored in data rather than those which may be assumed by myself, the researcher in the proposed study. Through *open coding*, data has been broken into meaningful units of analysis, such as words, phrases or sentences (Mavetera & Kroeze, 2009). *Axial coding* was done through reassembling the data in new ways in order to find meaningful relationships between the codes extracted in open coding. The extracted categories have undergone through selective coding where I compared the codes referring to the same aspect of each participant’s professional identity across the interviews and then captured the process of professional identity formation by each participant. To deepen the analysis, I ensured that quality is maintained as discussed in the following section.

3.8 TRUSTWORTHINESS

Trustworthiness in this study consists of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability.

3.8.1 Credibility

Credibility in qualitative research refers to the extent to which the data and data analysis are believable and trustworthy. This study applied four techniques elaborated by Guba and Lincoln (1989) to ensure credibility. The techniques are: prolonged engagement, persistent observation, member check and triangulation. This study applied triangulation to strengthen the research design. Triangulation involves the use of multiple methods and measures of

an empirical phenomenon in order to overcome problems of bias and validity (Blaike, 2000). The combined different forms of data yielded results that confirmed the distinction that exists in early career teachers of English second Language and those that have been practicing for more than 5 years.

3.8.2 Transferability

The findings of research are transferable only if they fit into new contexts outside the actual study context. Transferability is considered “as a major challenge in qualitative research due to the subjectivity from the researcher as the key instrument and is a threat to valid inferences in its traditional thinking about research data” (Maxwell, 2002: 107). This study qualifies inferential generalisation. Ritchie and Lewis (2003), explain it as generalising from the context of the research study itself to other settings or contexts. I enhanced transferability by detailing the research methods, context and assumptions underlying the study. I also provided a rich and clear description of the study such that data and description speak for themselves to enable readers to appraise the significance of the meanings attached to the findings and make their own judgement regarding the transferability of the research outcomes.

3.8.3 Dependability

Dependability refers to the stability of findings over time (Birtch, 2005) Dependability answers the question whether research results would be the same if the study would be replicated with the same or similar participants in a similar context. I was careful about instability which might be caused by instrumental drift, shift in objectives, constructs and methods. Detailed and comprehensive documentation of the research process and every methodological decision ensured the dependability of the findings.

3.8.4 Confirmability

In qualitative research, confirmability deals with the issue of bias and prejudice of the researcher. Confirmability is the degree to which the research findings can be confirmed or corroborated by others. Seale (1999: 45) argues that “auditing could also be used to establish confirmability in which the researcher makes the provision of a methodological self-critical account of how the research was done.” Data, interpretation and findings were drawn from individuals and contexts apart from the researcher. The research process was correctly followed. Therefore, findings of the study are independent of values, motives or

political persuasion. The integrity of this research is based on the data themselves and the research process. The quality assurance of this study depended on its elaborate documentation.

3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

I ensured that the interests of the participants were not violated (Bless, Higson-Smith & Kagee, 2006). The issues of ethics are divided into the following sections: ethical clearance, permission, informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity and discontinuity.

3.9.1 Ethical clearance

Ethical clearance was obtained before the study could commence. The researcher received the clearance letter from the Turfloop Research Ethics Committee of the University of Limpopo. Since the research involved human subjects, Teachers from the Department of education, ethical clearance needed to be obtained.

3.9.2 Permission

I was given permission to collect data by the Department of Education in the Mpumalanga and Limpopo Provinces.

3.9.3 Informed consent

The participants have the right to know what the research is about, how it will affect them, the risks and benefits of participation and the fact that they have the right to decline to participate if they choose to do so. I took some time to explain to the participants what the study entailed and what was required of them in terms of participation. The participants were asked to sign informed consent form which was an indication that they indeed understood what had been explained to them.

3.9.4 Confidentiality

Confidentiality is an ethical requirement in most research. Bless, Higson-Smith and Kagee (2006), state that information provided by participants, particularly sensitive and personal information, should be protected and made unavailable to anyone other than the researcher. I ensured that data collected from the participants was kept under secure conditions.

3.9.5 Anonymity

I ensured that data was identifiable with the individual participant in the form of a name, address, email, etc. In other words, there should be no link between individual responses with the identities of the participants. The names of the schools are concealed through pseudonyms to avoid revealing information that might illuminate the identity of the participants.

3.9.6 Discontinuance

The participants were given assurance that they were free to discontinue their participation at any time without being required to offer an explanation. The participants were told that stopping participation would not prejudice their assessments in their modules.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

As mentioned in Section 3.7 of Chapter Three, I will employ grounded theory to analyse data. With the use grounded theory, the study aims at finding out how people interpret a phenomenon. In the case of this study, the phenomenon is professional identity formation. To ensure authenticity, I personally transcribed the interviews without refining or editing what the participants have said. I avoided using my own words as this would fabricate the results and give less meaning and understanding. The advantage of transcribing the data on my own is that the data enabled me to gain insight and understanding to the participants' life stories and not only that but it ensured safe keeping of the data. Thus maintaining absolute anonymity of the participants. During the interviews of all the participants I tried to find a link that had similarities or differences in their life stories and how it impacted on the shaping and re-shaping of these particular teachers' professional identities.

4.2 PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS

The results presented in this chapter will help provide an understanding of the PI of ESL that is constantly formed and reformed all through their lives. Throughout the whole process of interviewing the participants, they all narrated different stories about their lives. In all the interviews there was a question which asked why they chose English as their major subject when studying for higher education, they gave various reasons which I found to be interesting. Some love the language whereas some were encouraged by their high school teachers. This chapter will begin by giving a summary of the participants' life stories. The main reason for doing so is to familiarise the audience with the participants and allow proper understanding for the results that will be provided. An analysis of the participants will follow on the section of *Open Coding* where I will identify the major concepts which emerged as influencing factors as I was interviewing the participants. Even though the teachers seem to have similar working experience which ranges between 2 and 4 years and teach ESL in high schools, this had a different impact on the teacher identities and how it was influenced but on the very same note, I have noticed that there are themes which emerged amongst

these participants and are similar. Therefore, in *Axial Coding* that is where I will identify and discuss those popular themes. It will conclude by creating a hypothesis or rather a theory about these themes that are considered to be influencing factors to the construction of professional teacher selves.

4.2.1 Summary of the participants' life stories

Below is a table representing the relevant background information of each of the participants and it will further be discussed in detail.

Table 1: A representation of the participants' backgrounds

<i>Key factors</i>	Educational level	Gender	Teaching experience	Grade responsible for	School type
1. Levi	B.Ed. degree	Female	3 months volunteer, 1 year experience	8,9 & 10	Public School
2. Pretty	B.Ed. degree	Female	2 years	12	Public School
3. Gabisile	B.A. (Languages and Communication) and PGCE	Female	4 years	4 & 6	Public School
4. Zinhle	B.Ed. degree	Female	3 years	11	Public School
5. Zwakele	B.Ed. degree	Female	3 years	6	Public School
6. Ntokozo	B.Admin Plain and PGCE	Male	2 years	10	Public School
7. Mathemba	B.Arts (Media Studies) and PGCE	Male	4 years	10 & 11	Public School
8. Senzo	B.Ed. degree	Male	3 years	12	Public School

Names of the participants

As said on my chapter three, the names of the schools and the names of the participants are concealed through pseudonyms to avoid revealing information that might illuminate the identity of the participants. Out of 8 participants, 5 of them teach only 1 grade (most likely to have 1-3 classes) unlike the remaining three (Levi, Gabisile & Mathemba) who teach 2 or 3 different grades with even more classes. Levi, with the least experience has even more classes in different grades. She teaches grade 8, 9 and 10. Gabisile, Ntokozo and Mathemba have studied various junior degrees unlike the other five participants (Levi, Pretty, Zinhle, Zwakele and Senzo) who studied for a B.Ed degree. Gabisile first graduated for a B.A. (Languages and Communication) before she obtained her PGCE. A degree in Languages and Communication does not qualify one to be a teacher. It mostly focuses on English or other languages and communication but nothing on the methods of teaching. It then becomes a must that for a person which such qualifications, they have to study towards obtaining a PGCE (Postgraduate Certificate in Education).

According to Roness and Smith (2009), a PGCE qualification allows teachers the confidence they need to teach learners as it deals mostly with the methods of teaching and the subject that which a person would like to specialise in. Ntokozo has a degree for Bachelor of Administration which deals specifically with administration. Because this degree covers English as one of its courses, Ntokozo also registered for a PGCE in order to qualify as a teacher. Mathemba obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree (Media Studies) before he could register for his PGCE qualification. A degree in media studies does not qualify a person to teach as it mainly focuses on the media vicinity. That is the reason Mathemba, just like the other two participants enrolled for a PGCE qualification.

All these teachers teach at public fee-free schools in rural areas where learners do no pay school fees. Dixon (2012), acknowledges that in South Africa there are three types of schools: public fee-free schools, low-cost private schools, private schools. The standard of the education offered in these schools ranges widely. Public fee-free schools are subsidised by government. These schools are only available within the poorest areas alongside the National Schools Nutrition Programme (NSNP). According to Dixon, the NSNP feeds 1.6 million children a day and established almost 2,000 school gardens. Low-cost private schools are subsidised by the government in South Africa also, but they charge school fees. These fees cover basic utensils like books and uniforms and extras counting on the category size, facilities, and teaching quality. In

some cases, parents can apply for exemption or a discount on fees. Independent private schools have an extended history and their concept is attracting an outsized number of scholars today. Independent private schools are either privately-governed or traditional private schools with a spiritual background that were established by missionaries.

The below subsections will introduce each life story of the participants in an order that is represented by the table above.

4.2.1.1 Levi

Levi is a young female at the age of 29 years to be exact. She is currently working at a public school in Limpopo teaching English and Xitsonga since early 2018. English was not her first choice of study but Life Sciences was, she mentioned. Eventually, Levi got admitted to the stream of English and Xitsonga because those are the subjects she qualified for. She did her first year in 2014, by the year 2018 she had already obtained her degree in Education and soon started working as a volunteer which lasted for a short period of 3 months. By the tone of her voice and eagerness to be part of this interview, one can assume that she is currently enjoying what she does.

4.2.1.2 Pretty

Pretty is a female in her mid-twenties. She started studying in 2013 and completed in 2016, in 2017, she obtained her Bachelor's degree in Education. She was majoring in both English and History. Pretty mentioned that the reason she chose English as one of her majors was because English is simple and that she wanted to improve herself on the language. In 2017 she got a job from a public high school to offer ESL in 3 classes, all in grade 12.

4.2.1.3 Gabisile

Gabisile is a 28 years young female teacher. She completed her junior degree in 2013 and went for a PGCE (English and Social Sciences) the following year, 2014. Her first experience as a qualified teacher was at a public high school where she first got demotivated in 2015, she explained. The following year she moved to a primary school

closer to where she lives and it happens to be a public school as well. At the moment she is teaching 4 classes in both grade 4 and 6.

4.2.1.4 Zinhle

Zinhle is a female in her mid-thirties. She enrolled for her studies in 2009 and completed in 2014 where she obtained her degree in Education. She was majoring in English and Life Orientation and chose both these majors because she loved and enjoyed the language but also wanted to understand human behavior, and how an individual's mind operates. She enjoys physical activity hence she chose Life Orientation as well. She started working in 2015 and currently works at a public high school offering ESL in grade 11 in 4 classes.

4.2.1.5 Zwakele

Zwakele is also a young enthusiastic teacher who seemed very happy to contribute to my research study. She is 25 years of age and completed her Bachelor's degree in Education in 2015 which she enrolled in 2012, majoring in English and Geography. Zwakele started working as a teacher in January 2016 teaching grade 6, from then to date. She explained that teaching was not her first choice as a career to pursue but when she got space, English became her first choice because she loves the Language. She is very much involved in multiple activities of the school that have to do with English as a subject she offers.

4.2.1.6. Ntokozo

Ntokozo is a male in his late-thirties. Growing up as a young boy he would work for white compounds and that is where he learnt both English and Afrikaans. Having realised that he had developed love for the language, he registered as a first year student in B. Admin Plain majoring in English, Geography, Psychology and Criminology from 2003 to 2006. Upon completion of his degree and working piece jobs for 6 years, he decided to return to the same university in 2014 and registered for a Post-Graduate Certificate in Education. In 2017, he was hired at a public high school where he currently works at and offers English in grade 10 and only teaches literature in 4 classes.

4.2.1.7 Mathemba

Mathemba is a male teacher in his late thirties. He registered for his undergraduate degree in 2010. By the year 2014 he had already obtained his qualification and registered for PGCE which he completed that very same year. Just like Zwakele, teaching was not his first choice as a career to pursue but when he got space, English became his first choice because he preferred studying Languages than any other subject. His major subjects are English and Xitsonga and he offers them in both grade 10 and 11

4.2.1.8 Senzo

Senzo is a male in his early-twenties. He furthered and completed his studies for a Bachelors' degree in 2016. In May 2017, not long after he graduated he got a job at a private school where he taught English as a home language. Early 2018, he moved to a public school where he offered ESL until the end of August in the very same year. September 2018 he moved again to another public school where he currently teaches ESL in Grade 12 for 2 classes. He was encouraged by his high school teacher to further his studies with English as one of his major subjects because the teacher realised that he was good at it. According to him, his teacher played a huge role in his life so he needed something that would help him grow.

From these life stories above, we have learned that most, if not all of these participants are still middle-aged (mid-twenties and late thirties). Even though they all teach ESL, they still had quite different experiences they felt were necessary to share with me. The life stories gives us an idea of the kind of teacher we are dealing with in this study.

The methodology that was applied in this study dictated that open coding be employed to determine and classify emerging themes. The next section will reveal all themes that emerged during the interviews.

4.2.2 Open Coding

Glaser (1978), ascertains that when researchers ask themselves a question like 'what is this data a study of?' This acts as a constant reminder that his intentions on what he thought he was going to study just might not be. Therefore, in this section I have tabulated the themes of each of the participants that helped in shaping their Professional Identities as they emerged during the interviews.

Table 2: Summary of the progression of themes or factors that emerged from the participants' narratives

Participant s name	Themes					
	Theme 1	Theme 2	Theme 3	Theme 4	Theme 5	Theme 6
Levi	Difficulty	Hard work and Remedial strategies	High self-esteem	Positive response from learners	Communication Competence	Teacher as a Manager and leader
Pretty	Low self-esteem	Teacher as a manager and leader	Hard work	Environmental influence and Communication Competence	Dedication and commitment	Fun
Gabisile	Motivation	Difficulty	Positive response from the learners	Hard work	Teacher as a Manager and Leader	
Zinhle	Excitement	Positive response from learners	Dedication and commitment	Hard work	Hybridity	Role model
Zwakele	Awkward	High self-esteem	Communication Competence	Role model	Teacher as a manager, leader and parent	Good relationship with the learners
Ntokozo	Difficulty	Passion for music	Dedication and commitment	Teacher as a manager and leader		
Mathemba	Interesting and Challenging	Hard work and remedial strategies	Teamwork with learners and colleagues	Communication Competence	Role model	
Senzo	Difficulty	Hard work	Communication Competence	Influence from the media	Dedication and commitment	Role model

We have 20 themes that emerged as the core influencers or factors that contribute in the PI formation of an ECT. All these themes are tabulated above in accordance to the relevant participant that mentioned the particular theme. In some instances, themes were shared amongst these participants. This will be thoroughly observed in the section of Axial Coding wherein themes are tabulated in their frequency and codes.

4.2.2.1 Exposition of the different themes or factors that emerged from the participants' narrative

(i). Levi

Difficulty

When Levi started teaching in 2018 (as she mentioned that she volunteered for 3 months), she found the experience quite difficult because the group of learners were different from the ones she taught during practice teaching. The pressure was too much on her as it felt like a real actual teaching process. On her first year of the actual teaching of the subject she felt somewhat nervous. The thought of being responsible for a class and a whole subject on her own frightened her. During her process of trying to instill discipline, she gained herself the name "prison warder". She recalls "on my first year of teaching, only one learner passed and the rest failed. I had to push, I had to find ways beyond what the department expects us to do" This could contribute to the difficulties she came across and had to overcome as well.

Hard work

When asked about her adaptation as a newly employed teacher, Levi explains that hard work got her by. The more she worked harder and showed her dedication to her work, the more she was able to adjust and familiarised herself with the curriculum and the subject content knowledge. "I know my learners individually and I make an effort to do so" she says. She then explained that where she realised that the learners are slow or struggling, she introduced remedial strategies such as, repeating all over again, giving extracts to the learners to go home and read then present in class in front of everyone. That somehow smoothed her way of adapting and also helping the learners in return (win-win situation). We then spoke about her strengths and weaknesses, this is what she had to say;

We are guided by CAPS, whether we like it or not, we cannot even run away from it because it is what makes the curriculum. My weakness are that I sometimes have to deviate from the curriculum no matter how beneficial it may seem to be, seeing the situation in my classroom where learners are really lacking behind, I end up deviating. It is not what the policy requires us to do but it helps build my strength and improves the progress of the learners. My other weakness is giving feedback. I hardly mark and give feedback, I teach and give more work (especially with language structures and conventions). This could be that language has a lot of work to cover and unfortunately we are only given an hour to teach a lesson resulting also to difficulty in moving from one topic to another.

High self-esteem

Even before she could respond to the question about her strengths and weaknesses, she made it very clear that she is someone with a very high self-esteem. At times when she is really struggling with a particular topic, her self-esteem often picks her up, it quickly jumps in to save the situation because she then engages the learners in an informal discussion to find out what knowledge they have on that particular subject and in most cases she ends up learning new knowledge from the learners. She emphasised that her experience during teaching practice boosted her self-esteem.

Positive feedback from the learners

“When you are a language teacher you do not just follow the textbook, there will be no progress...” she said when asked about her remedial strategies. She mentions that as time went on and months came to pass, she started enjoying the pressure of the work because of the positive feedback from the learners. She continued to say;

The work becomes a part of you and it defines you, shaping you into an identity that of an English Second Language teacher. This helps because other schools then want to use you to help build and enrich their learners.

Communication Competence

Part of her remedial strategies were that she researches a lot to improve her communication skills. She goes to different teachers from different schools to seek help where she is lacking. Fortunately she still keeps contact with her practice teaching mentor so she consults him every now and then. She also browses the internet and goes through tutorials on YouTube which also makes her a learner herself. When she was asked if the training

she received as an EFAL teacher has prepared her enough for the world of work, her response was:

No it hasn't, I don't think there's a way it can be improved. Experience is the best teacher, yes I speak better now, I write better and I am able to better myself and the learners in the language but for the real work, I had to go and find out, improve myself without any knowledge. Yes, we are trained for Educational Psychology and Philosophy but those are nothing compared to what we face at the schools. In Educational Psychology one does not learn that kids actually carry knives to school, you are never prepared for the reality you face, the back chatting from the learners etc. Yes, it's good to send students out for practice teaching but it is nothing compared to the realities of the world of work.

Teacher as a Manager and Leader

"I am on the management of the school (SMT) and I see more things coming beyond being just being a member in the SMT" this was her response when she was asked what defines an EFAL teacher. According to her, a language teacher is not a subject teacher, a language teacher is a mentor, someone who is trained for interviews, writing applications letters, trained to communicate with respect and how to behave. She continues to explain that a language teacher is formal, and someone who is able to train learners to know what the world out there holds for them. A language teacher according to her, does not only teach pronouns and nouns but politics included because learners need to stay informed about what the world is going through on a daily basis. Someone who is able to teach them about the state of the economy, service delivery. This allows learners to do their own research in order to stay informed about the changes of the world of work. Lastly, she said that above all else, a language teacher is a leader with the ability to teach all degrees of politeness.

(ii). Pretty

Low self-esteem

In her first year of teaching, Pretty struggled to find her way around the learners. When she arrived at the school as a new teacher, her principal approached her and told her that she should come up with strategies to help the learners improve in ESL. To her, that was a very great challenge because she was new and had no clue how to pick from the last teacher. When asked about her initial experience, this was her response

I don't want to lie, at first I thought I would not make it because the kids were failing. I thought that I was also not good enough considering that they had been

failing before. The principal came to me and told me that the learners were still struggling, this killed my self-esteem, I did not know what to do next. I took a moment to reflect on my teachings and that is when I told myself that I was going to improve, improve myself and both the learners and I see myself very much improving.

Pretty realised that her confidence in teaching the language was lacking and worked towards improving herself for the sake of her learners which according to her, in return it gave a positive outcome.

Teacher as a manager and a leader

Pretty believes that an English teacher is a leader and a manager; they have those innate skills within them. This response came about when she was asked what makes her different from an established teacher. She said that;

With the little experience that I have now, I am still lacking in managing a class properly compared to an established teacher but with time I will get there because I realised that at my school, good class leaders are ESL teachers therefore it is upon me that I learn how to instill proper discipline to the learners and once I am able to exert my power then I can cope.

Hard work

Not only should a teacher be dedicated and committed but, they should also be hard workers. "It is a pity that most teachers are not interested in teaching English anymore because they believe it has a lot of work". This was her response when I wanted to know what her remedial strategies are when she has taught a lesson to her level best but the outcome is not too good as yet. She further elaborated that she will re-do the work with the learners time and again until it becomes a habit to them and if it were up to her, she would bring back writing skills so they would be able to work on improving the writing skills of the learners.

Environmental influence and Communication Competence

I moved on to ask Pretty what her opinion was in describing a teacher in general and an ESL teacher per-se. Her response was that the environment and the situations around us play a huge role in forming an identity of a teacher but rather she preferred to elaborate on an English teacher, to which her response was that; an English can be recognised by the

way they respond to questions when making conversations, their language is formal and not political, the way they engage to trending topics in social media and they are always open for debate. “English teachers are always ahead of their learners and always encourage learners to read” She continued to explain that when he was growing up, in gatherings or ceremonies, one would find that an English teacher is the master of ceremony and presents himself in English most if not all of the time. One can argue that; according to Pretty, good vocabulary also plays a major role in identifying an English teacher

Dedication and commitment

When asked whether there is need for her to improve herself and if so, how? She smiled and said,

Not particularly improve myself but both me and my learners. What I have decided to do is try by all means to gather books from lower grades for them to read because the language used there is easier and this paves way for them to gradually understand and improve their English. In this way, they will be able to respond to questions. Therefore, as their teacher, I feel good.

Based on what Pretty has said, if a teacher is dedicated and committed in helping the learners learn best, then that helps in how they view themselves in regard to teaching the language.

Fun

According to Pretty, teaching should be fun. If one enjoys what they are doing on a daily basis then there is no way that they cannot perfect it. When asked what were her strengths in the whole contexts of English? Or rather, what does she enjoy teaching the most? She responded that she does not have any strength in particular but she enjoys literature more than language. According to her “as long as I have prepared then I will enjoy it. With literature, I get to know the history of different writers which I find to be very much fascinating”.

(iii) Gabisile

Motivation

Gabisile says that she was inspired and motivated positively by her grade 12 teacher to choose EFAL as one of her major subjects. Teaching became her first choice because her

previous teacher taught very well. She has been teaching the English language ever since she started teaching. "...I make sure I strictly teach in English and lay the proper foundation as it was done by my previous teacher. Even though the curriculum directs us on a daily basis on what to do so we hardly create our own lessons" she explained.

Difficulty

Speaking about her initial experience as a teacher, she made a remark as follows;

Teaching is exciting if you are a hard worker, it becomes difficult if you are doing it for the money because most learners are hyper active by nature, they will exhaust you if you do not have the love and time for them.

She further explains that adapting and adjusting to the environment was not easy but because of her bubbly personality she was able to navigate through. She commented on how learners basically love a new teacher but her first encounter with them was academically challenging. She had to teach grade 4 off which she learnt that those learners could not read nor write. She had to start everything from scratch nonetheless, she added that at this particular point, she has learned new strategies and can boldly say that she has discovered new ways on how to work well with the learners.

Positive response from learners

We swiftly moved to discuss her strengths and weaknesses, to which she responded "I enjoy teaching the skills of the language (listening & speaking and reading and viewing) because I get to read texts or extracts to them (the learners), we discuss and they get to note down what they think is important" Language is not the easiest to teach, she says. The learners find it very difficult to grasp, to read or even listen but she tries to make it fun. She said trying to teach paragraphs and sentence constructions is even worse but the learners tend to show a lot of improvement in term 3 and 4. Be that as it may, her weaknesses somehow turn into strengths because of the positive feedback from the learners and colleagues. She says learners define teachers as they contribute a lot to the formulation of an identity of a teacher. She also added that even colleagues draw towards you when they realise that you have a good attitude towards them and your work.

Hard work

In trying to improve herself, she attends workshops once a month at a college in Nelspruit. She has learned a lot there as they teach all the skills of the language and visuals as well. Such activities work as her remedial strategy because they help improve where she is lacking.

Teacher as a Manager and Leader

In an attempt to define a teacher, this is what she said “a teacher is defined by the respect they portray, the dress code and their good interpersonal skills. Besides being a teacher, more often we deviate to being parents, pastors, and social workers”. She continued to say that EFAL teachers are defined by the way they speak the language of instruction. English teachers do not just speak for the sake of passing information but they take note of the verb concord in sentence constructions, she said. “Remember we are what we teach, so English becomes a huge part of our lives as English teachers” she added. When asked if the training she received in varsity had prepared her well enough for the world of work, her response was;

By level 3, I was already prepared enough. The only thing I didn't have was a chalk, a black board and employment (she said jokingly). The training for me was excellent, it helped build me up and my identity. Even teaching practice helps a person decide what kind of a teacher they want to be when they are employed. Getting to experience the school environment is a very good thing as it prepares a person for what to expect when they get employed as teachers.

(iv). Zinhle

Excitement

Zinhle describes her initial year of teaching as way better compared to now. She believes that the core reason that she enjoyed teaching in her first year is that the learners were excited that they had a new teacher; they were cooperative in a way that they would go and find her where ever she was during her period. This brought so much joy and excitement in that she loved the language even more. But, unlike a year ago, now that that the learners are used to having her around they have killed the excitement because they do not see the need to impress her like they used to in order to win her over.

Positive response from learners

When she was asked about her strengths and weakness in teaching the language, with no hesitation or doubt she said “I do not enjoy the language part or rather the grammar rules”. She said that in most cases learners are the ones that determine your strengths and weaknesses in the way in which they respond throughout the lesson. She believes that if learners do not show a positive response to your lessons, then chances of you enjoying that particular chapter are very rare. In one of her responses she said

I think learners have an impact in our strengths and weaknesses because with language, one has to teach one thing over and over from the beginning of the year until the end of the year but still these learners show no or very little improvement and for this reason you end up not knowing which strategy to use because you change from one to the other but still there are no improvements.

Dedication and commitment

When asked if there is any part where she feels that she needs to improve on in the whole context, her answer was very short and straight to the point. She said “not really, I am doing my best, each and every year I see myself improving. I would like to see myself as a competent teacher. To which I asked, what is a competent teacher? Zinhle explained that she would like to believe that a competent teacher is a dedicated teacher, someone who eats, breathe and live his or her subject knowledge, someone who is confident to answer any question concerning their subject matter because they know what they are doing. A teacher who is competent in English should know both literature and language equally, none of the two should outweigh the other, she added that in English, one should read a lot, familiarise themselves with all the changes around them.

Hard work

The same way Pretty pointed out hard work as her remedial strategy, so did Zinhle. The aim of asking this question was to try to find out the strategies that they use as remedial work in cases where they feel that they are lacking or rather in cases where a lesson has been taught, a teacher has outdone himself but the outcome will say otherwise. What do they do then? The response was “hard work, nothing beats hard work my dear. I give extra work until they master it”

Hybridity

I understand the term hybridity as a mixture, it is when one takes the good from two separate people, race, or even culture and leave out the bad, to produce a useful outcome. This theme came up as she was attempting to answer the following question; what sets you apart from an established teacher of ESL? What knowledge do they have that you feel you need to work on to improve yourself or what is it that you think could be added to improve in teaching the language? She explained that;

An established teacher knows their way around the subject; they know how to manipulate the context to the best interest of the learners even though they may seem to use the same way of teaching all over again but that is where I come in as a new teacher, I am more energetic, I focus more on each learner, my focus is on bringing forth new ways of imparting the knowledge to the learners in a way that one can define me as an ESL teacher. My ways, combined with an established teacher's way of teaching could possibly make learning fun alongside with positive feedback.

Role model

Before we could even wrap up the interview, Zinhle added the issue of an ESL teacher being an exemplary both to learners and other teachers. She elaborated how important it is to be a role model to your learners. ESL learners should look up to their teachers and feel motivated even when they are out there speaking to society, they should not feel belittled but rather be proud of the person who laid the foundation of their knowledge.

(vi). Zwakele

Awkward

Zwakele highlights that English was not her first choice, she had to do it because she got admission. When we spoke about her initial experience when she started teaching she said that "it was awkward, I didn't have a mentor and unfortunately the one I had during practice teaching passed on so I had to figure things out on my own. I really didn't have enough support". She continued to explain that everything was new (the people and the environment) and that made her to feel left out. Her HOD tried to be somewhat supportive but that didn't change anything because he was not from her area of specialisation.

High self-esteem

As we moved on to talk about her strengths and weaknesses, her response was very brief. She revealed that she is very good with stories and poems (literature) but grammar is a bit challenging especially having to discover that what is taught at school is nowhere close to what was done in varsity. Even though her high self-esteem has helped her in acknowledging that she has weaknesses in this subject therefore she would open room for any assistance that will come her way.

Communication Competence

In answering the question that seeks to find out if there is anywhere she feels the need to improve when teaching the language, her response was that; most learners come from disadvantaged backgrounds where some still do not have any kind of media in their homes, the only time they get to speak the English language is when they are within the school premises hence when they have to read, it becomes a challenge to consider all the punctuations. She also weighed in on the programs they are currently running at the school, one of which is 'Rally-to-Read'. It is sponsored by Telkom and TSB (Malelane sugarcane firm). This programme encourages and allows learners to prepare, read and present at the school assembly (it could be articles, stories or any other informative short pieces). It provides the school with different books to read. Another annual event they have at the school which helps remedy the communication skills is 'Reader thorn'. With this one, schools meet together to witness their learners read out for each other. These kids are assessed through comprehension passages during the competition. Such programs are a good remedial strategy.

Role Model

Also, as part of her remedial strategies, Zwakele elaborates that she often uses her improvement plan to reteach the content whereby learners did not perform well at. She also has a resource file that assists her to improve a particular context. She said that these learners see her as a role model so she has to make sure that they are not disappointed.

Teacher as a Manager, Leader and a Parent

In an attempt to explain all the factors that contribute in forming an identity of a teacher, she said "the term teacher is an umbrella concept of all the other professions. Sometimes one has to be a parent, a social worker, a nurse or even a pastor" According to her, teachers

are the most important people that help shape a bright future for every hopeless child out there.

Good relationship with the learners

Zwakele clarifies that teachers are researchers and that makes them more powerful, they are the ones that instill the English language to the learners as this also helps them with the realities of life. She spoke of the importance to formulate a good relationship with the learners as everything centers on them. By so doing, one will enjoy their work and their working environment. She said that the training she received as a student during her varsity days did not do justice to her. What she came across was not even half of what she was taught at varsity but because of the good relationship she has with her learners in class, she still receives calls to assist at a school where she did her practice teaching (Grade 12).

(vi). Ntokozo

Difficulties

Ntokozo explained that his initial experience in the work field was not as easy as he thought it would be. he went into detail that during his practice teaching, whilst he was still a student teacher, he had a mentor who was always there to help him, the learners where not really his responsibility and the teachers were very much accommodating until he became a teacher himself. In addition to his response, this is what he said;

Adapting to a new environment was difficult, you get to the work place and question yourself, 'who am I?' What I have learnt from varsity is different from what I got in the field. There was no sense of willingness from the learners, one has to follow these learners from the same syllabi and keep on doing more extra work

When I asked him how he managed to find his way and try to cope with the situation, he said; “change is pain, but one has to adapt and move with time. We cannot afford to live in the past”

Passion for music

Ntokozo has passion for music, which is where he finds his strengths. He believes that with his passion for music, he can produce best learners. He prefers to bring to use his talent in class and in that way, learners enjoy his lessons because they get to exercise through singing and also listen to him as he performs. This was his response;

I enjoy teaching literature, though I am good at both but with literature there is a lot of rhyming and narrating. I am very much fond of music so when I teach poems or short stories, I try to make the learners feel as though it is real. I make them picture themselves in the same situation; go through what is being said on that particular literary text. My favourite poem is mementos. The writing is perfect and this is one of the reasons I enjoy literature because I am able to teach the skill of writing at the same time.

Dedication and commitment

As he was narrating and giving responses, I noticed the theme of dedication and commitment coming up from Ntokozo as well. He explained that when an ESL teacher takes a specific chapter and weighs it as his strength or weakness, the same goes for the kind of learners he will produce. He said; the learners will be the product of that particular teacher's weaknesses or strengths. Ntokozo does not teach the whole context at the moment, but rather the literature part. Even though that is the case, he still ensures me that he can teach everything in the context because during his spare time, he improves his grammar and other parts of language teaching

Teacher as a Manager and Leader

According to him, an ESL teacher is defined by his learners. The kind of learners that one produces will speak volumes of the teacher responsible. He believes that a teacher who is a leader and a good manager will be able to build up a generation that will be of his reflection. Ntokozo is certain that each and every teacher, (through his teachings and his ways of managing a class) molds the learners to be like him, knowingly or unknowingly. In other words, learners play a huge role in building up or destroying a teacher and the opposite could be true.

(vii) Mathemba

Interesting and Challenging

Mathemba chose English as a major subject because he had an interest in the language hence he majored in both languages (English and Xitsonga). He defines his first experience as an EFAL teacher both Interesting and Challenging. Some of the learners do drugs, after they have consumed them they seek attention and start to misbehave so as a new teacher, one has to adjust to such situations and find ways to survive; he said. At the beginning of his career he had a lot of energy to do research in preparing all his lessons with the fear of embarrassing himself in front of the learners when they ask questions either to seek clarity or to expose you, he recalls.

Hard work and remedial strategies

During our conversation, he revealed that he enjoys teaching literature a lot, he finds it fun to analyse stories. He pointed out the importance of working hard as a teacher and how it contributes positively to the progress of the learners. He backed this statement with the below;

In 2016, we were given a new set of work for literature and I was teaching 4 classes at the time. We didn't have previous question papers or other sources of information so we relied on the textbooks that were supplied to us. Together, the learners and I analysed the stories and poems, we worked on possible questions that might appear on question papers. Fortunately, when the question paper came we didn't have problems. The learners were happy and showed their understanding when responding to questions.

“Teaching creative writing (language) is a weakness for me”, he said. “It is not motivating, even learners do not show interest when you teach them creative writing”, he added. He concluded by saying that even though he is trying to come up with strategies to make it fun and interesting, it's hard to teach learners who are bored.

As I tried to find out from him if training as an EFAL teacher at varsity has prepared him for the world of work, his response was as follows;

Not really, at our university we did English for communication. The only time we were taught methods of teaching was when we were in our final year, for only one semester that is. Most of what we did there was not related to what is expected of you once you get to school. I believe that if the Institutions of Higher

Learning can change the strategy of training teachers then they can do enough justice. Teachers should be trained from first year on what exactly they are supposed to do. At some point I felt like quitting English because what we were taught was different from what we found during practice teachings but needless to say, this encouraged me to research a lot in order to empower myself.

Teamwork with learners and colleagues

In trying to explain how he adapted to the new environment, he said that he became an asset when he arrived at the school because most teachers needed help from him. He was fresh from high school somehow they thought that he was more knowledgeable than everyone else and in return that helped build his self-confidence a lot. It challenged him to research even more. He said;

I gained a lot of confidence through that, majority of the learners even improved their grades. I work very well with the learners also, a number of them come from independent schools so they can speak with no difficulty which makes them to enjoy the subject. Sometimes they ask challenging questions to test my knowledge and that makes the lesson fun for me. It boosts both my confidence and theirs.

Communication Competence

For his remedial strategies, he discusses with his colleagues. They share where they are lacking and also do more research to find different ways to teach a particular topic. Just like Levi and Zwakele, he also interacts with teachers from other schools to improve each other.

Role Model

In his understanding, a teacher is a lifelong learner and a researcher. He said, "As a teacher you don't just relax but keep researching to be updated on the daily news". He added that learners define teachers more than anything. He continued to explain that an EFAL teacher has passion for the language, instead of code switching like most teachers do, EFAL teachers simplify and that's what contributes to them being role models for the learners. Lastly he said, "My learners motivate me, they build my career and keep me going".

(viii). Senzo

Difficulties

Senzo had difficulties in adapting as well more especially with the learners, he recalls that for the first few weeks he felt lost. The learners were using short hand writing and slang language (which I would define as informal language and sometimes it can be very much offensive). That to him came as a huge challenge because he was working towards achieving the best grades in class so he realised that a lot still needs to be done about this situation. As for the working environment, he sees himself as a social person which makes it easier for him to adapt in any situation. He was lucky enough to be given a mentor who assisted him in quiet a lot of things.

Dedication and commitment

Senzo, just like the other participants believe that a dedicated and committed teacher can get away with anything that is thrown towards to them. He believes that one of the ways to improve oneself and the learners is through dedication and the willingness to reflect, correct and learn again. He stresses that;

A best teacher of ESL is the one that learns a new thing every day. We cannot regard ourselves as perfect but rather aim to improve in everything on a daily basis. I, for instance need new strategies each and every year to improve the way I teach the whole context of ESL.

Hard work

A dedicated and committed teacher works very hard also, he adds. One of the strategies he uses at the moment is giving the learners more work. "I give them plenty of work to check their state of readiness and if they understood the lesson as they claim to". He also mentions that for each and every activity he goes back to class and try to assist the learners, pair the in groups to work as a team and if his strategy works (off which it often does, so he says), then he feels complete and that to him is a definition of a teacher.

Role model

Senzo adds that an ESL teacher is a role model to the whole school, not only the learners that he teaches in class. It is someone who is always presentable and represents the profession of teaching. He articulates that such a teacher is always up to date with

information, works towards improvement because English is a universal language hence; one should always be a step ahead.

Communication Competence

He defines an ESL teacher as a talkative person, not just 'talkative' but someone with Communication Competence as well (this you can tell from their vocabulary and usage of words). To him, ESL teachers are inquisitive, they are very good listeners, read a lot and always communicate in English. He concludes this question by saying, "ESL teachers are not afraid to make mistakes and learn from them".

Influence from the media

One of the biggest components that either builds a strong learner or destroy that particular learner is the media, so he says. He believes that is speedily taking over in influencing their identities, both negative and positively so. According to Senzo;

Media has taken over reading; few learners would go to a supermarket and come back with a newspaper. Books have been replaced by social media. In my opinion, I think that we should use this technology to our advantage, let us create curiosity amongst the learners. Media should be brought to these learners informs of tablets, teaching using projectors and computers. When they see it from the slides it appears as though they see something different from what I read on a textbook. Seeing that we cannot take away technology from the learners let us then take what they like from technology and bring it to class. If one can achieve that, then they are fit to call themselves good ESL teachers.

With that being said, Senzo also adds that another way of improving teaching the language and in return having a good impact in influencing his PI is to introduce drama in schools. According to him, there is a lot that learners can learn from drama. He adds that, mother tongue plays a huge role in the learning of the English language. Learners are able to make errors and be corrected. In most case a learner will use the knowledge from their native language to read an English word because the grammar rules have not yet been learnt and that to him is good, it shows that there is room for improvement and proves that inter-language is influencing the process of learning a new language.

In progression with the methodology, I have to move to Axial Coding wherein I have collected all sections that are labelled by the same two, three or more codes and grouped them together in their frequency.

4.2.3 Axial coding

According to Glaser (1992), in *Axial Coding* the researcher should take the participants understanding of “what causes what as truth”. That is; the researcher should see the respondent as an insider expert and the model they create is indeed in the respondent’s folk model. He believes that the research must open for unexpected information. Here, the researcher collects all sections that are labelled by the same two, three or more codes. Below is a table that represents common themes and their codes that were discovered during *Open Coding*. We have 20 themes that emerged but only 8 were shared by the participants. Below I present the list of the 20 themes that emerged and the 8 that were shared. See table below:

Table 3: Themes that emerged during the process of open coding

Themes	Frequency	Theme codes
1. <i>Hard Work</i>	6	HW
2. <i>Teacher as a Manager and Leader</i>	5	TM & L
3. <i>Communication Competence</i>	5	CC
4. <i>Difficulty</i>	4	Diff
5. <i>Dedication and Commitment</i>	4	D & C
6. <i>Role Model</i>	4	RM
7. <i>Positive Response from learners</i>	4	PRL
8. <i>High Self-esteem</i>	2	HS-E
9. <i>Low Self-esteem</i>	1	LS-E
10. <i>Environmental Influence</i>	1	EI
11. <i>Fun</i>	1	FUN
12. <i>Motivation</i>	1	MVT

13. <i>Excitement</i>	1	EXT
14. <i>Hybridity</i>	1	HBT
15. <i>Awkward</i>	1	AKD
16. <i>Good Relationship with the learners</i>	1	GRL
17. <i>Passion for Music</i>	1	PM
18. <i>Interesting and Challenging</i>	1	I & C
19. <i>Teamwork with learners and Colleagues</i>	1	TL&C
20. <i>Influence from the Media</i>	1	IM

(i). Hard work (HW)

This code appears to be a very strong factor/influence in that 6 out of 8 participants had something to say about it. For example, when talking about her remedial strategies and means of adapting to a new environment, Levi declared that HW got her by. She spoke of how much effort she puts in getting to know all her learners individually and going out of her way to repeat lessons over and over to avoid a situation where she has only one learner passing in class. Pretty also gave HW in an attempt to answer the same question. She narrates that she repeats her lessons until they become a habit to the learners and once that is done, her work is complete. This is supported in a study by Sengupta, (2000) it indicates that revision strategies have a measurable influence on learners' performance. Questionnaires and interviews showed a difference within the way writing and revision were viewed. It was suggested that language teachers should consider multiple drafting and repeating of lessons in their classrooms as explicit instruction in contributing towards developing an awareness of discourse-related features in second language writing. Gabisile highlights the importance of attending workshops as it has worked in her favor before and it continues to do so. She made a remark that during her attendance of these workshops, she managed to learn quite a lot.

Zinhle is also one of the participants who gave 'HW' as an answer to the question 'What are your remedial strategies in cases where you feel that you are lacking?' just like Levi and others she believes in HW. The answer was short and well thought; "hard work, nothing

beats hard work my dear. I give extra work until they master it". Meaning that when she works hard, the learners will work hard as well and she will feel that she has properly done her work and that on its own completes her. Mathemba recalls a scenario in 2016 that made him to work even harder which resulted to the learners gaining confidence in him. He stated that teaching creative writing is not his strong point but through hard work he tries to come up with other useful ways to make his lesson fun. Senzo believes that an ESL teacher who is D&C should also be a HW. He mentioned that what makes him feel comfortable enough to define himself as an ESL teacher is when his remedial strategies give good outcomes; he checks the state of readiness from the learners by giving them plenty of work. A study by Hsieh (2010) reveals that hard work is a necessity in the learning and teaching environment. Three (3) participants from Hsieh's study defined themselves as individuals who constituted their professional identity by being hard workers who care about their students. One can only assume that HW influences the construction of PI of an ESL teacher. Also having note that, one of Hsieh's participants saw a part of being an educator as hard work but also characterised the teacher as fundamentally important within the classroom, she sought to use inquiry to research ways of creating her practice more sustainable to take care of the core commitments of her professional identity without burning herself out as an educator.

(ii). Teacher as a Manager and Leader (TM&L)

Sang (2009) believes that leadership is important to classroom instruction among school-related factors that contribute to what learners learn at schools. While evidence about leadership and management effects on student learning are often confusing to interpret, much of the prevailing research actually underestimates its effects. Sang elaborates that leadership effects are usually largest where and when they are required the most concerning teachers in leadership and management roles, the greater the challenge, the greater the impact of their actions on learning. Levi seemed to be very excited that she had been chosen to be a member of School Management Team (SMT) at the school and she believes that this was because of the leadership skills that she portrays and that such recognition opens room for more leadership positions. She also highlighted a lot of positive factors that contribute to the PI formation of an EFAL teacher. In Levi's own words, she referred to an EFAL teacher as a "leader with the ability to teach all degrees of politeness". Pretty believes that ESL teachers are born with leadership skills. This came

about to her when she realised that from the school that she teaches, good M&L are ESL teachers. Therefore, considering that she is new and still lacks the power to activate the discipline device in her, she took it upon herself to work towards getting there. One can argue that an identity of ESL teachers is not complete until they master the M&L skills, based on what Pretty has said. Just like Levi, Gabisile also listed a number of factors that define an EFAL teacher, amongst those are: a teacher being a parent, pastor, social worker, someone with good interpersonal skills. Speaking of good interpersonal skills, Harris and Sass (2009) advocate that teachers who are more knowledgeable would also tend to possess better interpersonal skills. Interpersonal and teaching skills is most closely related to teacher value-added. Gabisile made a remarkable statement which says “remember, we are what we teach” which could mean that the qualities that teachers portray in the classroom are likely to be absorbed by the learners because when you are out there standing in front of them and imparting knowledge they tend to copy what you do whether it is negative or positive. Therefore, teachers are somewhat expected to be good leaders so that they can make up good leaders from the learners they teach.

It seems that Zwakele couldn't agree more when she said that teachers are the most important people as they help shape up a bright future for the learners out there. She also remarked that the term teacher is an umbrella concept of all the other professions, which puts more emphasis on what Levi, Gabisile and Pretty have said. Ntokozo seems to agree with Pretty in her argument that teachers are born with leadership skills. He stated that an ESL teacher is defined by his learners. His understanding is that a good M&L can be seen through the learners he teaches because at the end of the day, those learners become the reflection of their teacher. One could argue that when a learner portrays good leadership skills, good behavior and responsibility then a lot can be said about the teacher of that particular learner. The learner becomes a mirror through which the teacher is reflected.

(iii). Communication Competence (CC)

Levi appeared to be dissatisfied with the training she received as a student in quest to become a teacher. Nonetheless, she didn't allow that to stand in her way of bettering herself and the learners' communication skills. She goes to an extent of browsing YouTube videos to better herself and in return bettering the learners. Another important issue she raised was that she still communicates with her previous mentor she had during practice

teaching, which in her view has a very positive impact. Pretty added that an ESL teacher can be recognised by the way they respond to questions. According to her, even though ESL teachers are likely to always engage themselves in debates, their language is always formal and not political. She stresses that ESL teachers always engage themselves in trending topics as this encourages them to read more in order to improve their vocabulary. Zwakele sounded very happy and proud of the initiatives they have at her school. They have two programs that aim to improve all the language skills. The schools are provided with books that these learners can read from with the aim of bettering them. She alluded that they had a huge challenge of teaching learners that come from disadvantaged backgrounds and have no or very little access to any social media platforms. In support of Zwakele's statement, Beijaard, Meijer and Verloop (2004) argue that the key to effective teaching lies within the growth and improvement of classroom communication, the ability of the teacher to adequately communicate to the learners and therefore the learners' ability and opportunity to respond and demonstrate some competence in reproducing what they have learned by formulating their own words, the facts and ideas that now illuminate their minds.

Just like Levi and Zwakele, Mathemba has established a beneficial relationship with teachers from other schools wherein they often contact each other when they need assistance. According to Senzo, vocabulary and the good usage of words seems to play a huge role in the construction of ESL teachers' PIs. He made it clear that as for him, he would be able to spot an English teacher from a group of teachers. He states that ESL teachers are talkative as compared to Maths teachers and they have no shame in the mistakes they make because they learn from those.

(iv). Difficulty (Diff)

Levi spoke about how frightened she was when she was told that she is responsible for a class and a whole subject on her own. She was faced with a number of ill-disciplined learners and every time she tried to discipline them they started calling her "prison warder". Name-calling, giving nicknames and teasing also are potentially ambiguous events, at times involving a balance of playful and aggressive intentions. They serve a variety of social functions (Rymes, 1996) and aren't necessarily aversive or malicious; they sometimes are prosocial (Keltner *et al.*, 1998), contribute to social identity, strengthen

interpersonal bonds and help to diffuse conflict (Boxer & Cortes-Conde, 1997). Be that as it may, Levi felt even more devastated when out of all the learners, only one passed. She says this affected her and made it difficult for her to enjoy her duties. There is evidence that, while some teasing is often considered good-natured banter between friends, learners and their teachers other instances can cause severe distress to pupils and teachers (Mooney, Creaser & Blatchford, 1991) and it's a standard reason why they fight with their peers and educators (Boulton, 1997). Therefore, school psychologists could help to speak to teachers that social exclusion, teasing and name-calling may harm children, which it might be inappropriate automatically to assume that all teasing is simply playful.

From the experiences she had, Gabisile learned that this teaching profession is exciting if one is a hard worker but difficult if one does it for the money. She explained that her difficulty came about when she had to adjust to a new environment and new set of learners that could not read nor write. Her bubbly personality saved her and boosted her confidence in adjusting to a new environment. This very same code appeared also in the open coding section of both Ntokozo and Senzo. When they were asked about their initial experiences in the work place, how they formed their identities and the identities they portrayed, the response were that; they struggled to adapt. Anderson and Christie (1982) state that each group of newly qualified teachers features a certain type of social network, which can be either a burden or a resource for the teachers. The network operates sort of a safety net, providing practical and emotional support in adjusting to the new environment, including access to contacts and knowledge, but at an equivalent time, decreasing their desire to integrate into the new setting and blocking their upward mobility within the receiving society (Mitchell, 1969; Sabar, 2004). Ntokozo and Senzo had self-doubt and lacked confidence, one can argue that they both portrayed an identity of uncertainty. They had not yet found themselves, for instance; Ntokozo had a mentor before he became a qualified teacher, which could have resulted to him struggling to handle the learners and the syllabi to a point where he questioned himself; who am I? I like how he took actions and realised that indeed change is pain, that something needed to be done in order for him to find himself, find his identity. In a study by Sadler (2013) one of the participants mentioned 'confidence' extensively throughout all three interviews. What was clear from the analysis of her descriptions was that firstly, confidence appeared to significantly influence the way that she went about teaching, and secondly, as a result of experience

and interaction with learners her confidence seemed to grow. Therefore, if greater confidence helped her to use more interactive teaching approaches, these experiences were more likely to have provided her with feedback that may have improved her confidence further. Senzo on the other hand also felt lost, one may ask; could this mean he had lost his sense of identity (personal, professional or even social)? They had a challenge of what to do with the learners that already had a strong foundation laid upon them. Luckily, Senzo is a social person, as he would like to see himself. This helped him to adapt well and start building himself up before going to class to build the learners.

(v). Dedication and Commitment (D&C)

This code appears to be a very strong influence in that all participants had something to say about it. Pretty mentioned that she realised the importance of improving herself and the learners at the same time, not just herself. Her D&C in probing the understanding of the language by the learners lead her into organising books from lower grades for her learners to read and take it a step at a time. She took this action in order to manage her teaching, which in return made her feel good. Zinhle also talked about an ESL teacher being D&C. She mentioned that the importance of this is that; when an ESL teacher is D&C they will know the subject matter and they will be confident enough to answer questions and engage in small talks. When one is confident in what they are doing, they can define themselves because it would mean they have found their identities. Ntokozo on one hand narrates that he does not teach both language and literature but because he would like to regard himself as a competent teacher of ESL, he makes means to improve his language during his spare time. One could argue that Ntokozo is trying to find his PI by doing so. He stresses that a teacher's weakness should not outweigh his strengths but the two should balance because the results of such an act may lead to a kind of learner that you will produce. Lee and Shaari (2012) confirm that in schools, teachers could also be a part of small networks one of which they observed is a network of dedicated to improvements in assessment. They agree that teachers always feel the need to improve and be more dedicated to their work

On the other hand, Senzo; just like the 3 participants believes in D&C. I found these responses quiet interesting because four participants talked about this theme when asked the same question; 'Is there any part where you feel that you need to improve on in the whole context?' This could mean that a D&C teacher is most likely to improve in whatever

they set their minds on. Senzo clarified this when he said that "...a dedicated and committed teacher can get away with anything that is thrown towards to them". He also mentioned that one should never consider themselves as perfect but rather aims to improve on a daily basis, hence I said earlier that an identity is not constant but it is constructed and reconstructed. When Senzo aims to find new strategies yearly, one could argue that he is in the process of shaping his PI.

(vi) Role Model (RM)

Zwakele strongly believes that the learners look up to her and feels that she needs to set a very good example. She has the fear of disappointing her learners and to avoid ever getting to that point, she often goes back to her improvement plan and reteach the lessons that needed to be repeated. Mathemba says his learners motivate him and they also build up her career. He believes that EFAL teachers should always lead by example. According to him, an EFAL teachers should always be updated with what is happening in the world and around them. I understand that an RM is someone that one looks up to and wishes to be like them.

For Zinhle and Senzo, an ESL teacher should that kind of a person to their learners. According to them, a person is defined by the kind of personality they portray to others and to society; so if one is a good role model then that person is likely to produce excellent learners. Zinhle's aim is for the learners to go out there and shine with their L2, and then she would know that she laid a concrete foundation to ESL. Senzo adds that an ESL teacher who is an RM is always a step ahead and always presents his profession in a good manner. He regards himself as an RM because his learners look up to him therefore, he believes that unlike his initial experience, now he has found himself around the whole concept of Language Teaching. He sees his professionalism way better than he did before. With everything said above, scholars Van-Lankveld, Schoonenboom, Volman, Croiset & Beishuizen (2017) believe that senior colleagues with track records based on teaching performance seem to function as role models for young teachers in this respect. They continue to articulate that experienced colleagues play a crucial role during the early years of newly appointed teachers, since they act as role models for these colleagues and mode their desired practices.

(vii). Positive response from learners (PRL)

This code overlaps with the code: *Good Relationship with the Learners (GRL)* which emerged from the open coding in Zwakele's narrative. Levi narrates on how she started enjoying her work because of the feedback and positive reaction from her learners. She makes a statement which reads "When you are a language teacher you do not just follow the textbook, there will be no progress..." Her remedial strategies and her means of going out of her way to make her lessons fun resulted to her eventually enjoying her job. She says that the learners are responding positively to her because they realise her efforts and they now pass her subject. DuFour (2013) seems to agree with Levi when he says teachers take control and reflect upon their daily work processes, and professional identity takes shape from this collaborative reflection. Dufour believes that giving feedback and reflecting on the work done shapes the PI of a teacher. Zinhle on the other hand claims that when learners do not respond positively, that in a way should inform the teacher of a weakness they need to look into. Her learners do not show interest in grammar lessons and this could be a result of her not enjoying to teach it which in turn will impact negatively on the progress of the learners.

Zwakele touched on the importance of building a good relationship with learners because everything a teacher does centers around the learners. She states that if one has a good relationship with their learners it becomes easier to receive positive response from them and they feel free to ask questions where they do not understand and they are always willing to go an extra mile with you if need be, both the teacher and the learners rely on each other going forward. Gabisile says even though teaching language skills is not easy, she still enjoys it and the reason could be that her learners react positively during discussions and when she reads to/with them in class. As much as it is not easy to teach language, she notes that usually during the last two quarters the learners start showing progress and that brings joy knowing that she did justice to her learners.

(viii) High self-esteem

This code only appeared twice from Levi and Zwakele. They both had almost similar narratives about how their self-esteem often saves the situation in the classroom and amongst colleagues. Levi says it has also helped her when she is interacting with her colleagues because through her self-esteem they are able to pick up her good attitude

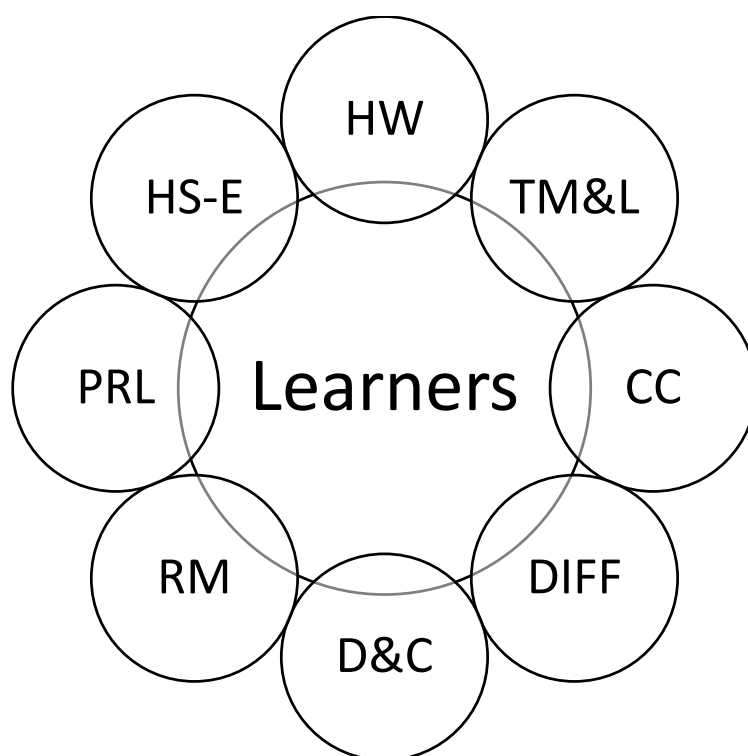
hence they draw up to her. Zwakele, unlike Levi enjoys literature. Be that as it may, she still uses her self-esteem to work on improving her weaknesses. It seems that for this two teachers, having a high self-esteem remedies some situations one can find themselves in.

Van-Lankveld, Schoonenboom, Volman, Croiset & Beishuizen (2017) in terms of developing a professional identity of a teacher, it seems important that teachers feel a way of appreciation for teaching either by their learners or colleagues as this boosts their self-esteem. In their study, early career teachers who felt their academic worth was questioned also felt their self-esteem to be undermined, whereas teachers who felt understood and valued didn't. On the opposite hand, appreciation from learners, as well as initiatives like teaching awards, grants or monetary rewards, seem to underscore a general appreciation for teaching and were found to validate one's identity as an educator.

4.2.4. Selective Coding

Selective coding as stated by Glaser and Strauss (1967) is a process of choosing a particular category and relating all the other categories to that category. The essential idea is to develop a single story line, a theory or hypothesis around which everything else is draped because it is believed that such a core concept always exists. In this final step of analysis, the aim of the researcher is to reorganise the data and identify relations between them. I have noticed that most of the participants if not all of them talked about their learners as the key influence in the construction of their PI throughout the analysis of the themes that emerged in the process of the interviews. Also, it seems that the themes that are displayed below would not have come about if they were not influenced by learners. It is quite amazing how all the interviewees had a lot to say about their learners more than they did about their colleagues. Below is a structure that shows all the codes relating to the key factor; the learners.

Figure 1. The connection of the codes to the learners, as key influencing factors.



Learners as the core influencers

From the themes that have been given and discussed, learners seem to appear in all of them. I have discovered that when these teachers interact with their learners on a daily basis, they form a very strong bond. It appears to me that there is no way that one can speak about an identity of EFAL teachers and leave out the learners. In some cases, the influence of learners to teachers may have challenged the participants' PI and also encouraged them to reflect and reshape their identities. For instance, Senzo (interviewee) reflects on his strategies each and every year, he tries to come up with new strategies to better improve himself and his learners, so is Mathemba and a few other interviewees.

It is important to say that even though participants gave very few instances or situations whereby they interact with their colleagues well some did mention that there were occasions where colleagues influenced their identities especially during their first experience in the work place. For example; Ntokozo, Zwakele, Levi, Senzo and Gabi had difficulties in adapting to a new environment but lucky enough for Senzo, him being a social person paved way to easily adapt to both the environment and the colleagues. Gabi also, because of her inviting personality and good attitude she managed to pave way for a friendly working

environment. On the same issue of difficulties to adapt, learners were involved in the formation of the teachers' PI.

The fact that Senzo had to question his identity and tried to familiarise himself with the situation at hand but still he could not relate; this shows a great deal of influence that learners had on the kind of identity he portrayed as an ECT of ESL. Levi mentioned that when she is really struggling with a particular topic, her self-esteem becomes a great deal of assistance, it saves the situation because she then engages the learners in an informal discussion to find out what knowledge they have on that particular subject and in most cases she ends up learning new knowledge from the learners. She emphasised that her experience during teaching practice boosted her self-esteem. This could mean that not only do the learners assist in forming her PI but they also assisted in boosting her self-esteem. Levi also mentioned that when she was struggling at some point, the positive response she received from the students made her to start enjoying her work.

Under the code of D&C, when participants were asked about their improvement plan, still they mentioned learners. Pretty made it very clear that there is no way that she could improve herself and leave out her learners. In order for her to see improvement, she needs to improve the learners first. Zinhle also touched on learners when she explained that when a teacher is D&C, they will master their subject knowledge which could mean that; that particular teacher would have done justice to the learners because being D&C does not only improve and form his identity but also benefits and shapes the identity of the learners involved. Ntokozo stressed on another issue which I found to be interesting. His concern is based on the kind of learners that he produces so according to him, an ESL teacher should not have his weaknesses weighing on his strengths because that will impact negatively on the learner. One can notice the trend of learners every time that a teacher is trying to build themselves. These participants seem to have one goal in mind, that is to brighten the future of their learners and the only way to do so is to give the learners the best education they can afford to offer regardless of the limited resources or the environment in which they teach. It also appears that in order to achieve this goal they have to be dedicated and committed to the job that also means putting in more effort and working even harder.

When speaking of hard work; Pretty, Zinhle and Senzo saw the importance to mention learners again. Their aim of working hard is to help the learners improve. Senzo finds

enough joy and fulfilment when his outcomes are positive and when the learners have proven to him that they are ready to learn and proceed to the next phase. Zinhle also believes that when she works hard, her learners will work even harder and to her; that is a great achievement. Levi hinted what sounded like a frustration when she said “We are guided by CAPS, whether we like it or not, we cannot even run away from it because it is what makes the curriculum”. This came about when she was elaborating how hard work got her by and helped her achieve beyond what is expected. She confessed that at times she would have to deviate from the actual schedule plan from the curriculum because her priority is her learners. Deviation to her would mean repeating a lesson until the learners understand it. One could argue that this is a teacher trying to avoid a situation whereby only one learner passes in class, again.

Gabisile on the other hand goes an extra mile to attend workshops, not only to enhance her knowledge but also give back to the learners that she is responsible for. Mathemba remember a situation wherein he had to go an extra mile with the learners because there were no other resources to refer from. He relied on the little he had and he knew that his learners depend on him and the kind of effort he gives. He also did allude that the learners were very pleased with him after an assessment they had because he had covered most of the questions asked during the assessment.

On the issue of role model, Zinhle again; saw the need to include learners. As she explained that if a teacher is a good role model, she is likely to produce excellent learners. Mathemba also feels motivated by his learner. He defined an EFAL teacher as a life-long learner, researcher and role model. Not only that, he also made an example of what sets EFAL teachers apart from other teachers and that according to him is the ability of EFAL teachers to “simplify” in situations where they found themselves having to code switch. One could also argue that this is done for the interest of the learners and another could argue that this contributes a lot in helping them (EFAL teachers) form their PI.

From the theme of M&L, Ntokozo directly stated that an EFAL teacher is defined by his learners. He strongly believes that to him, learners are a mirror through a teachers sees himself and his mistakes, therefore reflect on those. Levi seemed quite excited to share that she is part of the School Management Team (SMT). What I also found to be somewhat interesting from what she said was that an EFAL teacher is a leader that should be able to

teach learners all degrees of politeness, which could also imply that learners are the main factor of importance. Gabisile seems to agree with both Ntokozo and Levi that EFAL teachers are Managers and Leaders. In an attempt to clarify her statement, 'learners' came about again like they did in most if not all of the codes. She also alleged that EFAL teachers are defined by the way they speak the language of instruction. English teachers do not just speak for the sake of passing information but they take note of the verb concord in sentence constructions. "Remember we are what we teach, so English becomes a huge part of our lives as English teachers" she added.

It appears to me that as much teachers attempt to form their PIs in different ways, one cannot overlook the issue of learners being a core influence in this whole process even though some EFAL teachers may not be aware of such but through the response they have given, learners seem to be the main reason teachers feel the need to form and reform their PIs.

CHAPTER 5: OVERVIEW, LIMITATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I begin by providing an overview of the study chapters, followed by a detailed discussion of the study findings by objectives. I also outline the limitations of this research study, significance as well as the recommendations for further research.

5.1.1 Restating the aim and objectives of the study

The aim of the study was to investigate the professional identity formation of early career EFAL teachers in rural settings in the provinces of Mpumalanga and Limpopo. This was to be achieved by analysing their personal, professional and social identities and how they impact on the formation of their PIs. In order for me to succeed in this investigation, I formulated four objectives, which are:

- i. Establish how training as an EFAL teacher contributes to early career teachers' professional identity formation;
- ii. Document professional development initiatives that support EFAL teachers' professional identity formation in rural settings;
- iii. Determine the sort of environmental influences that impact on the formation of professional identity of EFAL teachers in rural settings;
- iv. Describe how early career teachers of EFAL in rural settings form their professional identity.

5.1.2 Overview of the study chapters

The first chapter provided an overview of the study comprised of the purpose, consideration of ethical issues and significance thereof. I demonstrated the relationship of other researches through the review of literature and theoretical framework in the second chapter. I perused both international and national literature in relation to my study. Moreover, I found it imperative that I should include the stance of EFAL teachers in the education sector particularly within institutions of higher learning.

In the third chapter, I outlined research methodology. I then provided the research procedure from the design, sampling, and selection of the research participants as well as generation of data where interviews took place. Most importantly I positioned myself as the researcher and my role in that regard. It was imperative for me to discuss ethical issues in detail and highlight the study limitations in the same chapter. I comprehensively provided my presentation of the research findings in the fourth chapter. I presented the narratives and the citations of the research participants. I then outlined and discussed the emergent themes with sub-themes from the study interviews whereby I was making use of an interview guide during an encounter with research participants. In this fifth and final chapter of the study, I concluded the study, highlight the discussion by the research objectives, provide reasons why the study is significant and implicate recommendations for further research.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY FINDINGS

Four research objectives were formulated, and in the following section the main findings are reviewed for each objective followed by a brief discussion. I found it equally important to relate the findings to the reviewed literature and the theoretical framework informing the study.

5.2.1 Objective 1: Establishing how training as an EFAL teacher contributes to early career teachers' professional identity formation

The results of the study showed that over eighty percent of the interviewees were not happy with the kind of training they received in university. According to the *Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications (MRTEQ) Policy* (2015: 5). MRTEQ proclaims that teacher education and, by implication, language teacher education should be aimed at ensuring that the higher education system produces teachers with a high grasp of pedagogical and content knowledge. MRTEQ (2015) also provides a basis for the construction of core curricula for initial teacher education, as well as for continuing professional development (CPD) programmes that accredited institutions must use in order to develop their programmes leading to teacher education qualifications. Also, the *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS)* (2011: 4-6), is aimed at facilitating the transition of learners from education institutions to the workplace, especially when one considers learners that may in future be trainee EFAL teachers. Unfortunately, that is not

the case with most of the participants of this study. When Levi was asked if the training she received as an EFAL teacher has prepared her enough for the world of work, she immediately said ‘no it hasn’t’. The following is in addition of what she said:

Experience is the best teacher, yes I speak better now, I write better and I am able to better myself and the learners in the language but for the real work, I had to go and find out, improve myself without any knowledge. Yes, we are trained for Educational Psychology and Philosophy but those are nothing compared to what we face at the schools. In Educational Psychology one does not learn that kids actually carry knives to school, you are never prepared for the reality you face, the back chatting from the learners etc. Yes, it's good to send students out for practice teaching but it is nothing compared to the realities of the world of work.

Gabisile was the only one who confidently believed in the training she received from her institution of higher learning. She said that *by level 3 she was already prepared enough. The only thing she didn't have was a chalk, a black board and employment. She assured me that training was excellent, it helped build her up and her identity as well.* Zwakele also felt let down, alluding that the training she received as a student during her varsity days did not do justice to her. What she came across was not even half of what she was taught at university but because of the good relationship she has with her learners in class, she still receives calls to assist at a school where she did her practice teaching (Grade 12).

As revealed in my literature chapter that most teacher education courses provide core units in the areas of education (curriculum, assessment, reporting, diversity, special needs), pedagogy units that focus on discipline subjects/specialist areas (for example, music education), compulsory school placement and elective units that comply with the preparation of teaching. It is well known that teacher preparation courses can only begin to prepare teachers for their profession as ‘learning to teach is a process that continues throughout a teacher’s career and that no matter what is done in the teacher education programs and no matter how well it is done, at best it can only prepare teachers to begin teaching’ (Conkling & Henry, 1999, 22). This is evident from the responses received from the participants. Most of them seem to have no faith that training as an EFAL teacher contributes to early career teachers’ professional identity formation. In a study in Australia,

Swabey, Castleton and Penney found that 'time is a perennial and internationally recognised problem for teacher education courses' (2010:31). They further point out that teacher education courses are just an entry into the professional community and that there is not enough conclusive evidence available regarding the quality of teacher education programs, even though courses provide beginner teachers with the skills, knowledge and understandings required for teaching but they do not shape the formation of their professional identity.

5.2.2 Objective 2: Document professional development initiatives that support EFAL teachers' professional identity formation in rural settings

Having noted in my literature chapter that studies by Nkambule (2015) and Lock (2008) have led me to the two initiatives that support EFAL teachers' PI formation that is; the Wits School of Education student teachers that were taken for rural teaching experience in rural contexts and the Student Teacher Rural Experience Program (STREP) aiming to support student teachers who wished to do their teaching practice in rural districts with the view of working in rural areas. These two are amongst other initiatives that this study documents as initiatives that support EFAL teachers' PI formation.

Irrespective of the research participants' working environment and having limited resources to enhance their teaching process, some still go out of their way to meet the department half way. Gabisile for instance, she has committed herself in attending workshops to improve her pedagogical content and her as an individual. Zwakele shared some information about the programs they are currently running at the school, one of which is 'Rally-to-Read'. It is sponsored by Telkom and TSB (Malelane sugarcane firm). This programme, according to her encourages and allows learners to prepare, read and present at the school assembly (it could be articles, stories or any other informative short pieces). It provides the school with different books to read. Another annual event they have at the school which helps remedy the communication skills is 'Reader thorn'. With this one, schools meet together to witness their learners read out for each other. These learners are assessed through comprehension passages during the competition. Such programs are a good remedial strategy and improve on the learners' communication skills which in return makes teaching even easier for the teachers. This two participants are the only ones that talked about initiatives in their schools that contribute to the formation of their PI. Either than the initiatives documented in my literature and the two mentioned by the participants, there

is no other evidence from the participants that introduces us to even more programmes that support EFAL teachers' professional identity formation in rural settings.

5.2.3 Objective 3: Determine the sort of environmental influences that impact on the formation of professional identity of EFAL teachers in rural settings

ECT identity in rural context relates to their innate perception of rurality in general and the rate at which they can adapt to rural conditions. As Wenger (1999) ascertains, ECTs need to create a connection between themselves and the rural schools to function properly in those schools. This implies that if such connection fails, it may cause an identity challenge for ECTs during the process of finding themselves in rural schools. According to Nkambule (2005), ECTs are at a risk of preceding their personal identities during the process of negotiating their rural identities in relation to rural context. This could happen as they encounter unfamiliar situations in rural schools during the course of their teaching experience, like having to interact with teachers and the learners in rural schools. The connection to rural school contexts helps them to develop a new form of identity which is referred to as rural ECTs' identity, which may be different from their urban or township background (Nkambule, 2015).

Levi had difficulties adjusting to the environment and the curriculum. On her first year of the actual teaching of the subject she felt somewhat nervous. The thought of being responsible for a class and a whole subject on her own frightened her. Levi explains that when she arrived as a new teacher her learners created an environment that was hostile for her to can identify herself as a teacher, instead they ended up calling her "prison warder". As time went on she was able to adapt and got used to the environment. Two participants remarked on the importance of developing a high self-esteem as a survival mechanism and it helps also to have a good personality as well as a good attitude towards the learners and colleagues. According to the results documented in this study, an environment that has an impact on the formation of professional identity of EFAL teachers in rural settings is that which learners create by responding positively to their teachers and teachers also develop a good relationship with them. Most participants seemed happy to have learners that look up to them as leaders and role models. In that way, it becomes easier for them to identify their professional Identity. As said in the previous chapter above that it is important to note that even though participants gave very few instances or situations whereby they interact

with their colleagues, well; some did mention that there were occasions where colleagues influenced their identities especially during their first experience in the work place.

The above said seem to confirm what has been observed in my literature that new teachers begin with beliefs and goals about their learners and the roles they will be “playing” as a teacher (Cross & Hong, 2009; Van Veen & Slegers, 2009; Hong, 2010; Schutz *et al.*, 2012). These beliefs and goals can range from being useful to not useful and yet they act as reference points or standards used by teachers to judge what happens during classroom transactions. For example, learners’ actions and reactions may be compared to idealized versions of how learners “should” act in the classroom (Flores & Day, 2006). When learners’ behaviors are in line with teachers’ perceptions of how the classroom should be and are associated with pleasant emotions and those salient identities may be strengthened. However, when there is a discrepancy among a teacher’s current identity beliefs and what is actually occurring in the classroom, there is the potential for those identities to be challenged, resulting in potential changes in those identities (Schutz *et al.*, 2007; Cross & Hong, 2009). This could mean that when learners are compliant, it confirms pleasant emotions about being respected. When learners are defiant, frustration can lead to doubt about emergent teacher roles.

5.2.4 Objective 4: Describe how early career teachers of EFAL in rural settings form their professional identity

The participants made it somewhat clear that whenever they dedicate their whole selves in their work places, they have that ability to learn from their learners and improve themselves. I have come to a realisation that when EFAL teachers engage themselves in reflection they get to know themselves best as professionals as this impacts greatly in an EFAL classroom. The reason that I say this is because of the responses that were narrated by the participants on how the results of their reflections changed the attitudes of their learners. This could mean that the change in learners’ attitude serves as a huge factor in the PI formation of EFAL teachers.

Teachers and learners assist each other great in forming and reshaping of each other’s identities. This has also been observed by Duff and Uchida (1997) who both describe language teachers as cultural workers, because teachers “play a key role in the construction of the learners’ views of their homes; their understandings of unfamiliar belief

systems, values and practices; and their negotiations of new social relationships” (Hawkins & Norton, 2009: 32) for students who just come into their new school and new community. It has been mentioned in my literature that the role of “*Teacher as Acculturator*” is not just for the long-term educational needs of their students but also the short-term entry into a new culture – a role that teachers of other subjects may not feel as acutely. As such, it is evident that in order to understand English language teaching and learning as well as to help learners learn their target language (English) more effectively, understanding teachers in the first place is essential. In order to understand teachers, we should have a clear perspective of who they are: “the professional, cultural, political, and individual identities which they claim or which are assigned them and the environment in which they teach” (Varghese *et al.*, 2005: 22).

5.3 STUDY LIMITATIONS

According to Jackson (2004), there is a need for researchers to be truthful about any deficiencies in their data or weaknesses in their methodology, as well as judicious in interpreting results. Therefore, there are also a few limitations in this research study that need to be highlighted:

5.3.1 Possible prejudice in the study

One of the limitations of this study is subjectivity. The nature of this research and its trustworthiness relies on my objectivity meanwhile collecting the data through interviews, analysing the data and giving conclusions. It was almost impossible for me not to form a bond with the participants through the whole process of interviewing them because some of them were people I know and had studied with at the University of Limpopo. One could argue that there was prejudice in the way that I looked at them and that might have had an influence on how deep I analysed most of the issues in their life stories.

According to Ponterotto, Utsey and Pedersen (2006) the nature of qualitative data makes it difficult, if not impossible, for the person doing the analysis to separate himself or herself from the data collected. There are ways, however, to try to control subjectivity and avoid prejudice with qualitative data analysis. Following the steps given by the scholars, below is how prejudice was avoided in this study.

5.4.1.1. Use multiple people to code the data.

I have used different people to code the data I have collected and there is consistency when interpreting the information given by my participants, then it is more likely that there's some truth by agreement in these interpretations.

5.4.1.2. Have participants review your results.

With the information given by my participants, I would confirm with them as to whether my interpretations from previously conducted interviews seem to be representative of their beliefs and most of them would agree. This was achieved without revealing the identity of other interviewees

5.4.1.3. Verify with more data sources.

This is sometimes called triangulation. I have looked at other studies that support my interpretations, studies by: Varghese, Morgan, Johnston, & Johnson (2005) and Beijaard, Verloop, & Vermunt (2000). Therefore I have confidence that what I have found is legitimate.

5.4.1.4. Check for alternative explanations.

I have consider whether there are other reasons why I obtained this data. My interpretations are stronger because in most instances I would ask one questions in different ways and would still get the same answers.

5.4.1.5. Review findings with peers.

I have requested assistance from my peers to review my conclusions. It is possible that other people might see things that I simply missed or they can identify gaps in my argument that might require to be addressed. However, they have provided affirmation that my conclusions are sound and reasonable given the data.

5.3.2 Possible dishonesty from the participants

Honesty and dishonesty are another important limitation in a narrative research where participants tell their stories. Participants were given the opportunity to omit or change information that which they did not feel comfortable sharing with me. Some participants who are not comfortable or rather intimidated either by the research study or the researcher are

likely to withhold important factors that helped in forming their PI's. However, I would like to believe that the given information by the participants was entirely true and speaks volumes of their true ideas, feelings, and personal views that have to do with the life experiences they had in their lives having noted that all the participants were interviewed in their own will and none of them were forced to take part.

According to Houdek (2017), Qualitative research participants often answer something, but their subconscious and actions do something entirely different. Many studies are conducted on how faulty counting on qualitative data may be. Participants tend to mention the primary thing that they think of in their mind or what they think they need. But you dig deeper to understand that there's a great deal of what you would possibly have uncovered. So although it's important to assume the bulk of qualitative research participants aren't maliciously telling untruths, it happens often enough to make you actually believe why it's happening and what you'll be able to do about it. It's also very possible that they simply do not remember an answer. If you're asking an issue about whether or not the services you offered to a client were excellent, you are likely to be given a positive response that does not mirror the true future. Some questions shouldn't be asked in that specific format, or the way the question is asked almost forces a particular type of response, resulting in a greater change of untruths. This is often the reason most of my questions were asked in several ways and a few simplified to serve the purpose or convey the meaning they intend to. I have considered the below steps by Houdek to guard against dishonesty from participants.

5.4.2.1. Participants care about appearances

People do not like appearing like they are worse off than others. That is the reason my questions did not dwell much on their demographical details and nothing was asked about their income details or employment details.

5.4.2.2. Participants want to remain socially viable

I am aware that people do not like socially undesirable topics and that if there a question is socially unacceptable, people tend to be dishonest about their situation. Hence, none of my questions made my participants feel like they are being interrogated.

5.4.2.3. Participants are sensitive too

My interview guide avoided questions that are personal like asking about illegal behaviors which might lead participants to lie about the realities they deal with

5.4.2.4. Participants are not malicious and feel the need to “help”

I am also aware that some participants always feel the need to help especially if they want to please the researcher, they give answers that they think are what the researcher needs to hear in order to please him or her. To help avoid this, I advised my participants that there is no wrong or right answer.

5.4.2.5. Participants are human which suggests “greed”

Most participants often think that there is always something in it for them that is why some may shape their answers to meet their needs. I read out the significance of this study to them to avoid such situations.

5.3.3 Sample size

Although this study consisted of 8 participants, this should not be viewed as consisting a limitation, because as a researcher, I aimed for an in-depth rather than data saturation in this study. Hence an in-depth analysis was achieved. According to Tucket (2004), sampling may be a core concern for researchers to work out the success of a project and continual examination may be required. In studies like mine, (qualitative *narrative* research) the choice of participants may not follow the procedures of quantitative sampling because the aim is not to achieve representativity or count opinions or people but to explore the variety of opinions and different representations of a problem (Gaskell, 2000). Thus, sampling in qualitative research attentions with the richness of data (Kuzel, 1992) Hence, the number of participants required, therefore, depends on the manner of the topic and the resources available (Gaskell, 2000). Morse and Field (1995) argue that there are two key considerations that guide the sampling methods in qualitative research, appropriateness and adequacy. It is maintained, therefore, that the researcher should be practical and versatile in their approach to sampling which an adequate sample size is one that sufficiently answers the research question (Marshall, 1996). In this sense then generalisability is not pursued by the researcher and therefore the focus is a smaller amount on sample size and more on sample adequacy (Bowen, 2008). Bowen argues that adequacy of sampling relates to the demonstration that saturation has been reached, which suggests that depth also as breadth of data is

achieved. Qualitative researchers often make decisions associated with the adequacy of their sample based on the notion of saturation.

5.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

It is imperative to highlight the significance of this research study, particularly in the education sector. Most learners do not see the importance of education (particularly in rural schools). For researchers in this area of study, the findings of this research will fill a number of gaps: this study will give more clarity on the kind of identity formed by ECTs of ESL and how they compare to that of an established PI of an English teacher as portrayed by studies such as Atkinson (2004), Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) and Dvir (2015). In terms of teacher training, this study is significant in that it seeks to point out some valuable considerations advocated by the specifications set by the *Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications (MRTEQ) Policy* (2015: 5). MRTEQ (2015) proclaims that teacher education and, by implication, language teacher education should be aimed at ensuring that the higher education system produces teachers with a high grasp of pedagogical and content knowledge. MRTEQ (2015) also provides a basis for the construction of core curricula for initial teacher education, as well as for continuing professional development (CPD) programmes that accredited institutions must use in order to develop their programmes leading to teacher education qualifications. Hence, one of my objectives was to establish how training as an EFAL teacher contributes to the ECT's professional identity formation. This is also in line with the *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS)* (2011: 4-6), which aims at facilitating the transition of learners from education institutions to the workplace, especially when one considers learners that may in future be trainee EFAL teachers.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES

The purpose of this study was to investigate the professional identity formation of Early Career English First Additional Language teachers in rural settings in the provinces of Mpumalanga and Limpopo.

I wanted to get their insight's perspective (subjective views) on how training as an EFAL teacher contributes to their professional identity formation, the kind of development

initiatives that support their professional identity formation in rural settings and the sort of environmental influences that impact on this formation of professional identity

It is therefore imperative for me to recommend a few research topics for further research, and they are as follows:

- A further research is required in order to investigate the kind of training offered to student teachers in institutions of higher learning before they are qualified to teach.
- An investigation on the impact code switching has in EFAL classes.
- The research that currently exists on the conceptualisation of professional identities of SL teachers has been expanded with qualitative research as presented in this study, although further research is necessary to fully understand these findings. I have also found that story telling is very much useful when one aims at learning another person's life. As a result, other researchers out there who are exploring the formation of teacher identities should continue with this method to encourage teachers to think about the role of identity formation in the professional development of language teachers.

5.6 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the issue of identity became a fundamental factor in the findings as avowed by a few of the research participants. They clearly affirmed that their preference is not only about teaching the English language but to produce learners that they can be proud of, learners that are not ashamed to speak the English language, better yet improve more in writing it.

The findings of this study were discussed in relation to the research objectives stated in the first chapter. The aim of the study was to investigate the professional identity formation of early career English First Additional Language teachers in rural settings in the provinces of Mpumalanga and Limpopo. Overall, the findings of the study showed that the kinds of identities that these teachers portray are more likely to be personal, social and role identities. As Burgess (2016) narrates that people tend to use their personal qualities and traits to give meaning to the categories to which they belong to socially. Therefore, the responses that these teachers gave proved that even though personal and social identities are viewed as unconnected or unattached but they are intertwined constructs. The fact that

they are separate means that they can influence each other continuously. Burk and Stets (2009), believe that when people are able to identify themselves according to the positions that they have as members of their social structures, they tend to unveil role identity. In chapter 2, I defined role identity as per understanding of the above scholars' ideas. According to them, role identity is the internalised meanings of a role, or the expectations that are tied to a social position which guides the attitude and behaviour individuals apply to themselves (p.114). On that note, I further elaborated in the same chapter that role identity of a teacher may include the meanings "life-long learner" which people apply to themselves when playing the role of a teacher.

These three identities may appear to be different but they work together in different occasions. For example; in chapter 2 again, I have given Burk and Stets's ideas on how these identities connect to each other. They believe that "a teacher is part of a certain school (social identity), functions as a teacher in that particular school (role identity), and fulfils that role in his or her own way (personal identity)" (2009:24). Based on the above findings I would like to agree with Olsen's findings that as a result, identity can then be regarded as a product at a particular time in a particular situation as well as a process that is continuously influenced by internal and external influences. On the very same note, Miró-Bonet, Bover-Bover, Moreno-Mulet, Miró-Bonet, and Zaforteza-Lallemand (2014) argue that "identity is not individually definite and unchangeable. People may attempt to keep up their habits and routines but they are not resistant to outside influences", to which the results given above prove the scholars' ideas to be true.

It can be argued that the identities that these ECT of EFAL portray is not entirely, if not at all different from that of an established teacher. I have mentioned that Identity is a shifting concept and these teachers need new strategies to utilise in each and every year in order to enhance the learning process and develop their identities. Therefore, the same way that an established teacher constantly changes his ways of teaching; so does an ECT. Once these teachers are able to adapt and overcome the difficulties that they experience in their initial year of teaching then little can be said about the difference between their PIs and that of an established English teacher.

I believe that this project will allow professionals in this field to uncover other issues that similarly impact or influence professional teacher identities and work on them.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: PARTICIPANTS' INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Title: *An Inquiry into the Professional Identity Formation of Early Career English Language Teachers in Rural Settings of the Provinces of Mpumalanga and Limpopo*

Researcher: Msana B.I

Date: _____

I volunteer to participate in a research project conducted by Ms B.I. Msana from the University of Limpopo. I understand that the project is designed to gather information for the research topic: ***“An Inquiry into the Professional Identity Formation of Early Career English Language Teachers in Rural Settings of the Provinces of Mpumalanga and Limpopo”***.

1. The procedure envisaged might hold some risk for the participants that cannot be seen at this stage.
2. The Ethics Committee has given its approval that the individuals may be approached to participate in the study.
3. The experimental protocol, that is the extent, aims and methods of research, has been explained to me.
4. The protocol sets out the risk that can be reasonably expected as well as possible discomfort for persons participating in the research, an explanation of the anticipated advantages for participants or others as are reasonably expected from the research, and alternate procedures that maybe to his/her advantage.
5. I will be informed of any new information that may become available during the research that may influence the willingness of participants to continue participating.
6. Access to records that pertain to participants' participation in the study will be restricted to persons directly involved in the research.
7. Any question that I may have regarding the research, or related matters, will be appropriately responded to by the research.

8. Participation in this research is voluntary and participants can withdraw their participation at any stage.
9. I indemnify the University of Limpopo and all persons involved with the above project from liability that may arise from participants' participation in the above project or that may be related to it, including negligence on the part of the abovementioned persons.

Agreement to participate in the research:

I have read, or have had read to me, the above relating to the study and have had an opportunity to ask questions, which have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree voluntarily to participate in the study as described.

.....
Date

.....
Participant's name

.....
Date

.....
Signature of consenting party

.....
Date

.....
Signature of the investigator

.....
Date

.....
Signature of witness

APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW GUIDE

Opening

[Greetings and shake hands] My name is Msana Buliswa, a student at the University of Limpopo doing master's in English Studies. I am conducting research for my dissertation titled: "*An Inquiry into the Professional Identity Formation of Early Career English Language Teachers in Rural Settings of the Provinces of Mpumalanga and Limpopo*". I figured it would be best if I could interview you as an ECT of ESL, so as to gather valid data for my research project and I hope to use this information for my results.

I would like to ask you some questions about your profession, your choice of study and the experiences you have while teaching ESL. First, please note that you have every right to refuse to take part and, should you feel uncomfortable during the process, you are allowed to withdraw from the interview. Last, please feel free to ask questions where you need clarity about anything.

This interview should take about 45 minutes of your time; are you available, please, to respond to the questions at this time?

Body

Transition: *Personal Information*

Let me begin by asking you about yourself

- Please could you introduce yourself.

Transition to the next topic: *Education*

- When and where did you study for your higher education qualification?
- What were your major subjects?
- Why did you choose English as one of your majors?

Transition to the next topic: *Experience*

- When did you start teaching?
- In which grades do you offer ESL?
- How would you describe your experience in your initial year of teaching ESL?

- Did you have any difficulties in adapting to your work place as a newly employed teacher?
- What are your strengths in teaching the language and what are your weaknesses? (What is it that you enjoy teaching the most and what do you enjoy least?)
- Is there any part where you feel that you need to improve on in the whole context?
- What are your remedial strategies in cases where you feel that you are lacking?
- Now that you've been practising for a while, how would you define the professional identity of a teacher? (A teacher in general?)
- ...and that of an English teacher?
- What is it that you would say defines your PI as an ECT of ESL?

Last question: would you say that training as an EFAL teacher has provided you with enough knowledge on how to survive in the work place and in a way that influences how you form your PI? If so, explain how that training provided this knowledge?"

Closing

Well, it has been a pleasure finding out more about you. The information that has been recorded will be used in the results of this study. I appreciate the time that you took for this interview, and I think that I should now have all the information I need. Is there anything else that you feel would be helpful for me to know? Or is there any information that you feel should be excluded from the recording?

Would it be okay to call you if there are any more questions? Thanks once again.

APPENDIX 3: FACULTY APPROVAL



University of Limpopo
Faculty of Humanities
Executive Dean

Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa
Tel: (015) 268 4895, Fax: (015) 268 3425, Email: Satsope.maoto@ul.ac.za

DATE: 8 March 2018

NAME OF STUDENT: MSANA, BI
STUDENT NUMBER: [201202721]
DEPARTMENT: MA – English Studies
SCHOOL: LANGCOM

Dear Student

FACULTY APPROVAL OF PROPOSAL (PROPOSAL NO. FHDC2018/240)

I have pleasure in informing you that your MA proposal served at the Faculty Higher Degrees Meeting on 21 February 2018 and your title was approved as follows:

TITLE: AN INQUIRY INTO THE PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY FORMATION OF EARLY CAREER ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS IN RURAL SETTINGS OF THE PROVINCES OF MPUMALANGA AND LIMPOPO

Note the following:

Ethical Clearance	Tick One
Requires no ethical clearance Proceed with the study	
Requires ethical clearance (Human) (TREC) (apply online) Proceed with the study only after receipt of ethical clearance certificate	√
Requires ethical clearance (Animal) (AREC) Proceed with the study only after receipt of ethical clearance certificate	

Yours faithfully

Prof RS Maoto,
Executive Dean: Faculty of Humanities

Director: Dr JR Rammala
Supervisor: Dr TE Mabila

Finding solutions for Africa

APPENDIX 4: ETHICAL CLEARANCE TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE



University of Limpopo
Department of Research Administration and Development
Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa
Tel: (015) 268 3935, Fax: (015) 268 2306, Email: Anastasia.Ngobe@ul.ac.za

TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

MEETING: 06 April 2018

PROJECT NUMBER: TREC/39/2018: PG

PROJECT:

Title: An Inquiry into the Professional Identity Formation of Early Career English Language Teachers in Rural Settings of the Provinces of Mpumalanga and Limpopo.

Researcher: BI Msana
Supervisor: Dr TE Mabila
Co-Supervisors: N/A
School: Languages and Communication
Degree: Master of Arts in English Studies


PROF. TAB MASHEGO
CHAIRPERSON: TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

The Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) is registered with the National Health Research Ethics Council, Registration Number: REC-0310111-031

Note:

- i) Should any departure be contemplated from the research procedure as approved, the researcher(s) must re-submit the protocol to the committee.
- ii) The budget for the research will be considered separately from the protocol.
PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES.

APPENDIX 5: ETHICAL CLEARANCE LIMPOPO PROVINCIAL RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

CONFIDENTIAL



LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

OFFICE OF THE PREMIER

Office of the Premier

Research and Development Directorate

Private Bag X9483, Polokwane, 0700, South Africa

Tel: (015) 287 6564. Email: mokobil@premier.limpoopo.gov.za

LIMPOPO PROVINCIAL RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

Meeting: 24th May 2018

Project Number: LPREC/09/2018: PG

Title: An Inquiry into the Professional Identity Formation of Early Career English Language Teachers in Rural Settings of the Provinces of Mpumalanga and Limpopo

Researcher: B.I Msana

Department: Department of Education

Dr Thembinkosi Mabila

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Mabila'.

Chairperson: Limpopo Provincial Research Ethics Committee

The Limpopo Provincial Research Ethics Committee (LPREC) is registered with National Health Research Council (NHREC) Registration Number REC-111513-038.

Note:

- i. This study is categorized as a Low Risk Level in accordance with risk level descriptors as enshrined in LPREC Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)
- ii. Should there be any amendment to the approved research proposal; the researcher(s) must re-submit the proposal to the ethics committee for review prior data collection.
- iii. The researcher(s) must provide annual reporting to the committee as well as the relevant department.
- iv. The ethical clearance certificate is valid for 12 months. Should the need to extend the period for data collection arise then the researcher should renew the certificate through LPREC secretariat

PLEASE QUOTE THE PROJECT NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES

APPENDIX 6: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT STUDY – MPUMALANGA PROVINCE



Building No. 5, Government's Boulevard, Riverside Park, Mpumalanga Province
Private Bag X11341, Mbombela, 1200
Tel: 013 766 5552/5115, Toll Free Line: 0800 203 116

Litiko le Tomfandvo, Umnyango wo Fuzdo

Departement van Onderwys

Ndzawulo ya Dyandzo

Ms Buliswa Msana
Email: Buliswa.Msana@ul.ac.za
071 636 1457

RE: APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: MS BULISWA MSANA

Your application to conduct research study was received and is therefore acknowledged. The title of your research project reads: "An Inquiry into the Professional Identity Formation of Early English Language Teachers in Rural Settings of the Provinces of Mpumalanga and Limpopo". I trust that the aims and the objectives of the study will benefit the whole department especially the beneficiaries. Your request is approved subject to you observing the provisions of the departmental research policy which is available in the department website. You are requested to adhere to your university's research ethics as spelt out in your research ethics.

In terms of the research policy, data or any research activity can be conducted after school hours as per appointment with affected participants. You are also requested to share your findings with the relevant sections of the department so that we may consider implementing your findings if that will be in the best interest of the department. To this effect, your final approved research report (both soft and hard copy) should be submitted to the department so that your recommendations could be implemented. You may be required to prepare a presentation and present at the departments' annual research dialogue.

For more information kindly liaise with the department's research unit @ 013 766 5476/5148 Or
a.baloyi@education.mpu.gov.za

The department wishes you well in this important project and pledges to give you the necessary support you may need.

MRS MOC MHLABANE

HEAD: EDUCATION

01, 06, 2018

DATE



APPENDIX 7: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT STUDY – LIMPOPO PROVINCE



LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Ref: 2/2/2

Enq: MC Makola PhD

Tel No: 015 290 5448

E-mail: MakolaMC@edu.limpopo.gov.za

Msana BI
University of Limpopo
Private Bag x1106
Sovenga
0727

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

1. The above bears reference.
2. The Department wishes to inform you that your request to conduct research has been approved. Topic of the research proposal: “AN INQUIRY INTO THE PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY FORMATION OF EARLY CAREER ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS IN RURAL SETTINGS OF THE PROVINCES OF MPUMALANGA AND LIMPOPO”.
3. The following conditions should be considered:
 - 3.1 The research should not have any financial implications for Limpopo Department of Education.
 - 3.2 Arrangements should be made with the Circuit Office and the schools concerned.
 - 3.3 The conduct of research should not in anyhow disrupt the academic programs at the schools.
 - 3.4 The research should not be conducted during the time of Examinations especially the fourth term.
 - 3.5 During the study, applicable research ethics should be adhered to; in particular the principle of voluntary participation (the people involved should be respected).

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: MSANA BI

CONFIDENTIAL

Cnr. 113 Biccard & 24 Excelsior Street, POLOKWANE, 0700, Private Bag X9489, POLOKWANE, 0700
Tel: (015) 290 7600. Fax: (015) 297 6920/4220/4494

The heartland of Southern Africa. Development is about people.