

Intermediate Phase teachers' constructions of their self-perceived credibility

by

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Declaration

I declare that the thesis, which I hereby submit for the degree Philosophiae Doctor in Humanities Education at the University of Pretoria, is my own work and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other higher education institution.



.....

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Ethics Statement

The author, whose name appears on the title page of this thesis, has obtained, for the research described in this work, the applicable research ethics approval. The author declares that she has observed the ethical standards required in terms of the University of Pretoria's *Code of ethics for researchers and the Policy guidelines for responsible research*.

Dedication

'Those we love and lose are always connected by heartstrings into infinity'
(Quote by Terri Guillemets)

This thesis is dedicated to you, mom. A soul that I will forever be in awe of.

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Abstract

This thesis focuses on teachers' constructions of their own credibility. More specifically, the study aims to explore and understand Intermediate Phase teachers' constructions of their self-perceived credibility within a South African context. In alignment with the purpose of the study, two underpinning research questions were posed. The first research question inquired into how Intermediate Phase teachers construct their own perceptions of their credibility. The second research question focused on why Intermediate Phase teachers construct their own perceptions of their credibility in the way that they do. The findings from this study are based on the stories of the participants. The participants were selected using two qualitative sampling techniques, namely purposive and snowball. The criteria ensured that the participants were Intermediate Phase teachers who have experience teaching in Gauteng-based primary schools. Two research designs were used, namely narrative and arts-based inquiry. In alignment with the designs, two methods were used, specifically biographic-narrative interpretive method outlined by Wengraf (2001, 2004) and arts-based method. The data heavily relied on the participants' input by using a single question aimed at inducing narrative (Wengraf, 2004) and participants' personally selected artefacts to provide a foundation for their stories. The study draws on two theoretical frameworks, specifically the McCroskey, Valencic, and Richmond (2004) model for instructional communication and the phenomenology of sociology theory by Schutz (1967). By adopting and adapting tenets from both theories, I propose a conceptual framing to situate the emergent findings. I adopted the major credibility factors suggested by McGlone and Anderson (1973) to strengthen the focus on teachers' credibility in the conceptual framing. This qualitative study's findings were decoded using inductive thematic data analysis, whereby emergent themes and subthemes were used as a backdrop to interpret the data. Conceptually, this study proposes a conceptual framing that offers Intermediate Phase teachers a framework to consider and reflect on their constructions of their self-perceived credibility. Methodologically, this study justifies the importance of blurring the boundaries between narrative and arts-based research designs. Theoretically, this study highlights commonly referred to credibility pillars based on 21st century Intermediate Phase teachers' narratives.

Keywords: Intermediate Phase teachers, stories, narratives, self-perceived credibility, narrative inquiry, arts-based inquiry

Language Editor's Disclaimer

I, Deborah Rudman, the undersigned, hereby certify that I have revised and edited the language of the doctoral thesis, titled: 'Intermediate Phase teachers' constructions of their self-perceived credibility', written by Tanita Reddy.

I confirm that the standard of the language is acceptable, provided that the indicated corrections have been implemented.

Signed: 

BA (UCT), Diploma in Journalism (Australian College of Journalist)

Date: 09 August 2021

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

ABM	Arts-based method
BNIM	Biographic-Narrative Interpretive Method
CAPS	Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement
DBE	Department of Basic Education
FET	Further Education and Training
FP	Foundation Phase
GET	General Education and Training
IP	Intermediate Phase
N-pointed questions	Narrative-pointed questions
SACE	South African Council for Educators
SHEIOT	Situation, Happening, Event, Incident, Occasion/Occurrence, Time
SP	Senior Phase
SQUIN	Single Question aimed at Inducing Narrative
TQUINS	Topic Question aimed at Inducing Narrative
WoS	Web of Science

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Prologue

Teacher credibility, Constructions, and South Africa

Think of a teacher whom you admired. What made them admirable and important for you to remember their name? Possibly their teaching styles fitted your learning needs, the way the teacher made you feel brilliant in the lessons, or even just a friendly smile or words of encouragement that stuck with you? These memories stemmed from your experiences and emotions that you connected with and reflected on.

Teacher credibility is fluid and can be easily fractured based on an array of events (Woest, 2016). Just as easily as you could recall your favourite teacher, it is highly probable that you could just as quickly recall your least favourite teacher. Your reasonings behind your recollections of your favourite and least favourite teachers would be varied, fundamentally based on your preferences, experiences, and personality (Schutz, 1967). Considering the interaction, engagement, and quality of relationships built between learners and teachers, teacher credibility is in the motion of consistently balancing between how others view teachers and how the teacher views himself/herself (Finn, Schrodtt, Witt, Elledge, Jernberg, & Larson, 2009). From these seeds of experiences, your views began to emerge, which led to the development of your perceptions about your teachers. Maybe your teacher was extremely strict, and you were frightened by his/her tone of voice, or you excelled in this structured environment; in either instance, this is where your perceptions were born.

Alongside learners' perceptions of teachers' credibility, which is so often the focus (McCroskey, Valencic, & Richmond, 2004; Hattie & Clinton, 2001), teachers have functioning and developing perceptions of their own credibility. Every smile from a learner, letter of appreciation, hug, incidents of learners' misbehaviour, notes from parents, and comments from colleagues form the foundation of teachers' own perceptions of themselves. Since every learner is unique, every teacher is unique, which essentially means that every practice is unique. The probability of every teacher getting along with every learner, every parent, and every colleague, during all parts of the school year, is fairly low. Credibility is thus, to a large extent, coated in social settings (Van Lankveld, Schoonenboom, Volman, Croiset, & Beishuizen, 2017). Hence, it is important to consider the socialising element to credibility, and to acknowledge that learners and teachers alike, are social beings who are in constant interaction with each other. A multitude of external

and internal variances are embedded in these interactions, including, but not limited to political, social, economic, academic, professional, and personal dimensions.

With the above-mentioned in mind, teachers' credibility often goes unnoticed from a personal perspective, instead information pertaining to how others view the teacher becomes the focus (Freeman, 2011), perhaps with limited meaningful reflection and understanding. To some extent, it becomes a mere 'take it or leave it' type of situation. Learners will pass through the grades, but teachers remain in practice. Hence, the focus calls for a much-needed shift. Reflective practices are thus becoming increasingly important, not only to self-monitor, but also to meaningfully inquire into own actions, behaviour, and attitudes, with insight into sustainable development in practice. Reflective teachers inquire into their own perceptions and take the reins on shaping their constructions of their perceptions. Constructions then become the centre of who teachers believe they are (Freeman, 2011; Shapiro, 2010). Once again, constructions are unique and personal, which requires a contextual and cultural backdrop. Considering that this study was undertaken within the South African arena, I provide some background.

Africa, popularly known for its human origin, is a continent dipped in rich cultural stories that build on its deep set and colourful heritage. Metaphorically, Africa is a continent that has formed its own constructions based on its various historical transitions. South Africa, specifically, the African country popularly referred to as the rainbow nation, triumphantly gained its democratic government in the year 1994 (Chisholm, Friedman, & Sindoh, 2018). More than twenty-six years later, the country continues to grapple with its wounds in the persistent fight to see a united nation. Our vibrant culture stems from our 11 official languages, a range of beliefs, and an array of racial profiles. From this diversity, South Africa found its path in working toward the uniting of its people against the backdrop of separation during the years of apartheid¹ (Mhlauli, Salani, & Mokotedi, 2015). As South Africa's story continues to unfold, so do the stories of its people, who encounter the ripple effects from the transition from apartheid. In so saying, political domains and the education sector work hand in hand (Harley & Wedekind, 2004), thus are affected by the various changes and disruptions encountered over the last two decades. The teachers' constructions are informed by their experiences as both teachers and South Africans.

¹ Apartheid was the system of separation of people based on the colour of one's skin (Mhlauli *et al.*, 2015), also commonly referred to as racism, to discriminate against people with different racial profiles or identities (Spren & Vally, 2011).

This highlights the need to explore teachers' stories in understanding their own perceptions of their credibility.

Teachers were asked to share their experiences through stories of who they thought they were as teachers. Stories provide a window into a universe of intertwined, possibly contradictory, and confusing experiences that are tied together through memories and words (Muylaert, Sarubbi, Gallo, Neto, & Reis, 2014). Essentially, social beings are products of their stories, which are threaded together through recalled memories, and shape our lives based on what and how we tell our stories. Teachers' constructions are thus communicated through their stories, which projected their worlds painted with experiences, events, upbringings, cultures, and so forth.

As I take the first steps into the journey of my thesis, my story tends to become a mixture of feelings of doubt, confusion, and an overarching element of excitement. I enter this journey with high regard placed in credibility overall, and this seeps into my own configuration of my own credibility not only as a teacher, but also as a researcher. Acknowledging my awareness in this regard, I become increasingly conscious of how my personal biases might influence this study. I mentally and emotionally prepare myself for this phase of my life, which will grow deep roots into my story and construction. As uncomfortable as this voyage may become, I plan on taking it day by day, paragraph by paragraph, and section by section, thus shaping this study into a passage of understanding Intermediate Phase teachers' (discussed in Chapter 1) constructions of self-perceived credibility. To minimise possible tainting of the teachers' stories, I kept it simple by asking:

Who are you as a teacher?

CHAPTER 1

Framing the study

1.1 Introduction

Teachers are constantly being monitored (Page, 2016) and thus are constantly fighting for survival of their credibility. Teaching has become a judgmental profession often based on qualifications, physical appearances, choice of attire, age, race, mannerisms, teaching styles, communications, and so forth. These judgments, directed at teachers, influence and shape who they are, who they believe they are, and what they are worth, as both teachers off the job and on the job. So, having to maintain that ‘veil between their [teachers’] personal and professional personas’ (Hutchens & Hayes, 2014: 5) can be quite challenging for teachers.

Globally, teachers’ credibility has been prevalently exposed as a situation which demands attention. For instance, an American school was placed under investigation based on a learner being bullied by other learners and teachers were accused of being negligent about the situation (Rogers, 2019). Additionally, it was claimed that a learner was physically harmed by a teacher, pointing to the irresponsibility of teachers. In Canadian elementary schools, racial allegations were reported by learners (James, 2019) holding teachers’ carelessness accountable. Locally, the Gauteng Department of Basic Education (DBE) expressed their concern about the number of cases of learners’ deaths in schools. They highlighted a few related incidents, including the passing of a nine-year-old learner who had vomited in the classroom; a Grade 1 learner who passed away after ingesting poison; another Grade 1 learner who passed away due to a collapsing goal post (IOL, 2020); and a 12-year-old learner who lost her life during a swimming extramural activity (Sobuwa, 2020). In January 2020, South African news was filled with information pertaining to Enock Mpianzi’s death. A parent who was awaiting her child’s arrival from the same camp that Enock did not return from stated ‘you send them knowing they’re in safe hands’ (Eyewitness News, 2020) which foregrounds the expectations of teachers. This level of confidence, trust, and reliability placed on the shoulders of teachers represents the epitome of teachers’ credibility.

Thus, teachers are obliged to accept the responsibility and accountability of acting *in loco parentis*². The reality of teaching is not pretty, and based on the abovementioned incidents, can be considered draining and demanding. Teacher credibility is easily tarnished and sensitive to several elements evident inside and outside of the classroom context. These teachers' credibility has been, to some extent, tainted due to misconduct, negligence, and/or accusations. This further proves the highly dynamic state of credibility. Hence, credibility is complex and based on the nature of the mentioned cases, it is questionable whether teacher credibility can be ignored.

In this chapter, the background and context will be highlighted. The motivation behind undertaking this research study will be outlined whereby the rationale from various perspectives will be discussed, namely personal, professional, conceptual, scholarly, and methodological. Thereafter, the purpose and focus of the study will be framed which underpin the research questions. Next, the conceptual framework will be discussed by using two theoretical frameworks that were individually adapted, specifically the McCroskey *et al.* (2004) model for instructional communication and the phenomenology of sociology theory by Schutz (1967). A synopsis of the research methodology will then follow. Concepts that are relevant and frequently used throughout the research study will be clarified. Finally, a brief outline of the upcoming chapters will be provided.

1.2 Background and context

Credibility, in its broadest sense, typically refers to how believable someone is in their communication (Page & Duffy, 2018). Synonymous with being believable is being honest, truthful, genuine, trustworthy, authentic, and transparent. Considering in prior years, teachers were viewed as being credible due to the connotations attached to the profession, it was as though credibility was 'given' to the teachers (Aydin, Demir, & Erdemli, 2015: 154). However, nowadays, credibility needs to be established, earned, and constantly confirmed due to its sensitive nature. Credibility is a construct that is sensitive to slight variances in the environments, behaviour, and relationships within classroom settings. It seems as though teachers are constantly fighting for

² *In loco parentis* refers to a South African law principle that bounds teachers as acting and legal guardians within the school context (Segalo & Rambuda, 2018). Essentially, the teacher takes on the role of acting as the parent to every learner present within the classroom context.

their credibility and for this reason, credibility construction is increasingly evident within teaching situations (Freeman, 2011).

Credibility is linked to constructions based on life histories and experiences including social, historical, cultural, and political circumstances (Hassan, 2011). Since the study was situated within the South African context, and credibility is a time, context, and social construction (Freeman, 2011), it was important to paint a holistic picture of how teacher credibility is developed. Cubukcu (2013) suggests that teacher quality is directly related to teachers' competence, whereby qualifications act as stepping stones into the classroom (Van Lankveld *et al.*, 2017). In South Africa, teachers are expected to have completed a recognised teaching degree or diploma, at minimum, supplemented with a South African Council for Educators (referred to as SACE) certificate, which needs to be applied for after obtaining the qualification. The SACE certificate acts as a quality assurance to safeguard the rights and responsibilities of both learners and teachers (South African Council for Educators, 2011) and thus is a prerequisite for teachers entering the classroom. These protocols build the confidence of teachers by setting them apart from other graduates and school stakeholders, slowly building their competence. Based on this aspect of credibility, teachers are appointed for vacant teaching positions.

With the prerequisites having being met, the process of building teachers' identities begins, which is fluid and disordered (Woest, 2016). Finding coping mechanisms, adjusting to school climates, and calibrating own personas in different contexts can be emotionally and mentally taxing (Mclean, 2017; Shapiro, 2010). Thus, the need for reflection tends to strengthen during the identity development process whereby a reality of construction and deconstruction is introduced by the teachers (Van Lankveld *et al.*, 2017). Cubukcu (2013) highlights that beginner teachers tend to wrestle with the challenging art of striking a balance between being competent and being caring enough to be viewed as trustworthy. Thus, the teachers' identities are moulded according to the feedback received by those around them, specifically and more frequently from learners (Freeman, 2011).

Hence, by encouraging teachers to become more self-aware and self-reflective, teachers will be more wary about their own identity developments and influences thereof (Vuori, 2015). A more meaningful outlook is required by teachers to become an integral element in the steering and constructing of their identities. By teachers playing a more present role in shaping their identities, an awakening of their credibility, as commonly shaped by learners' perceptions and behavioural

feedback (Freeman, 2011), could be transformed into supporting fragments of their credibility constructions. Thus, teachers' credibility should instead be fundamentally shaped by their personal reflections, inputs, and own perceptions.

Perceptions are malleable (Schutz, 1967) and thus it is important to consider impostor syndrome and its relationship to teacher credibility. Imposter syndrome is a form of inaccurate thoughts and beliefs that influence perceptions of the self through fluctuations of self-doubt and a lack of internal sense of success (LaDonna, Ginsburg, & Watling, 2018). While it could be the case that many teachers strongly believe that they are credible, and thus their perceptions of their credibility could be over-inflated, there is more evidence to suggest that good teachers experience healthy doses of impostor syndrome and routinely question their motives in the classroom (Gill, 2020; Wilkinson, 2020).

1.3 Rationale and motivation for the study

The motivations behind the pursuit of this study were multifaceted. Five dominant reasons outlined the inspiration for this study, namely: personal, professional, conceptual, scholarly, and methodological.

1.3.1 Personal motivation

Beginner teachers are faced with various changes and challenges during their novice years. As Botha and Rens (2018) highlight, one of the major challenges faced by beginner teachers is the gap between theoretical knowledge and the reality of teaching. Learning to teach is a skill that is not necessarily addressed in tertiary education courses, however prove to be important in beginner teachers finding their feet in practice (Ping, Schellings, & Beijaard, 2018). Learning and learning to teach does not happen in isolation and thus the compulsory teaching practical modules during undergraduate courses allow for beginner teachers to observe their mentor teachers and to collaborate with peers (Musanti & Pence, 2010). Based on these observations, beginner teachers are better prepared to begin their construction of their teacher identities (Taylor, 2017).

From my own experiences as a beginner teacher, there was a distinctive difference between how learners treat beginner teachers versus more experienced teachers. As learners' misbehaviour and classroom management are highlighted as common challenges experienced by beginner teachers (Ünver, 2014), it is increasingly important for beginner teachers to quickly adapt to the

realities of teaching amongst establishing their identities (Taylor, 2017). Learners had an existing perception of their teacher and were only starting to develop perceptions of me, as a beginner teacher. The learners and teachers' perceptions and behaviour toward me ultimately made me question my credibility as a teacher. It was in this moment that I realised that teacher credibility is a construction and deconstruction of experiences, beliefs, and perceptions. At the end of my practical, I reflected on my experiences as both a student teacher and a beginner teacher and I realised that the learners and their perceptions inevitably leave my classroom and the grade at the end of the year and I am left with my reflective notes and thoughts, once again. Thus, I found great importance in understanding my own perceptions of my credibility to meaningfully dissect and respond to my reflective thoughts as an Intermediate Phase teacher. Hence, I pursued this study to explore greater insight into Intermediate Phase teachers' constructions of their self-perceived credibility.

1.3.2 Professional motivation

Professionally, there is a lot of hidden power behind teachers becoming aware of their own credibility and taking note of the aspects that influence their constructions of their credibility. Being a teacher, I can relate first-hand to the experiences and challenges that 21st century teachers are facing. Daily, I am reminded of how rewarding and gratifying being a part of the teaching profession can be; however, this does not come without the stresses that are often more prominent. Considering the constrained time frames that teachers work under, there is limited time for reflection on themselves and their practices. There is great value and importance in teachers analysing their personal and professional personas and finding an equilibrium between the two to safeguard their wellbeing. Hence, teachers who are willing to self-reflect critically and continuously are more likely to professionally develop themselves and their practices. Teachers who deeply reflect on their credibility will uncover the essence of their professional and personal identities and more effectively identify their own weaknesses and strengths.

1.3.3 Conceptual motivation

Teaching has become a very judgmental profession (Page, 2016) inasmuch as teachers are judged based on their qualifications, the way they look, their choice of attire, their age, their race, how they talk, what they teach, how they teach, and the list continues. All this judgment received from others begins to influence and shape who they are, who they believe they are, and what they are worth as teachers. To be a credible teacher may have several meanings that are vastly different for each teacher. I wanted to understand what teachers thought of themselves as

professionals. This perspective would stem from two places, one which is the self-belief of who teachers believe they are (I know that I am the best teacher in the world because I am the Head of Department for English) and the other which is what teachers think other people think of them as teachers (I do not think learners like me because I am too strict).

Human behaviour is dipped in social interactions, where approval, such as a smile, and dislike, such as moving away, draw lines of normality in terms of how one should behave within various settings (Teven & Hanson, 2004; Mehrabian, 1967). Attitudes, behaviour, beliefs, and views, all contribute to constructions of how one perceives themselves. Woest (2016: 155) reminded that 'selves are dynamic and fluid' which intrigued me further. Just like every learner is unique and to be treated as such, teachers came with their own set of constructions, which were coloured in with their personalities, perceptions, and identities. Instead of listening to the side of the judgers (receivers), it was equally important to allow teachers to become their own judges and to share their narratives.

1.3.4 Scholarly motivation

Teacher credibility should focus less on measuring the dimensions, but rather to shift the focus on attentively listening to the narratives of teachers (Freeman, 2011). To understand these narratives, one needs to critically listen (Squire, 2013; Wengraf, 2001, 2004³) to what is being said and what is not being said. Teacher credibility is a construct that relies heavily on self-reflection. By listening to teachers' narratives, teachers' voices can be projected more clearly and more transparently. Teachers' stories and experiences can build a foundation for understanding teacher credibility whilst facing the fast-changing realities of the 21st century classrooms. Although plenty of research has been studied from the angle of how teachers are perceived by learners (Fernandes, 2019; Freeman, 2011), the angle of exploring teachers' own credibility could unearth more meaningful insight into the lives of Intermediate Phase teachers.

1.3.5 Methodological rationale

Methodologically, my role was dually positioned, in that I was both a participant, to some extent, and an inquiring researcher. I was a 'participant' in the sense that I am an Intermediate Phase

³ Throughout this research study, the Harvard referencing style was used. When referring to the same author who published work in different years, the intext citation includes the author's last name followed by the two or more publication years. Each item separated by a comma and space (Kotzé, 2016).

teacher which meant that I could easily relate to some of the narratives and constructions shared by the participants. The biographic-narrative interpretive method by Wengraf (2001) was followed, whereby a single question was used to inquire about participants' constructions. Additionally, an arts-based method was used specifically using artefacts, selected by each participant, which they believed symbolised their teacher credibility. The second role that I fulfilled was as a researcher. Becoming aware of my positioning as a researcher alerted me to remain cognisant of my surroundings and to listen to what was being said, and not said, through the narratives. In addition to attentively inquiring into the participants' stories, the need to pay attention to my own life account was foregrounded. For this, I interrogated, scrutinised, and analysed my life history and my intentions as proposed by Clandinin (2006, 2013) using my researcher journals (cf.⁴, Section 4.3.3.3: 139). In essence, my methodological rationale assisted me in paving the path to justifying the purpose and focus of my study.

1.4 Purpose and focus of the study

The purpose of this study was to understand and explore Intermediate Phase teachers' constructions of their self-perceived credibility. By no means was the aim of the study to generalise the findings to other grades, phases, or contexts as argued by Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2007). Instead, the focus was to contextualise the South African Intermediate Phase teachers' constructions of their own credibility.

1.5 Research questions

The purpose and focus of the study were used to shape the research questions, namely:

How do Intermediate Phase teachers construct their own perceptions of their credibility?

Why do Intermediate Phase teachers construct their own perceptions of their credibility in the way they do?

⁴ cf. is an abbreviation originating from the Latin word, *confer/conferatur*, meaning 'with reference to', to cross reference to another section, or to compare. In this study, the abbreviation 'cf.' was used to refer readers to other relevant and/or overlapping sections. Moreover, 'cf., Section x: y' was used as the cross-referencing format. Therefore, after the abbreviation, the specific section to which has been referred to is stated, followed by the page number of that section.

The reasoning for the need to know *how* the Intermediate Phase teachers construct their own perceptions of their credibility lies in the fact that credibility is heavily dependent on highly influential states of perceptions, which is often diluted by how others perceive teachers (Hattie & Clinton, 2001; Ledbetter & Finn, 2017). By exploring the *how*, the study might unearth patterned experiences of teachers which may provide greater insight into developing stories shaped by similar and contrasting experiences. Thus, instead of an evaluative tool (McCroskey, Holdridge, & Toomb, 1974) as constructed by others based on their unique ontologies, and considering the fact that their world references might not be in the same space as that of a teacher in the classroom, alongside all the other contextual factors, great value may lie in understanding the roadmap of the constructions of the Intermediate Phase teachers' stories, prior to exploring the evaluative aspect of their credibility.

The *why* might show reasons behind the importance of exploring teachers' constructions of their self-perceived credibility before solely focusing on how others consciously and subconsciously perceive and evaluate them without background insight into the teachers' lived stories. More simply, to never judge a book by its cover, these research questions set out to explore and understand the teachers before planting preconceived ideas about them and their credibility.

The reasoning behind how Intermediate Phase teachers' self-perceptions alter their teacher credibility works on two levels: teachers drawing feedback from their learners which influences how they feel about themselves and teachers' communication with themselves which influences their actions and reactions displayed to their learners. These two levels are at play simultaneously and constantly, which speak directly to the importance of understanding the *how* and *why* behind Intermediate Phase teachers' constructions of their self-perceived credibility.

1.6 Constructing a conceptual framework

Two theories were used to theoretically frame the study. The first theory is the McCroskey *et al.* (2004) model for instructional communication, which is used to understand and situate teachers' credibility. The second theory is the phenomenology of sociology theory by Schutz (1967), which is used to explore the functioning of attitudes, behaviour, and experiences as a means of understanding Intermediate Phase teachers' stories. Below, is a discussion of the frameworks including the additions and adaptations that have been made to each of the

frameworks. Within these discussions, specific elements have been highlighted from each of the frameworks that were used to construct the conceptual framework (cf., Section 3.4: 88).

1.6.1 The McCroskey *et al.* (2004) model for instructional communication

The McCroskey *et al.* (2004) model for instructional communication highlights the communicative exchanges between teachers and learners. This model is comprised of six interconnected components that underpin the functioning of the theory. The six components include instructional environment, learners, teachers, teachers' verbal and nonverbal behaviour, learners' perceptions of the teachers, and instructional outcomes. An additional component to the model, namely 'teachers' perceptions of own credibility', is proposed.

1.6.2 The phenomenology of sociology theory by Schutz (1967)

Alfred Schutz believed that reality is a human-made construct that is based on subjective experiences. Perceptions are dynamic and are sensitive to time and context. Experiences become building blocks to memories and is characterised by 'particular moments from which it is viewed' (Schutz, 1967: 98). This resulted in Schutz (1967: 99) postulating that anyone other than the self cannot 'observe the subjective experience of another ...' since precision, intensity, attention, ordering of experiences, actions, and reactions need to be exactly the same as the observed, which he reckoned was 'absurd'.

1.7 Synopsis of the research methodology

The research process is outlined in Table 1 below, which will be further elaborated on in Chapter 4. A constructivist epistemology (Hernández-Hernández & Fendler, 2013; Yilmaz, 2013) was used in which an interpretivist paradigm was adopted. A qualitative methodological approach was followed (Maxwell, 2013; Soiferman, 2010; Creswell, Hanson, Clark Plano, & Morales, 2007) which was steered by narrative inquiry and arts-based inquiry research designs (Clandinin & Huber, 2010; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). The narrative inquiry research design was informed by the work of Maxwell (2013) and Riessman (1993). The biographic-narrative interpretive method (BNIM) by Wengraf (2001) and arts-based method (ABM) was used. Two data collection methods were selected, namely narrative interviews using a single question aimed at inducing narrative (SQUIN) (Wengraf, 2001) and personal artefacts (Schutz, 1967). The raw data were documented using a researcher journal as suggested by Feucht, Lunn Brownlee, Schraw (2017), and Ortlipp (2008). The data were audio recorded and transcribed as

recommended by Soiferman (2010). The artefact pictures were safely saved on a password-protected universal serial bus (USB) along with all the collected data. After the completion of collecting and constructing the data, I engaged in inductive thematic data analysis of the transcribed narratives which is encouraged by Terry, Hayfield, Clarke, and Braun (2017).

Next, a tabulation of the paradigmatic and methodological decisions is summarised and presented.

Table 1: The paradigmatic and methodological choices shaping the study

Paradigmatic approach	I followed a qualitative approach. To complement this approach, I used an interpretivist paradigm, whereby observations and understanding were key components (Taylor & Medina, 2013). I adopted a constructivist epistemology such that the participants' experiences and stories were foregrounded and situated within unique social settings and circumstances as suggested by Hicks (2011).
Research design	I used narrative and arts-based inquiry research design which afforded me the opportunity to glance into the participants' experiences (Caine, Estefan, & Clandinin, 2013). My design was informed by two, interwoven, theories, namely the Maxwell (2013) interactive model of research design and the five levels of representation for a narrative analysis (Riessman, 1993).
Participant selection	My selection of participants was supported by two sampling techniques, specifically purposive and snowball sampling (Sharma, 2017; Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016). I purposively selected nine teachers who were teaching within the Intermediate Phase, Grades four, five, and six, within South Africa, Gauteng. I employed the snowball sampling technique to create social networks through referrals using platforms such as Whatsapp and email.
Data construction methods	I used the audio recordings of the interviews which were later transcribed. The interviews followed three steps from the BNIM (SQUIN) (Wengraf, 2001). 1. Single interview question, 2. Narrative-pointed questions, and 3. Artefact questions (sent prior

	via email or Whatsapp). I made use of the artefacts that were selected by the participants to symbolise who they think they are as teachers. I took photographs of these artefact selections.
Data documentation	I used the transcriptions of the audio recordings, observations and notes captured in my researcher journal, the pictures of the artefacts, and the notes jotted down during the SQUIN process (Appendix F). I also used a researcher journal, whereby I captured any additional information (Feucht <i>et al.</i> , 2017).
Data analysis and interpretation	I used inductive thematic analysis in which I listened to the audio recordings and read the transcriptions at least three times each. I used the five levels of representation for a narrative analysis by Riessman (1993) and the Zucker (2002) model mapping approach to analyse and interpret the findings. I began coding, whereby themes, subthemes, and categories were identified (Appendix H).
Ethical considerations and quality criteria	Considerations included: (i) informed consent and voluntary participation; (ii) privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity; (iii) protection from harm; and (iv) possible benefits. The quality criteria included trustworthiness, credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability, authenticity, reflexivity (Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Lincoln & Guba, 1985), and an audit trail.

1.8 Research assumptions

In this section, the research assumptions are stated and acknowledged.

- Teacher identity is “dynamic and fluid” (Woest, 2016, p. 155) and thus may change drastically over time and contextual variances. Beginner teachers might be more open to sharing their experiences more transparently due to being more self-aware and consistently comparing and reflecting on their actions versus more experienced teachers might be more set in their ways leading to less transparent experiences being shared to protect their competence.
- Experiences might vary due to time which may blur the connected emotions, or due to the context in which the IP teachers find themselves at the points in their lives and careers (Schutz, 1967; Zeferino & Carraro, 2013).

- It may be challenging to shift focus onto the self and critically reflect on all experiences, good and challenging, and be able to share these with a researcher. To this end, IP teachers may strictly keep their stories within their current classroom situations, similar to the outlined elements in McCroskey, Valencic, and Richmond's (2004) model for instructional communication.

1.9 Concept clarification

In this section, the key concepts are briefly defined, followed by the contextualisation of the concepts.

1.9.1 Intermediate Phase teachers

Within South Africa, the DBE is compartmentalised into two domains. The first domain is referred to as the General Education and Training (GET) and the second domain is referred to as the Further Education and Training (FET). These two domains are then divided into phases based on grades. In the GET, Grades R (also referred to as Grade 0), one, two, and three are referred to as the Foundation Phase (FP); Grades four, five, and six are regarded as the Intermediate Phase (to be referred to as IP throughout this study); and Grades seven, eight, and nine make up the Senior Phase (SP). Within the FET, Grades 10, 11, and 12 are included (Department of Basic Education, 2015). I focused on the teachers who teach Grades four, five, and/or six, thus the IP teachers. Hence, teachers who have a qualification(s) to teach learners within Grades four to six, despite the learning area specialisations were selected. Moreover, elementary school teachers or primary school teachers teaching learners who are in Grades four, five, and/or six are referred to as IP teachers.

1.9.2 Construction

To construct means to build, configure, or develop (Ashforth & Schinoff, 2016). Construction refers to the creation and establishment of teachers' own credibility. Hence, teachers build, break down, and rebuild their credibility both professionally and personally (Mackiewicz, 2010). This process of credibility building and rebuilding is in line with what Van Lankveld *et al.* (2017) refer to as construction and reconstruction of the self.

1.9.3 Credibility construction

Teachers' narratives and self-reflections underpin the building blocks for teachers' constructions of who they perceive themselves to be as teachers. Hence, when true and critical evaluations of the professional self emerge, a manifestation of construction and deconstruction is born (Van Lankveld *et al.*, 2017), similar to that of the personal self during the construction of personalities (Vuori, 2015). Therefore, credibility construction refers to the teachers' exploration, reflection, and understanding of their credibility.

1.9.4 Teacher credibility

Teacher credibility is conceptualised as the portrayed attitude of the source as viewed by receivers at a given time under specific circumstances within a communicative event (McCroskey & Young, 1981). Teacher credibility could be understood as a subcategory of credibility (McGlone & Anderson, 1973), since there are various types of credibility (discussed in greater detail in upcoming chapters). The credibility of a teacher is largely based on learners' willingness to relate with the teacher through various communicative channels (Prickett, 2016). These channels are often referred to in literature as dimensions (McCroskey & Teven, 1999), core dimensions (Rieh & Danielson, 2007), and factors (McCroskey, Holdridge, & Toomb, 1974). I focus on the sources' credibility based on teachers' reflective narratives.

1.9.5 Self-perceived credibility

To critically perceive a phenomenon, event, or situation, some form of self-reference and personal world views frame the observations and judgments being constructed (Meier, 2001). To perceive means to be thought of in a certain manner or to be associated with a specific idea or notion (Burton, Boschmans, & Hoelson, 2013). Hence, self-perceived credibility refers to one's own ideas or set of beliefs about the self, based on their credibility.

1.10 Outline of the thesis

In this section and in Table 2 below, the contents of each of the chapters making up this study is summarised.

Table 2: Chapters outlining the thesis

Chapter	Chapter outline
<p>Chapter 1: Framing the study</p>	<p>Chapter 1 frames the study. This overview of the thesis includes the background and context, rationale, and motivation for the study. The purpose and focus of the study are highlighted followed by the research questions. The theoretical framings and methodology are briefly discussed. Finally, the concepts relevant to the study are clarified and contextualised with the focus of the study in mind.</p>
<p>Chapter 2: Grouping the study in literary scholarship</p>	<p>Chapter 2 groups the study in scholarly literature. I explain the structuring behind the literature review, following the steps suggested by Hart (2018). I then discuss the global reference of credibility which is followed by a historical recap of credibility within the education sector. I elaborate on credible versus 'un'credible and I discuss the pillars of credibility. Next, I highlight the need to socialise teacher credibility. I foreground the focus of my study by elaborating on the concept of constructions, perceived versus self-perceived credibility, and communication. Then, I discuss the niche of my study. Finally, I synthesise the findings reported in the literature.</p>
<p>Chapter 3: Framing the study in theory</p>	<p>In Chapter 3, I select two theoretical frameworks. These two frameworks include the McCroskey <i>et al.</i> (2004) model for instructional communication and the phenomenology of sociology theory by Schutz (1967). I discuss both frameworks and their relations pertaining to the focus of this study. I add, adopt, and adapt elements from the framings to construct the conceptual framework.</p>
<p>Chapter 4: Research design and methodology</p>	<p>In Chapter 4, I outline the research design and methods. I then discuss the paradigmatic positioning, including the ontology, epistemology, and research methodology. Finally, I highlight the ethical considerations and quality criteria.</p>

Chapter 5: Data presentation, analysis, and interpretation	In Chapter 5, I present the participants' artefacts and reconstructed stories through their personally selected mediums. Each participant's story was individualised following a multimodal approach of presenting the unfolding of their stories. I then analyse and interpret the participants' stories based on existing literature and emergent findings grounded in my meta-analysis of the narratives. In order to transparently analyse the data, I code the information into themes, subthemes, and categories.
Chapter 6: Conclusions and recommendations	Chapter 6 concludes the thesis by situating the findings in the proposed conceptual framing and providing answers to the underpinning research questions. The limitations of the study are outlined and the research assumptions are responded to. The contributions that the study offers are discussed, followed by possible future and practice recommendations.

1.11 Conclusion

In this chapter, I introduced the background and context of the study followed by the various layers underpinning the rationale and motivation, including personally, professionally, conceptually, scholarly, and methodologically. The research questions were stated which were grounded on this research study's purpose and focus. The theoretical frameworks were highlighted through the lens of constructing a conceptual framework, which was followed by a synopsis of the research methodology. Next, I clarified the main concepts frequently referred to throughout the study. Lastly, I outlined the upcoming chapters of the thesis. In the next chapter, I refer to various literature and scholarly voices to guide my own voice and ideas that contour this study. Furthermore, this deep engagement with literature in Chapter 2 sketched the theoretical and methodological decisions made within Chapters 3 and 4.

CHAPTER 2

Grouping my study in literary scholarship

2.1 Introduction

Cronin, Ryan, and Coughian (2008) explain that a literature review is a critical debate that thoroughly engages with current information on a specific topic. The review of literature is an unbiased analysis of information pertaining to the topic of study (Rowe, 2014). Various authors' stances are brought forward and gaps in the literature are unearthed. Therefore, knowledge is not isolated and attention needs to be paid to the minuscule role undertaken by this study in comparison to that of the broader body of research.

In this chapter, the route map followed as suggested by Hart (2018) will be discussed. The global reference of credibility will be foregrounded and the contrast between credible and 'un'credible will be highlighted. Next, the pillars underpinning credibility will be elaborated on. The need to socialise teacher credibility will be explained, focusing on constructions, perceived credibility versus self-perceived credibility, and communication. The gap in the literature that underpins the study will be discussed.

2.2 Systematising a literature review

Engaging in the planning and write-up of a literature review requires thorough reading, in-depth understanding of the existing literature relevant to the field of study, and a sense of structure. Hart (2018: 8) elaborates on this by stating that 'the activity of scholarship is ... about thinking systematically'. Based on the mapping of constructing a literature review by Hart (2018: 9), he followed a set of features, namely 'questioning, inquiring and a scrutinising attitude'. Accordingly, Hart (2018) outlines a map guiding the literature review and this map consists of seven important and integrative steps. These seven steps are carried out within the write-up of my literature review and consist of: choosing a relevant topic; engaging in deep searches into the background information of the topic; mapping the chosen topic; selecting a focus topic and analysing the topic; engaging in a thorough search of various sources; constructing draft bibliographies; and engaging in secondary evaluation of the literature.

2.2.1 Step 1: Relevant topic and Step 2: Deep searches

In adopting Hart's (2018) method of undertaking a literature review, the first and second steps which he suggests focus on outlining the topic of the study and engaging with the background information pertaining to the selected topic. Outlining the topic of study requires time and thorough thought. Various study fields and research topics should be considered and reading should be unbounded in order to ensure thorough engagement with literature. This broadened scope outlines information that is topic-worthy and relevant to the field of study. Moreover, in the process of seeking and developing a topic, various methodologies, designs, theoretical frameworks, and overall research perspectives need to be considered. Step two requires deep searches to be done across various platforms and sources of information in order to engage and navigate through large bodies of knowledge and information relating to the chosen topic.

2.2.2 Step 3: Topic mapping

Step three focuses on carefully selecting relevant literature to map out the research topic. Generally, a research reference manager assists with coding and categorisation of read sources (Naudé, 2017). VOSviewer (CWTS, The Netherlands) may assist in attaining a better understanding of the body of literature in the education field. VOSviewer is a software tool used to visually construct bibliometric networking of large amounts of literature (Meng, Wen, Brewin, & Wu, 2020; Van Eck & Waltman, 2017). In order for VOSviewer to construct visualisations of data, the data needs to be prepared, selected, and refined using Web of Science (to be referred to as WoS) (Clarivate Analytics, United States).

2.2.3 Step 4: Focus topic

Step four pays attention to selecting a focus topic and analysing the topic. Through the deep searches, coding, and categorisation of large bodies of information, a general focus will emerge which will outline the focus topic.

Below is a visual network, generated by VOSviewer, showing the linkages amongst commonly used terms related to 'credibility' based on published literature.

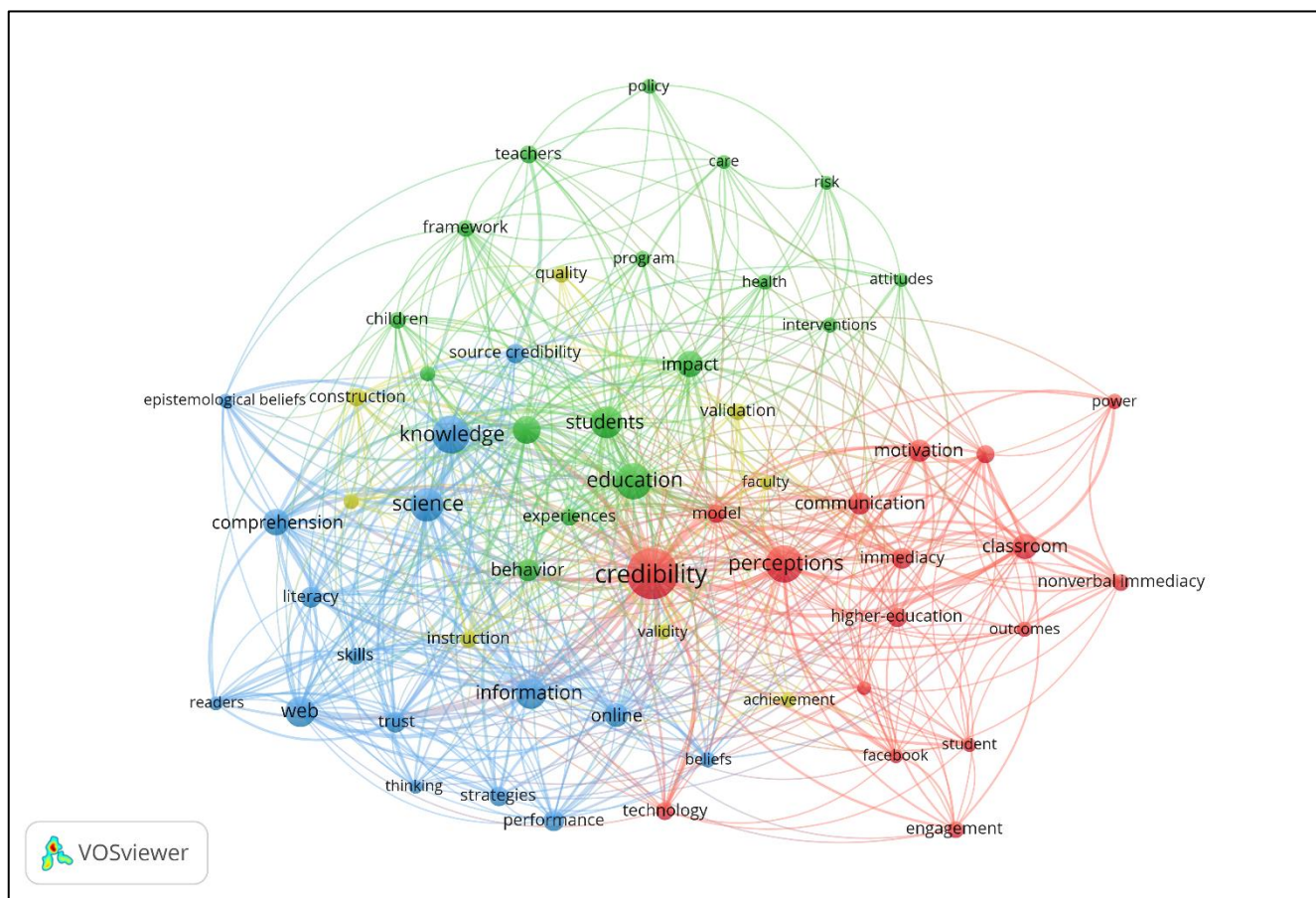


Figure 1: A conceptual network illustrating the terms most commonly linked to credibility within literature. A topic search for 'credibility' was performed using WoS database conducted during the month of March 2020.

2.2.4 Step 5: Source searching

The fifth step requires mapping out the source searchers. With the broader scope of literature being narrowed down and categorised using a reference manager software, engaging in a thorough search of various sources outlines step five. In this step, an umbrella topic should emerge with subtopics as smaller, related sources of information. Some of the sources and abstracts will align with the main topic, however, by engaging in a thorough analysis of the literature, some of the initially saved content might not be of great use to the main topic. As a result, selecting and disposing of sources that are relevant and irrelevant to the topic of the study

is necessary. Hart (2018) argues the importance of considering various sources such as books, reports, slides, journal articles, essays, and reviews, to name a few. Moreover, by making use of a reference manager software, all saved and coded literature will be electronically stored, backed up, and easily accessible online.

2.2.5 Step 6: Bibliographies

Step six consists of constructing draft bibliographies. Like any search, the most prevalent key words pertaining to the chosen topic should be used. Key word searches lead to various sources of literature, as mentioned in step five, that contain their own bibliographies. These bibliographies should be used as a source of information to connect the researcher with other relevant sources of literature that are topic-related and current as mentioned by Ridley (2012).

2.2.6 Step 7: Secondary evaluation

The aim of step seven is to engage in secondary evaluation of the literature in order to construct a literature review proposal (Hart, 2018). Ridley (2012: 200) argues the importance of researchers making credible judgments about sources 'as with all journal articles ... it is important to make your own judgments'.

2.2.7 Step 8: Integration amongst literature [Proposed]

Hart (2018) mentions that integration is a fundamental element for respectable scholarship. Making relevant connections amongst ideas, experiences, arguments in literature, and information develops a well-grounded and informed literature review (Hart, 2018; Ridley, 2012; Cronin *et al.*, 2008). It is for this reason that an eighth step is proposed, integration amongst literature, be added to Hart's suggested seven steps. Within systematising the literature review, the main intention is to critically review existing literature through engaging with various researchers' works, theories, and findings and to use these aspects of research to theoretically compare, interpret, and create an understanding for the topic of study. Thus, systematically working through the taxing task of sorting through, coding and categorising, arguing, and cohesively constructing the underpinning bibliography in support of a literature review is necessary.

2.3 Global reference of credibility

In this section, I discuss the construct of credibility using a global reference. I use this section to locate credibility on a global scale based on research outputs in the field. Moreover, I foreground leading country connections based on scholarly outputs, thus providing a holistic world view of the literature.

Based on Figure 2 below, the leading country for credibility research belongs to the United States of America. The leading contributor is then followed by England, Australia, and Canada. Additionally, with reference to Figure 2, the line weightings are thicker between the countries that have higher literature connections and publications. Thus, the line between United States of America and Canada represents the strongest connection. The line between United States of America and Norway represents the second strongest connection. The line connecting United States of America and England shows the third strongest connection. The search into credibility highlighted a multidisciplinary nature. Credibility was widely used in various disciplines, including however not limited to, nursing (Muliira, Natarajan, & Van Der Colff, 2017), digital media, politics (Flanagin & Metzger, 2014), economics (Christensen & Miguel, 2018), and education (Freeman, 2011).

Next, a visualisation, generated by VOSviewer, of the global research outputs relating to the search term 'credibility' is presented.

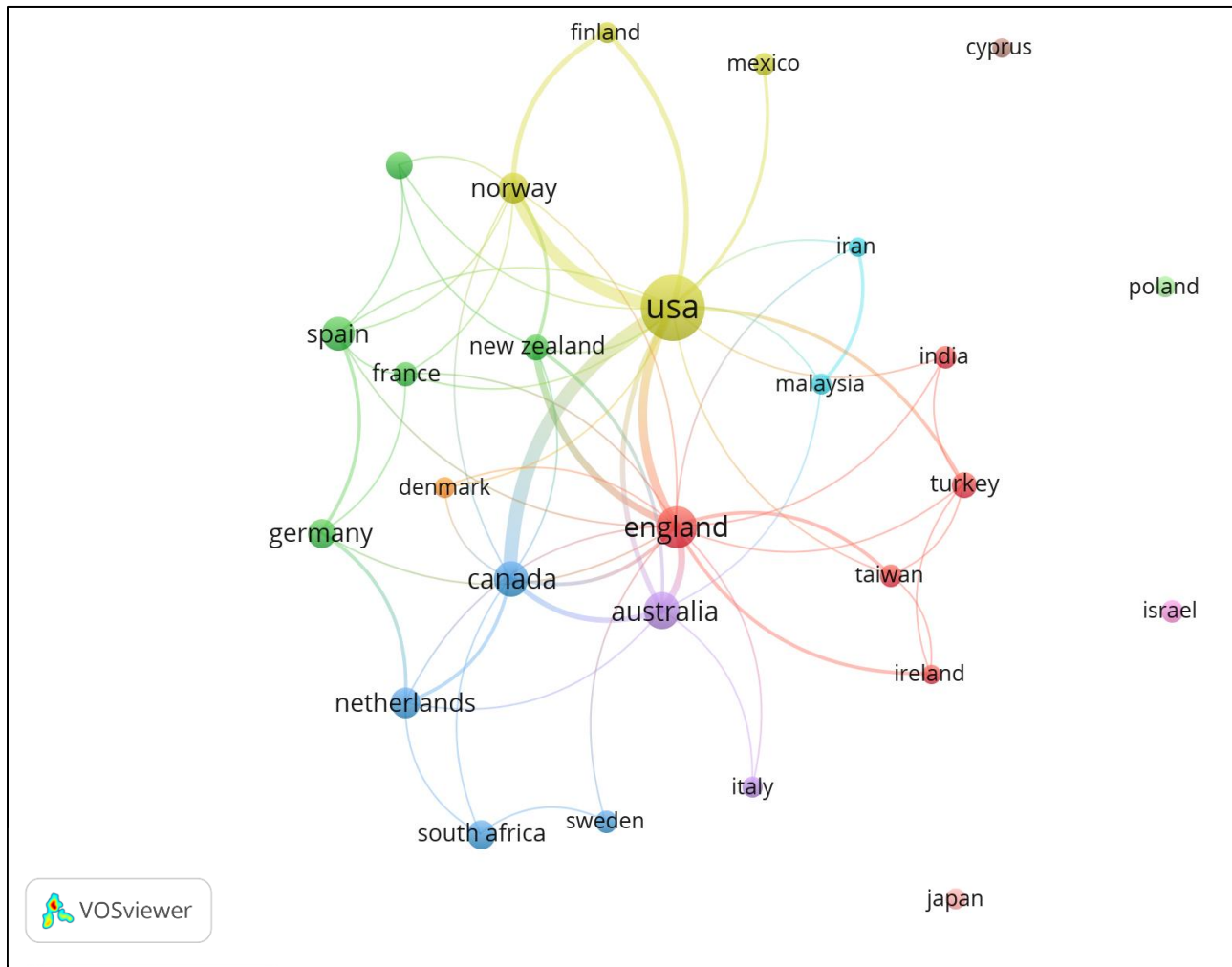


Figure 2: A visualisation of global research outputs relating to credibility

An American researcher suggests that persuasion is at the heart of political communication (Flanagin & Metzger, 2014), adding that Aristotle’s main interest was embedded in political persuasion. In the third century B.C., Aristotle was the theorist who led research related to human communication. Flanagin and Metzger (2014) argue that the fundamentals of credibility are based on Aristotle’s work on communication, specifically highlighting the three modes of persuasion, namely logos (logical argument); pathos (emotional connotations); and ethos (the credibility of the communicator) (Braet, 1992). In alignment with the work of Flanagin and Metzger (2014), during the 1950s, Hovland and his colleagues studied the dimensions of persuasive sources and the influence of sources’ credibility (Hovland, Janis, & Kelley, 1953; Hovland & Weiss, 1951). It was then concluded that source credibility is indeed dependent on the receiver and determined by the receiving of messages by the receivers. From the Netherlands, Braet (1992) highlights that

credibility is based on the communication delivered by the speaker and not from the receivers' preconceived notions about the speaker. Braet posits two elements pertaining to ethos, first being the perceptions of the receivers about the communicators and second being the quality of the message being sent by the communicators to the receivers. Clearly, their argument focuses on ensuring that ethos was strictly based on the communicative events and the quality of messages thereof.

McCroskey (1966) enquires into how receivers of messages perceived communicators. However, McCroskey slightly adjusted the focus angle away from the actual message and more toward how the message was perceived. A more recent study was conducted in England, the second leading country of published literature relating to credibility. Djafarova and Rushworth (2017) conducted a study on the credibility of Instagram celebrities and suggested that consumers, much like receivers, perceive large numbers of subscriptions and followers as being more attractive and trustworthy. Thus, Djafarova and Rushworth link credibility to the likes of perceptions, knowledge, and trustworthiness of communicators, as shown with the connections made in Figure 2 above. Living amongst the advancements during a technologically savvy era, the research trends in credibility seem to follow suit. A Canadian study foregrounds the credibility of online health applications and argues that credibility is bound to perceptions emerging within persuasive systems that were designed to promote behavioural change amongst social beings (Oyibo & Vassileva, 2017). People seem to buy into products, services, and public figures that they can relate to. Social media and online advertising can be compared to a wave of trends that engulf users' attention based on their interests and needs. The 'likes' and 'dislikes' are then compared to public figures and basically creates an online image that can be viewed by others. Based on the projections in Figure 2 above, the Netherlands is connected to the United States of America through the stronger connection between Canada and the United States of America. These connections symbolise the scholarly outputs and collaborations.

Within the context of Africa, Mazonde and Carmichael (2018) presented a paper on cultural credibility within a developing country perspective. Mazonde and Carmichael are of the belief that credibility is linked to trustworthiness between communicator and receiver, and more specifically between researchers and participants. They suggest the importance of cultural and contextual awareness and of remaining mindful of the cultural respect that follow participants' values. They argue that cultural credibility is a dimension that is often insignificant within narrative research. South Africa showed connections between the Netherlands and Canada. These linkages connect South Africa to the leading contributor of credibility research, which is the United States of

America. Credibility is focused on the perception of communicators' credibility by the communicator within an educational setting.

In this section, I discussed the construct of credibility using a global reference. I foregrounded the leading countries' scholarly outputs and discussed a few linkages amongst the output countries, based on Figure 2 above.

2.4 The history of credibility in education

In this section, I discuss the history of credibility within an educational context. I outline the significant historical literature and movements regarding credibility in education.

Over the past 30 years, credibility has been studied and scrutinised as an important aspect to be considered in the classroom context in effective teaching and learning. Ethos, commonly referred to as source credibility (McCroskey & Young, 1981), was a fundamental topic in educational studies. Credibility was viewed as the receiver's perception of the communicator's intelligence, character, and goodwill (Clune, 2009; Cooper, 1935). Hovland *et al.* (1953) conceptualise source credibility as the degree of believability awarded to communicators, which was ultimately determined by receivers' assessments of the sources' expertise and trustworthiness. Flanagin and Metzger (2014) posit that the current definition of source credibility persists in alignment with Hovland and his team, however acknowledging that there have been additional suggested dimensions. Some of these dimensions include competence, trustworthiness, objectivity (Whitehead, 1968; McCroskey, 1966), relatability, goodwill, dynamism, safety, and likeability (Flanagin & Metzger, 2014; Berlo, Lemert, & Mertz, 1961).

In addition to the work of Hovland *et al.* (1953), source credibility is conceptualised as the attitude toward a communicator by a receiver at a specific time (Mohammad & Ziaabadi, 2019; McCroskey & Young, 1981). Haiman (1949) focuses on the effect of credibility on persuasion. Haiman suggests that reputation and competence should be dimensions considered in source credibility (Haiman, 1949). However, Aristotle argues that ethos consists of three dimensions, namely intelligence, character, and goodwill (McCroskey & Young, 1981).

Subsequent studies suggest different yet overlapping credibility dimensions, including expertness, trustworthiness, and intention (Hovland *et al.*, 1953). Andersen (1961) and Berlo *et al.* (1961) suggest that the constructs of credibility be challenged and the dimensions of

competence, trustworthiness, and dynamism be considered. It was due to these two studies that the dynamism component in source credibility was considered. Soon afterwards, Haiman, (1949), Walter (1948), and McCroskey (1966), measured the credibility dimensions and included authoritativeness and character. The year 1969 marked the three dimensions of credibility based on the work of Berlo *et al.* (1961). Two further dimensions were added: safety and qualification, which are analogous to that of competence and trustworthiness.

Whitehead (1968) went on to study scales to accurately measure source credibility using the work of Hovland *et al.* (1953). Whitehead analyses high and low source credibility to authenticate prior argued dimensions of source credibility and measuring scales thereof. The findings highlight the need for a re-evaluation of source credibility. Thus, the three-dimensioned analysis consisting of expertness, trustworthiness, and dynamism was to be reworked. Over the next couple of years, McCroskey *et al.* (1974) summed up a five-dimensioned outline of credibility. These dimensions include competence, character, sociability, extroversion, and composure (McCroskey, Scott, & Young, 1971). However, to much debate, within the last century, credibility has been conceptualised using the following dimensions: expertness, dynamism, caring, composure, trustworthiness, emotional stability, and sociability (Clune, 2009).

The link between credibility and education stemmed from the work of McGlone and Anderson (1973). The focus of their study was to identify the dimensions of teacher credibility, to investigate the dimension stability over a school term, and to develop suitable measuring instruments. They believed that the teachers' credibility was directly linked to verbal power. The persuasion factor continues to be evident within communication today within various contextual settings, one of which is the classroom (McGlone & Anderson, 1973). Teacher credibility is one of many essential factors influencing quality interactions within the classroom. To this end, the past three decades have played an important role in the research field relating to the construct of instructional communication. Scholars have examined teacher credibility and managed to unearth meaningful findings establishing the importance of credibility within the classroom context (Finn *et al.*, 2009; McCroskey *et al.*, 1974). As a result of these findings, McGlone and Anderson (1973: 199) report on the reconsideration of credibility dimensions as they conclude that '... traditional categories of source credibility should not be used to ... construct instruments for investigating teacher credibility'. Additionally, they caution that generalised measurements of teacher credibility will be challenging due to its identified instability over time and context. To this end, McGlone and

Anderson (1973: 200) suggest that researchers should ‘... identify variables more specific to teaching effectiveness...’ instead of traditional dimensions of investigating source credibility.

In this section, I discussed the history of credibility in education, specifically emphasising the last three decades of scholarly outputs. A historical overview was outlined using literature pertaining to credibility within the educational context.

2.5 Credible versus ‘un’credible

In this section, I differentiate between being credible and ‘un’credible within an educational context. I discuss aspects influencing low and high credibility.

With teacher credibility having such a great influence in the classroom, it is important for teachers to be aware and understand the differences between high and low credibility, how credibility is developed and maintained, and the role that their views play in terms of self-perceived credibility. Taking a moment to acknowledge the conceptualisation of credibility, Hovland *et al.* (1953) contextualise credibility referring to the degree to which the communicator is perceived to be valid in its assertions. When a teacher is viewed as being credible, his/her ability to persuade the receivers increases (Freeman, 2011; Cooper, 1935). He focuses much of his attention on the degree to which the speaker is able to persuade the audience. Based on this persuasion aspect evident within communicative events, Aristotle claims that when perceiving the speaker as being either good or bad, inevitably one would need to consider the speaker’s presentation of himself (Braet, 1992; Cooper, 1935).

Evidently, credibility is a construct of communication and thus places the source under constant evaluation by the source itself and by the receivers within the communicative events. Hurt, Scott, and McCroskey (1977) explain that for a source to be completely credible, the perception of being a credible source needs to exist. This perception of being a credible source is to encompass the following attributes, namely competence, high character, sociable, composed, and somewhat extroverted. Hurt *et al.* went on to elaborate that if the abovementioned attributes were not met, it was probable that the source was perceived significantly lower in credibility and less effective within a communicative situation. Freeman (2011) recommends that character, caring, or interpersonal behaviour need to be evidently perceived to enhance the quality of communicative situations. Furthermore, she argues that with all these elements of credibility involved, persuasion

is indeed a construct that is closely linked to credibility (Freeman, 2011; Cooper, 1935) and so the acceptance of messages will be increased accordingly.

Credibility has definite delineators in the evaluation of communication credibility. Credibility is specifically focused on teachers' self-perceived credibility and for this reason I explain the aspects that suggest that a teacher is more credible or less credible. McCroskey (1992) suggests that teacher credibility is highly influenced by how caring is communicated to their learners and that such a teacher is deemed more credible. Furthermore, Frymier and Thompson (1992) posit that affinity-seeking strategies, such as showing empathy and being kind, increase teacher credibility. Immediacy is a large contributor in assessing teacher credibility (McCroskey *et al.*, 2004; Thweatt & McCroskey, 1998), amongst argumentative teachers (Schrodt, 2003), teachers who are confident and approachable (Teven, 2001), who include appropriate humour (Houser, Cowan, & West, 2007), use positive vocal cues (Beatty & Behnke, 1980), such as intonations, and teachers who utilise a suitable amount of technology (Schrodt, Witt, & Turman, 2007; Schrodt & Turman, 2005).

In contrast to positive aspects that portray a positive or higher credibility, there exists a scale of negative credibility and accompanying aspects that literature suggest make a teacher less credible. Negatively perceived aspects that decrease credibility include teachers' verbal aggressiveness (Schrodt, 2003), monotonous voices or slow speech rates (Simonds, Meyer, Quinlan, & Hunt, 2006), or teachers who regularly display misbehaviour within the classroom (Thweatt & McCroskey, 1998). Whitehead (1968) agrees with McCroskey (1992), as both studies argue that one of the main underlying factors that was evident in both high and low credibility situations was the trustworthiness dimension. They specifically highlight characteristics of low credibility including disloyalty displayed toward learners, being contemptible, dishonest, unreliable, and portraying a character that is worthless. Another major attribute that Whitehead discovered pertaining to low credibility was the dimension of dynamism. This dimension refers to characteristics including aggressiveness, being bold, decisive, and proud. Being unrelatable, unfriendly, unpleasant, unstable, unconcerned, irrational, and uninspiring were also traits that portrayed low perceived credibility.

I refer to the work of Whitehead (1968), which outlines the factors of source credibility using four major factors to evaluate credible and 'un'credible characteristics. The data in Whitehead's study are separated into high and low credibility factors based on sixty-five randomly ordered scales.

The sample size is 152 second semester University students. These students were asked to rate two speakers, one high and one low credibility source. I use this study specifically as Whitehead foregrounds several essential dimensions that directly related to credibility as a construct, which are explained in greater detail in the upcoming sections. This study creates meaningful justification for understanding and contextualising credibility within the classroom. Credibility factors portray dimensions of trustworthiness (honest, right, and moral), competence (professional and experienced), dynamism (energetic and active), and fairness (objective and impartial). I stress the value behind the quality of teacher-learner relationships based on the quality of teachers' credibility as highlighted by Clune (2009). They further suggest that highly credible teachers possess a greater influence within the classroom context. Credible teachers develop and demand mutual respect, higher evaluations from their learners, and increased numbers of future recommendations (Clune, 2009; Teven & Hanson, 2004; Teven & McCroskey, 1997).

In this section, I discussed the contrast between high and low credibility sources and characteristics. I elaborated on other scholars' voices foregrounding traits that were commonly categorised as either being credible or not credible.

2.6 Underpinning credibility pillars

In this section, I argue the selection of the following dimensions of credibility to be highlighted and used as a framework. Considering the boundedness nature of credibility (cf., Section 2.7.1.2: 43), and the interconnected representation visualised in Figure 3 below, it is important to select the dimensions accordingly. The credibility dimensions that were chosen as a baseline to conceptualising credibility include: competence, trustworthiness, immediacy, and dynamism. These dimensions are used as umbrella terms for some of the other important dimensions suggested by other scholars (Teven & Hanson, 2004; McCroskey & Teven, 1999; McCroskey *et al.*, 1974; McGlone & Anderson, 1973). In selecting the dimensions underpinning this study, it was important to be reminded of the findings unearthed by Finn *et al.* (2009: 532): '...future researchers are encouraged to use the three-dimensional credibility scale in the operationalisation of teacher credibility. Researchers should also continue testing more sophisticated models of teacher credibility ...'. For this reason, I created Figure 3 below, based on the dimensions and subdimensions discussed in the following sections (cf., Section 2.6.2: 32). I use this figure to delineate (orange concepts) the selection of the pillars, namely trustworthiness, immediacy, competence, and dynamism.

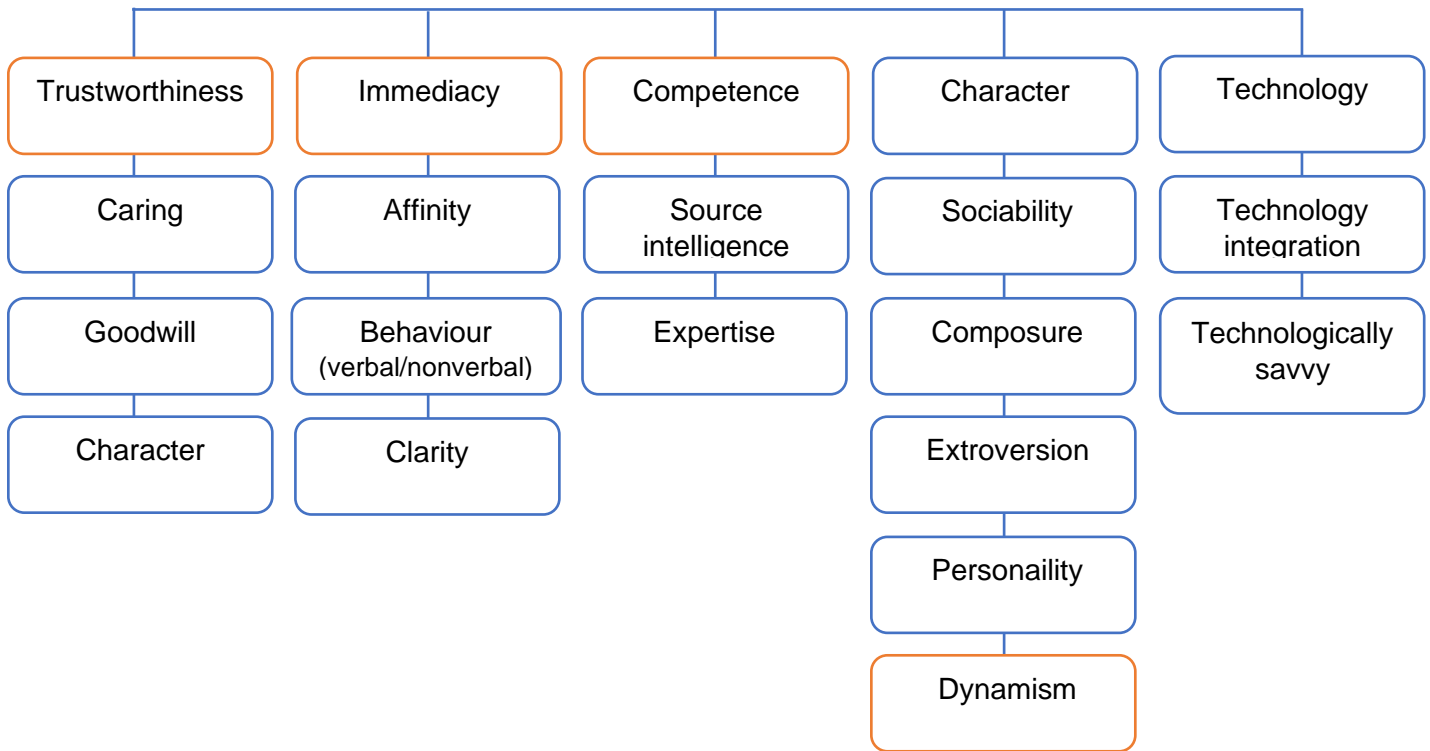


Figure 3: Diagram showing popular dimensions and subdimensions of credibility

2.6.1 The groundwork of credibility

Aristotle (Cooper, 1935) focuses on communication and conceptualises ethos in communicative events using three elements, namely intelligence, character, and goodwill. Likewise, Hovland *et al.* (1953) refer to similar elements, specifically expertness, trustworthiness, and intent toward the receiver. Generally, the first concept is referred to as competence, including qualifications, expertise, being knowledgeable, and authoritativeness. The second concept is regarded as trustworthiness, specifically focused on honesty, integrity, and connected to character. The third concept is referred to as goodwill or intent toward the receiver and was, for a long time, written off as the ‘lost dimension’ of credibility and regarded as a ‘misanalysis’ (McCroskey & Teven, 1999: 90). Therefore, McCroskey and Teven (1999) argue that there was no valid reason for the discarding of the three-dimension theory of credibility. In their quest, they aim to maintain the three dimensions with their focus placed on investigating suitable measures for the inclusion of the goodwill dimension. For this reason, I continue using the three dimensions of credibility as suggested by Hovland *et al.* (1953), McCroskey, and Teven (1999); however with

the consideration that this is a qualitative study and is focused on teachers' perceptions of their own credibility, I found it necessary to select credibility dimensions accordingly.

Furthermore, McGlone and Anderson (1973) focus on the boundedness of credibility which led to their proposed concept of teacher credibility. Their study aims to identify the dimensions of teacher credibility constrained by time. McGlone and Anderson (1973) separate teacher credibility from source credibility research in literature. They conducted a longitudinal study that surveyed students four times within a semester. Their factor scale considered, to some extent, the credibility measures used within persuasive events. However, these measures proved to be ineffective due to the decreased stability noticed over time. This meant that frequently used credibility scales that used 'traditional categories of source credibility should not be used to delineate instruments for investigating teacher credibility' (McGlone & Anderson, 1973: 199).

2.6.2 Pillars versus dimensions

The four pillars, as outlined in Figure 3 above, are terms that are used to conceptualise the construct of credibility. Considering the many scholars that each argue their opinions and concerns regarding the dimensions of credibility (Finn & Ledbetter, 2013; McCroskey *et al.*, 1974; Mehrabian, 1967), I decided to use four major dimensions that have been confirmed in literature and refer to these dimensions as pillars. The reasoning behind using the term pillars instead of dimensions is based on paying respect to the already discovered and measured dimensions of credibility. Considering the time frames, contexts, situations, and overall circumstances of these studies (Freeman, 2011), there has been great development in the literature relating to credibility. For laying the foundation to my scholarly pursuit, it was only fair that I acknowledged Aristotle (Cooper, 1935) for his work on ethos and persuasion pertaining to communication; Mehrabian (1967) for his work on immediacy; Berlo *et al.* (1961) and Whitehead (1968) for their work on dynamism; and the recommendation by McCroskey and Teven (1999) to continue to use the three dimensions of credibility. These three dimensions were regarded as caring, competence, and character, which have been tested and proved through the work of McCroskey and Teven. However, I argue the need to recognise the current time, context, and situation, whereby I use these elements as a framing to justify my selection of pillars in my attempt to understand IP teachers' constructions of their self-perceived credibility within the South African context.

In my selection of these pillars, I used my own experiences as an IP teacher. Therefore, I was able to justify each of the four pillars, namely competence, trustworthiness, immediacy, and

dynamism to be used as umbrella terms. The terms were selected in accordance with the purpose of this study thus considering various narratives regarding experiences, events, circumstances, situations, emotions, views, behaviour, attitudes, personalities, and overall constructions of South African IP teachers. In the event of IP teachers' narratives not fitting the mentioned pillars, I linked these to other dimensions of credibility and used this as a justification for the need to consider additional pillars in the scope of understanding IP teachers' constructions. On the contrary, in the cases of narratives that were fundamentally linked to one or more of the four pillars, I used this as proof that credibility is indeed time and contextually bounded and the need to reconsider the proposed dimensions of credibility is necessary per era and per situation.

2.6.3 Features of credibility

I will refer to five studies specifically in supporting my justification of the four-pillar selection toward understanding IP teachers' constructions of their self-perceived credibility. Although these studies were based on the dimensions of source credibility focused on receivers' perceptions (Cronkhite & Liska, 1976), it was worthwhile in understanding the reasoning behind these dimensions used as a means of measuring credibility, nonetheless. Three stable dimensions are reported on by Berlo, Lemert, and Mertz (1969), which are competence, trustworthiness, and dynamism. Whitehead (1968) proposes four dimensions which were closely related to their study, namely competence, trustworthiness, dynamism, and objectivity. Another dimension of credibility is immediacy, proposed by Mehrabian (1967). Two other dimensions are reported on by McCroskey (1966), which to some extent are synonymous with the dimensions that are later reported on by Whitehead and Berlo *et al.*, namely authoritativeness and character. McCroskey believes that his two proposed dimensions are correspondent to the dimensions of competence and trustworthiness suggested by Berlo *et al.* In relation to this argument, the dimensions outlined by McCroskey do not include dynamism due to his scales not being inclusive of this dimension.

All five of these studies were investigating source credibility within persuasive contexts and are not focused on perceptions of the source. To this end, Cronkhite and Liska (1976) contest that the dimensions differ amongst studies that are focused on person perception and those that focus on sources of persuasive events. However, with their argument in mind, they also state that the findings of credibility studies would largely depend on the rating scales used, or in this case, the dimensions used to understand teachers' constructions. They emphasise the need to be wary of this underlying dynamic element that accompanies perceptual studies as they mention 'It is a mistake, ..., to be that the perceptual structure is identical for any two listeners ... at different

times' (Cronkhite & Liska, 1976: 92). Although Cronkhite and Liska's argument suggest that receivers' perceptions are likely to 'change over time' (Cronkhite & Liska, 1976: 92), I contextualise this element by acknowledging the element of time and the effects this may have on the perceptions of teachers within a day, year, or decade. For this reason, I use dimensions of credibility, as the pillars, that were broad enough to use features (or factors, quantitatively speaking) as themes into refining the narratives shared by the teachers.

Cronkhite and Liska (1976) further elaborate on their concerns regarding quantitative factor analytic studies, to which I refer to as features. They highlight three concerns: scale selection and factor naming; statistical procedures; and conceptualisation of the context of communication. I specifically refer to the first and last concern, which are the pillar and feature naming and contextual boundaries of credibility. Their first concern focuses on the reuse and overlapping of dimensions and factors which they challenge as the result of some dimensions being untapped, the neglect of discovering other dimensions through varied methods of measurement, and the adoption of factor names masking higher similarity when there are really none to begin with. To this concern, my selection of broader, yet popular, dimensions (pillars) enabled a sense of flexibility required when dealing with social beings' perceptions of the self. In choosing the pillars, the less specific the pillars, the better the chance for a true depiction of what the narratives revealed. This argues Cronkhite and Liska's concern about additional methods being used. In response to this, I use pillars that have already been reported on for decades which were characterised by predominantly used factors (features) within research. This allowed me to categorise, where permitted and evident, the decoded narratives.

As mentioned by Applbaum, Anatol (1973), and Freeman (2011), credibility is indeed contextually bounded. This was further justified by the work of McGlone and Anderson (1973) on the construct of credibility in which they examine credibility specifically within the educational context and direct their study's focus on teacher credibility. Remaining cognisant of the context and culture of the events of communication being studied, this provides another aspect to the study which needed consideration (cf., Section 2.7.1.2: 43). With reference to the third concern outlined by Cronkhite and Liska (1976: 107), whereby they reiterate the fluidity within the study of credibility based on perceptions, they posit that the "meanings' ... of the scales may be expected to change depending on the ... source in the specific topic-situation, it is little wonder that ... credibility have not been found to be generalisable". I refer to the conclusion made by Cronkhite and Liska (1976: 107) in which they argue the need to allow participants 'to generate their own criteria'

instead of creating and providing a set factor (feature) analysis to which participants were required to respond to. Hence, through this qualitative study and use of broader pillars accompanied by somewhat categorised features, I explored the constructions of IP teachers' own credibility.

Next, a tabulation of the pillars and features pertaining to the credibility construct is presented.

Table 3: The pillars and features underpinning this study (Berlo *et al.*, 1969; McCroskey, 1966; McCroskey & Teven, 1999; Mehrabian, 1967; Mehrabian & Wiener, 1967; Whitehead, 1968)

Pillars			
Trustworthiness	Immediacy	Competence	Dynamism
Features (not limited to the contents of this table)			
Good	Verbal	Qualifications	Frank
Right	Optimism	Trained	Fast
Honest	Duration of event	Experienced	Energetic
Just	Intonation	Authoritative	Extroverted
Moral	Attitude	Skilled	Bold
Nice	Clarity	Informed	Active
Friendly	Speech rate	Important	Aggressive
Virtuous	Nonverbal	Educated	Decisive
Authenticity	Preference	Expert	Colourful
Emotional awareness	Facial expressions	Professional	Confident
Goodwill	Gestures	Management	
Caring	Postures	Communication skills	
	Spatial usage		
	Eye contact		
	Professional attire		

In Table 3 above, the four pillars, namely trustworthiness, immediacy, competence, and dynamism, accompanied by a few of the considered features are tabulated. Some of the features that have been suggested in the above table were adopted from the factors proposed in the work of Berlo *et al.* (1969), McCroskey (1966), McCroskey, Teven (1999), Whitehead (1968), Mehrabian (1967), Mehrabian, and Wiener (1967). I discuss and justify each of the four pillars in greater detail below.

2.6.4 Pillar 1: Competence

'Who said it?' is the question that initiates the perception of the source (Berlo *et al.*, 1969); however, 'How did I say it?' is the underlying question that propelled this study. Competence refers to the preliminary goal toward becoming a practising teacher, which refers to having a qualification in education. Additionally, qualified teachers are expected to register with SACE to be administered a unique teacher number. SACE is a South African professional council that strives 'toward excellence in education' (South African Council for Educators, 2011: 4). Within the notion of obtaining a qualification, SACE's mandatory procedures requires, prior to admission into the education profession, proof of all documentations, such as degrees, certificates, and diplomas (South African Council for Educators, 2011).

Additionally, SACE follows a professional development point system that tracks teachers' development over the practice duration, thus maintaining a culture of continuous professional development within the education system. Therefore, I refer to the conceptualisation proposed by Teven and Hanson (2004) whereby they define competence as the degree of being an expert within a given field and possessing an adequate knowledge base and skill set within a subject area. Teachers are perceived to be competent if they seem eloquent, informed, and confident in what they are talking about (McCroskey, 1992), to which Teven and Hanson (2004: 40) reason that competent teachers are able to 'explain complex material well, have good classroom management skills, have the ability to answer student questions, and communicate effectively'. Closely linked to competence is trust, which is the next pillar that I discuss. Trust is largely grounded in good classroom management skills. Teachers who are in control ensure a sense of structure and clarity which communicates a sense of competence and trust based on teachers' judgments and direction (Bruney, 2012).

2.6.5 Pillar 2: Trustworthiness

Within a communication situation, trustworthiness refers to the extent to which the receiver is able to believe what the source is saying is indeed true (Hovland *et al.*, 1953). Trustworthiness is fundamentally linked to integrity and in many cases is directed by one's already existing moral compass (Simons, 2002). As a teacher, trust is what makes or breaks learner-teacher relationships (Bruney, 2012) and the main aspects that influence teachers' trustworthiness are that the teacher 'offer(s) rational explanations for grading, treat(s) students fairly, give(s) immediate feedback, and never embarrass(es) students or is verbally abusive ...' (Teven & Hanson, 2004: 40).

Teachers are being monitored by their learners daily. From the collection of raffle ticket donations to ensuring that teachers care about their learners' wellbeing, an embedded element of trust is ever-present and is being weighed by both teachers and learners. According to Bruney (2012), the most important aspect in building and maintaining trust between teachers and learners is teacher authenticity. A genuine approach from teachers is easily distinguishable from a fake sense of caring, to which Bruney (2012: 24) explains that 'children spot "phonies" very easily'. She further elaborates that if teachers are not truly invested in the wellbeing of their learners, it is easily observed through teachers' behaviour. Such behaviour displayed by teachers communicates a lack of interest. For this reason, I argue the consideration of caring and goodwill suggested by McCroskey, Teven (1999), Teven, and Hanson (2004) under the trustworthiness pillar.

2.6.6 Pillar 3: Immediacy

With reference to the argument posed by Bruney (2012) that false care projected by teachers is observable through behaviour, I refer to immediacy (Mehrabian & Wiener, 1967). Immediacy has two parts to its conceptualisation, namely verbal and nonverbal, and is believed to be the behavioural communication and expression shared between people (Aydin, Miller, Xiaojun, Menten, Leblebici, Yildiz, & Erkul, 2013). In Aydin and colleagues' study, four categories are proposed to investigate the effects of university instructors' nonverbal immediacy skills on students' perceptions of cognitive learning. The four categories include nonverbal expressiveness and relaxed movements, which are grouped under nonverbal immediacy, and in-class conversation and out-of-class conversation, which are grouped under verbal immediacy. Their study proves that immediacy is a dimension that can have great credibility influence if used correctly. However, Aydin *et al.* (2013) stress that nonverbal immediacy is contextually and culturally bounded.

Based on the two nonverbal immediacy categories, smiling, nodding, body posture, eye contact, and professional attire are all contributing features. Nonverbal immediacy is a form of communication, too, and in many cases is the leading category in immediacy research (Aydin *et al.*, 2013). Frymier and Thompson (1992) agree with Aydin *et al.*, whereby they report that nonverbal immediacy is related to teachers' competence and character. Immediacy is a pillar that is directly connected to competence, whereby behaviour and verbal communications work hand in hand in communicating perceptions of whether or not teachers know what they are talking

about and if they are confident in their messages (Mehrabian, 1967). Immediacy is thus conceptualised as the degree of clarity and intensity portrayed verbally and nonverbally (Mehrabian, 1967). This communicated intensity can be connected to the pillars of competence and dynamism. Teachers who deliver direct and powerful messages facilitate a classroom atmosphere that is structured and decisive, which means that such teachers display higher levels of immediacy.

2.6.7 Pillar 4: Dynamism

Burgoon, Birk, and Pfau (1990) examine the relationships among nonverbal behaviour, source credibility dimensions, and speaker persuasiveness. They establish that there is indeed an element of verbal immediacy linked to dynamism. Berlo *et al.* (1969) conceptualise dynamism as the degree of intensity and activity in conveying messages. To evaluate the situation and to adjust accordingly requires a dynamic teacher who is aware of the contextual relevance and evident needs within the classroom. Therefore, the pillar of dynamism is closely related to the pillar of immediacy in that the findings foregrounded in the work of Burgoon *et al.* (1990) suggest that variances in pitch and tempo communicated dynamism. Another finding reported from their study is that variation in tempo and voice projection convey confidence, which enhances the perception of competence and emotional stability. Despite the conclusion drawn by Burgoon *et al.* (1990: 163) stating that dynamism shows a weaker relationship with persuasion and advise ‘to omit the dynamism dimension from future use of the credibility construct’, I argue the inclusion of this pillar when working with a younger sample audience.

A finding made by Bruney (2012) highlights a teacher’s experience of not having slept enough the night before and came to school the following day and explained to the learners that she was feeling unwell. Her dynamism for that day was low because she was tired and irritable. For that day she was low on energy and spoke ‘with a very small voice’ (Bruney, 2012: 29). To her surprise, she realised that because she was quiet, her learners were quiet too. This is indeed proof that dynamism is an important pillar to consider when exploring IP teachers’ constructions of their self-perceived credibility.

However, it is important to note levels of dynamism are bound to change and that neither high nor low levels are considered as best practise in a classroom setting (Burgoon *et al.*, 1990). Dynamism is contextually and culturally bound in a sense that at some points throughout the day,

lesson, or syllabus, quiet time or low levels of dynamism are required, which does not necessarily decrease credibility (Freeman, 2011). Due to the instability recognised in dynamism, it is used more as an intensifier, more specifically to evaluate the intensity of other factors (Schweitzer, 1970). In today's realities faced by teachers within classrooms, diversity, in terms of socio-economic backgrounds, learning styles and needs, linguistic preferences, to name a few, is an underlying factor that requires consistent attention. Teachers are required to differentiate and accommodate for various learning needs and styles. Therefore, a single teaching style or methodology can no longer be used as a staple manner of teaching. Constant and immediate adaptation and modification of teaching terminology and methods need to be implemented, which requires a grasp of dynamism.

2.7 Socialising teacher credibility

In this section, I argue the need to situate teacher credibility within a social dimension, acknowledging that credibility does not and cannot function within a vacuum (Van Lankveld *et al.*, 2017; Vuori, 2015). I discuss constructions, perceived versus self-perceived credibility, and communication in socialising teacher credibility. I decided to use these headings to guide this section to emphasise the importance of teachers' experiences in the creation of their constructions. The structure of this section showcases a cyclic overview of how constructions are manifested, namely forming beliefs about the self, personally and professionally, which grounds perceptions of the self as a teacher based on own and others' views, and how these constructions are communicated to the self and others through reflection.

2.7.1 Teachers' constructions

In this section, I discuss the duality of constructions focusing on own beliefs versus the beliefs of others about the self, hence the need to socialise teacher credibility. I then elaborate on the boundedness nature of constructions and focus on time and context as constraints.

2.7.1.1 Duality of constructions

A famous Japanese quote reads, 'You have three faces. The first face, you show to the world. The second face, you show to your close friends, and your family. The third face, you never show anyone. It is the truest reflection of who you are.' It is important to note that constructions are like façades. Past, present, and future experiences are used as projections of what could manifest as elements pertaining to the development of constructions. Realities differ according to

experiences, recollected experiences, experiences that are hidden or purposefully forgotten (Schutz, 1967), personality characteristics (McAdams & Zapata-Gietl, 2015), how we intend to be viewed by others, and who we truly are deep inside. In Figure 4 below, I refer to the Johari window model (Luft & Ingham, 1961) which is focused on feedback based on self-awareness. This model considers individuals' feelings, experiences, views, attitudes, intentions, motivations, and so forth in relation to contextual settings taking on four different perspectives.

	Known to self	Unknown to self
Known to others	Open/Free activity area	Blind area
Unknown to others	Avoided/Hidden area	Unknown activity area

Figure 4: Johari's Window showing the four quadrants/areas relating to the self [adapted from Luft and Ingham (1961)]

The four perspectives are separated by means of quadrants and are labelled as the open or free area in the first quadrant. This area refers to what is known about the individual by the self and others, such as a personality trait of impatience, for instance. The second quadrant is referred to as the blind area and considers the unknown. Thus, this unknown area refers to aspects about the self that others are aware of, however the self is not necessarily conscious of them. For example, if you interrupt others during conversations, you may be perceived by others as not being a good listener. The avoided or hidden area is the third quadrant, which refers to what the self knows and is not willing to share with others, generally referred to as the façade. This area may involve pretending to be a happy-go-lucky person in front of others, however when left alone that person may be suffering from loneliness. The fourth and final quadrant is the unknown area. This area is unknown territory to both the self and others. This quadrant is generally characterised by repressed or subconscious experiences or emotions (Schutz, 1967; Luft & Ingham, 1961). This

quadrant could be explained by the self's experience of a traumatic event during childhood, and the suppression of these thoughts and experiences was believed to have enhanced the quality of life.

Freeman (2011) sets a reminder that there are always, at a minimum, two sides to a story. Instinctively, teachers use learners' engagement and behaviour as a form of feedback within lessons (Freeman, 2011). Shadiow (2010) puts this theory into practice. She assigned levels of credibility to each of her students and allowed these levels to be allocated levels to influence the manner in which she managed her time within the classroom. After the evaluation of her findings, she realised that the students whom she perceived as being more credible were students who were similar to her (Quadrant 3 – hidden area). As a result of this finding, she noticed that she avoided the students that were least like her. This highlights the reality of the oblivion within constructions. Shadiow (2010: 58) refers to this false pretence of clearly communicated credibility as 'perception of credibility'. This means that teachers' constructions can be blurred and ambiguous at times with regard to various perceptions of learners, classroom settings, and own confidence. To this end, there exists a construction of false credibility and this remains in the mind of the teachers without ever being scrutinised in search for the reality of situations and behaviour.

The nature of constructions are relational, contextual, dynamic, complex, and interrelated (Murray, 2014). Constructions are much like negotiations with the self, ongoing, critical and deliberated upon during social interactions (Taylor, 2017). Constructions occur at the level of conversations, arguments, and discussions aimed at socially positioning oneself within various communicative events. A quarrel occurs within these emerging social interactions of constructions and deconstructions of the self's understandings and evaluations. Constructions begin as a mixture of thoughts, projections, ideas, emotions, comparisons, arguments, and disagreements, all resulting in contextualising the situation to best fit one's own reality. Sometimes, these constructions can become uncomfortable, and propel one to deconstruct the existing construction and to reconstruct accordingly based on the quality and nature of the social interactions. Constructions are self-reflective thoughts that outline understandings and misunderstandings and try to create meaning out of what was gathered from the message that was received (Taylor, 2017; Vuori, 2015). This argument ignites the need to foreground the dual nature of constructions framed by two simple yet thought-provoking questions: Who am I, and who do I think I am to others?

The Bem (1972) self-perception theory suggests self-perception is based on behaviour. This theory is based on two postulates, namely reasoning and identity. The first postulate of the self-perception theory refers to the self's 'knowing' (Bem, 1972: 5) of own attitudes, feelings, and internal states of mind, much like Quadrant 3 in Johari's window. In such knowledge of the self, inferences based on own behaviour and contextual circumstances are made. The second postulate suggests that there exists a 'partial identity between the self- and the interpersonal perception' (Bem, 1972: 5). This postulate considers the reality whereby internal cues are vague and uninterpretable to the extent that the self is equal to that of others' inferences about the self.

The Bem (1972) self-perception theory led me to justify the duality of constructions. The sociological theory values identity as a means of bridging the void between the inside self and the outside self (Vuori, 2015). Schutz (1967) distinguishes these two selves by referring to them as subjective and objective interpretations, respectively. Hall (2002) uses these two interpretations of the world to connect individuals' personal thoughts to that of the impartial structures of their realities. Identity construction is thus divided into two manifestations to elaborate on its dual nature, specifically public and personal (Christidou, 2015). Constructions are thus a narrative of the self and the roles emergent of the self. These narratives highlight the views of the self as an individual within contextual circumstances and others' views of the self. The latter view considers others' constructions based on their world views and how the self fits into others' constructions (Vuori, 2015). Simply put, from the positioning of the self: Who I am in my world view and who do I think that I am to others in their world views?

Vuori (2015: 9) situates individuality within identity and posits '... identity is about both difference and sameness'. Often, constructions are the result of how individuals relate with others in the attempt of comparing and finding similarities, such as gender. In so saying, instinctively, social beings find clarity in finding differences between the self and others to justify their sense of uniqueness (Christidou, 2015; Vuori, 2015). To this end, a constant sense of self-reference is occurring with the intent to understand and situate the self as separate from all other inferences. This separation is interconnected and occurs simultaneously to the attempt of searching for common attributes within situational events and the self.

2.7.1.2 Boundedness nature of constructions

Time is a dynamic and unstable factor that influences the boundedness nature of perceptions, attitudes, behaviour, and constructions. It is important to remain cognisant of the constraints that may influence the variances highlighted in perceptions and experiences. Freeman (2011: 11) maintains that 'credibility differs depending on the subject, source, exposure time, and situation'. As Freeman suggests, I discuss two of the main constrictions that require attention in this study, which include time and context.

With reference to the first constraint, time, most research conducted on teacher credibility occurs in isolation and mainly focuses on a single dimension of credibility (Pogue & AhYun, 2006; Thweatt & McCroskey, 1998) besides the work done by Myers and Bryant (2004). Additionally, an American study, which focuses on elementary students' construct of physical education teacher credibility, argues that time and context play an essential role in how learners perceived their teachers' credibility. In support of foregrounding the factor of time, one of the objectives which Hovland and Weiss (1951) mention is to investigate the degree to which opinions based on high and low credibility are maintained over a set period of time. In light of this study, Hovland, Lumsdaine, and Sheffield (1949) reinforce the time factor as they discovered that some opinions directed toward the communicators depict variances based on immediate responses versus time lapsed responses. Moreover, several researchers are sceptical that time would cause alterations in perceptions (Applbaum & Anatol, 1973; McGlone & Anderson, 1973), in response to which Applbaum and Anatol (1973) work on creating suitable scales to explore changing perceptions based on exposure time. Applbaum and Anatol used previous scale designs from Berlo *et al.* (1961), McCroskey (1966), and Whitehead (1968).

The second constraint pertaining to this study refers to the contextual circumstances evident within studies. In relation to context, a dimension of culture requires attention. Context and culture are elements to be considered as integral to one another. Context can be conceptualised as a multifaceted element that provides background information and historical milestones that frame the understanding of a specific place within a specific time period (Miller, 2018). Miller further suggests that the contextual settings are mainly characterised by the underlying influences rooted in institutional, communal, national, economic, and political domains. The cultural element can be conceptualised through referring to two very distinct aspects, specifically visible characteristics and invisible characteristics (Ayman & Korabik, 2010; Triandis, 1996). The visible characteristics include boundaries set by countries, nations, provinces, or districts, in which case include racial

profiling, gender differentiation, and official languages, to name a few examples. The second aspect of culture includes the invisible characteristics, which refer to the individuals who make up the nation. Such characteristics are refined to considering individuals' feelings, views, beliefs, perceptions, and personalities.

In this case, Triandis (1996) argues the uniqueness in culture where it was believed that culture is a recognition of beliefs, norms, emotions, and behaviour of a specific group from a defined area [context]. Hence, contextual circumstances are greatly influenced by cultural elements and vice versa. Furthermore, in support of this claim, Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1997: 13) describe their views on culture and state that culture is a shared system of meaning, 'it dictates what we pay attention to, how we act and what we value'. Their definition highlights the several aspects influencing culture which relate to behaviour and knowledge that affects that behaviour.

Teacher credibility is highly dependent on the time periods and the contextual and cultural circumstances of the teachers and learners. Applbaum and Anatol (1973: 132) confirm this statement by explaining that 'the factor structure, including the number of significant factors and amount of variance accounted for by the factors, does change over time'. Moreover, subsequent research continued to highlight that credibility is indeed dependent on 'the subject, source, exposure time, and situation' (Freeman, 2011: 11).

Therefore, the contextual and cultural settings of each school and classroom are sensitive to the surrounding circumstances. The bounded and dual nature of constructions reinforces the need to socialise teacher credibility.

2.7.2 Perceived credibility versus self-perceived credibility

In this section, I distinguish between perceived and self-perceived credibility. Perceived credibility, often referred to as source credibility or ethos, is described by McCroskey (1998: 80) as 'the attitude of a receiver that references the degree to which a source is seen to be believable'. Clune (2009) reiterates the fact that perceived credibility is a personal construct built by receivers based on the messages relayed by communicators. In agreement with Clune (2009), Hurt *et al.* (1977) state that perceived credibility is merely the receivers' perceptions of the messages and the communicators and does not accurately expose the reality of the communicative event. Ethos is thus the perception of the receiver in relation to the message being communicated by the sender

(Haskins, 2000). Several studies focus on the perceptions of the sources' credibility (Clune, 2009; Baringer & McCroskey, 2000; Haskins, 2000; Frymier & Thompson, 1992; McCroskey & Young, 1981); however, there has been very little discussion of the personality aspect of ethos. Haskins (2000) thus suggests that the focus on the dimension of the sources' personality is necessary.

An American study focuses on examining how types of information posted on Twitter influences teachers' perceived credibility (Johnson, 2011). The study investigates how students perceived their instructors based on posts and various dimensions such as self-disclosure. The students were divided into two groups, one group exposed to social tweets and the other exposed to scholarly tweets. The results showed that the social tweets group perceived their instructor to be more credible. Johnson's findings speak to perceived credibility. On the contrary, another American study by Powers, Nitcavic, and Koerner (1990: 277) suggests that 'an integral aspect of teachers' perception of self ... establishing [established] positive credibility'. This notion highlights the importance of credibility to both teachers and learners. To this end, Freeman (2011) suggests that, considering the importance of credibility to both entities, teachers need to be able to differentiate between their beliefs and learners' perceptions. Furthermore, this differentiation requires a sense of self-monitoring and may enhance teachers' self-perceived credibility (Freeman, 2011).

Perceived credibility versus self-perceived credibility is a gap that my study intends to highlight and is visually represented in Figure 5 below. How others perceive the sources' credibility is important to that of the learners or receivers; however, if the sources' own perceived credibility is to be viewed with minimal value, then the essence of perception is to be overshadowed by elements that display surface level value (Freeman, 2011; Powers *et al.*, 1990). Perception of the self, especially when in a front-line profession such as teaching, insists on critically analysing the self in various situations. Based on all of the studies directed at ethos, teachers are now able to evaluate verbal and nonverbal behaviour displayed by learners in order to justify and develop their own practices (LeFebvre & Allen, 2014; Mehrabian & Wiener, 1967).

Consequently, I refer to Figure 5 below to visually distinguish between perceived and self-perceived credibility.

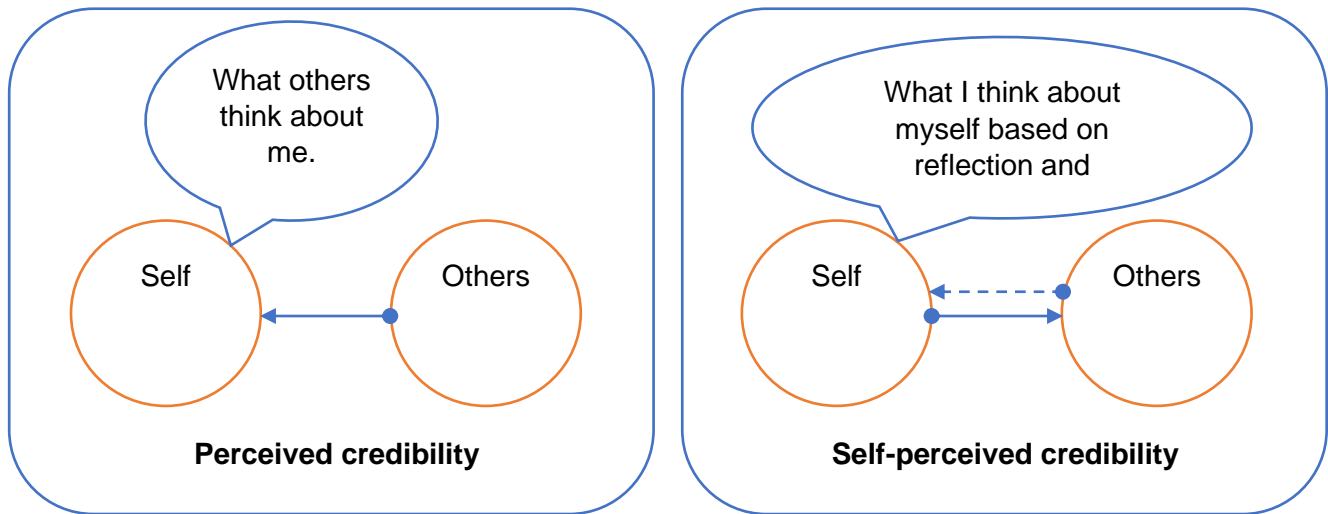


Figure 5: Visual representation of perceived versus self-perceived credibility

From Figure 5 above, it is apparent that the difference between perceived and self-perceived credibility can be quite confusing and for this reason I felt the need to visualise both of the concepts. Perceived credibility is represented using the self and others whereby credibility is grounded in how others view the self and the message being relayed by the self. Essentially, perceived credibility is thus what others [receivers] think of the self [communicator] within communicative events. Perceived credibility is directly linked to and synonymous with that of source credibility (Clune, 2009; Haskins, 2000; McCroskey, 1998). On the other hand, self-perceived credibility is also represented using the self and others as entities, however this concept is based on what the self thinks about the self. Thus, self-perceived credibility takes on more of a reflective attitude as Freeman (2011) suggests. I used the dotted arrow to symbolise the reflective nature that self-perceptions entail. My intention was to stress that self-perceived credibility is what the self [communicator] thinks of the self, based on the interactions and overall contextual feedback received from others [receivers] within communicative events.

Brookfield (2017) defends the need for teachers to become aware of and take responsibility for their decisions, actions, and developmental practices. Accordingly, Brookfield suggests that ethos provides in-depth understandings of learners based on teachers' credibility; however, learners' realities and truths differ drastically and thus are vulnerable to vast variances in their perceptions. On the contrary, teachers who act as the source in communication have the option of facilitating the learning process and analysing their own perceptions through reflection of their own credibility. In the context of this research study, perceived credibility refers to the perceptions from the receivers, whereas self-perceived credibility refers to the teachers' way of formulating their own

perceptions for themselves based on their views and experiences within the classroom. Teachers' views on self-perceived credibility are necessary constructs that are useful for professional identity developmental and self-evaluation purposes (Woest, 2016), which is discussed in the next section.

2.7.2.1 Teachers' perceived credibility

In this section, I discuss teachers' perceived credibility, specifically how own identity is influenced by others. Personal identity is, to a large extent, an inward reflection and refers to who one believes they are within certain mindsets, realities, and events (González-Calvo & Arias-Carballal, 2017). In a different view, professional identity reflects who one believes they are in a professional capacity and within professional domains, such as work, attire, mannerisms, linguistic usage, and so forth. As argued earlier in this section, identity is a changing and dynamic construct (Taylor, 2017; Abednia, 2012). Considering the dynamic nature of identity, identity is scrutinised daily, in a personal and professional capacity. Having a sense of who you are, in relation to the self and the feedback from others, becomes an integral element to that of identity development, which is linked to the construction of moral, emotional, social, and cognitive components (Mclean, 2017).

Life is a museum of memories, however, only some of these memories are recalled and ultimately remembered (Mclean, 2017; Schutz, 1967). From those memories that are remembered, only a fraction of these memories are connected to scrutinising and self-understanding (Mclean, 2017). Thus, meaningful experiences play a role in the understanding and development of self-identity. To support this notion, Sachs (2005: 15) argues that teacher identity 'provides a framework for teachers to construct their own ideas of how to be, how to act and how to understand their work and their place in society'. Therefore, the personal and professional identities are connected to teachers' self-identities and teachers' professional identities respectively. There is no doubt that both these identities are integrated and integral to each other's development. González-Calvo and Arias-Carballal (2017) support this claim as they maintain that the self of the teacher is constructed by means of acknowledging their social interactions that they experienced within specific social, cultural, historical, and professional settings.

González-Calvo and Arias-Carballal (2017) contend that teacher identity is largely composed of the relationships formed and maintained amongst all stakeholders within the school context, including learners, parents/guardians, and colleagues. However, the interaction is also based on

teachers' recollection of personal experiences, largely dependent on how others perceive the self (Hagenauer & Volet, 2014). Akkerman and Meijer (2011) conducted a study in the Netherlands based on conceptualising teacher identity, in which they argue that teachers' emotional experiences and personal identities are not to be regarded as mere technical aspects; instead, as inseparably associated with teachers' personal lives. Hence, there is a constant interjection of others' perceptions into the construction of own perceptions.

2.7.2.2 Teachers' self-perceived credibility

In this section, I specifically discuss teachers' self-perceived credibility. Creating a secure and caring environment plays an important role in the formation of perceptions, of others and of the self, which is deep rooted in teaching practices (González-Calvo & Arias-Carballal, 2017). In so saying, this security ensured within the classroom depends on the use of teachers' professional identities. Teachers' identities, in this event, acts as a framework for teachers to constantly reflect on their behaviour, ideas, and practices (Taylor, 2017).

Teachers' self-perceived credibility focuses on teachers' own views and perceptions of the professional and personal self. Self-perception is an important element for teachers to become self-aware and establish positive credibility in their professions (Freeman, 2011). In the same breathe, teachers need to understand and acknowledge the fact that there is a difference between their own views and their learners' perceptions of the teachers. Freeman (2011) adamantly argues that this reflective platform allows for teachers to use learners' behaviour as instant feedback in the classroom and to differentiate their self-perceptions and learners' perceptions within their practices. To this end, in light of directing more attention toward teachers' self-perceived credibility, Haskins (2000: 1) argues that:

'Today's teachers face a variety of reactions from their students ...: from simple praise to national awards, from insults to dismissal, from pushing and shoving to physical violence. No matter what the reaction, at the core of the response is the person's perceptions of the teacher's credibility'.

This statement sheds light on the multitude of aspects to consider based on how teachers are perceived from all stakeholders. Haskins (2000) highlights the importance of teachers' self-perceived credibility and demands the evaluation of the realities that teachers are exposed to on a daily basis. Thus, these considerations are to be acknowledged before creating attitudes

that lead to perceptions of others based on such events within the classroom context (Schutz, 1967).

Teachers' self-perceived credibility is fundamentally grounded within teachers' professional identities. Murray (2014) suggests that identity is moulded from the beginning of teachers' higher education and begins to form an integral part of who teachers aspire to become and ultimately develop toward. Hence, teachers' identity development should be continuously reflected on to ensure that the foundation of their self-perceived credibility is evident and acknowledged as an integral part of their practices. It is to this end that teachers' self-perceived credibility enlightens their own behaviour which directly influences their professional identity development in practice. Teachers rely heavily on their own perceptions to formulate their professional image. Accordingly, Ghanizadeh and Ostad (2016: 832) argue that 'Professional identity includes individual's self-concept and identity that begin from ... reinterpreting ... professional experience'. Professional identity and self-awareness work hand in hand in developing teachers who are reflectors, critical thinkers, and creative intellectuals who thrive on reinventing their personas to best suit the needs of their learners.

In this section of contrasting perceived and self-perceived credibility, I elaborated on teachers' perceived credibility and self-perceived credibility. I discussed personal and professional identity and the influences of others' perceptions, attitudes, and behaviour on own perceptions. Moreover, I explained teachers' self-perceptions based on how teachers may view themselves in relation to their own identity and self-concept.

2.7.3 Communication

According to the conceptual network illustrated in Table 3 above, I refer to the communication category. In this section, I discuss communication as an aspect of socialising teacher credibility. Communication plays an important part in understanding credibility. Since credibility is grounded on communicating trustworthiness and belief (Cooper, 1935), I connected the significance with communication in socialising credibility. Therefore, this section includes explaining the importance of verbal and nonverbal behaviour, communicating with the self, reflexivity, and communicating the self to others.

2.7.3.1 Communication as a construct of credibility

Research on communication began its scholarly uprise within the mid-1900s by Mehrabian (1967). Much of Mehrabian's research focuses on nonverbal messages (Mehrabian, 1967; Mehrabian & Wiener, 1967). Albert Mehrabian wrote the book titled 'Silent messages', which highlights an important aspect to his exploration into communication, in which he suggested that there is an artistic element to communication. He alludes to the idea that communication is an array of acting scenes that are silently portrayed through 'feelings, our facial expressions, postures, movements, and gestures' (Mehrabian, 1971: iii) which he referred to as silent messages. To this end, he highlights that despite the use of words within communicative events, it is the silent messages that receivers revert to that allow receivers to question the validity behind the communicators' words and to rely on the communicators' actions nearly instinctively.

Communication is a term that derived from the Latin term, *communis*, directly translated to the root word 'common'. Essentially, communication requires a foundation of common grounds, some form of shared understanding resulting from the exchange of symbols or words, in today's case. Communication can thus be formally conceptualised as the process of mutually sharing encoded information such that some form of collective understanding is reached (Keyton, 2011). Communication was separated into two types of attitudes: explicit and implicit communication (Mehrabian, 1967). Explicit communication is connected to the display of positive or negative attitudes or preferences through the meaning of the words used. An example of explicit communications may be portrayed by 'I really enjoy spending time with A' or 'I really dislike spending time with B'. It is evident that by the choice and use of words, an attitude is explicitly depicted. However, Mehrabian also made it clear by explaining that if attitudes are not explicitly conveyed, then it is automatically assumed that some implicit message is being relayed. Therefore, implicit communication is communicated by means of tone of voice, facial expressions, body language, eye contact, gesture, spatial distance, and posture (Miller, 1981). From the distinction made above between explicit and implicit communication, it is apparent that explicit communication is referred to as verbal communication and implicit communication is referred to as nonverbal communication, except for the vocal element regarding the tone of voice (Sutiyatno, 2018; Mehrabian & Wiener, 1967).

The study of human communication has long been studied and the significance of scholarly contribution has grown exponentially over the years (Richmond & McCroskey, 2019; Mehrabian, 1971; Mehrabian, 1967). This scholarly engagement thus allows for human

communication to be classified using two major approaches, namely rhetorical and relational (Shepherd, 1992). The rhetorical communication approach refers to the element of influence. This influential element is thus closely linked to that of Aristotle's persuasion in communication. Both approaches are fundamentally focused on getting others to do what you want them to do and to think in a way that best suits you (Richmond & McCroskey, 2019; McCroskey *et al.*, 2004; Cooper, 1935). The relational approach, on the contrary, scrutinises communication from a cooperative perspective. Thus, all parties participating within the communicative event reach a collective and suitable outcome. The relational approach places more of its concern on the quality and maintenance of the relationship with the communicators. Therefore, the rhetorical focuses on accomplishing influence and the relational places more attention on protecting the relationships. I view communicative events using the relational approach.

According to Pogue and AhYun (2006), when investigating communication, two main constructs appear, specifically immediacy (LeFebvre & Allen, 2014; Richmond, McCroskey, & McCroskey, 2005; Christophel, 1990) and credibility (Teven & McCroskey, 1997; Andersen, 1961). As I have dealt with the latter construct of credibility in the previous sections (cf., Section 2.6: 30), I found it important to explore the former construct of immediacy, which is to follow in the next section (cf., Section 2.7.3.2: 51). With the intent to justify the next section of differentiating between verbal and nonverbal communication, I refer to the justification made by Mehrabian (1971: iv) that the value of nonverbal immediacy 'without being able to hear his words; ... we can feel that we like or dislike him ... appearance and ... nonverbal mannerisms can significantly contribute to the impression one makes'. From this statement, there is an apparent difference between explicit and implicit communication of attitudes. I use these differentiations between communicative attitudes to outline the variances between verbal and nonverbal immediacy in the next section.

2.7.3.2 Verbal and nonverbal behaviour

Ochs and Whitford (2007: 502) pay close attention to the behaviour of teachers and suggest 'credibility is enhanced by a teacher's own sense of comfort and confidence ... their enthusiasm and interest'. As discussed in the above section, the profession of teaching is under intense scrutiny. Thus, a large amount of pressure is placed on teachers to be consistently self-aware of their own behaviour, verbal and nonverbal. I refer to one of the six components suggested by McCroskey *et al.* (2004) in their general model of instructional communication, which is used as one of the theoretical frameworks underpinning this study (cf., Section 3.2.1: 66). The component that I acknowledge in this section refers to teachers' verbal and nonverbal behaviour. Teachers'

communicative styles differ immensely from one another, so the uniqueness of each teaching practice is to be acknowledged (McCroskey *et al.*, 2004). The communication displayed by teachers introduce several variances within the instructional processes based on what they say (verbal) and what they do (nonverbal). With such variances evident within the communicative events, Mccroskey *et al.* argue that learners feel a sense of closeness or distance between themselves and their teachers based off of teachers' verbal and nonverbal behaviour. To this notion, Mehrabian (1971) highlights the concept of immediacy which he conceptualised as 'the degree of directness and intensity of interaction between a communicator and the object ...' (Mehrabian, 1967: 414).

Education is driven by quality communication and relies heavily on the impact of conveyed and received messages. Powers *et al.* (1990: 227) attest to this and maintain that 'personal credibility was reasoned to represent the highest exploratory potential regarding communication ...'. Thus, it becomes increasingly evident that there is power behind being mindful and recognising the silent messages, as Mehrabian (1971) notes. Since communication, over the years, has been categorised under verbal and nonverbal communication, it is important to understand both categories and their placement within the classroom. Within the classroom context, verbal communication is conceptualised as events of exchange that are propelled and directed through the mutual exchange of speaking and conversations (Sutiyatno, 2018). It is necessary that teachers are aware of their word selection and usage within the classroom as each word awakens an emotion and reaction from their learners. Therefore, teachers becoming mindful of the way their words are used influences their ability to capture learners' attention and increases relatable moments perceived within communicative events.

Furthermore, Aydin *et al.* (2013) conducted a study in Turkey and maintained that a further categorisation of verbal communication can be argued, specifically in-class and out-of-class communication. They discuss that in-class communication includes behaviour connected to encouraging learners to engage in lessons, allowing different opinions to be shared, and by relating taught content to personalised experiences which are relatable to the learners. On the other hand, out-of-class communication refers to the degree to which teachers are perceived as being approachable outside of the classroom context. Both categories of verbal communication have proven to increase learners' interest and motivation toward learning and achieving (Georgakopoulos & Guerrero, 2010).

Therefore, communication is much more than a mere exchange of words. For this reason, it is important for teachers to be reminded that nonverbal messages are ever present within the classroom, and even outside of the classroom (Aydin *et al.*, 2013). Nonverbal behaviour includes aspects such as maintaining eye contact, body gestures and postures, movement within the classroom, voice intonations, smiling, providing adequate time for learners to engage with tasks, and choice of attire, to name a few (Aydin *et al.*, 2013). However, Christensen and Menzel (1998) argue that immediacy is best justified by means of nonverbal communication. Perhaps this argument may be more justifiable within higher education institutions. In younger learners, immediacy accounts for both verbal and nonverbal behaviour with equal value. I refer to a recent Indonesian study conducted by Sutiyatno (2018: 431) who states that nonverbal and verbal messages occur concurrently and messages portrayed through behaviour 'substitute, complement, regulate and contradict the verbal message'. The study explains that nonverbal cues are instinctively used and acknowledged within communicative events and thus could be substituted. For example, instead of saying 'yes', a nod of the head will adequately convey the message.

To further elaborate on the construct of immediacy, which is possibly the most studied concept in communication research (Pogue & AhYun, 2006), and its link to verbal and nonverbal behaviour within communication, Mehrabian's study conducted in the year 1967 used a simple example that captured the value of immediacy. Mehrabian defines immediacy as communication that has the power to make another feel liked through the engagement with emotions. He makes use of a popular comment of 'I like this (that) piece Jane is playing' (Mehrabian, 1967: 414). The use of the words 'this' and 'that' highlights the closeness evident within the communicative event. He explains that 'this' symbolises a more immediate reference in comparison to 'that'. Therefore, immediacy is considered as a binding term of the constructs of verbal and nonverbal behaviour. The use of verbal comments or remarks directly influences the perceived physical and emotional distances between communicators and receivers. Accordingly, nonverbal behaviour, such as crossing of arms and frowning, for example, also influence receivers' perceived distances. Therefore, immediacy is a concept that needs to be considered in communicative events (Andersen, 1979; Mehrabian, 1969; Mehrabian, 1967).

In this section, I discussed the importance and underpinning presence of verbal and nonverbal behaviour. Both verbal and nonverbal behaviour influence communicative events and thus need

to be carefully used, especially in the classroom situation. I then related verbal and nonverbal behaviour to one of the credibility pillars used in this study, immediacy (cf., Section 2.6.6: 37).

2.7.3.3 Communicating with the self

The primary years of reflective thinking were initiated by Dewey within the early 1900s as he dedicated much of his work to reflection focused on personal and cognitive development. Credibility, according to several studies, begins as reflective thoughts and demands a sense of self-awareness (Haskins, 2000; McCroskey, 1998; McCroskey *et al.*, 1974), as it is a construct that was born out of communicative situations (Chesebro Joseph & McCroskey, 2001; McCroskey & Wheelless, 1976). Although teacher credibility was receiver-based and placed most of the attention, if not all, with the exception of the work of Freeman (2011) and Powers *et al.* (1990), on the receivers' perceptions of the sources (Ramos & McCullick, 2015; McArthur & Bostedo-Conway, 2012; Teven & Hanson, 2004), I found it necessary to understand the sources' perceptions of own credibility. Freeman (2011: 19) approves my quest and argues that '... when teachers take the time to examine their own practices, conscious efforts can be made to enhance credibility ...'.

Powers *et al.* (1990: 277) explain that '... an integral aspect of teachers' perception of self was a concern for establishing positive credibility ...' and thus enabling awareness from both teachers and learners about the importance of credibility within the classroom. Therefore, the use of learners' behaviour as a means of feedback, initiates a sense of continuous reflection of effectiveness within the classroom (Freeman, 2011). On the contrary, teachers' ignorance or disinterest to monitor own credibility may negatively affect the quality of teaching and their learners, overall (Freeman, 2011). Therefore, Freeman (2011: 21) suggests that 'to self-monitor, a heightened sense of awareness of credibility influencing behaviours is needed'. She further adds that 'The more aware teachers are, the stronger the propensity to self-monitor behaviours that negatively impact credibility ...' (Freeman, 2011: 21). This sense of self-awareness can only be awoken when teachers are encouraged and enabled to understand the need for introspection. In order to improve on the self and eventually enhance teachers' practices, attention must be paid to developing reflective practices (Geerinck, Masschelein, & Simons, 2010).

Reflective practices consequently will need to follow suit in terms of dealing with the duality of constructions as a starting point. Reflection is often related to solely the personal and subjective

nature, specifically the sense of self. However, as based on the argument of acknowledging the duality of constructions (cf., Section 2.7.1.1: 39), it is subsequent that reflection will need to be considered under a dual-based positioning. Reflection begins with the self, including the interrogation of experiences, ontological views, social positionings, and overall constructions and this points to the personal sense of self identity (Mordal-Moen & Green, 2014). On the contrary, reflection may enter a professional setting, in which the personal self will still be in search of socially positioning itself. Situating the self within a professional context will maintain the process of developing constructions based on the retrieval of relatable experiences, views, and emotions and begin to construct and reconstruct the framing of the personal self within the professional self.

2.7.3.4 Reflexivity

A Norwegian study attempts to clarify the complex term of reflexivity by stating, like that of reflection, reflexivity has a deeper linkage to the sociological perspective (Mordal-Moen & Green, 2014). Roberts (2012: 115) navigates his way through acknowledging the value of reflection and conceptualises reflexivity as ‘being aware of and trying to take into account one’s own preconceptions, the fragility of one’s conclusions, and the limitations and sources of error ...’. From a sociological positioning, reflections are the grounding to constructions of experiences and world views (Vuori, 2015). Vuori (2015) is of the belief that the field of sociology focuses on the reflexive nature of identity construction. Since constructions are ultimately independent views of receiving messages from the outside world, thus beyond the self, becoming a reflexive thinker means that introspection is necessary. Constructions are highly dependent on interactions and meanings of the objective experiences, and are referred to as the significance that others convey (Hall, 2002).

The interconnectedness of identity construction foregrounds the importance of identity development within the dynamic nature of constructions. Shapiro (2010) explains that emotions are a large aspect to consider in the identity constructions of teachers, and this could create a platform for teachers to develop greater reflexivity. Day and Leitch (2001: 414) discovered that teachers’ narratives from their study were ‘replete with feelings’ and displayed a ‘continuing inner debate between the personal and the professional ...’ selves. Sutton and Wheatley (2003: 344) share that teachers felt obliged to ‘regulate’ their emotions and expressions within the school context. Shapiro (2010: 617) shares similar experiences and explains that she was required to ‘suppress’ her emotions. This is a worrying thought within the education field, as a sense of

teacher neglect is exposed. Teacher reflexivity is required daily, even on an hourly basis, due to the high demands and pressures of teaching several lessons and learners per day. There is an evident need for teachers to become more self-aware and regularly engage in critical introspections of the self. Teachers need to recognise the nature of the situations that they may find themselves in and to effectively socialise themselves into a mindset of thinking and reacting (Mordal-Moen & Green, 2014).

The need for teaching to become a reflective practice and not a mere profession is fast becoming and more needed than ever before (Geerinck *et al.*, 2010). To consider the self's own world view, to scrutinise perspectives, and to critically analyse ourselves within various situational contexts, as teachers, requires a rigorous sense of reflective practice (Geerinck *et al.*, 2010). It is at this level of introspection that teachers are able to become controllers of their own constructions and overall identities leading to greater self-awareness in practice. Mordal-Moen and Green (2014) suggest a rating range for reflexivity. I explain this range by using levels to discuss reflexivity.

The first level is most used and interchangeable with that of reflection. At this level, reflection is based on replication of actions and experiences based on advice and research (Zwozdiak-Myers, 2011), such as becoming aware of the correct use of terminology within lessons as prescribed by the curriculum outlines. Level two involves reflection as a form of interaction within the assessing and evaluating of the self as a teacher and thus using feedback from various sources (learners' behaviour, questions, quality of work) as a means of reflecting on the quality of the lessons. An example to further elaborate on level two of reflexivity can be found in teachers differentiating a lesson to accommodate for various learning needs. The third level of reflexivity, and ultimately the strongest level of the three, include the reconstructions of the self. This level encourages teachers to become more self-aware within their practices and enable teachers to reconstruct their assumptions and experiences (Mordal-Moen & Green, 2014).

I focus on level three of the reflexivity range. Teachers' constructions and reconstructions of the self is an important part of this study. I argue the need for teachers to become self-reflectors in their practices and to become aware of their experiences and influences thereof on their ontologies. Additionally, teachers are encouraged to regard their perceptions and views as an essential aspect to that of their self-perceived credibility and to ultimately endorse this culture of reflection to become an integral part of their practices.

2.7.3.5 Communicating the self to others

In the midst of becoming aware of the personal and professional selves, Murray (2014) maintains that professionalism is central to understanding teachers' constructions. Murray's study uses 12 university participants and highlights that the most interesting findings elicited from her study was having 'recent and relevant' knowledge of schools and having a sense of teacher identity (Murray, 2014: 11). Teacher professionalism is an element that is stressed from the beginning of teacher training, based on the notion that learners look to their teachers to model behaviour (Murray, 2014; Bruney, 2012). To this end, it is important to remain cognisant of maintaining a balance between the self as an individual and the self as part of an institution. More specifically, teachers are to become aware of their personal self and their professional self. Referring to the latter identity, the professional self is emergent and developing under bounded conditions. These conditions are stressed in a Canadian study and include stipulated school policies and regulations, departmental guidelines, and national professional boards regulating teachers (Van Nuland, 2011).

Professionalism is often a neglected concept within the formation of teachers' identities and overall constructions (Murray, 2014). However, before conceptualising this term, Demirkasimoğlu (2010) conducted a study in Turkey and argues that there are two accompanying terms that need clarification. Demirkasimoğlu suggests that 'professionalisation' and 'professionalism' require attention in the differentiation of the concepts in literature. Goodson (2000: 182) refers to professionalisation as 'promoting the material and ideal interests of an occupational group'. Thus, professionalisation is considered as the process of gaining professional-based cultural and contextual knowledge of an institution (Whitty, 2000). On the other hand, professionalism refers to the professional qualifications, capacities, and competencies acquired for the skill level of an occupation (Englund, 1996). Using these conceptualisations as a piece of the framework in outlining teacher credibility, professionalism certainly seems to become an increasingly essential pillar to consider. This is discussed in greater detail in the upcoming sections.

To clarify the need to consider professionalism as an important construct in communicating the self to others, I refer to the Carr (2005) criteria based on highly cited literature regarding professionalism. This criterion consists of five considerations pertaining to professionalism. The first consideration refers to professions being viewed as public services and to be valued as services being rendered. This directly relates to education and teaching as a professional service as teachers provide a service and commitment in transferring knowledge to learners in a

structured and prepared manner. The second consideration refers to the theoretical and practical nature of the expertise. This element requires teachers to have formal training and prerequisite qualifications prior to engaging within practice. At this consideration, teachers are to sustain the quality of education and strictly adhere to the guidelines and policies of education within their districts or regions.

Consideration numbers three, four, and five can be clustered based on their common relations bounded by policy, regulations, and accountability. Consideration three concerns an ethical dimension and is linked to the moral codes and policies to be abided by on a daily basis by teachers. This refers to obtained certificates, professional development points, policy regulations, and so forth (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2016; De & Bhattacharjee, 2015; Gray & Balmer, 1998). The fourth consideration relates to the regulations stipulated and adhered to upon employment and throughout practice. This refers to the standards being maintained in terms of selection of teachers for specific subject expertise and the qualifications supporting this knowledge. The fifth consideration of Carr's criteria is autonomy, which includes emotional intelligence, informed judgments, and being accountable for own actions within practice. From analysing Carr's criteria, it is noticeable that professionalism is directly linked to teacher communication based on teachers' behaviour (actions, reactions, choice of words, facial expressions, body gestures), teacher identity (who I am and who I think I am to others – learners, parents, colleagues), and overall teachers' credibility (competence, character, verbal, and nonverbal behaviour).

It is with the abovementioned arguments and considerations that I support Murray (2014) in the justification of professionalism playing an essential role in the construction of teachers' identities (cf., Section 2.7.1: 39) in communicating the self to others. Moreover, from a personal perspective, as an IP teacher, I understand the relevance of being aware of the way teachers portray themselves within the practice. All eyes are on teachers, at all times of the day, and it is part of teachers' duties and responsibilities, prior to stepping foot into practice, to acknowledge the value of own professionalism. Teaching is a profession, in combination with a way of life (Hogan, 2003), as teachers' choices, behaviour, and reactions are constantly being monitored and evaluated by all stakeholders within the school context (Page, 2016). Consequently, teachers' professionalism is read by others and used as a justification to perceive teachers' credibility, which directly influences how teachers construct their self-perceived credibility (Hutchens & Hayes, 2014). Hutchens and Hayes counterargue that 'One way instructors maintain

credibility among students is by keeping a veil between their personal and professional persona' (Hutchens & Hayes, 2014: 5). However, I argue the need for balance between the personal and professional self.

In this section, I elaborated on communication as a construct of socialising teacher credibility. I distinguished between verbal and nonverbal behaviour, the aspect of communicating with the self, emphasising the need for reflexivity, and communicating the self to others, highlighting professionalism.

Overall, this entire section included a road map into the reasoning behind the need to socialise teacher credibility. In my reasoning, I highlighted teachers' constructions, stressed the contrast between perceived and self-perceived credibility, and foregrounded the importance of communication. Next, I outline the niche of my study.

2.8 The niche of the study

In this section I discuss the need for this study based on the voices echoed in the literature review. I used three angles of engaging and determining the value of this study. The first angle includes teachers' self-perceptions, which is further narrowed to IP teachers. The second angle aims to understand and explore through a qualitative approach versus the several quantitative studies in the field of credibility. Finally, the third angle relates to the selected dimensions of understanding teacher credibility, using the findings from other studies, however, including additional dimensions that are suitable and necessary for the phase and context of the learners; and the era in which this study is being conducted, using an interpretivist paradigm.

The first angle focuses on teachers' constructions of their self-perceived credibility. These constructions are important strands of research that look at credibility from the perspective of IP teachers. Basch (2012) mentions that research is limited on self-perceived and perceived credibility at primary school level. For this reason, in combination with my personal experiences as an IP teacher, I find significance in understanding and exploring teacher credibility from an IP teachers' perspective. To this end, Freeman (2011) foregrounds the need for research that focuses on increasing teacher credibility. However, several studies focus on source credibility, ethos, perceived credibility, and even teacher credibility which are related to receivers' perceptions of the sources' credibility (Freeman, 2011; Clune, 2009; McCroskey & Young, 1981).

Freeman (2011: 16) maintains 'Although one's level of credibility is established by receivers, it is first communicated by a source, who is seemingly overlooked...'. Considering that every communicative event requires two or more parties, every event needs to be told, in its own truth, to develop a holistic understanding of the communication taking place (Freeman, 2011; Haskins, 2000). She further shares her concern in this regard by stating 'Including teachers in the measurement of credibility has been severely underutilized and understudied' (Freeman, 2011: 16) which argues the need for teachers' self-perceived credibility to be considered. Within this acknowledgement of the teacher, it creates a space for teachers to become self-aware and more open to receive feedback from learners' behaviour in the classroom.

Furthermore, Powers *et al.* (1990: 227) reinforce the importance of exploring self-perceived credibility by stating 'personal credibility was reasoned to represent the highest initial exploratory potential regarding communication related internalised characteristics'. Hence, considering that credibility is the sources' ability to persuade listeners to believe what is being communicated (Hutchens & Hayes, 2014; McCroskey, 1992) and the highlighted importance of teachers' self-perceived credibility, limited research focuses on teachers' perceptions of own credibility (Freeman, 2011). Although the aims of studies may differ, McCroskey and Young (1981: 24) remind researchers that 'Research generally has supported the proposition that source credibility is a very important element in the communication process, whether the goal of the communication effort be persuasion or the generation of understanding'. This study focuses on the latter. Due to the explorative nature ultimately aimed at understanding teachers' constructions, I highlight the need for an increase in qualitative studies within the credibility field which introduces the second angle of justification.

Freeman (2011) explains that studies on teacher credibility are mainly quantitative studies that direct attention to learners' perceptions of teachers. The literature requires more attention from a qualitative approach that includes the perceptions of both parties involved in the instructional communication situation. To enhance the understanding of teacher credibility, the source needs to be given the opportunity to gather, analyse, and reflect on own self-perceived credibility in practice. Freeman (2011) and Hurt *et al.* (1977) acknowledge the important role that teachers play in the communication exchange within the classroom, which urges the need for teachers' perceptions to be considered in credibility research. Quantitative studies use scales and tools to measure credibility, which sometimes remove the social elements pertaining to credibility. Although several quantitative studies focus on increasing credibility using tools and scales

(Teven & Hanson, 2004; McCroskey, 1998), even qualitative studies tend to be too narrow in their investigations, mainly focusing on specific and unchangeable variables such as race (Perry, Moore, Edwards, Acosta, & Frey, 2009; Brown, Cervero, & Johnson-Bailey, 2000). Even though these studies are of great help and insight, the highly focused variables are not alterable, and thus cannot be manipulated as with behaviour and perceptions, which are fundamental elements to constructions. Consequently, the intent of research focused on increasing credibility cannot be justified with the little opportunity permitted to do so.

The third angle of justification refers to the dimensions of measuring credibility. Teachers' own perceptions of the self could be used to enhance positive credibility traits and behaviour displayed in practice involving both teachers and learners in the communication exchange (Powers *et al.*, 1990). Self-perceived credibility encourages teachers to understand the importance of their decisions and actions in the classroom. This allows teachers to become critical thinkers in terms of their personal beliefs entering the classroom and their learners' perceptions that begin to develop from the very beginning of the communication interaction. As teachers become aware of their own self-perceived credibility, a revelation of willingness and self-reflection positively influences their practices, their learners, and their effectiveness within the classroom. These inward reflections require tools and scales that suit the elements being measured, preferably social tools, reflective scales, or introspective measures. In light of bringing the tools of measurement and elements being measured to the same level, Finn *et al.* (2009) unearth the need for researchers to progress the models being used to explore teacher credibility. Powers *et al.* (1990) created a tool used to measure teachers' self-perceptions of competence, composure, and extroversion. This tool supports and encourages teachers to engage in continuous reflections and monitoring of own effectiveness in practice, which positively influences teachers' growth and professional development.

Since most of teacher credibility-related research focuses on single dimensions of credibility in isolation (Pogue & AhYun, 2006; Brann, Edwards, & Myers, 2005; Thweatt & McCroskey, 1998), the differences between perceived and self-perceived credibility diminishes. Freeman (2011) suggests that current studies regarding perceived credibility should be used to enhance teachers' self-perceived credibility in practice. Self-monitoring and reflection encourage self-awareness and responsibility of teachers, inevitably increasing teachers' credibility. She proposes that 'if instructors took a more active role in self-monitoring behaviours that negatively influenced credibility, there is an opportunity for change, Improve credibility ...' (Freeman, 2011: 21). With

this in mind, Freeman (2011) recommends that by integrating the three dimensions proposed by McCroskey and Teven (1999), within a qualitative approach, it may pave the way to unearthing more ‘sophisticated models of teacher credibility’ suggested by Finn *et al.* (2009: 532).

The need for continued research, engaging with prior literature, on teacher credibility is evident. The value and role of the teacher credibility construct to enhance the instructional communication process in the classroom could be helpful to all teachers in practice. Teachers may become more aware and in charge of whether their credibility efforts in practice enhance or reduce their own perceived credibility. Behavioural feedback from learners could be instantaneous messages to teachers that might allow teachers to adjust their credibility efforts. In this sense, teachers may be able to gauge which dimensions of credibility have the most influence in their practices and what factors hinder or increase their self-perceived credibility. This self-awareness might provide teachers with a sense of power over their practices and their credibility.

2.9 Synthesis of findings in the literature

In this section, I outline the main findings gathered from the existing literature and reviewed in this chapter. I develop this section by geographically reporting on literature from global and local domains. In order to follow through with the structuring of the literature review (cf., Section 2.2: 19), specifically using the funnel approach (Ridley, 2012), I begin this section by highlighting the main findings globally, followed by the local findings.

- Based on American research, the leading country for credibility research (Figure 2), credibility is fundamentally grounded in Aristotle’s three modes of persuasion through communication, namely logos (logical argument); pathos (emotional connotations); and ethos (the credibility of the communicator) (Flanagin & Metzger, 2014; Braet, 1992; Cooper, 1935).
- McCroskey (1966), a renowned American researcher, suggests a focus adjustment in exploring credibility, specifically becoming aware of how messages are perceived by receivers within communicative events. With this shift in mind, both Basch (2012) and Freeman (2011) highlight the need for research on self-perceived credibility within the education sector.
- Djafarova and Rushworth (2017), researchers from England, which is the second leading country of published credibility literature, link credibility to social media (Figure 1). They

suggest that credibility, in this technologically savvy day and age, is largely linked to the perception of being a competent and trustworthy virtual influencer. Similarly, a Canadian study reported that online systems are bound to users' perceptions and these perceptions, like most, are shaped by persuasive messages (Oyibo & Vassileva, 2017).

- Within the African context, Mazonde and Carmichael (2018) foreground the need to acknowledge context and culture when investigating credibility. Since South Africa is a country coated with diversity, culture tends to become a driving force behind perceiving credibility.

2.10 Conclusion

Chapter 2 focused on grouping my study in literary scholarship. The chapter begins with a discussion of how the literature were to be organised which is followed by explaining the structuring of the review. I made use of the WoS database and a software tool called VOSviewer to visually construct bibliometric networking of large amounts of literature. This bibliometric data is used within specific sections of the review to visualise aspects of the discussions based on topic connections and global scholarly associations.

Next, I discussed the global reference of credibility which was followed by elaborating on the history of credibility in education. I highlighted the contrast between being a credible or an 'un'credible teacher, which was followed by a discussion of the dimensions of credibility. I connected the discussion of the dimensions of credibility to the pillars of credibility used within this study. Following this, I explained the reasoning for the need to socialise teacher credibility, whereby I focused the discussion on constructions. Under the subsection of constructions, I expanded on my discussion directing attention to the duality of constructions and the boundedness nature of constructions. Thereafter, I elaborated on the discrepancies between perceived credibility and self-perceived credibility. Considering that communication plays an essential part in understanding credibility, I discussed communication as a construct of credibility, verbal, and nonverbal behaviour, communicating with the self, reflexivity, and communicating the self to others. Next, I contextualised this study within South African schools, and I foregrounded the gaps that this study attempted to fill. Finally, I synthesised the findings from the review of the literature.

In the next chapter, I frame this study in theory. I focus on the two theoretical frameworks that are used to underpin this study, namely the McCroskey *et al.* (2004) general model of instructional

communication and the phenomenology of sociology theory by Schutz (1967). From these two framings, I adopted relevant elements that pertain to the purpose of this study to create and propose a conceptual framework.

CHAPTER 3

Framing my study in theory

'I am not who you think I am; I am not who I think I am; I am who I think you think I am'

(Charles Cooley, a sociologist)

3.1 Introduction

Considering the background and the context of this research study, I knew that my theoretical framings needed to be aligned with the methodological decisions underpinning the study. With reference to the phenomena being studied, I focus on IP teachers' constructions of their self-perceived credibility using creative story-telling techniques. Hence, I found it suitable to combine theoretical frameworks that account for aspects relating to both credibility and the arts. Through this study, I propose the blurring of boundaries between narrative and arts-based inquiries (cf., Section 4.2.3: 118). I make use of the proposed conceptual framing to attempt to justify this quest.

Perceptions are fluid and thus require attention to be paid to how they are constructed, co-constructed, and deconstructed (Squire, 2013). I thus refer to the abovementioned quote by Charles Cooley, whereby he explained the complexity of perceptions and constructions. I used this quote as an opening statement to this chapter to justify my selection of the two theoretical frameworks. In my quest to understand teachers' constructions of their self-perceived credibility, I needed to stress the intricacy of perceptions. Credibility is heavily dependent on others' perceptions of the source (Ramos & McCullick, 2015; McCroskey & Teven, 1999), however this study proposes a shift in perception in exploring credibility constructions of teachers' credibility (Freeman, 2011; Shadiow, 2010). As the quote simplifies this notion, social beings are not just who they believe they are or even who others believe they are, but rather and more intriguingly, the self is a construction of how others construct the self, and this construction is then perceived to be who the self thinks is the 'real self'.

In this chapter, I discuss the McCroskey *et al.* (2004) model for instructional communication and the phenomenology of sociology theory suggested by Alfred Schutz (Schutz, 1967) as the two theoretical framings. Next, I elaborate on the credibility dimensions which are interwoven into the two theoretical framings. My conceptual framing proposal will be justified by discussing the

relationships between the selected elements of the theories and dimensions and how these elements coalesce with this study's focus and purpose. Finally, I elaborate on the application of the conceptual framework throughout this research study.

3.2 Theoretical frameworks

I have decided to introduce and discuss the theories in a specific order that will best justify the unfolding of the connections made between the theoretical frameworks. The two theoretical frameworks used in this study are: the McCroskey *et al.* (2004) model for instructional communication to explore the concept of teachers' self-perceived credibility, and the phenomenology of sociology theory to understand the construction of IP teachers' perceptions (Schutz, 1967). Schutz includes an artistic element to his theory, which is believed to elicit more meaningful and transparent constructions. I referred to Schutz's book titled 'The Phenomenology of the Social World', specifically focusing on Chapter 3: 'Foundations of a theory of intersubjective understanding' (Schutz, 1967). I used this chapter to create a structured theory of my understanding of his work and related these elements to this study's focus.

3.2.1 The McCroskey *et al.* (2004) model for instructional communication

I chose the McCroskey *et al.* (2004) model for instructional communication as one of the theoretical frameworks, as the purpose of the study is to understand IP teachers' constructions of their self-perceived credibility. Hence, the underlying and dominant theme of this study points to credibility. For this reason, I found that the McCroskey *et al.* (2004) model for instructional communication highlights the necessary elements needed to be accounted for during typical events within the classroom context. Accordingly, I acknowledge the communicative theme connected to credibility and focus this connection on the teachers' perceptions of their own credibility within the model. This connection that I search for is not explicitly evident in the McCroskey *et al.* (2004) model for instructional communication, as an abundance of credibility research is focused on the receivers' perceptions (Clune, 2009; Baringer & McCroskey, 2000; Haskins, 2000; Frymier & Thompson, 1992). I thus propose an element to be added to this model to account for teachers' perceptions to be acknowledged during instructional communication. This model thus plays a key role in framing my study in theory, showcasing the need for teachers' perspectives and foregrounding a different angle to be considered in credibility literature.

The McCroskey *et al.* (2004) model for instructional communication focuses on the mutual exchanges between teachers and learners. The model provides a backdrop toward working in a direction of sharing knowledge and information in developing a sustainable learning relationship (McCroskey *et al.*, 2004). This model comprises six interconnected components that support the functioning of the theory. The six components consist of instructional environment, learners, teachers, teachers’ verbal and nonverbal behaviour, learners’ perceptions of their teachers, and instructional outcomes. An addition of “teachers’ perceptions of own credibility” to this model is proposed in this study, which will be connected to tenets outlined in the second theoretical framework, namely the phenomenology of sociology theory by Schutz (1967).

Figure 6 below provides a visual representation of the McCroskey *et al.* (2004) model for instructional communication with the proposed addition of “teachers’ perceptions of own credibility”. This proposal is aimed at acknowledging the teachers’ views of communicative events within the classroom context.

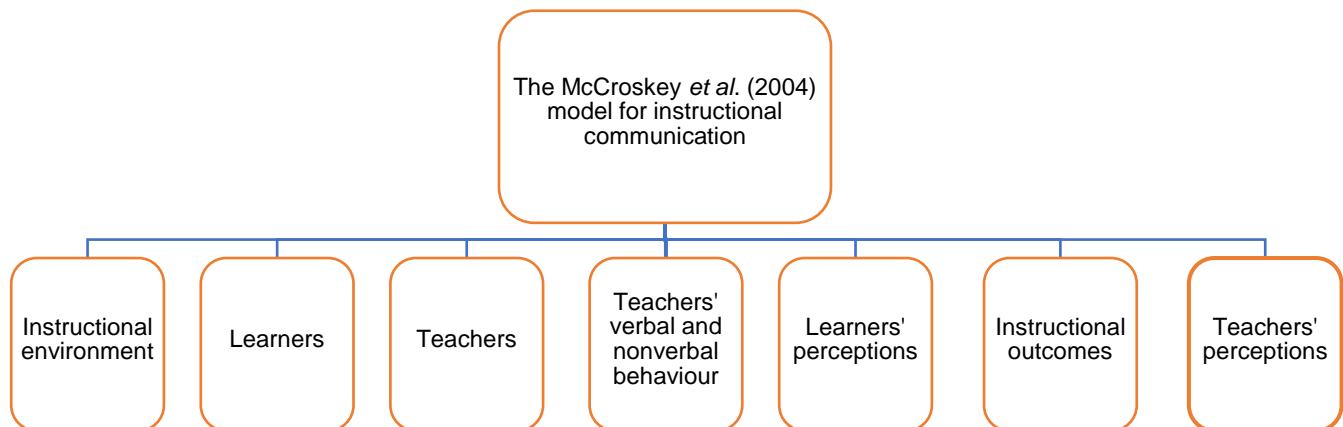


Figure 6: A visual representation of the McCroskey *et al.* (2004) model for instructional communication with a proposed addition

Figure 6 above highlights six components that are evident and influential in instructional communication in the learning and teaching context. The first component of the model is the instructional environment. This component provides a ‘general’ idea of the context of learning. Considering that no two instructional environments are identical, elements of the school climate, classroom culture, the age of the learners, political settings, class sizes, and so forth are mentioned in the instructional environment component of the model (McCroskey *et al.*, 2004). The presence and absence of these elements function beyond the control of the teachers or learners.

Component number two relates to the learners. Learners are viewed and accepted as unique individuals who show diverse factors, including learning interests, learning motivations, learning styles, learning needs, contextual backgrounds, prior content knowledge, personalities, and temperaments (Kolb, Boyatzis, & Mainemelis, 2011). Moreover, the core of learners' diversity lies within their cultural, ethnicity, social, economic, religious, and political statuses. All of these elements affect learners' perceptions of their teachers and learning experiences (McCroskey *et al.*, 2004).

Teachers comprise the third component of the McCroskey *et al.* (2004) model for instructional communication. Teachers are the driving forces behind the implementation and transmission of content knowledge. Elements pertaining to teacher credibility is involved in this tenet of the McCroskey *et al.* (2004) model. McCroskey *et al.* (2004) mention that content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, communication competence, and teaching experience are important factors to be considered for the effectiveness of teaching. Teachers are social beings (cf., Section 2.7: 39), and function from a base of emotional developments such as character, temperament, and educational knowledge, which influence teachers' verbal and nonverbal communication behaviour in the instructional environment (Mehrabian & Wiener, 1967). The fourth component of the model refers to teachers' verbal and nonverbal behaviour. Just as no two instructional environments or learners are identical, no teachers' communicative languages and behaviour are identical. Teachers are continuously watched and judged based on what is said and what is not said. Teachers' behaviour form a large portion of their communication in the instructional context (McCroskey *et al.*, 2004). These messages create a stream of meaning-making connections that learners use to formulate their perceptions of content knowledge, learning experiences, and their teachers' credibility (Sutiyatno, 2018).

Component number five of the model relates to the learners' perceptions of their teachers. Occasionally, learners create perceptions of their teachers before even being taught by that teacher. This could be a result of older siblings or current learners sharing their perceptions of teachers, and these comments would have created a perception about the teacher. Alternatively, the teacher may be totally unknown to the learner, so the perception development of that teacher by the learner begins instantaneously upon meeting and continues into the learning experiences. Perceptions are often based on stereotypes and preconceived ideas that are developed from external sources (Schutz, 1967), such as friends or nonverbal behaviour of others toward the teacher. However, perceptions are primarily strengthened by means of teachers' verbal and nonverbal communication behaviour (Sutiyatno, 2018; McCroskey *et al.*, 2004). The sixth

component is concerned with the instructional outcomes in instructional communication. The outcomes of instructional communication revolve around cognitive, affective, and psychomotor development (McCroskey *et al.*, 2004). Teachers' verbal and nonverbal behaviour influence the instructional environment and learners' perceptions of teachers. This, in turn, depicts how learners observe, interpret, and perceive their teachers' credibility. These perceptions create a platform of certainty versus uncertainty in the trustworthiness of knowledge being relayed, which affects the immediacy between learners and teachers. This immediacy may negatively impact teachers' awareness of competence and dynamism in transmitting content knowledge (McCroskey *et al.*, 2004).

The seventh component that this study proposes is the addition of teachers' perceptions of own credibility. The addition of teachers' perceptions of own credibility is based on the holistic understanding of the McCroskey *et al.* (2004) model for instructional communication. Considering that the model places much emphasis on the relationships formed between learners and teachers, it seems to be that learners are at the core of the instructional communication. This study emphasises teachers' roles in the conception and constructions of own credibility in the instructional environment. It is important for teachers to be aware of their self-development in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor spheres.

3.2.2 The phenomenology of sociology theory by Schutz (1967)

I selected the phenomenology of sociology theory by Schutz (1967) since the focus of the study pertains to understanding the constructions of IP teachers. Constructions are experiences that are captured as recollections or passive memories that are regarded as phenomena which are highly subjective to prior experiences and current realities (Schutz, 1967). For these reasons, I found great overlaps of my study with this theoretical framework. The theory is an analysis embedded in social interactions. Schutz stresses that actions are conscious and are to be regarded as intentional. The conscience and action elements in his theory provide the rationale behind his connections made to subjective meaning-making.

Schutz (1967) suggests that people are driven by future motivations to which he referred to as motives for. Moreover, he argued that the reasoning for peoples' actions were based on prior experiences and this he referred to as motives why (Zeferino & Carraro, 2013). In his framework, Schutz maintained that reality is a human-made construction based on subjective experiences. He refers to this subjective nature as intersubjective experiences which are driven by daily

routines and cognitive processes. Carraro, Kempfer, Sebold, Zeferino, Da Silva, and Frello (2011: 95) argue that 'phenomenology assumes another view, where the human is no longer considered a mere individual, but a social being'.

To understand social reality, it is important to understand the constructions of social beings, instinctively arising from speech and communicative events. These events are highlighted in the McCroskey *et al.* (2004) model for instructional communication (cf., Section 3.2.1: 66) and are referred to as first-degree constructs. On the other hand, second-degree constructs are grounded in first-degree constructs, whereby interpretative elements from the first-degree constructs are comprehended and validated within social settings and what is believed to be known in reality (Schutz, 1967).

Reality is considered a subjective construction of the 'other' and the 'I' (Schutz, 1967). Schutz makes it clear that 'I' is a manifestation of the Ego and 'Thou' refers to others, each having their own character within a similar form to thy own. The sociology of this theory is foregrounded in this argument, whereby Thou is only cognisant of experiences through reflective acts of attention provided to those specific experiences. These acts will vary according to character and is influenced by moments of time. In essence, this theory cannot believe only the Ego exists, it acknowledges that Thou is also in existence alongside the Ego and is slave to its own experiences and 'aging' (Schutz, 1967: 98). For the purpose of this study, the Ego refers to the participants and Thou refers to the researcher and others.

Engaging in this research, constructions are limitlessly streaming from both the researcher and the participants. Using this theory creates a sense of awareness in the attempt to understand others' lived experiences, based on inanimate objects, such as artefacts (cf., Section 4.2.2.2: 115), animals, or other social beings. Schutz (1967: 116) refers to 'expressive' action whereby social beings are to outwardly express their consciousness, in which retention and communication of experiences are acknowledged. A form of communication through these expressive actions are referred to as 'expressive movement' (Schutz, 1967: 116) which highlights the communication behind what is not necessarily said, such as gestures, facial expressions, and paralinguistic cues.

The perceived movements of social beings are often treated as signs or indications of what might be going on in the minds of the observed. It was then explained that a sign is considered a subjective expression of an experience (Schutz, 1967). To this end, signs from the participants could then be an indication of an event being recollected and thus referred to as the 'expressive function' (Schutz, 1967: 119). Schutz suggests that a sign can fall into one of two categories, an artefact or an act-object, such as pointing a finger, or using bodily movements during explanations. Signs can thus be grouped under two functions, namely the significant function which can be ordered by the listener, and the expressive function which requires the participants to go back into memories of using the sign to create meaning. For the purpose of this study and in alignment with the methodology, I use the significant and expressive function. I asked the participants to select a symbolic artefact that they believe best describes them as teachers. To this end, the artefacts were used as a form of a sign that encouraged the participants to explain their selection and symbolism of their selected artefact.

The next part of the phenomenology of sociology theory is interpretation. The two components emergent in interpretation are objectivity and subjectivity. Objectivity refers to the meaning of the sign and subjectivity is the deeper connected meaning to the cognitive selection of the sign. Once the interpretation has been determined by the researcher during the communicative event, an analysis of what was said and how it was shared needs to be made. In a subjective sense, constructions can be truly heard for what they are if and when shared experiences are emergent within the same reality. On the other hand, an objective sense of reality relates to the sorting and ordering of events and experiences contributing to the wholeness of an experience.

Behaviour is thus a construct of attitude. So, lived experiences become products of this behaviour. Schutz (1967) differentiates between two types of related lived experiences. The first type is simply undergone, lived through, or surpassed. This type of experience takes on a passive nature. The second type of experience considers the attitude toward the first experience. Hence, the 'meaningfulness' of experiences is categorised using two elements, specifically thoughts and life (Schutz, 1967: 69). Schutz (1967) conceptualises the two terms by explaining that thoughts focus on chronological events in time, and life refers to the duration. He further suggests that not all experiences are said to have meaning. Rather, meaningful experiences emerge through the reflection of those very experiences. The meaning of the experience is the manner in which the Ego regards the experience, so the meaning is founded in the attitude of the Ego. Hence, Schutz (1967) posits that experiences can be differentiated under two themes: reflective or

prephenomenal. More specifically, experiences are either meaningful, subject to being reflected on, or experiences remain prephenomenal, not reflected on. Both types of experiences are still regarded as justifiable experiences as they are both internal and time-sensitive. Schutz (1967: 70) substantiates this claim by stating that ‘these experiences are ... the sum total of my [one’s] lived experiences, even if I [one] never reflect[s] on them’.

Becoming familiar with the depth of the phenomenology of sociology theory (Schutz, 1967), I decided to create a visual depiction (Figure 7) of my understanding of Schutz’s theory in accordance with the purpose of this study. I use a shadowed outline of a person to provide a visual relational element to the figure, since the theory is depicted through a diagram highlighting the construction of social beings.

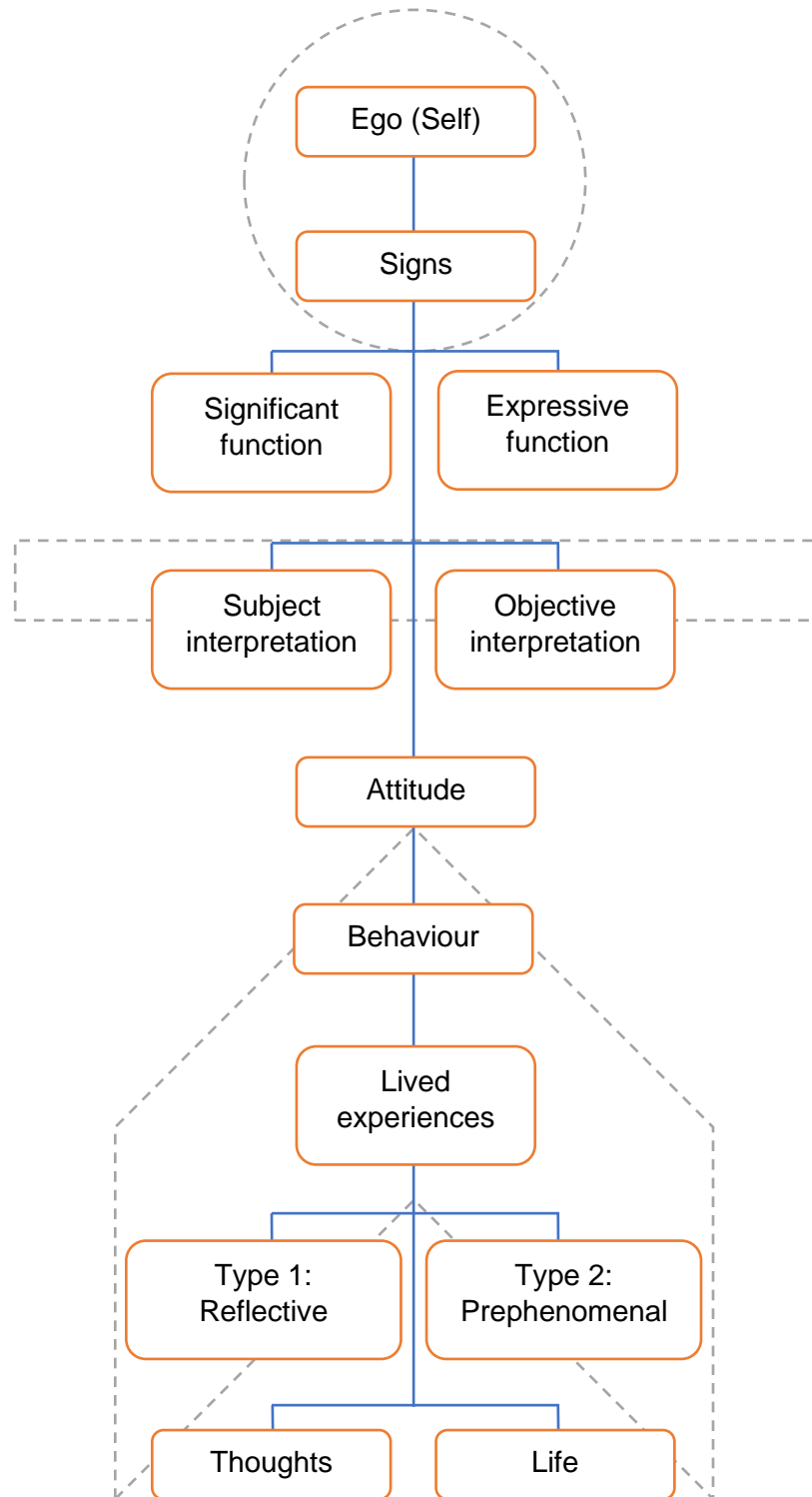


Figure 7: Visual representation of the phenomenology of sociology theory adapted from Schutz (1967)

In this section, I discussed the two theoretical framings underpinning the study, namely the McCroskey *et al.* (2004) model for instructional communication and the phenomenology of sociology theory founded by Schutz (1967).

3.3 Dimensions of credibility

In this section, I introduce the dimensions of credibility. By highlighting the dimensions of credibility, more insight is gained into the reasoning behind the selection of specific dimensions over others. Thus, the dimensions of trustworthiness, immediacy, competence, character, and technology are elaborated on. I use these dimensions of credibility as part of the groundwork, in addition to the two theoretical frameworks discussed above, for the proposed conceptual framework.

3.3.1 Introduction to dimensions of credibility

The multifaceted nature of credibility is largely based on quantitative findings that theorised specific and measurable factors that underpin the dimensions of credibility (Ledbetter & Finn, 2016; Finn *et al.*, 2009). Broadly speaking, Rieh and Danielson (2007) theorise a multidisciplinary framework for credibility and report on concepts that are commonly related to credibility. The first concept discussed is quality, which relates to the evaluation of the source and the message being relayed. Quality refers to the value and accuracy of the messages from the sources. Quality is the consistent questioning of whether or not information is reliable and whether the source is relaying the information correctly and effectively.

The second concept related to credibility is authority. The Wilson (1983) cognitive authority theory is closely related to credibility and focuses on the dimensions of competence and trustworthiness. Wilson postulates that beyond the self-known lies a depiction of stories. The few who supposedly 'know what they are talking about' (Rieh & Danielson, 2007: 313) are considered as authoritative figures. Similarly, the common misconception within the classroom context is that of the belief that teachers are the knowers and learners are the misinformed awaiting corrected information (Power & Holland, 2018), to which teachers are viewed as the cognitive authorities. On the other hand, Wilson acknowledges that these authorities are not necessarily bound to persons, and can take on the form of books, organisations, and instruments. He posits that these authoritative sources are 'worthy of belief' (Wilson, 1983: 15) and that this worthiness provides a sense of competence and expertise.

Cognitive authorities are believed to ‘influence thoughts deeply’ (Rieh & Danielson, 2007: 313) and this places an increased emphasis on the notion of perceptions. This led to the third concept commonly connected to credibility, trust. For several decades, trust has been regarded as a key construct when referring to credibility (Hovland *et al.*, 1953). Although trust and credibility have at times been used interchangeably, it is important to stress that the two concepts cannot be used synonymously (Tseng & Fogg, 1999). The significant difference between the two concepts is based on the notion that trust refers to a perceived confidence in a situation, person, message, or artefact. Overall, the construct of credibility is grounded on perceived source quality, and this leads to one of two options: trust the source or do not trust the source.

The final concept connected to credibility, according to Rieh and Danielson (2007), was persuasion, commonly referred to as source credibility (Rieh & Danielson, 2007). The most common belief connected to credibility is the ability to persuade the receiver and phrased as ‘persuasion through character’ (Rieh & Danielson, 2007: 314). This assumption ran its course of assessment within the twentieth century to which conditions of source credibility and persuasion were scrutinised based on increasing and decreasing effects (Pornpitakpan, 2004). To this end, it was reported that although persuasion is to be considered an important construct of credibility, the two constructs, specifically credibility and persuasion, were by no means equivalent to each other.

The dimensions of credibility became a long and complex debate into which themes, characteristics, and elements best related to the construct. Mostly based on quantitative scales and tools (McCroskey *et al.*, 1974; McGlone & Anderson, 1973; Whitehead, 1968), the measurement of credibility was questioned based on its reliability (Applbaum & Anatol, 1973). To this end, researchers set off into grappling with the construct of credibility and how it was to be measured. Through much debate, it was suggested that credibility was possibly influenced by time and context (Applbaum & Anatol, 1973), which were influential aspects that required attention. At this stage of research, teacher credibility is born from the construct of credibility within persuasion situations (McGlone & Anderson, 1973). With regard to this separation in constructs, the dimensions require a shift in focus (Powers *et al.*, 1990). To simplify the projection of the credibility dimensions in literature, Table 4 below assists with the navigation of the developments toward delineating appropriate dimensions in measuring credibility. Moreover, the dimensions are alphabetically ordered for ease of reading and navigation. The ticks represent the presence of the dimension in the referenced literature. The contents of the table are based on the time period of 1935 to 1999, whereby the fundamental work of credibility is noted.

Table 4: The progression of credibility dimensions from 1935 to 1999

Credibility dimensions	Researchers								
	Aristotle (Cooper, 1935) *Grounded on ethos and persuasion, not directly related to credibility as such	McCroskey (1966)	Mehrabian (1971, 1967); Mehrabian and Wiener (1967)	Whitehead (1968)	Berlo <i>et al.</i> (1969)	McCroskey <i>et al.</i> (1974)	McCroskey and Young (1981)	McCroskey (1992)	McCroskey and Teven (1999)
Authoritativeness	√	√							
Caring							√	√	√
Character		√				√	√		√
Competence				√	√	√	√	√	√
Composure						√			
Dynamism				√	√				
Extroversion						√			
Goodwill	√						√		√
Immediacy			√						
Objectivity				√					
Sociability						√			
Source intelligence	√						√		
Trustworthiness	√			√	√		√	√	

Aristotle's investigation into speakers' ethos with regard to persuasion through communication (Braet, 1992; Cooper, 1935) highlights aspects such as the intelligence of the source, trustworthiness, and goodwill (McCroskey & Teven, 1999; Cooper, 1935). Credibility scales were created to measure communicators' ethos based on the findings elicited by Berlo *et al.* (1961), Hovland *et al.* (1953), and McCroskey (1966). These researchers set out to analyse characteristics of high and low credibility sources and suitable scales thereof. Whitehead (1968) uses these scales as the basis for his research aimed at updating the characteristics of credibility, to which he adds new characteristics that influence the perceived levels of credibility. Although Whitehead's identified characteristics are not added to the existing themes of trustworthiness, professionalism, dynamism, and objectivity, he argues that 'we can no longer regard ethos or source credibility as simply a three-factor structure composed of expertness, trustworthiness, and dynamism' (Whitehead, 1968: 63).

Responding to the argument made by Whitehead (1968) regarding the need for credibility change, McGlone and Anderson (1973) consider the need for contextual change pertaining to credibility and link the construct to education, specifically the classroom. Teacher credibility then grew into its own scholarly concept and became more focused on investigating the dimensions of teacher credibility and was further constrained to time periods, specifically 'during a complete school term' (McGlone & Anderson, 1973: 197). Prior to the study of McGlone and Anderson (1973), tools that were used to measure credibility were effective in terms of measuring initial credibility. Initial credibility is based on assumptions made during first impressions and brief exchanges. However, their study demonstrated that existing tools, at the time, were inaccurate measurements of derived or terminal credibility. Derived and terminal credibility are the perceptions created during and post interaction, respectively. These phases of credibility further proved that credibility was indeed time-sensitive. To this end, McGlone and Anderson (1973) found an accelerated ambition to investigate additional variables that measured teacher effectiveness specifically. Accordingly, scales used to measure source credibility within persuasive situations could not necessarily be employed when measuring other contexts, such as teacher credibility, further proving that credibility was contextually bound (cf., Section 2.7.1.2: 43).

A study by McCroskey *et al.* (1974) focuses on identifying themes relating to communication instructors with the intent of pursuing an investigation into the creation of a valid measuring tool. In their study, they found five prevalent themes connected to the credibility of instructors, namely, competence, extraversion, composure, sociability, and character (McCroskey *et al.*, 1974). Over

the next two decades, this tool was used to measure teacher credibility (Finn *et al.*, 2009). With the argument that many of the existing themes were interconnected and recognisably very similar, McCroskey and Young (1981) compress the five themes suggested by McCroskey *et al.* (1974) into three themes, namely competence, trustworthiness linked to character, and goodwill linked to caring. McCroskey and Young (1981) are of the opinion that the themes of competence and character are more essential than that of caring, and for this reason factor analysis studies redirects their focus on the measurement of competence and character.

After much debate, Aristotle's work on communication specifically focusing on goodwill was deemed plausible by McCroskey and Teven (1999) as they argue that goodwill/caring might even be more important than that of competence and character. This movement in literature revalidated the initial three factor tool, suggested by McCroskey and Teven (1999). Considering all these debates and reconsiderations of the themes and factors relating to credibility, I decided to run a second search using WoS with the input topic of 'high credibility'. I then extracted these published results to be analysed through VOSviewer to which I refer to Figure 8 below. This figure is used to provide a visual projection of the commonly connected terms linked to high credibility. Essentially, Figure 8 highlights the dimensions that are often referred to in literature. I began this section with a broader scope of the dimensions of credibility and thereafter narrowed down my selection of dimensions maintaining the implementation of the funnel approach. Consequently, Figure 8 suggests a few terms to be considered when exploring credibility.

depicts. Therefore, in this section, to classify the information, I briefly conceptualise the major terms, discuss the aspects that overlap with other credibility dimensions, and thereafter link the concept to the educational context.

3.3.2 Trustworthiness

Trust is considered as a two-sided concept: one side having traits such as being helpful, dependable, competent, honest, and open; and the other side portraying the trait of being vulnerable in accepting the openness being shared (Hoy & Tschannen-Morgan, 1999). Moreover, Gísladóttir, Lachuk, Rut, Ottir, and Degraff (2018) deliberate the construct of trust as the ability to identify and sustain confidence in another. Thus, these mutual exchanges further highlight the reciprocal nature of trustworthiness. Accordingly, Teven and Hanson (2004) propose that perceived caring is the construction of believing that there is open and comfortable communication channels that exist between two people (McCroskey & Teven, 1999). As part of considering caring as a construct of trustworthiness, Teven and McCroskey (1997) highlight goodwill as a measure of credibility.

Teacher caring is a demonstration by the teacher, perceived by the learners, of how concerned the teacher is about the wellbeing of the learners (McArthur & Bostedo-Conway, 2012; McCroskey & Teven, 1999). I have combined teacher trustworthiness and teacher caring under the term trustworthiness. Both dimensions rely on the learners' perceptions of their teachers' caring. For genuine care to be received, a level of trust between both parties is required. With the perceived idea of caring, trust will develop and will strengthen the relationship. Therefore, according to McCroskey (1992), perceived caring is a key dimension to teacher credibility. Furthermore, McCroskey (1992) conceptualises perceived caring using three components: understanding, empathy, and responsiveness. Understanding relates to the ability of teachers to acknowledge and accept learners' ideas and inputs; empathy refers to the willingness of teachers to place themselves in the learners' situation; and responsiveness is the ability of teachers to react and respond appropriately and timeously to various classroom situations.

Sincerity, honesty, and believability are central to effective teaching (Haskins, 2000). Trust is an element that develops through a give-and-take situation (Hoy & Tschannen-Morgan, 1999). The comfort levels of learners in the classroom based on the classroom culture of sharing ideas without being mocked or making mistakes without being reprimanded creates an open

atmosphere and a culture conducive to learning. Teachers showing vulnerability and transparency in not knowing all information and admitting to being only human promotes a classroom that is safe and sincere (Teven & Hanson, 2004).

3.3.3 Immediacy

The construct of immediacy was primarily explored by Mehrabian (1967) and put into practice by Andersen (1979). Immediacy is established through behaviour such as eye contact, facial expressions, body gestures, posture, movements, and voice tones (cf., Section 2.6.6: 37) (Baringer & McCroskey, 2000). This construct is separated into two behavioural categories, namely verbal and nonverbal. Verbal behaviour that increases immediacy includes the use of positive remarks, the use of appropriate terminology during communication, and responses using a suitable tone. On the other hand, verbal behaviour that decreases immediacy includes the use of demotivating language, deceitfulness, and variances in dialects (Clune, 2009; Zeki, 2009; Chesebro Joseph & McCroskey, 2001). The other category of behaviour refers to nonverbal behaviour. Nonverbal behaviour that results in an increase in immediacy includes smiling, nodding of the head, walking around the classroom, and the use of appropriate expressive body language. Contrary to increased nonverbal immediacy behaviour is behaviour that causes a decrease in immediacy, such as unprofessional attire and visibly low self-confidence (Clune, 2009; Zeki, 2009).

Haskins (2000) and Mehrabian (1967) explain that teacher immediacy is the behaviour displayed in the classroom that minimises the physical and psychological distances between teachers and learners. Therefore, teacher immediacy is regarded as the perceived quality of interactions between teachers and learners (Mehrabian, 1967). Mehrabian (1971) went on to discuss the basic behaviour evident in communicative situations. The immediacy principle was developed and suggested based on the notion that 'people are drawn toward persons and things they like, evaluate highly, and prefer; and they avoid ... things they dislike, evaluate negatively, or do not prefer' (Mehrabian, 1967: 1). Thus, liking enhances immediacy, which results in greater levels of liking. Mehrabian (1971) mentions proximity as a factor that increases immediacy. This means that associations among people and groups of people have an increased probability to enhance immediacy, which directly relates to enhanced liking. One of the major factors evident in the increase of immediacy within the classroom is teachers talking about matters that concern learners (LeFebvre & Allen, 2014; Teven & Hanson, 2004). Therefore, with such open

communications, there is an increase in relatability between teachers and learners which inevitably decreases the physical and psychological distances between the entities.

Moreover, teacher clarity may also fall under teacher immediacy as a subdimension. Teacher clarity is conceptualised as effective structures of stimulating and relaying content to learners in an age-appropriate and methodologically fitting manner through the use of verbal and nonverbal messages (Chesebro Joseph & McCroskey, 2001). The structure of presenting lessons and differentiating methodologies to best suit the needs of the learners enable an atmosphere to establish teacher clarity. Factors such as vagueness, disfluencies, and verbal ambiguity hinder the immediacy in the classroom (Chesebro Joseph & McCroskey, 2001), which results in negatively influencing teacher clarity. To enhance teacher immediacy through the factor of clarity, teachers are encouraged to be self-aware when communicating with learners. Reflections can be made by teachers through personal audio recordings of presented lessons, providing preview content before a lesson, reviewing sections of the work, summarising lessons, being cognisant of the pace at which a lesson is being presented, and making use of user-friendly learning and teaching support materials. This type of preparation and structure minimises ambiguous and confusing questions and creates a sense of clarity throughout the lesson.

3.3.4 Competence

Competence is conceptualised as an individual's knowledge, skills, abilities, attitudes, and experiences (Kuivila, Mikkonen, Sjögren, Koivula, Koskimäki, Männistö, Lukkarila, & Kääriäinen, 2020) in relation to a specific discipline or field. Teven and Hanson (2004: 40) support this definition by reiterating that competence is indeed 'possessing knowledge or expertise of a particular subject'. Competence can then be said to be interrelated with expertise in which the skill set and proficiency levels of an individual are to be deemed fit enough to take on related responsibilities within the profession. Therefore, the maintenance of quality competencies within various professions predominantly lies in the knowledge and experience within a field (Kuivila *et al.*, 2020). Such competencies primarily begin with relevant institutional qualifications certifying the skills and knowledge of being an expert within a given field.

A study conducted in the Netherlands suggests that competence is a factor to be considered when understanding the development of teachers' identities (Van Lankveld *et al.*, 2017). Within the initial years of becoming a professional, one of the main contributors to building self-confidence is grounded on the qualifications behind one's name. Competence and identity

work alongside each other based on exploring who one is in a personal and professional setting and what elements are to be considered in the affirmation of these identities. Therefore, competence relates to the assurance of the self in a professional capacity. I refer to two elements to consider with regard to competence. The first being what proof there is to showcase self-competence, such as degrees, certificates, diplomas, titles, and years of experience, to name a few. The second element refers to self-assurance: the confidence and acceptance of oneself based on what one believes they are capable of doing and how proficient they are to be regarded as an expert by others.

I refer to the work of McArthur and Bostedo-Conway (2012: 287) to elaborate on the two elements: 'teacher competence refers to student [learner] perceptions of teacher's subject-matter expertise and the ability to relay information'. Additionally, I simplify McArthur and Bostedo-Conway's explanation by means of an example: a teacher who has a degree in History feels more equipped and confident in himself/herself based on their qualifications and years of studies to provide a well-structured History lesson. However, if that teacher were asked to teach a Mathematics lesson, when Mathematics was not one of their specialisation subjects, the teacher may not feel as confident and self-assured in presenting that lesson compared with the History lesson.

Hence, teacher competence is the ability of the teacher to persuade the learners to believe that the teacher is indeed capable of teaching (Arslan & Polat, 2016). Competence in the classroom is linked to how teachers react to various learning situations and in this sense, it is important to acknowledge that teachers' competencies are not limited to teaching a specific subject. Accordingly, these competencies also refer to teachers' management of completing the curriculum, relaying the curriculum, differentiating learning tasks, accommodating for various learning needs and styles, and dealing with learner discipline, among other competencies.

3.3.5 Character

A teacher characteristics study was conducted by Powers *et al.* (1990) who argue by means of the findings elicited in the work from Staton-Spicer, Marty-White (1981), and Staton-Spicer (1983) that there is a connection between communicative decisions and teachers' self-perceptions. Powers *et al.* (1990: 227) distinguish between self-thoughts and others' thoughts and explain that 'The traditional view of credibility ... given by an audience to a source. Internal characteristics are composed of values given by self'. To this end, they argue the need for a change in focus.

Despite the several traditional dimensions of credibility being recognised and to some extent referred to by Powers *et al.* (1990), the inner traits of teachers were of concern and focused on more. Referring to the overlapping dimensions of credibility in relation to teacher character, McArthur and Bostedo-Conway (2012) maintain that character is based on learners' perceptions of teachers' trustworthiness. In support of this integrative approach of the dimensions, Teven and Hanson (2004: 40) share their insight: 'A teacher who relates well with students is more likely to be perceived as a credible source. Although this is from an external perspective, and not of teachers', it is still apparent that there is indeed a definite overlap of dimensions. With reference to the study by McCroskey *et al.* (1974), a factor analysis was created using the factors of sociability-character, composure, extroversion, and competence. These factors contributed to the character depiction of the source and further investigated the dimension of character through the use of specific scales. Some of these scales included being sociable, nervous, cheerful, tense, irritable, aggressive, calm, friendly, and unpleasant. Thus, it is evident that character was closely associated with personality and represented through the connection amongst traits.

Personality is a complex construct that requires rigorous exploration (McAdams & Zapata Gietl, 2015) and is broadly conceptualised as an integration of the development of the self and the contextual circumstances surrounding the self (Mclean, 2017). For this reason, I argue the subdimension of dynamism, which in many aspects relate to character. Dynamism is the degree to which learners admire and are able to identify with teachers' attractiveness, power, and energy displayed in the classroom (De & Bhattacharjee, 2015). Haskins (2000) suggests that dynamism is the degree to which learners identify with their teachers based on displayed charisma and energy in delivering the content knowledge. Therefore, the aspect of relatability evident within dynamism further justifies the reason for considering this subdimension. I refer to the argument posed by Powers *et al.* (1990) to shift the focus toward teachers and urge the need for teachers to become self-aware through their own dynamism. Teacher dynamism communicates meaning behind teachers' constructions of their self-perceived credibility.

Dynamism is a construct of credibility that is closely related to competence. Dynamism foregrounds teachers' abilities to control lessons, direct discussions, create room for engagement, and facilitate relatable and relevant content to the learners for meaningful engagement. Additionally, dynamism overlaps with immediacy. Learners' active participation is largely based on how comfortable they feel in the setting to want to share ideas and discuss outcomes.

Haskins (2000) states that aspects such as body language, facial expressions, eye contact, space and object usage, and the use of language influence teacher dynamism.

Furthermore, teacher dynamism is the degree to which teachers display genuine passion for a topic or subject (Stuart, 2016). To build dynamism in practice requires teachers to find points of passion throughout the content being taught and continuously find creative methodologies to link the passion and content. It is believed that if teachers display high interest and passion toward a subject, their learners will mimic this interest and will lay a foundation of passion that learners will relate to (Ghanizadeh & Ostad, 2016). Moreover, to increase teacher dynamism, verbal distractions such as ‘uhm, like, and, so, good’, and other distractions should be minimised. When the necessary planning has been done in combination with genuine passion for a subject, external distractions should be minimal.

3.3.6 Technology

The First Industrial Revolution focused on the shift from animal and biomass as sources of energy to mechanical power. Using the underpinnings from the First Industrial Revolution, the Second Industrial Revolution highlighted electricity distribution and power generation. Subsequently, the Third Industrial Revolution foregrounded digital system development and computing power (Davis, 2016). The 21st century grew from the groundings of the 19-20th centuries, which focused on power productions, mass productions, electronics, and automatised productions (Oke & Fernandes, 2020). The 21st century evolutions highlighted influences that the technological transformations had on life, including economical advancements, social reconstructions, and educational alterations (Mhlanga & Moloi, 2020). Thus, the 21st century acted as the stepping stone into the world of digitisation, specifically with teachers having to adjust, adapt, and acquire the necessary skills required for teaching.

There has been a clear shift in professionals’ job description and development into the 21st century. The tools, methods, and performance standards have altered according to the needs that accompany current societal developments. Ertmer and Ottenbreit-Leftwich (2010) highlight that technology advancements still have a way to go in terms of reaching their optimal capacity, especially in education. Moreover, their study suggests that despite the more frequent use of technology in the United States of America within the educational setting (Mueller, Wood, Willoughby, Ross, & Specht, 2008), the aim of using technology for learner-centred lessons has

not been adequately accomplished. Another study highlights the concerns that accompany technology within the classroom and highlight the cultural trend that is connected to the use of digital media (Ledbetter & Finn, 2016; Finn & Ledbetter, 2013). Ledbetter and Mazer (2014) highlight the aspect of learners' attitudes with the integration of technology, which would also directly impact teachers' credibility regarding their use of technology.

According to Davis (2016), the Fourth Industrial Revolution (commonly referred to as the 4IR) is the introduction of cyber-physical systems and spaces (physical, biological, and digital) that require a different skill set from people and machines. Thus, societies are seeing massive shifts in the way technologies are being integrated into everyday life activities. 4IR has been viewed as a threat to job security as many daily tasks have completely changed due to technological advancements (Schwab, 2019; Davis, 2016). In the world of education, some of these advancements include the integration of robotics and coding. Despite the resilience and slow shift experienced in South Africa toward the integration and implementation of 4IR in schools and classrooms, the global pandemic sped up this avenue as the world was forced under lockdown restrictions and teachers were required to teach via online platforms (Mhlanga & Moloi, 2020).

Although there is a need to integrate technology within the classroom, the realities faced by teachers of changing with the developments and feeling a sense of apprehension toward this change is evident in the education practice (Ertmer & Ottenbreit-Leftwich, 2010). The 21st century has brought with it a multitude of technological advancements that require teachers to keep updated with the developments that enter the youth's upbringing. To this end, McCroskey and Young (1981: 24) explain that teacher credibility is 'the attitude toward a source of communication held at a given time by a communicator'. It is also suggested that three dimensions are to be considered when understanding teacher credibility, specifically competence, character, and caring (Hutchens & Hayes, 2014; McCroskey & Teven, 1999). Positive instructional outcomes, increased interest from learners, and a sense of 'meeting learners half way' in the classroom encourages an atmosphere that is approachable and comfortable for both learners and teachers (Finn & Ledbetter, 2013).

Finn and Ledbetter (2013) suggest that it is more likely that learners will positively perceive teachers and learning when aspects of technology are present in the classroom. The evidence of technology in lessons is said to portray a sense of awareness and competence. In their study, it is mentioned that learners adhere to a culture that values and encourages the use of technology.

Moving in sync with the developments of the 21st century, Schrodt and Turman (2005) maintain that the educational aims need to be adjusted accordingly to best facilitate the development of learners in becoming global citizens. Thus, teachers who were willing to use technology in their lessons, showed a higher sense of credibility in dealing with the needs of the 21st century learner (Schrodt, Witt, & Turman, 2007).

Ledbetter and Finn (2017) argue that teachers are required to incorporate various technologies into their teaching and learning planning in order to increase learner engagement. Though uncertain as to what the extent is on learning with the incorporation of technologies in lessons, they highlight that amongst the different types of technology, such as PowerPoint, email, and Internet platforms, one of the most commonly used type is PowerPoint. Learners reported that when their teachers use PowerPoints, they are more interested and their understanding of the content is enhanced (Hill, Arford, Lubitwo, & Smollin, 2012). Additionally, learners explained that their consolidation of the taught content is more structured as their notes are more organised when their teachers use PowerPoints in their lessons, resulting in their studying becoming easier (Susskind, 2008).

Learners feel closer to their teachers and the taught content when technologies are used as a sense of relatability between learners and teachers is established. According to Hill *et al.* (2012), learners reported that the use of PowerPoints during lessons improved their learning and improved their experience in the lesson. With learners viewing the incorporation of technology in lessons positively, learners also reported that they perceive their teachers more positively when PowerPoints are used during lessons (Susskind, 2008) resulting in an increase in perceived teacher credibility (from the learners' perceptions). With an overall positive outlook received by the learners, teachers would also experience this positive feedback which would positively influence their constructions of their self-perceived credibility.

Teaching amidst the global pandemic took a toll on all school stakeholders, especially on teachers and learners (Mhlanga & Moloji, 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic created several disruptions in the education sphere and pushed for teaching and learning to occur virtually, which resulted in various challenges that required attention. Some of the tools that were available and accessible were television teaching and learning programmes and radio sessions. However, these tools were not sufficient over the many extensions of lockdown that the pandemic brought. Virtual learning

required massive shifts whereby the incorporation of technologies were necessary for teaching and learning to continue (Mhlanga & Moloi, 2020). Some of the tools that were commonly used were WhatsApp chats, Skype, Teams, Google Classroom, and YouTube videos. These disruptions in the education system forced teachers far beyond the norms of teaching and required massive modifications in teachers' preparations, methodologies, and pedagogies in order to adapt to the changes resulting from the pandemic. This influenced teachers' constructions of their self-perceived credibility, in some way or another, whereby teaching became unpredictably dependent on technology.

3.4 Conceptual framing

With reference to the two abovementioned theoretical frameworks, namely the McCroskey *et al.* (2004) model for instructional communication and the phenomenology of sociology theory by Schutz (1967), in addition to the dimensions of teacher credibility outlined in the study conducted by McGlone and Anderson (1973), I propose a conceptual framework. I attempt to foreground the main elements pertaining to the study within the framework. Hence, I use the McCroskey *et al.* (2004) model to elaborate on the need to focus on teachers' perceptions. I also highlight this element within the theory of understanding phenomena of experiences which develop into constructions.

All participants were viewed and treated as individuals entitled to unique perceptions. These perceptions are thus argued to be part of the elements mentioned in the phenomenology of sociology theory (Schutz, 1967). Since the Ego is embedded and developed in all social beings (Figure 7), attitudes are the initial points of development toward the behavioural traits. Behaviour is then characterised by the recollection of experiences through memories, to which memories can either be reflected on or remain prephenomenal (Schutz, 1967). In light of this justification, I argue the development of the theory by adding a next element of perception grounded in reflected memories (Figure 7).

Taking into account that most instructional communication occurs within the classroom context, depending on the learning areas being taught, I found that the components delineated in the McCroskey *et al.* (2004) model were seemingly fitting. As previously mentioned, however, this model, amongst many other studies, focused on source credibility and others' [learners'] perceptions of teachers (Pena, Klemfuss, Loftus, & Mindthoff, 2017; Hutchens & Hayes, 2014;

Chesebro Joseph & McCroskey, 2001). Agreeably, I found it of great significance to include the perceptions of receivers within the communicative events, however I am of the belief that equal importance should be placed on understanding the communicators' perceptions. My argument in this regard is that studies and feedback can be received from others based on how they might perceive the speaker, however this feedback is influenced by various Ego systems that are unique to perceptions, and not necessarily true within a specific event (Schutz, 1967). In so saying, various factors may influence such perceptions of the communicators, some of which may be motivated by external events outside the communicative event. I will refer to these as spiral perceptions (Figure 9), based on the idea that there are infinite forces that influence these views.

Teachers, however, within these communicative events may be aware of receivers' perceptions, but also have their own perceptions of the receivers. I justify this claim, as school teachers spend approximately one quarter of the day with the same set of learners over a duration of one academic year, thus perceptions on the part of both parties are bound to form. Hence, spiral perceptions are also evident from both parties and are not necessarily only influenced by the communicative contexts. It is to this end that I highlight the importance of including teachers' perceptions of own credibility in the communicative events. Teachers' reasoning for changing or not changing various aspects affecting their credibility need to be considered and reflected on; otherwise, all teacher credibility really results in is an array of back-and-forth spiral perceptions that go unheard and ultimately unnoticed.

Next, I present a visual representation of the abovementioned spirals relating to both teachers and learners. The first spiral relates to possible influences or interactions by teachers with learners, such as creating negative feelings toward a disruptive learner or favouring learners who may be hard workers and may be believed to show more academic potential than a learner who displays a poor work ethic. The second spiral refers to possible influences experienced by learners toward their teachers which may affect their perceptions about their teachers. Some of these influences may include stories and experiences shared by siblings who may have been taught by the teacher; the learner may not have a positive disposition toward the subject being taught by the teacher; or the teacher may be known to be strict as shared by friends in other classes.

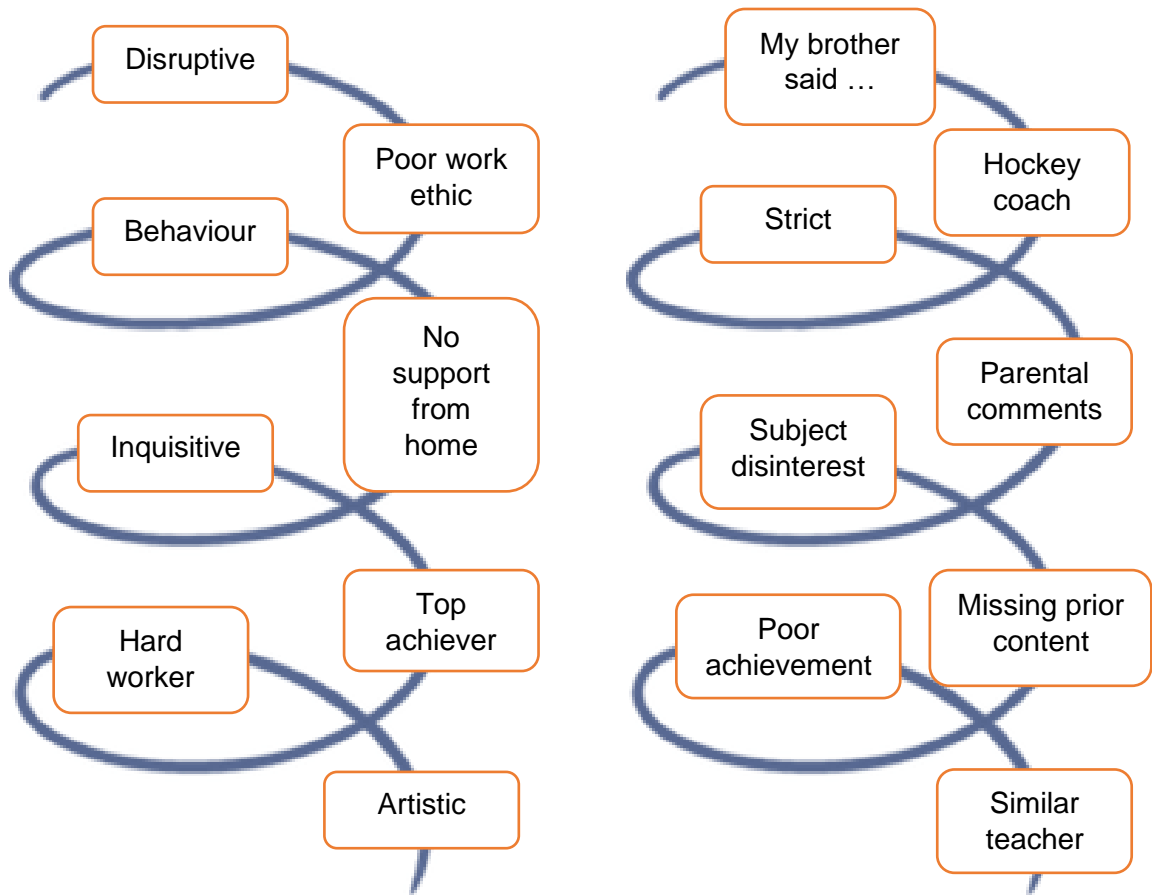


Figure 9: Visual representations of possible teachers and learners' spiral perceptions

Furthermore, I decided to use the phenomenology of sociology theory by Schutz (1967) to elaborate on the arts-based inquiry evident in this study. I use an arts-based inquiry to summon teachers' constructions using a nonintrusive and subtle manner. I have always found a comfort in art which allows oneself to tap into a creative domain of thinking. I thought of linking the narrative inquiries to artefacts, selected by the participants, that they believe symbolise them as teachers. Perceptions can be tricky to foreground, especially in an unnatural communicative event, such as a recorded research interview supposed to feel like a conversation. Schutz (1967) mentions the importance of communication found in signs, and suggests that signs can be categorised as either tangible objects, such as artefacts, or act-objects, which are considered to be body movements and gestures. I thus made use of this aspect of the theory by Schutz (1967) and adapted my inquiry with the addition of artefacts supporting the narrative inquiry.

Since the McCroskey *et al.* (2004) model and the theory outlined by Schutz (1967) were not directly linked to the classroom context or teachers, I refer to the work of McGlone and Anderson

(1973) to contextualise the two selected theoretical frameworks. According to McGlone and Anderson (1973), the elements that compromise teacher credibility were compartmentalised into four major factors and elaborated on through the use of several connected minor factors. It is important to highlight that their study was based on perceiving source credibility, however I found the elements of credibility to be quite similar in terms of perceived and self-perceived credibility (cf., Section 2.7.2: 44). Table 5 below is an outline of the findings unearthed in the study conducted by McGlone and Anderson (1973).

Table 5: Dimensions of teachers' credibility (McGlone & Anderson, 1973)

Major credibility factors	Minor credibility factors
<p>Expertness</p> <p>Based on being:</p> <p>Informed/uniformed</p> <p>Trained/untrained</p> <p>Expert/inexpert</p> <p>Interesting/uninteresting</p>	<p>Fairness</p> <p>Fair/unfair</p> <p>Consistent/inconsistent</p> <p>Open-minded/close-minded</p> <p>Character</p> <p>Sinful/virtuous</p> <p>Unselfish/selfish</p> <p>Dynamism</p> <p>Meek/aggressive</p> <p>Bold/timid</p> <p>Objectivity</p> <p>Subjective/objective</p>
<p>Expert-personality</p> <p>Based on being:</p> <p>Expert/inexpert</p> <p>Impressive/unimpressive</p> <p>Stable/unstable</p> <p>Just/unjust</p> <p>Cheerful/gloomy</p> <p>Educated/uneducated</p> <p>Sympathetic/unsympathetic</p> <p>Trained/untrained</p> <p>Sociable/unsociable</p> <p>Knowledgeable/unknowledgeable</p> <p>Professional/unprofessional</p>	<p>Trustworthiness</p> <p>Fair/unfair</p> <p>Experienced/unexperienced</p> <p>Realistic/unrealistic</p> <p>Reasonable/unreasonable</p> <p>Likable/unlikable</p> <p>Intelligent/unintelligent</p> <p>Consistent/inconsistent</p> <p>Respectful/disrespectful</p> <p>Honest/dishonest</p>

Informed/uninformed	
Trustworthiness Based on being: Trained/untrained Open-minded/close-minded Devious/straightforward Sensible/not sensible	Impressiveness Impressiveness/unimpressiveness Sociability Crude/gracious Meek/aggressive Affability Nice/awful Cheerful/gloomy
Personality Based on being: Impressive/unimpressive Interesting/uninteresting Realistic/unrealistic Trustworthy/untrustworthy Cheerful/gloomy Honest/dishonest	Expertness Expert/inexpert Informed/uninformed Experienced/unexperienced Educated/uneducated Knowledgeable/unknowledgeable Intelligent/unintelligent Competent/incompetent Scholarly/unscholarly Sympathy Sympathetic/unsympathetic Stubborn/not stubborn Selfish/unselfish Fairness Fair/unfair Accuracy Right/wrong

I connected these four factors in Table 5 to the phenomenology of sociology theory by Schutz (1967) in which the personality is directly linked to the Ego, where the Ego influences professional domains which are intertwined with expertness and trustworthiness. McGlone and Anderson (1973) consider an array of relevant factors in their quantitative study. However, I needed to narrow down the pillars of teacher credibility using the factors in Table 5. Based on the 21st century IP teachers' realities in the classroom, I decided to carefully select four pillars that conceptualise teacher credibility in the context of this study based on the prevalence of the dimensions in various literature (Ghanizadeh & Ostad, 2016; McCroskey, Teven, Minielli, & Richmond McCroskey, 2014; Aydin *et al.*, 2013; Finn *et al.*, 2009). The four pillars, which were interconnected with the theory by Schutz (1967) and findings reported

on by McGlone and Anderson (1973), were competence; immediacy; dynamism; and caring. The interconnectedness of these framings was visually represented in Figure 10 below, whereby I created the figure with disjointed lines, displaying the flow amongst the various tenets of the theoretical frameworks. Hence, the figure does not function as a typical Venn diagram. I decided to structure the conceptual framework in this manner to foreground the multidimensionality of teacher credibility (Danielson & Rieh, 2007).

The four pillars suggested through the conceptual framework of this study propose that competence, immediacy, dynamism, and caring are umbrella terms that may exhibit more than just the conceptualisation of each of the terms as seen in Table 5 above. Competence is a blend of expertness and personality (McGlone & Anderson, 1973); immediacy is a proposed addition to the findings reported on by McGlone and Anderson (1973), considering that their study was based on higher education institution students, while the IP works with considerably younger learners who require a sense of closeness. Hence, my proposed addition of immediacy, which includes both verbal and nonverbal behaviour highlighted in the McCroskey *et al.* (2004) model for instructional communication and behaviour foregrounded in the phenomenology of sociology theory by Schutz (1967), the addition is subjected to the time and contextual boundedness evident within the IP (Mehrabian, 1971). The third pillar of teacher credibility proposed in this conceptual framework is dynamism, which takes into account how meek or aggressive a teacher is believed to be in the classroom context. I think that the pillar of dynamism within the IP will prove to be highly regarded in terms of considering teacher credibility and works hand in hand with teachers' personalities as suggested by McGlone and Anderson (1973) and Schutz (1967). The final pillar of the conceptual framing is trustworthiness, which is directly linked to the major factor of trustworthiness which McGlone and Anderson (1973) outline.

This proposed untraditional Venn diagram includes dashed lines to show the interconnectedness amongst the various theoretical tenets adopted from McGlone and Anderson (1973), Schutz (1967), and McCroskey *et al.* (2004). Teacher credibility is situated in the centre of the framework in line with the focus of the study. The four pillars of credibility, namely dynamism, competence, immediacy, and trustworthiness, surround the central concept of teacher credibility (cf., Section 2.6: 30). Surrounding these pillars are the constructs of behaviour suggested by Schutz (1967) (cf., Section 3.2.3: 69), which are connected by arrows highlighting the direction of the development of the constructs, more specifically from attitudes to behaviour, to reflection, finally constructing perceptions which link to the central construct of teacher credibility, are stated.

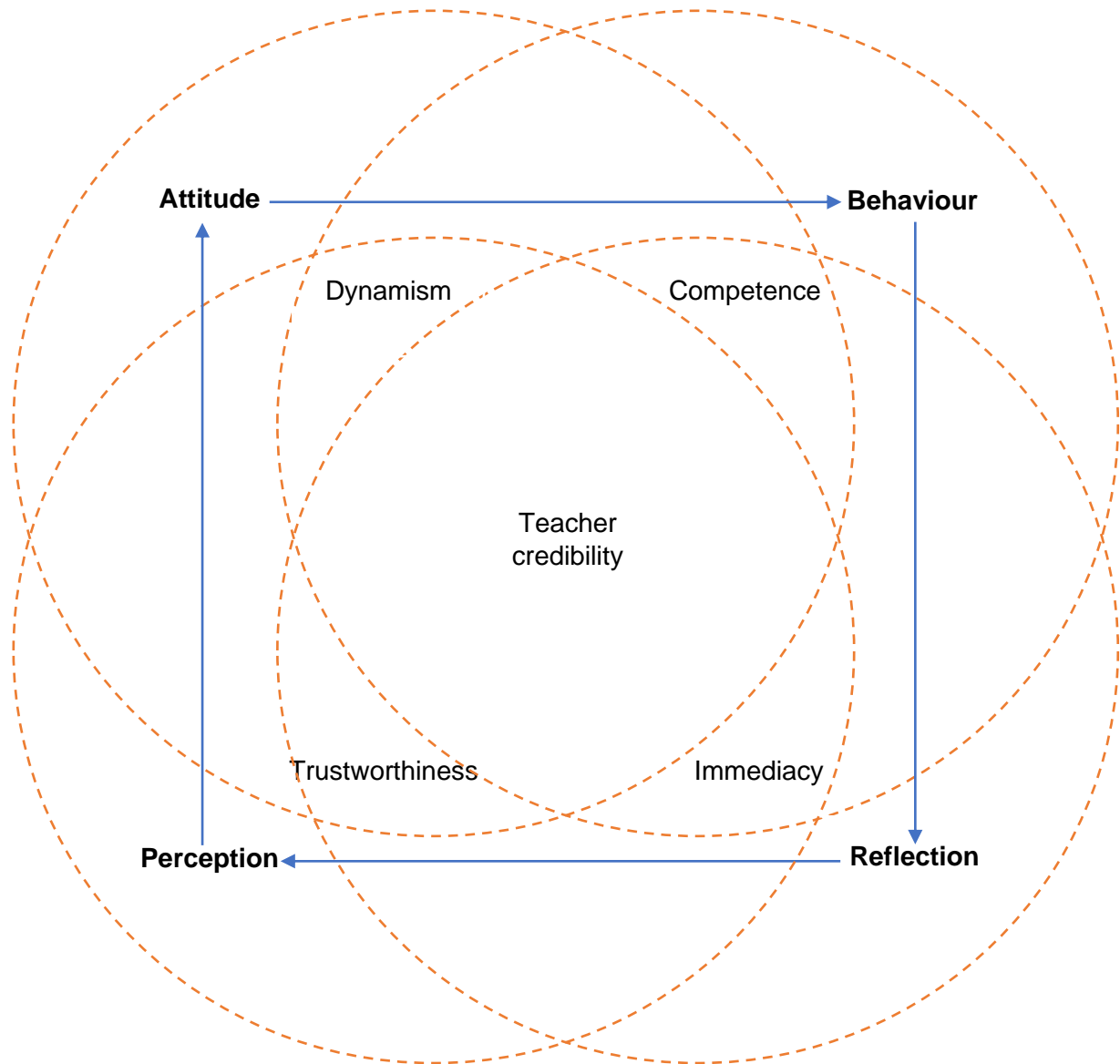


Figure 10: Proposed teacher credibility conceptual framing adopting elements from McCroskey *et al.* (2004) and Schutz (1967)

3.5 Application of conceptual framework

The proposed conceptual framing (Figure 10) provides me with the important elements pertaining to my study. Teacher credibility is a multidimensional concept and is to be regarded as such to acknowledge the uniqueness of contexts, egos, experiences, perceptions, and ultimately constructions. I acknowledge that my quest into understanding IP teachers' constructions through inquiring narratively and creatively may elicit teacher credibility pillars and dimensions that may

not necessarily be stated in my conceptual framework. For this reason, I add to and adjust the framework accordingly throughout the research journey to best represent the 21st century IP teachers' credibility constructions within the context of South Africa. In so mentioning, it is important to highlight that stories are time and context-sensitive (Freeman, 2011). Consequently, stories are constructions of interrelated projections of thoughts, views, perceptions, egos, behaviour, emotions, and fears, that are interrogated and manipulated and may come across as confusing and contradictory, however are still to be treated as meaningful in their own right (Luchetti, Rossi, Montebanocci, & Sutin, 2016).

Based on Figure 10 above, since the focus of my study was understanding IP teachers' constructions of their self-perceived credibility, I used theoretical frameworks that spoke to the main elements underpinning this research study. In order to understand teachers' self-perceptions of their credibility, the McCroskey *et al.* (2004) model for instructional communication allowed me to theoretically explain this avenue of the research. Additionally, I used the phenomenology of sociology theory by Schutz (1967). In my adaptation of his theory, I explored phenomena of teachers' stories embedded in various social settings through narratives. The narratives were depictions of who the participants believed and perceived themselves to relate to (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990), and so the personal and professional selves were manifestations of the teachers (Vuori, 2015). I needed to consider the phenomena of experiences through acknowledging the participants' egos, personalities, views, beliefs, and reflections.

Using tenets from both of the theoretical frameworks, I constructed and proposed a conceptual framework that was used as theoretical support. At the centre of the conceptual framework, I used teacher credibility, which was in alignment with the research questions and purpose. By ensuring this connectedness throughout the engagement and selection of theories, I followed the suggested interactive model of research design by Maxwell (2013) in establishing design coherency. To understand IP teachers' constructions, I referred to elements drawn from the theory by Schutz (1967), specifically attitude, behaviour, reflection, and perception (cf., Section 3.2.2: 69). From this theory, Schutz (1967) suggests that from the Ego, attitude is formed, which leads to portrayed behaviour, which determines experiences. These experiences are either reflected on or stored and form the basis of perceptions. In shaping the study toward exploring IP teachers' self-perceptions of own credibility, I referred to the McCroskey *et al.* (2004) model for instructional communication.

I applied this proposed conceptual framework by means of acknowledging the phenomena behind the formation of constructions (Schutz, 1967), in the light of understanding IP teachers' perceptions of own credibility (McCroskey *et al.*, 2004). It was important to contextualise the conceptual framework in an educational background, whereby I referred to the teacher credibility dimensions (McGlone & Anderson, 1973). According to McGlone and Anderson (1973), the major credibility factors include expertness-personality, expertness, trustworthiness, and personality, which I linked to Schutz's phenomenology of the social world. From these proposed major credibility dimensions (McGlone & Anderson, 1973), I foregrounded and proposed four pillars of credibility that I used to underpin this research study. The four pillars included competence, immediacy, trustworthiness, and dynamism. These four pillars were overlapping and integrated with the major factors suggested by McGlone and Anderson (1973), which contextualise the McCroskey *et al.* (2004) model. Grounded on this literature, framed through this conceptual framework, I argued the need to consider the proposed teacher credibility pillars of the 21st century IP teacher.

Next, I present Figure 11 which visually represents the application of the proposed conceptual framing. The figure highlights the focus and purpose, in relation to both theoretical underpinnings, which are used to contextualise the dimensions of teacher credibility.

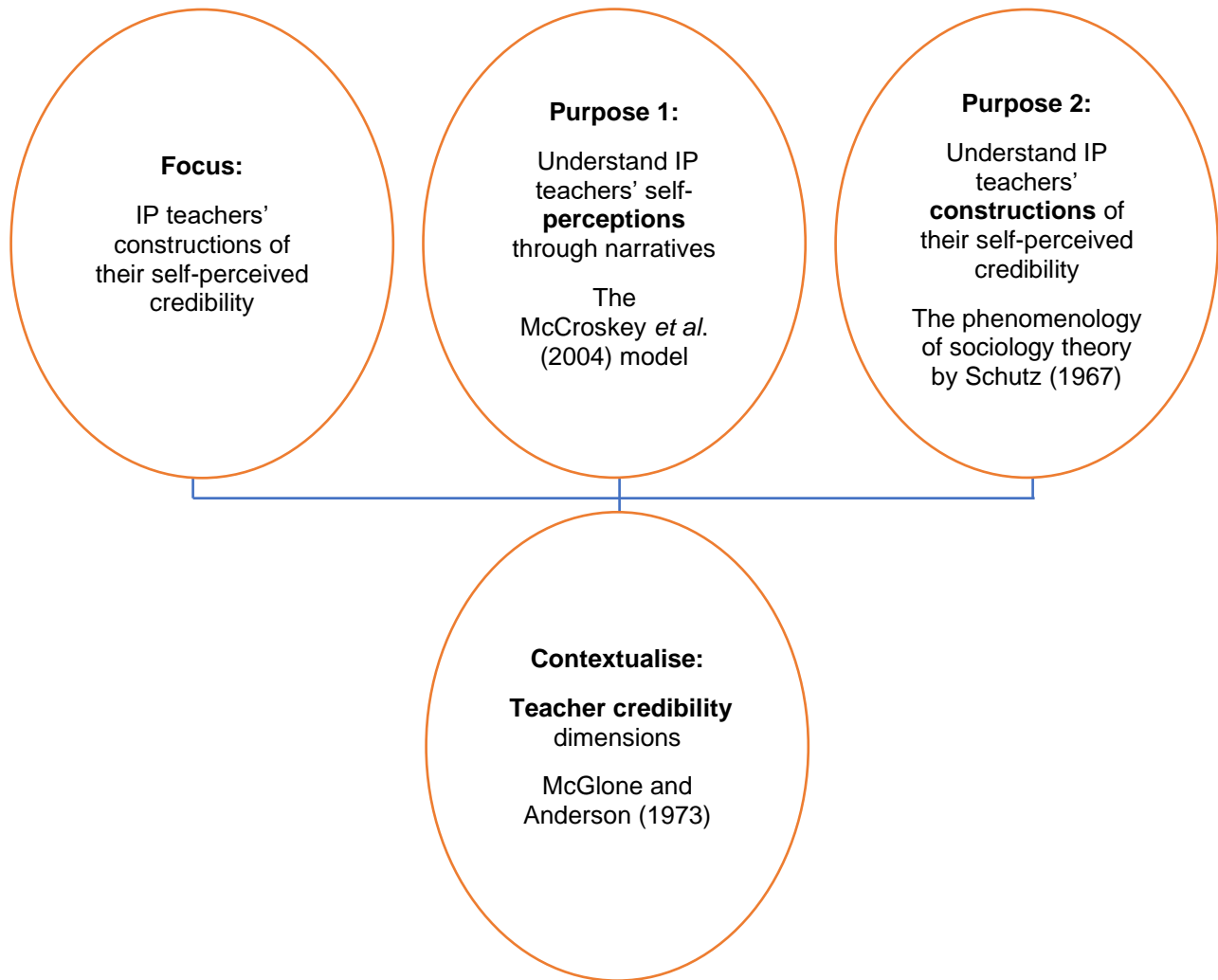


Figure 11: A visual representation of the construction of the conceptual framework and the application

I used the study's focus to guide the selection of theoretical frameworks. The McCroskey *et al.* (2004) model for instructional communication was used to centrally position teacher credibility within the conceptual framing where the proposed addition of teachers' perceptions was highlighted. With teacher credibility theoretically supported, I needed to meaningfully understand the constructions of the teachers, which were largely shaped by their perceptions. Important to note, the theory by Schutz (1967) was adapted by my understanding of his work from his book titled: 'The phenomenology of the social world'. With the construction of the conceptual framework underway, I contextualised the frameworks by using the major factors of teacher credibility reported on by McGlone and Anderson (1973). At this point of the conceptual framework construction, I proposed four pillars of teacher credibility, namely competence,

trustworthiness, immediacy, and dynamism, that were aligned with the factors mentioned by McGlone and Anderson (1973) (Table 5).

3.6 Conclusion

Using the two theoretical frameworks and the suggested teacher credibility dimensions, the conceptual framing of this study was based on the purpose of attempting to understand IP teachers' constructions of their self-perceived credibility. I elaborated on the dimensions of credibility. I then discussed the application of the conceptual framework and proposed that the framework be used to support the multidimensionality of teacher credibility constructions and the methodological selections thereof, which were guided by the research questions. Now, with the conceptual framework in place, the investigation into the research design and methodology was underway.

CHAPTER 4

Research design and methodology

4.1 Introduction

The research design provides a conceptual outlining of the study, taking into account the purpose and context of the study; the theoretical paradigm underpinning the study; and the research techniques used to collect and analyse the data (Maxwell, 2013). The research methodology outlines the approach taken toward engaging with the study. I selected two research designs, namely, narrative inquiry and arts-based inquiry. I selected these designs as they aligned with the interpretive paradigm framework which highlighted the relativist ontology and constructivist epistemology.

In my pursuit of finding a non-rigid, non-exploitive method that was best suited to the purpose of this study, I selected a qualitative approach. Qualitative research is conceptualised as ‘capturing a level of reality ... develop a critical view that qualifies in the deepening of data’ (Muylaert *et al.*, 2014: 187). I focus on the exploration and understanding of IP teachers’ constructions of their self-perceived credibility. All participants were treated as unique individuals who encapsulated their own set of stories and experiences which were awakened through their story-telling (Wellin, 2007). Contextual settings and historical backdrops were treated with high importance in imbuing each participant with relevance and significance in their stories.

In this chapter, I elaborate on the research design and methods. I then discuss the blurring of boundaries between the two designs, namely narrative and arts-based inquiry. I discuss the paradigmatic positioning which includes the ontology, epistemology, and research methodology. Thereafter, I highlight the ethical considerations and quality criteria that morally guides my study.

4.2 Research design and methods

A research design is an iterative process that requires rigorous interpretation and reinterpretation of the design’s components (Maxwell, 2013). These components include the study’s purpose, theoretical groundings, research questions, methodological selections, and validity threats. Considering the interconnectedness of the components, I decided to use both the work of

Maxwell (2013) and Riessman (1993) to conceptualise the research design of this study and foreground the design coherence which is visually represented in Figure 12 below.

In this study, I selected two research designs, namely narrative inquiry and arts-based inquiry. The rationale for using these designs is to explore and understand the participants' deep and raw narratives which required a lot of thought and feedback to the self through story-telling (Van Beveren, Roets, Buysse, & Rutten, 2018). Methodologically, despite the non-generalisability of findings connected to qualitative research, data from qualitative studies are 'far longer, more detailed and variable' (Yilmaz, 2013: 313) than that of quantitative data. In this section, I discuss the two research designs, the methods, namely BNIM and ABM, and the tools, specifically SQUIN and artefacts.

Maxwell (2013) refers to the research design as being an iterative process which propels his idea behind the proposal of an iterative model. He maintains that the iterative nature of the research design needs to be in alignment with the arrangement of elements guiding the functioning of qualitative studies instead of a step-by-step design that rigidly follows a process that is supposedly appropriate for a study. He also acknowledges that the innovativeness of the model is depicted through the relationships amongst the components and not necessarily the components themselves. Maxwell proposes five components in his model and argues that these components are based on each of their roles played in the research study (Maxwell, 2013). The five components are purposes, conceptual content, research questions, methods, and validity. Riessman (1993) suggests five levels of representation, namely attending, transcribing, telling, analysing, and reading. I suggest the combining of both the Maxwell (2013) model and the five levels of representation by Riessman (1993) in outlining my research design (Figure 12).

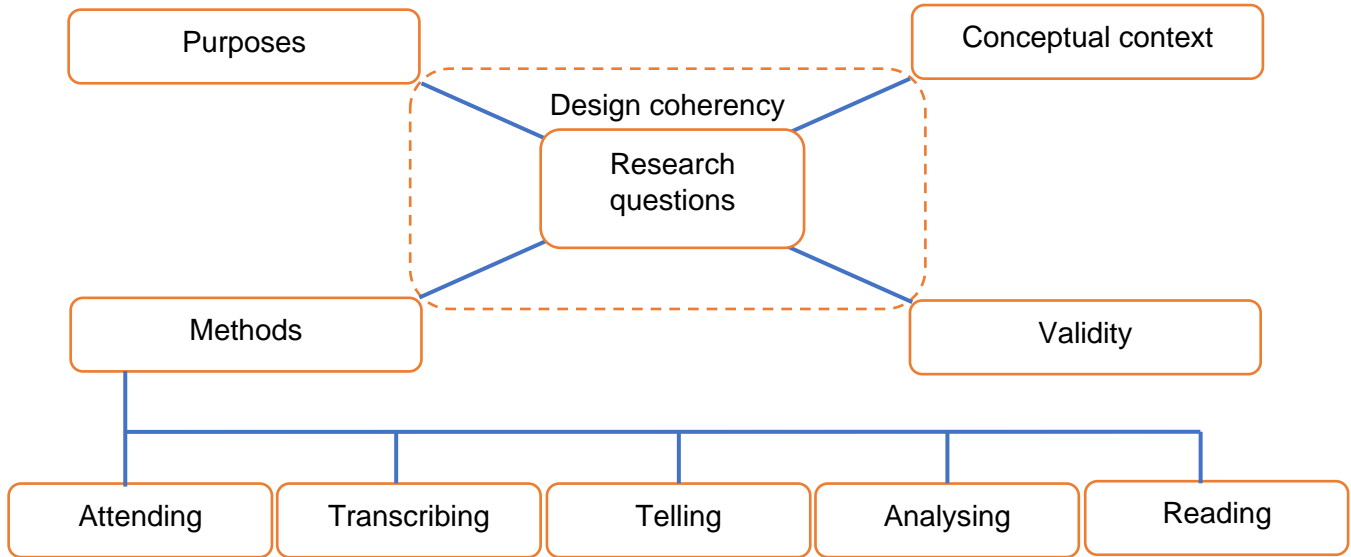


Figure 12: The interactive model of research design (Maxwell, 2013) and the five levels of representation (Riessman, 1993)

The first component addresses the ultimate goal consistently informing the study along the way. The reasoning behind the purpose of a study requires an in-depth argumentative reflection with the self that is able to direct the aim of the study toward a worthwhile initiative. I took about eighteen months to brainstorm a relevant purpose for my study, which required me to dig deep and think critically. The next component is the conceptual context, whereby the phenomena regarding theories, frameworks, models, literature, and possible new ideas is necessary in developing the study. This component has considerable influence in steering the study. Essentially, this second component became the driving force behind the development of the study. I needed to be very selective and critical in employing this component, as there were several theories and models to support a study, however one burning question in particular required reflection: *Is it really supporting my study?* Through this component, I learned that not everything is appropriate, no matter how hard you try to make it fit.

Component number three in the Maxwell (2013) model is the research questions. The research questions are closely aligned to the purpose of the study. Often, the research question fades away during the research process and the research questions tend to get lost in all the other exciting research elements, however, it is the research question that is the ultimate goal that the study is designed to answer, as shown in Figure 12, specifically highlighting the central positioning of this component. The fourth component is the methods, which interrogates the approaches and

techniques to be used to integrate the functioning of the study. Maxwell (2013) posits that this component includes four subcomponents, namely the research relationship with colleagues, selection sites, data collection methods, and data analysis and interpretation techniques. The fifth and final component refers to the validity of the study, whereby the researcher is required to analyse the threats and possible conclusions drawn from the study and how these will be dealt with. This component is characterised by challenging and questioning the findings and ideas and the believability thereof.

The five levels highlighted by Riessman (1993) include attending, transcribing, telling, analysing, and reading (Figure 12). The first level involved my role as a narrative inquirer, whereby I delineated each of the participants' responses through outlining their descriptions of experiences and views. The second level required me to obtain written and verbal consent from the participants. I audio recorded each of the narratives and these recordings were then transcribed using a credible transcriber who was required to read and sign a confidentiality agreement (Appendix G). In addition, the participants were asked to bring an artefact that they believed was symbolic of how they see themselves as teachers. This aspect brought in an ABM and allowed for the participants to liken their credibility to artefacts. For the third level, I asked the participants to select the mode in which they wanted their stories to be presented. This multimodal approach to telling the participants' stories allowed for more transparent retelling of narratives, which are presented in Chapter 5. Level four included the analysis of the collected data from each of the participants. This analysis was done using inductive thematic data analysis whereby coding of data and grouping of similar themes, subthemes, and categories were focused on. Through this analysis, the data were arranged, coded, and grouped according to various identified themes. Lastly, the interpretation level was done by myself in order to fine-comb through the data to generate findings that corresponded with the research questions posed in this study.

Hence, the combining of the Maxwell (2013) model and the five levels outlined by Riessman (1993) was important such that a holistic and more fitting design was used to support the study.

4.2.1 Narrative inquiry

Photograph 1 below is a beautiful and clear message of what stories are. The image was captured by myself at the Zeitz Art Museum in Cape Town, South Africa.

Stories are born, they grow, transform and travel. They gather richness and meaning as they move through different times and places. They teach life's lessons, reveal wonders and share adventures that they have witnessed. They breathe life into the imaginations of our children and are the voices of adults entrusted to teach. They speak in whispers and cries to our emotions. They are the witnesses of our triumphs and failures and question our motives. They thrive in cycles of never ending telling...

Photograph 1: An image in the Zeitz Art Museum in Cape Town, South Africa titled: 'And so the stories ran away' (September 2019)

Narrative inquiry is a process of bringing about a recollection of past lived experiences through story-telling (Clandinin, 2006). The creation of meaning through the retelling of such stories provide an understanding to our experiences. Connelly and Clandinin (1990: 2) suggest that 'people by nature lead storied lives ... (and) narrative researchers describe such lives'. Taking a similar stance, Caine *et al.* (2013) posit that narrative inquiry is a way of thinking about phenomena dipped in lived experiences and truths. Experiences are thus bound to time and place (McGrath, Palmgren, & Liljedahl, 2019; Caine *et al.*, 2013).

Narrative inquiry was expected to see many advancements and new ideas in its development (Clandinin, 2006). The explorative nature of narrative inquiry enabled new ways of thinking about experiences. The integrated nature of thinking about phenomena suggested that experiences were to be understood in a subjective manner as true and real to the actual event being recalled. To this end, stories were referred to using the narrative inquiry and included observations, encounters, and challenges that were faced by the participants and researchers (Caine *et al.*, 2013). Consequently, narrative inquiry was regarded as both a phenomenon and methodology (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990).

The narrative inquiry methodology often takes the form of oral communicative structures and recalls lived events. It brings about historical situations and is communicated through words. In so saying, these historical moments contributed to the construction of individuals' realities and truths based on their reports and recollections of their pasts (Muylaert *et al.*, 2014). Considering the selective feature of memories, what is recalled on was viewed as significant to the participant (Schutz, 1967). Hence, narratives are essentially representations and interpretations of each of the participants' worlds. Each shared truth is a point of view, a construction, of each participant's specific time, space, and situational context (Clandinin & Huber, 2010). Narratives then lead us

to question positivist stances, specifically where there is one set truth, and sheds light on the interpretivist paradigm, toward understanding subjectivity in individual truths (Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach, & Zilber, 1998). Riessman and Speedy (2007) highlight that narrative inquiry integrates the realist, postmodern, and constructionist fields. Family to that of narrative inquiry is the BNIM proposed by Wengraf (2001), which I employed in this research study. In this method, Wengraf suggests three subsessions. Subsession one includes posing the single question, the second subsession relates to the narrative follow-up, and subsession three includes an optional second interview.

An advantage of narrative inquiry includes the 'relational' aspect which allows for the researcher and the participant to become equals in the research process (Haydon, Browne, & Van der Riet, 2018). These engagements allow a sense of trust to be developed and maintained throughout the data collection phase of the study (Clandinin & Huber, 2010). However, the in-depth inquiry limits the number of participants included in the study, so as to ensure thick, content-rich data (Li, 2004). This, may however, be a disadvantage whereby the findings may not necessarily be generalisable to the broader population.

Another limitation to consider when conducting narrative inquiry is the time lapse between the actual lived experience and the time of recollection by the participants, as memories may have changed according to what is believed to have occurred (Caine *et al.*, 2013). Moreover, participants may socially construct their experiences to best suit their audiences (Haydon *et al.*, 2018). This may also negatively affect the data as the participants' lived experiences may be altered based on the participants' socially constructed expectations of what is thought to be the correct answer during the interview.

Narrative inquiry enables participants to be as flexible and comfortable as possible in terms of answering the questions genuinely. This in turn results in large amounts of data being collected (Caine *et al.*, 2013; Clandinin & Huber, 2010). With such large content being collected and decoded, it is important to keep track of the decisions and additional observations being made throughout the study. Etherington (2009) recommends using a researcher journal as a method to remain true to the study and the process. The researcher journal provides a sense of direction to the study, keeping the focus strong and maintaining the purpose throughout the research journey (Feucht *et al.*, 2017). I have created a researcher journal in which I jotted down my research

journey, my thought processes, and the direction and changes during the research process (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Furthermore, it was necessary for me to remain unbiased to the narratives developed and shared by the participants.

4.2.1.1 Biographic-narrative interpretive method (BNIM)

BNIM is a method that highlights the subjective experiences through story-telling of events. The term 'interpretive' in the name of the method refers to the high intensity focused on subjectivity (Wengraf, 2004). The aim of the researcher in using this method is to try to better understand the subjectivity relayed through the stories shared by the participants (Wengraf, 2004). The researcher thus pieces together the shared storylines from the participants into connected segments that are bound together through cultural aspects and emotional messages from the responses received.

Wengraf (2004: 12) explains that the aim of BNIM is to 'reconstruct the experiencing interpreting subjectivity' of the participant. The focus is placed on one of two decision-making paths: decisions made in lives and decisions made in the telling of stories (Wengraf, 2004). The first path considers the choices made during prior life events leading up to their current life events. The second path focuses on trying to complete and piece together the first path, of which choices of retelling their stories are foregrounded. Such choices include questioning the topics being spoken about, the manner in which the topics are being spoken about, how the participants expect the researcher to evaluate their shared events, the presentation of the participants, and so forth.

BNIM lies on an extreme end of the spectrum of narrative inquiry whereby the 'conversation' is no longer a session of sharing, rather the researcher adopts a minimalist approach in using this method. Hence, intervention provided by the researcher needs to be extremely limited. This minimalist approach requires a lot of learning and unlearning of the 'norms' of daily communication. Such 'norms' include sharing of personal and similar accounts to show a sense of understanding, paraphrasing responses, asking further questions for clarification purposes, and nodding in agreement. The key role of the researcher is thus to become an active listener (Squire, 2013). Wengraf uses the Fischer-Rosenthal (2000) and Rosenthal (2004) models to underpin the developed elements of BNIM. The Fischer-Rosenthal (2000) and Rosenthal (2004) models are based on the biographical case reconstruction. This model aims to understand people in social settings, taking into account the historical and social backgrounds. The

Fischer-Rosenthal (2000) and Rosenthal (2004) models are thus aligned with the aspects proposed in the BNIM.

Rosenthal (2004) explains that biographical case reconstructions pay close attention to differences detected between past experiences and narratives of those experiences. Reconstructions and ordering of events are focused on in this model whereby the recollections of experiences are interpreted using the overall information collected in the interview. The sequential aspect, conceptualised by Rosenthal (2004), is interpreted in accordance with the sequential gestalt. Gestalt is the natural flow characterised by free behaviour and open thought processes expected from the participants during their sharing of stories (Wengraf, 2001). This concept is elaborated on in the next section. Rosenthal (2004) maintains that the biographical case reconstructions model used sequential analysis of the narrated and experienced life stories that were interpreted through individuals' life histories.

4.2.1.2 Single question aimed at inducing narrative (SQUIN)

The SQUIN comprises three subsessions, namely the single question initial subsession, the narrative follow-up as the second subsession, and the second interview as subsession three (Wengraf, 2001, 2004). SQUIN works alongside BNIM and thus is referred to as a tool that supports the BNIM.

Subsession one aims to enquire about the participants' life experiences of a specific phenomenon using a single focused question. The manner and sequence in which the participant chooses to respond to the question is entirely up to them. During the SQUIN, no new questions are posed by the researcher for any purposes including trying to understand, finding clarity, and so forth. The researcher is to play the role of a listener and to provide support, mainly nonverbally, to the participants during their response to the question (Flick, 2018; Wengraf, 2001). The researcher is required to take down brief notes using keywords used by the participants. These notes should be written down according to the topics that were brought up by the participants during their narrative.

Moreover, Wengraf (2004) explains that the responses received by the participants in their attempt to answer the SQUIN should have no set time frame. The researcher should aim to allow the participants to tell their life stories for approximately 30 minutes, however this is variable and could last between 5 to 55 minutes depending on the participant (Wengraf, 2001). The assumption and concern using this design is that participants could not answer the question in the form of

sharing their life stories and rather answer the question in a similar way that closed-ended or semi-structured interviews are commonly answered. To this end, Wengraf (2004: 4) advises that a participant who 'dries up' at any point in the session must be given time to be completely done with sharing their story, as this short account may well be as complete and valuable as a longer account.

The second subsession of narrative follow-up occurs approximately 15 minutes after the first subsession has been completed. In this subsession, questions are posed by the researcher to the participants based on the topics elicited during the first subsession. The questions are to be asked with a great deal of thought and restrictions. In unpacking the term 'restricted questions', the researcher is to only ask narrative-pointed questions (referred to as N-pointed questions) regarding certain or all of the raised topics during subsession one. To guide the researcher in ensuring that only N-pointed questions are asked, Wengraf (2004) suggests using topic questions aimed at inducing narratives (referred to as TQUINS). Researchers are thus restricted and should refrain from asking any questions outside of this scope. Additionally, the researcher should only use the topics highlighted by the participants and no other questions regarding topics that might be of interest to the researcher. It is also important for the researcher to ask the questions using words or phrases used by the participants in the same order as what was followed in the first subsession.

Wengraf (2001, 2004) explains that topics should be carefully separated by the researcher and questions should follow this categorisation of the topics in order to maintain structure to subsession two. Topics may be skipped during this follow-up subsession, however once the researcher has passed a topic the researcher cannot go back to a skipped or missed topic. Wengraf (2004: 4) talks about 'never going back to an earlier topic', to minimise the risk of interfering with the gestalt. Hereafter, further N-pointed questions are posed to the participants in which case notes covering further situation, happening, event, incident, occasion/occurrence, time (referred to as SHEIOT) are captured during the second subsession. This is not just to capture relevant information but also to gather information about researchers' understandings of the event and future understanding of the interaction that had occurred (Wengraf, 2001). The 15-minute interval between subsession one and subsession two, mentioned earlier, is to be used by the researcher to review the SHEIOT notes and to begin ordering and preparing the TQUINs necessary for subsession two. Moreover, I aimed to capture at least 10 points during subsession one and to scrutinise these 10 points during subsession two.

The gestalt theory, as mentioned above, is based on the idea that listening to the voice is far more telling than hearing the words. To this end, paralinguistic cues, in addition to facial expressions, body movements, eye contact, fidgeting, the contextual settings, to name but a few, create a sense of holistic awareness of what is really being communicated by the participants (Feucht *et al.*, 2017; Muylaert *et al.*, 2014). Wengraf (2001: 48) explains that interviews are thus not mere day-to-day conversations relying solely on words; interviews are rather to be considered as a gateway of endless communicative structures that are influenced by 'nonverbal communication and whole-body/whole-context events'. Gestalt encourages researchers to search for 'free behaviour' (Wengraf, 2001: 69) elicited by participants in order for researchers to place various displayed behaviour into context. Thus, behaviour free from external influences allows a truer depiction of internal expressions to be unleashed. Wengraf (2001: 69) sums up the importance of reaching and maintaining gestalt in the SQUIN design by stating that '... adopting an interview strategy that minimises ... the interviewer's concerns ..., the life-world, of the interviewee' could establish a smoother and more transparent account of participants' narratives.

The interview, much like any other interview, must be recorded. In this research study, the participants' interviews were audio recorded with their knowledge and permission, which is stipulated in the participant consent form (Appendix D). The audio recordings served as the record of the interviews (McGrath *et al.*, 2019; Poland, 1995) and the SHEIOT notes captured by the researcher became my cues for asking N-pointed questions at later stages during the interview (Wengraf, 2001). As mentioned earlier in this section, after the interview had taken place, the researcher needs to make notes on the experience of engaging in the first sub-session. These notes provided me with meaningful information that might not have been captured through the audio recordings nor by the notes during the interviews. This writing section requires the researcher to be completely open and honest in terms of jotting down all information entering the cognitive space of the researcher in that moment, despite the relevance or irrelevance of the thoughts. Wengraf (2001: 5) refers to this note-taking as 'instant-debriefing time'. It is also suggested that, similarly to participants being allowed the time to complete sharing their accounts in approximately one hour, the researcher should also recall and note-take for approximately one hour after the interview until all thoughts have been exhausted, as explained below in the free association method. In this case, daily scheduling and planning using the researcher journal was important (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

This freedom of thinking and recording of thoughts is underpinned by the free associative method. According to Galton (1879), two main categories of thought processing are foregrounded. The

first is the association of ideas through perspectives guided by the senses or prior experiences. The second category refers to these associated ideas being fixed based on the belief set of the individual. Galton elaborates on the association method, and does not focus on the second category at all. The free flow of ideas that are not to be forced or prepared speaks directly to the associative method (Joffe & Elsey, 2014; Galton, 1879). Galton (1879: 150) refers to these associated ideas as 'fleet' and 'obscure' and reiterates that these thoughts are not consciously created and shared. He suggests that the method of association is a free play of the mind, unobstructed and unrefined for a brief period of time. Galton's analyses led him to believe that participants' associations that were formed earlier in their lives exhibited a higher probability of repetition during the recollection period, and thus it was more likely that that experience or idea had more of an impact on that participant (Joffe & Elsey, 2014; Galton, 1879).

Subsession three is a second interview. Based on the in-depth and rigorous SQUIN answers received from the participants in subsessions one and two, a subsession three, in many instances, is not necessary. Despite the suggestion made by Wengraf (2001) to conduct subsession three on a separate day to subsession one and two, subsession three was conducted directly after subsession one and two. The reasoning behind conducting subsession three on the same day as subsession one and two was threefold. The first reason was that teachers typically lead very busy lives with administrative and teaching responsibilities; reason number two was that nine participants were involved in this study; hence it was extremely challenging to set up a second interview with each participant within the time constraints; and finally, the time limitations of interviewing participants were bounded by the completion time of this doctoral study. In the third subsession, more N-questions could be posed or additional questions, not necessarily N-questions, may be asked. Such questions include unanswered questions or additional information questions from the first interview. More questions were directed toward the reasoning behind the participants' artefact selections, how they related to these artefacts, and how these artefacts related to their views of who they are as teachers.

Referring to Figure 13 below, the Briggs-Wengraf model (Wengraf, 2001) foregrounds the components of the interview situation using the narrative inquiry methodology. It is a model that stresses the power play between emotions and unlearning the habits expected to be used during conversations. The power balance is evident in two regards in this model. The first being the power play that exists between the researcher and participant whereby the researcher is required to become solely an active listener and the participant is the enabler of the communicative events. The second aspect of power play exists between the researcher and the mind of the researcher,

remembering to not over-support or facilitate the interviews, even if the participants ‘dries [dry] up’ (Wengraf, 2004: 4).

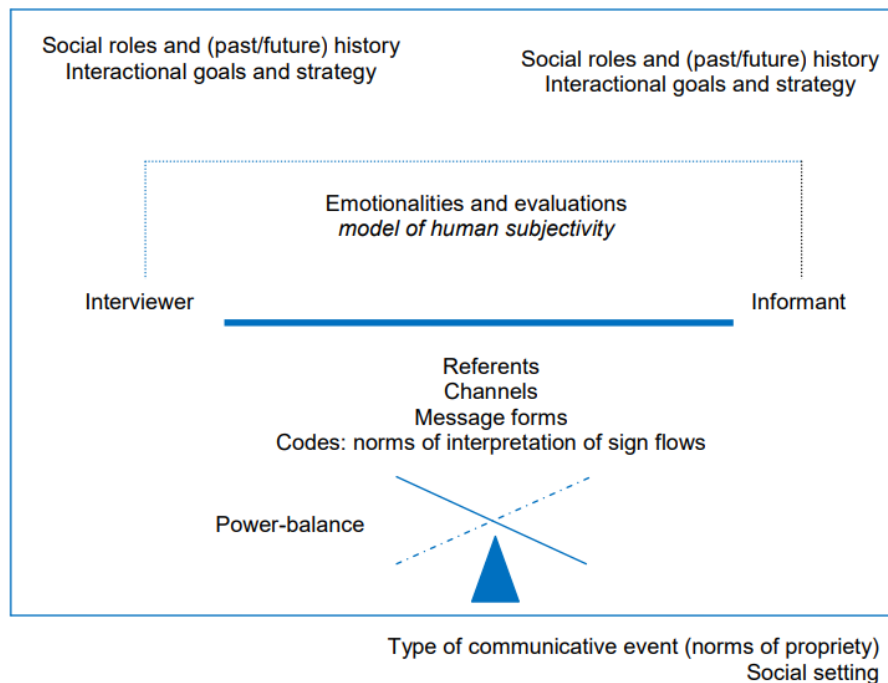


Figure 13: Briggs-Wengraf model of components of the interview situation (Wengraf, 2001)

During subsession one, the participants were doing most of the gravity-pulling, since the researcher took on the role of being solely an active listener. At the commencement of subsession two, topics raised by the participants during subsession one were discussed in greater detail. Topics could not alter in sequence (Wengraf, 2001) and this naturally encouraged the participants to redirect their focus on their experiences and use these recollections to continue their story-telling (Caine *et al.*, 2013). If asked by the participant, researchers are allowed to share information to create a more traditionally-based conversation. At this point of the data construction process, the fulcrum highlighted in Figure 13 tilted nearly equally between the participants and researcher. It is important to note that following the BNIM, this fulcrum did not display normal communicative characteristics.

4.2.1.3 Application of the biographic-narrative interpretive method

BNIM was applied in a methodical manner, whereby the method was separated using the tool, SQUIN which comprised of three subsessions (Figure 14). Each participant was provided with the same question, as outlined below, in order to maintain consistency:

Please tell me your story of how you became a teacher, what and who influenced your journey to becoming a teacher, your past and current experiences of being a teacher in South Africa, the good, the bad, and the ugly of being a teacher, all of your experiences and events which are important to you personally and professionally. In essence, tell me your story of who you are as a teacher.

As prescribed by the BNIM, the participants were not restricted by time (Wengraf, 2004). The SQUIN was stated and thereafter the remainder of the interview relied heavily on the participants. The IP teachers began unravelling their stories by searching and sorting through their thoughts and recollections (Riessman, 1993).

During the first subsession of BNIM, the main aim was to listen attentively and allow for the participants to talk in response to the posed SQUIN, as stated above. During this subsession, note-taking in bullet form was important in order to remember the sequence of the mentioned topics which assisted in gathering and organising the TQUINS (McGrath *et al.*, 2019; Wengraf, 2001). At the end of this subsession, a 15-minute interval was taken to review the SHEIOT notes and to begin ordering and preparing the TQUINS necessary for subsession two. Subsession two allowed for clarifying questions to be asked, in the same order as the participants' highlighted topics from subsession one, in a conversational approach. During subsession two, I was permitted to ask N-pointed questions using the TQUINS relating to the topics foregrounded by the participants in subsession one (Wengraf, 2001). Subsession three was completed on the same day as subsessions one and two, whereby semi-structured questions regarding their selected artefacts were posed. This subsession was used to ask questions to explore, understand, and connect the reasons behind the participants' artefact selections in relation to their stories. The following three semi-structured questions pertaining to their artefacts were emailed or sent via WhatsApp prior to the interview session:

Question 1: Why did you choose this object/artefact to symbolise you as a teacher?

Question 2: What about this object/artefact is significant to your experiences as a teacher?

Question 3: What specific parts of this object/artefact do you think best symbolise you as a teacher?

Thus, the participants were provided the chance to think about their artefacts and how they related these artefacts to their story (cf., Section 4.5.8: 154; Appendix B; Appendix F).

4.2.1.4 Summary of narrative inquiry

Narrative inquiry is a methodological framework that is bounded by time, space, and context. Based on its highly intensive subjective nature, hypotheses are not true measures that guide this methodology. Communicative structures are key to this methodology and stories are intended to be unearthed through 'active listening' by the researcher (Wengraf, 2001: 128). The researcher thus plays the role of a facilitator of free behaviour and open thinking supported by a gestalt of the participants. Subsessions one, two, and three in BNIM are structured in such a manner as to elicit participants' story-telling in its rawest forms. Despite the researcher not always being in complete control of the responses received and not knowing how to interpret the responses, it is of paramount importance for the researcher not to interrupt, even if it is just to clarify (Wengraf, 2001). Disruptions in this regard negatively influence the gestalt of the participants' narratives.

In summary, the research design underpinning this study was narrative inquiry of which BNIM was adopted (Wengraf, 2004). The tool that was used was SQUIN which is separated into three subsessions. Subsession one is engaging in the single-question format, in which the sole purpose of the researcher is to actively listen to the stories of the participants. In subsession two, the narrative follow-up, the SHEIOT notes that were captured during subsession one, were revisited and added to in order to be used as a guideline to prepare and order relevant N-questions. These N-questions needed to be linked to TQUINS. Subsession three was the optional second interview (Figure 14).

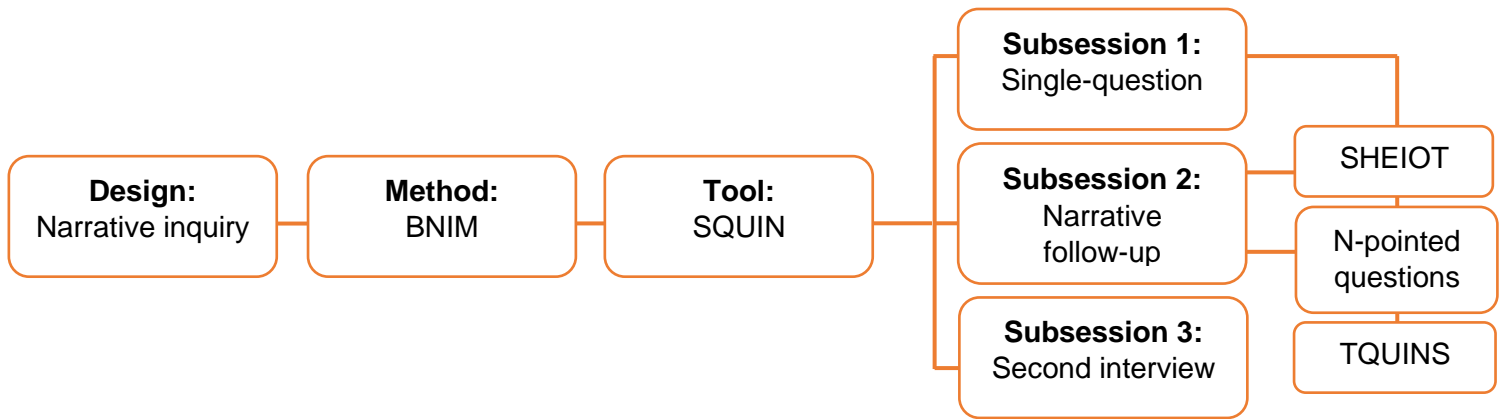


Figure 14: Visual outline of narrative inquiry underpinning this study

4.2.2 Arts-based inquiry

Rolling (2010: 110) states that arts-based inquiry is ‘capable of yielding outcomes taking researchers in directions the sciences cannot go’. Arts-based inquiry is the process of, in this case researchers and participants, attempting to understand the art for what it presents itself to be or become (Savin-Baden & Wimpenny, 2014). In this study, art, which was presented through the medium of artefacts, was used to understand the constructions of participants’ self-perceived credibility. The key feature of arts-based inquiry is to explore personal constructions of the participants. The arts are considered to be closely related to human experiences and elevate recollection of these experiences when referring to historical events. These historical accounts communicate reflexivity of the participants through the use of arts-based inquiry (Eaves, 2014). Art foregrounds the artist and in itself speaks volumes about who the artist is, as Savin-Baden and Wimpenny (2014: 2) put it ‘the artist is evident through the work’. An interesting stance taken by Rolling (2010: 108) suggests that arts-based research is a ‘de/re/construction of research methodology’.

The advantages of arts-based inquiry are proliferating. Arts-based inquiry possesses a participatory nature that welcomes openness, transparency, and innovative ways of understanding (Coemans & Hannes, 2017). An advantage of this inquiry is also that it uses a medium that can translate raw meaning under investigation. The arts-based inquiry is believed to be an important and necessary shift toward pluralistic research (Savin-Baden & Wimpenny, 2014). Weber (2014: 10) expresses that ‘Arts-based approaches to research expand(s) our knowledge base by including many of the neglected, but important ways in which we construct meaning...’. Furthermore, it is believed that arts-based inquiry fosters

reflexivity, breathes life into words and stories, ‘provoke[s] embodied responses’, and draws readers’ attention to the findings of studies (Weber, 2014: 10).

The arts-based inquiry came with its fair share of disadvantages, including being questioned about the science and evidence behind this inquiry (Coemans & Hannes, 2017). Moreover, the rationality of the inquiry is also foregrounded as a disadvantage in research. Weber (2014) highlights that some scholars might underestimate the value behind arts-based inquiry, suggesting that the complexity of the procedures and ethical considerations of the inquiry might not be completely understood. Weber exposes another challenge of arts-based inquiry, explaining that the deep and transparent involvement required in arts-based research may sometimes lead and add to what she refers to as the ‘ripple effect’ (Weber, 2014: 12). She argues that attention was not paid to the other, possibly more pressing, research avenues, due to the significance placed on the inquiry itself.

4.2.2.1 Arts-based method (ABM)

Eaves (2014) highlights the value behind ABM and explains that the connection through the creation process of the participants and artefacts creates deeper and more meaningful connections to elaborate and share narrative accounts. During the nineties, ABMs attracted increasing interest in developing research approaches and has grown ever since (Coemans & Hannes, 2017). Elliot Eisner was an educationist scholar and coined ABMs based on his exploration into the blending of traditional research with creative work (Savin-Baden & Wimpenny, 2014). The nature of ABMs encourages different perspectives and understandings of phenomena due to its experiential and explorative elements. Conventionally, ABMs are used as a means of data collection techniques or dissemination systems (Coemans & Hannes, 2017). In the context of this study, I use an ABM in the form of an artefact that is specifically selected by each participant based on their self-perceived credibility constructions. I do not, however, replace the traditional narrative interview methods with the ABM. In this study, as a methodological advancement, I propose using ABMs alongside narrative inquiry to support the process of interpretation of participants’ responses.

The use of ABM then summons experiences within specific contexts, which is supported using the BNIM, discussed earlier. In this study, I use artefacts as a medium to allow for a whole depiction of understanding the participants’ storied lives. ABMs are used as a tool to support the ‘communication’ process of participants (Coemans & Hannes, 2017). The research process of researchers and participants can often be influenced by an awareness of what professional


behaviour requires, accompanied by a constant worry about 'Are my answers good enough, or correct?' Moreover, the recording, whether it be audio or visual (in this study, participants' stories were audio recorded), can create a sense of apprehension from participants as well as researchers and takes away from the 'rawness' of the shared narratives. The use of ABMs, in this light, can bring a sense of comfort and control experienced by the participants during the [non-traditional] interview sessions: comfort, because participants may feel less apprehensive toward sharing their narratives based on an artefact and thus a friendlier environment is established to support a more 'natural-like' setting for communication to occur; and control, as participants are asked in advance, prior to the interview, to select any artefact that they think best symbolises who they think they are as teachers.

Hernández-Hernández and Fendler (2013: ix) maintain that experiences are authenticated through artistic encounters by stating that art 'becomes research when practices are articulated as inquiry'. Despite the traditional trends of using narrative inquiry methods to find answers to research questions, phenomenon being studied are greater than that of simply reiterating events through words (Hernández-Hernández & Fendler, 2013). The convergence of ABMs with other methods used accentuates the stories that are being told. Art allows for the explicit engagement of participants to connect with innate emotions, allowing another element or dimension to form part of the research which encourages the participants to engage in deeper inquiry. This deep inquiry includes verbal communicative events to depict stories and other senses such as touch and sound, which allows a greater understanding by the researchers of the relayed messages.

4.2.2.2 Artefacts

Artefacts are pieces of art that can take on various forms and shapes (Eaves, 2014). Artefacts can include objects, mouldings, paintings, sculptures, collages, posters, summaries, letters, articles, photographs, and so forth. In essence, artefacts have the potential to expose experiences based on aspects of the artefact or the entire artefact. The art elements, visually represented in Table 6 below, bring life and texture to the narratives of the participants in which deep meaning-making can be achieved (Becker, 2020). Aspects of artefacts can be highlighted by participants to create the starting point or continuity of their stories. The selection of artefacts by the participants in this study was purely based on personal association with the artefact and thus spoke directly to free association (cf., Section 4.2.3.2: 121) (Foster, 2012). Artefacts are thus intentional overlaps between the construction of the self and an inanimate object that fosters a sense of understanding and association.

Table 6: Table visualising the elements of art using an artefact example and descriptions

Element of art	Artefact	Description
Line		<p>Focus: moving point in space. The continuous lines forming circles, specifically the chain itself and the six cylindrical components showcase strength and unity within the classroom. I encourage my learners and I to function as a family, to showcase values such as dependability, responsibility, and kindness toward each other.</p>
Shape		<p>Focus: two-dimensional. The final connecting link on the chain creating the 'wholeness' of the chain represents the power of the teacher directing and guiding the classroom and lessons.</p>
Form		<p>Focus: volume. Each link represents learners in my classroom, and so I believe that every link has its purpose to play. After all, a teacher is only as strong as his/her weakest link.</p>
Value		<p>Focus: light contrast. Some parts of the chain are shinier than other parts, and this speaks to aspects of myself as a teacher that I consider to be my strengths such as subject knowledge, methodologies, and emotional intelligence, and the duller parts I refer to as my weaknesses and consider aspects of development such as patience, parental communication, and dealing with the stress that being a teacher comes with.</p>
Space		<p>Focus: depth. The concept of depth I regard as the six cylindrical components in the chain. Each cylinder structure representing the pillars of who I believe I am as a teacher and this showcases the depth of my personality. I am compassionate, passionate, determined, responsible, competent, and perseverant in who I consider myself to be as a teacher. Just like these six cylinders add character to the chain, the depth of these cylinders provide character to my practice as a teacher.</p>
Colour		<p>Focus: hue, value, and intensity. I chose a gold chain because I consider myself a winner. I am quite the competitive candidate and I thrive on feeling like I am the</p>

		<p>best. I think that this trait that I have shines through into my teaching practice. For example, on a weekly basis each class has an order chart and I ensure that my learners know that we reach for gold, every day. This trait spills over into Go-kart Day, whereby each class competes for first prize in terms of best dressed, number of laps ran, and most money raised, and in this case, I ensure that my learners work hard to achieve the best results we can achieve together.</p>
Texture		<p>Focus: feeling. The chain looks to be quite smooth to touch, however when actually touched has little elements of bumps and humps. I liken this to how people may view me as a teacher of maybe having it all together and ensuring that things are completed on time and to standard, however when one looks closely, I too have moments of distress that cause chaos to my practice and my presence in the classroom.</p>

The purpose of Table 6 displays how artefacts can be used by participants to foster memory recall and meaning-making linked to experiences. The elements of art are highlighted in this table to foreground the importance of the dimensions that could be used by participants to create meaning of their experiences through their associations with the various artistic aspects within their artefacts.

Considering the nature of ABM and the complexity of art, the subjective elements of the artists are heightened and ever-evident in the entire process of data collection. Participants' selection of artefacts was a lever of control in highlighting their subjectivity underpinning their narratives. I decided to use artefacts as a design of ABMs in this study to support the participants in sharing their stories. This design interrupts the structure of daily thought processes and attempts to eliminate the logic behind the sharing of participants' constructions. Similarly to the ideas underpinning the work of Savin-Baden and Wimpenny (2014), I intended to provoke the participants' thought process prior to the interviews. The idea behind this design was to provide time for participants to think about their constructions of their self-perceived credibility before the actual interview.

In summary, I refer to Table 7 below to simply outline the research designs and methods underpinning the study. It is a brief tabulation of the research designs and methods.

Table 7: Summary of the research design and methods

Research designs	Narrative inquiry	Arts-based inquiry
Methods	BNIM (Biographic-narrative interpretive method)	ABM (Arts-based method)
Tools	SQUIN (Single question aimed at inducing narrative)	Artefacts

4.2.3 Blurring the boundaries between narrative and arts-based inquiry

In this section, I propose an advancement in methodology in which I suggest blurring the lines between narrative inquiry and arts-based inquiry. In this study, I initially wanted to use clay sculptures as a method to allow participants to recall their experiences and share their constructions of their credibility. However, after much reconsideration, I decided to use artefacts as a second tool underpinning this study, which is further discussed in the previous section. The reason for not using the clay sculptures was based on the resistance by some participants to touching the clay, I was also cognisant of the fact that all of my participants are teachers who are often overwhelmed with administrative and extramural duties. With reference to my own experiences of being a current teacher, I realised that I would also have found it onerous to have to build a clay sculpture after school as well as having to engage in an hour-long interview.

The recollection of ideas, events, and past experiences are all but a construction of what we think happened. Based on the emotions experienced in those past events, a collection of moments pose itself to be recalled as an experience (Luchetti *et al.*, 2016; Schutz, 1967). Narrative inquiry is a design that aims to awaken such experiences and outlines them to be viewed as life histories and subjective accounts of recollected experiences (Clandinin & Huber, 2010). The regathering and narrating of these accounts are believed to be recalled in clusters or chunks of memories (Wengraf, 2004). These clusters are then recalled according to the level of importance or impact which is used to interpret the scene of individual participants and their stories (Schutz, 1967).

To this end, memories are created and remembered based on experiences in those moments and in the moments of recollections (Zeferino & Carraro, 2013). Verbally storied lives cannot be told in isolation to just words (Foster, 2012). A true recollection will account for a holistic experience of those moments, using kinaesthetic movement for example. Just like each lived life unfolds in chronological events, so too does the recollection of these moments that in totality retell the life story of a participant (Flick, 2018; Squire, 2013). Personal narratives highlight several

performative features (Riessman, 2012). To identify such features requires active listening skills from researchers throughout the narratives (Wengraf, 2001). Participants may stress specific words or phrases, enhance detail in specific sections of the narratives, provide direct quotes that were recalled, attempting to appeal to the audience, paralinguistic cues ('uhms', 'hmms', and 'ahhs'), and patterned body movements (Riessman, 2012).

4.2.3.1 Gestalt theory

Gestalt psychology, as discussed above, was founded in 1910 by Max Wertheimer, Kurt Koffka, and Wolfgang Köhler. According to Behrens (1998), the gestalt theory has many overlaps with art. Max Wertheimer thought of the idea of motion pictures during a train ride whereby lights flashed by at the train crossing. An idea similar to that of Wertheimer's was a toy called a 'zoetrope' (Figure 15). The 'zoetrope' showed a strip of pictures, which were placed on the inside of the toy, and it was viewed through the slits on the outside of the toy. The illusion of a moving picture was thus seen based on a succession of stationary pictures spinning. In agreement with Wertheimer (1944), Ehrenfels (1980) proposes a music theory of 'if a melody and notes ... are so independent, then a whole is not simply the sum of its parts, but a synergistic 'whole effect' or gestalt' (Behrens, 1998: 299). In agreement with Ehrenfels (1980), Wertheimer (1944) argues that movement is not led by individual elements instead by dynamic interactions.

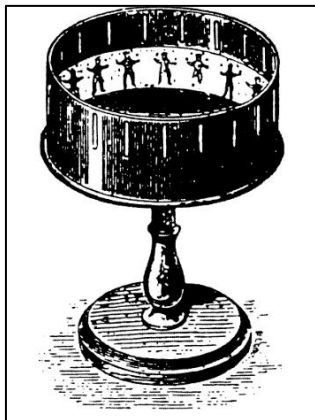


Figure 15: The 'zoetrope' toy which displays motion pictures invented before 1850 by W. G Horner in England (Behrens, 1998)

Wertheimer (1944) concludes that some gestalts are influenced by innate inclinations to find a sense of belongingness. He suggests that tendencies to group experiences in specific ways are not learned. Three important findings are foregrounded: elements are inevitably part of the whole;

similarity in judgments are comparative; and ABMs are purposefully created to elicit contrasting elements that highlight connectedness and differences (Wertheimer, 1944). These compositions elevated in art are shown in Photograph 2 below. The image was captured by myself at the Zeitz Art Museum in Cape Town, South Africa. Behrens (1998) argues that the grid lines used in art, much like Photograph 2, uses parallel formations that create a lattice. Like the gestalt theory, 'edges that align in space appear to belong together' (Behrens, 1998: 301). Hence, the recollection of memories in a chronological order or an order that follows the gestalt theory suggests that memories, according to the impact, justify the recollection order of experiences in narrative events (Larsson & Sjöblom, 2010; Rosenthal, 2004). According to Photograph 2, the gestalt theory showcases the smaller pieces of art, which in totality creates the whole picture of the art piece. I decided to use this art piece as the smaller art elements were labelled as grid coordinates and together created a sense of belongingness, mentioned earlier, as pieces in the telling of a whole story.



Photograph 2: An art piece displayed in the Zeitz Art Museum in Cape Town, South Africa by William Kentridge named 'Thinking about the forest and the tree' (September 2019)

It is necessary to consider physiological recollections within the verbal encounter during narratives to produce a holistic picture of each of the participants (Hernández-Hernández & Fendler, 2013; Andrade, 2007). To best understand the relationships, senses of the moments need to be

interpreted (Wertheimer, 1944). Wertheimer (1944) suggests that science deals with two schools of thought. The first being mutually exclusive components, whereby the parts of the whole do not display signs of interrelatedness. The second being parts instead of components, that are positioned with careful consideration to the role that each part contributes to the whole. Hence, Wertheimer (1944: 143) expresses his understanding of the two schools of thought by referring to the 'interpretation from below'. This suggests that the parts of the whole are recollected in the form of memories and may have displayed disjointedness to the entire experience being recalled. However, the fragmented experiences still provide enough information to interpret the sense behind the event of recollection. He then also proposes the 'interpretation from above' (Wertheimer, 1944: 143), to which he refers to as the second school of thought. He went on to explain that the whole event determines the behaviour of the recollected parts brought up by the participants.

The gestalt theory sets a reminder to be aware of the emotions connected to the recollection of the parts of the story and that the answers are not to be misinterpreted as just verbal communicative events (Behrens, 1998). Rather, gestalt under narrative inquiry should be used as a motivation to explore the entirety of the situation that was experienced (Eaves, 2014; Clandinin & Huber, 2010). It was to this end that Wertheimer (1944: 143) theorises that 'interpretation from above' be given the credit that it deserved in working with senses and mental recollection.

4.2.3.2 Free association method

Galton (1879) suggests that the free association method was reliant on thought processes of participants and could be categorised under two main headings. The first category referred to ideas presenting themselves by means of association, namely with regard to an object, or in this study artefacts, perceived through the use of senses or through the connection of prior ideas. In the second category of association, it was proposed that ideas are static and brought to life through providing the idea with attention, hence consciously thinking about the ideas.

Similar to the decision taken by Galton (1879), to only consider the first category of association in his study, I too decided that my study would focus more on the idea of association by means of objects [artefacts] using senses. Participants' stories were led by ideas that were not directed or summoned, instead were automatically recalled based on events with high impact on their storied lives (Kris, 2002; Schutz, 1967). These associated ideas, proposed by Galton (1879), were

believed to be consciously summoned, shared, and recorded through narrative accounts. It was, once again, important to highlight the faintness of the mind when recalling past events (Galton, 1879), and keeping in mind that the mind is a continuous machine of thought-provoking memoirs (Zeferino & Carraro, 2013). It was because of this element of the mind that past events tend to have gaps that are forgotten or unable to be recalled precisely. This provides the rationale of this study's proposal of using the Wertheimer (1944) gestalt theory, discussed above, and the free association method posed by Galton (1879) to manifest a holistic depiction of participants' stories.

Galton (1879) explains his method by allowing the participants' minds to experience a sense of free play for a brief period to the point of allowing a few ideas to pass through the mind. Thereafter, he proposed in the process of the mind recalling the echoes of those passing ideas. The aim of the method was to pay complete attention to those ideas to awaken a sense of awareness of these ideas. The participants were then required to solely focus on these ideas, stabilise them, scrutinise them, and record, through their narrative, the precise interpretation of their recalled moments (Clandinin & Huber, 2010; Galton, 1879).

The free association method brings about freedom for the mind to make connections and disconnections to lived experiences by means of an artefact (Johnson & Rasuloova, 2017; Eaves, 2014). To some extent, artefacts could thus be used to awaken the beginning of the recollection process. The artefact is to be used as an associative tool guiding what participants decided to talk about as well as what the participants chose not to talk about. According to Galton (1879), the repetition of thoughts by participants was noticeable during the recollection process and was described by Kris (2002: 830) as a 'relative freedom of conscious control'. Therefore, the nature of the free association method used participants' introspections to make sense of their constructions of understanding.

This method encourages participants to become comfortable and encourages the expression of thoughts, emotions, and sensations using the artefacts. Saying what comes to mind was of great importance to the success of this method. I used the free association method in two ways in this study. The first aspect of this method was viewed in the unstructured stories of the participants, expressed with no disruptions, and the second aspect was the researcher's part in writing down and recording all that came to mind after the completion of the interviews, as suggested by Wengraf (2001). The key of the free association method was to attempt to find meaning in the associations communicated by the participants.

Narratives following the free association method were characterised by a lack of structure according to unconscious logic (Hollway & Jefferson, 2013). This method was based on allowing pathways to be followed based on emotional accounts and overlooking rational ideas. Hollway and Jefferson (2013) support the proposal of this study of blurring the boundaries between narrative inquiry and free association methods. In using the free association method, narratives were incoherent and messy (Rolling, 2010). Subsequently, this method defied traditional narrative methods and allowed researchers the opportunity to be alerted of these incoherences through the narratives (Kris, 2002). Such incoherences included contradictory statements, avoidances, and inaccurate recollections, and provides a pathway for researchers to read between the lines to create a whole story by using the parts in their constructions of their storied lives.

4.3 Paradigmatic positioning

According to Kuhn (2012), a paradigm is considered to be a representation of understandings, common beliefs, and views within a community. A paradigm is a lens through which values, beliefs, and practices contribute to the holistic vision of interpretation of a specific event or reality. In line with my choice of a qualitative approach, I employed the interpretivist paradigm throughout the study. This paradigm adopts a humanistic approach focusing on observations and understanding (Taylor & Medina, 2013). In this section, I discuss the ontology (theory of reality and being), epistemology (theory of knowing and knowledge), research design and methods, and methodology (theory of data collection methods) (Aliyu, Singhry, Adamu, & AbuBakar, 2015; Crotty, 1998).

4.3.1 Ontology

Following the interpretivist paradigm, the study guided me toward a relativist ontology whereby multiple realities are believed to exist (Tuli, 2010). A relativist ontology relates to the recollections of events and experiences in a subjective manner in which experiences are viewed independently in comparison to other peoples' experiences (Tuli, 2010) and are believed to be 'socially and psychologically constructed' (Yilmaz, 2013: 312). Furthermore, arts-based inquiry can be considered as both a qualitative and a quantitative approach (Rolling, 2010), however for the purpose of this study, I ontologically argue that arts-based inquiry is experiential, performative, pluralistic, and iterative in its nature (Becker, 2020; Foster, 2012; Rolling, 2010). Rolling (2010) argues that arts-based inquiry is part of a relativist ontology due to the fact that all ideas and

constructions of experiences, significant or insignificant, are subject to interpretation and reinterpretation. He further elaborates on the influence of paradigm shifts and explains that ‘... reinterpretation have [has] always been a threat to the continuity of dominant paradigms of thought ...’ (Rolling, 2010: 107).

4.3.2 Epistemology

Epistemology is considered to be the lens through which readers are able to relate to and understand the content presented within a study (Harper, 2011; Tuli, 2010). Therefore, the epistemology of a study forms the ‘how’ behind the knower and the known (Yilmaz, 2013; Tuli, 2010). I adopted a constructivist epistemology which encourages a sense of exploration of individualised-constructed realities (Hernández-Hernández & Fendler, 2013). According to Yilmaz (2013: 312), a constructivist epistemology ‘assumes to be a socially constructed dynamic reality ... which is value-laden, flexible, descriptive, holistic, and context-sensitive’. Therefore, this epistemological framework focuses on understanding the construction of social experiences and the meanings behind these constructions.

Following this epistemology, the researcher is required to place a large amount of attention on establishing and developing personal, comfortable, and empathetic relationships with the participants (Cohen *et al.*, 2007). Hence, in this research study, I focus on the context, interpretation, and understanding of IP teachers’ constructions of their credibility. I paid attention to developing and sustaining empathetic relationships with the participants such that they felt comfortable enough to share their stories. I did not, however, get too personal and friendly with the participants as this would traverse the ethical boundaries of the study.

4.3.3 Research methodology

Creswell *et al.* (2007: xvii) explain the difference between research methods and research methodologies by stating that a research method can be viewed as the ‘data collection and analysis’ and a research methodology as ‘the entire research process from the problem identification to data analysis’. In this section, I discuss the participant selection, focusing on the nine participants’ profiles and the research sites. Next, I elaborate on the data construction process, highlighting narrative interviews, personal artefacts, and the two sampling techniques, namely purposive and snowball sampling. Then, I discuss the documentation techniques used and finally, I explain the data analysis and interpretation.

4.3.3.1 Participant selection

Gathering and constructing data are fundamental elements in contributing to the body of theoretical knowledge (Etikan *et al.*, 2016). Therefore, in order to marry the theory with the data, a sound judgment in the collection process of data must be obtained. The collection of data is a complex and detailed process that requires careful thinking of how to go about selecting participants whilst remaining cognisant of the purpose and focus of the study. Accordingly, Etikan *et al.* (2016: 1) suggest that the techniques should be chosen based on 'the type, nature and purpose of the study'. The main driving force behind the data collection selection is the research questions, as ultimately these questions are what the research is trying to answer (Taherdoost, 2016).

With the aim of finding transparent and valuable answers to research studies' proposed research questions, not all sample sizes, participants, and cases would be suitable. For these reasons, Taherdoost (2016) proposes six sampling process steps that are to be considered by researchers in order to assist with the conducting of sample selections. The first step includes clearly outlining the target population; step two focuses on selecting a sample frame. Steps three and four highlights the need to select a suitable sampling technique(s) and to critically think about the appropriate sample size, respectively. Collection of the data frames step five, and finally step six is to evaluate the response rate of the participants. In alignment with these six steps, I outline my sampling process.

Since Taherdoost (2016) generally outlines the six steps to be adopted in both qualitative and quantitative studies, I adapt some of the proposed steps to better suit my research study and data collection process. Since I was pressed for time as an IP teacher and a full-time doctoral candidate, I needed to select a target population that was realistic, but was also necessary and beneficial to the study. To this end, I made use of data saturation, which highlights the end of the data collection process (Liu, 2016). Data saturation is characterised by data that has become redundant and refers to the point where no new data is emergent (Flick, 2018). Therefore, I decided to interview participants for this study. The second step was to frame the sample. This step was partially completed during the application for ethical clearance as the DBE required an application form to be completed for researchers to conduct research in schools in and around the Gauteng province. To this end, I made a list of possible schools that I could approach to search for participants. It is important to note that within this step, I needed to remain cognisant

that the proposed samples that I considered needed to be representative of the broader population of schools and teachers in Gauteng (Taherdoost, 2016).

Step three required me to choose suitable sampling techniques. Taherdoost (2016) categorises sampling techniques into probability sampling and non-probability sampling. Since my study followed a qualitative approach, I selected non-probability sampling (Yilmaz, 2013). As I immersed myself deeper into the literature, I discovered two techniques that best suited my study's purpose and research questions (Etikan *et al.*, 2016). I used the purposive sampling technique (Etikan *et al.*, 2016) to select IP teachers within the Gauteng region in South Africa. Once I found a few suitable participants, I asked for their assistance in connecting me with other eligible participants. This technique spoke to snowball sampling (Baltar & Brunet, 2012). I needed to identify fitting participants who abided to the criteria of this research study. All of the participants needed to be IP teachers who had experience in teaching within the IP. I continued with data collection until the data had reached saturation (Liu, 2016), which led me to interviewing nine participants in this qualitative study. This then completed step four of the sampling process proposed by Taherdoost (2016).

Step five entailed collecting the data from the research sites. This meant me finding suitable participants and asking if they would be interested in participating in this research study. Once and if the participants had agreed to participate, I emailed the headmaster consent forms to the respective headmasters and asked them for permission to interview the identified teachers. In this aspect, steps five and six were closely related, as step six required me to evaluate the response rates of the participants and headmasters. The response rates varied dramatically, and most times I had to follow up or resend the consent forms. The headmaster consent forms often were not signed and instead the headmasters had written me an email of approval. Thereafter, I had to arrange suitable meeting times and dates with each of the participants to conduct the interviews. Due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, I had to communicate with the headmasters and participants via Whatsapp and/or email and conduct interviews via Zoom.

Below, I discuss the participants' profiles and research sites.

i. Participant profiles

In this section, I discuss the profiles of the participants who were selected and who gave their consent, verbally and in writing, to participate in this research study and I elaborate on the research sites.

Prior to the selection of participants, I decided to choose the sampling techniques that would support my participant selection process. I chose purposive and snowball sampling techniques, which are further discussed in the upcoming section (cf., Section 4.3.3.2: 130). These sampling techniques assisted me in ensuring that I adhered to my ethical pledges, specifically voluntary participation. Thus, by using the purposive sampling technique, I had a set criterion of finding and selecting teachers, specifically IP teachers, within the South Africa context, Gauteng province. By using the snowball sampling, I strictly adhered to the ethical consideration of voluntary participation, whereby I could not ask headmasters to select suitable teachers to engage in my research study, as this would not constitute voluntary consent from the participants. Therefore, snowball sampling was better suited to scout for suitable participants, as the participants who I had considered and approached had the opportunity to accept or decline their participation.

Being an IP teacher myself, I was well aware of the stresses and pressures placed on teachers during the academic year (Mahmud, 2014) which causes teachers to have limited time to spare outside of their professional demands (Day & Leitch, 2001). Day and Leitch (2001) report on one of their participants, Peter, who explained that the demands placed on teachers were real and draining. Peter went on to share that the increased work load placed on teachers was taking 'over increasing amounts of his personal time' (Day & Leitch, 2001: 408). With these factors in mind, in combination with my personal teaching experiences, I felt anxious about having to ask teachers to set aside time, approximately an hour, to engage in a research interview. Moreover, under the lockdown circumstances that the world was facing (Hamzelou, 2020), teachers were more overwhelmed and apprehensive about completing the curriculum and catching up with lost time and thus turned to virtual teaching tools and techniques, which was a fairly new venture in education (Mhlanga & Moloi, 2020). Hence, with the uncertain and changing times experienced and ahead of us, I understood that trying to find participants who were willing to spend time doing an interview might be more challenging than I had anticipated.

Nonetheless, I asked various IP teachers, putting the purposive and snowball sampling techniques to use, to participate in this study. After several rejections, I managed to find enough

suitable participants to engage in my research study. Despite all the challenges, I found a diverse sample group to represent my research study. The sample population included IP teachers who varied in racial profiles; spanned different ages; specialised in different learning areas; taught only within South Africa and who taught globally; taught in mainstream and special needs schools; ranged in current teaching districts and sectors, specifically private and public; included both males and females; who had varying years of experience; and had different places of origin. I placed much attention on trying to find a diverse population to represent this study, such that the sample was a true depiction of a small section of South African teachers. However, I do acknowledge that this qualitative study included a rather small sample size, specifically nine participants in total, and this was by no means a generalised population of South African IP teachers (Yilmaz, 2013).

Table 8 below summarises the profiles of the participants based on gender, race, age, the number of years of teaching experience, and schooling sector.

Table 8: Biographical information pertaining to the participants

Number	Pseudonym	Gender	Race	Age	Years of experience	Public/Private school
1	Caterina	Female	Asian	29	3,5	-
2	Sharylene	Female	Coloured	31	6	-
3	Mbali	Female	White	29	7	Public
4	Alexa	Female	Coloured	27	5	Private
5	Jayal	Female	White	38	15	Private
6	Carlene	Female	White	33	9	Private
7	Laurel	Female	African	32	5	Private
8	Christina	Female	White	28	5	Private
9	Katlego	Male	Coloured	53	27	Private

ii. Research sites

The research sites were chosen according to the participants who had agreed to partake in this research study. All of the sites varied drastically culturally, contextually, economically, politically, and socially. Moreover, I also ensured that I included both government and independent sector schools in this study. By including both public and private sector schooling, I was able to include a wide range of IP teachers across various schools in and around the Gauteng province.

Government or public schools are mainly funded by the South African DBE, and independent or private schools are funded by parents and private investors and function independently, unlike schools under the DBE (Languille, 2016; Department of Basic Education, 2015).

The last three decades have witnessed increasing trends of private investors injecting funds into the education field (Languille, 2016). Based on these educational investments within South Africa, access to basic education has improved, however academic performance has stagnated. Chisholm (2004) argues that this stagnation evident in South Africa's educational performance is largely due to the inequalities contouring South Africa as a country. Chisholm specifically highlights this inequality through economic and political discrepancies amongst the South African population. To this end, Languille (2016: 529) draws a distinction between private versus public sector schools and contends that private schools, even though classified as 'affordable', 'do not cater mainly for poor children' and that 'a small elite sector ... charges high tuition fees and delivers high-quality education'. Globally, private sector schooling tends to be increasing based on the quality of education received and the increased chances of entering higher education institutions (Smith & Joshi, 2016). Therefore, I found it important to include teachers from both public and private sector schools within this study.

In order to remain committed to my researcher pledge of safeguarding the participants and schools' identities, I used pseudonyms for the schools. As part of my obligation to ensure that I ethically adhered to privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity (cf., Section 4.4: 146), I decided to use the Greek alphabet letters in place of the actual schools' names. Moreover, by using the Greek alphabet letters instead of making up school names, I was able to avoid any biases I might have had about the schools. Hence, for the first school, I used the pseudonym 'School Alpha'. With reference to Table 9 below, the various research sites and a description of each site are given to provide the reader with a more holistic understanding of the schools used in this research study.

Table 9: The various research sites used in this study and a brief description of each site

Research sites	Description
School Alpha	Double medium school, government, one participant.
School Beta	Culturally oriented, independent, two participants.
School Chi	Academically renowned, value-driven, independent, one participant.
School Delta	Religiously oriented, independent, two participants.
School Epsilon	Academically renowned, value-driven, independent, one participant.
Own school	Two participants did not work at a school at the time of the interviews. Due to personal circumstances, these teachers were either teaching part-time or planning to relocate to a school outside of the South African context.

School Alpha focuses more attention on their sports and cultural interests and less attention on religious practices. The learner population is relatively large, with a larger teacher to learner ratio. School Beta focuses more on cultural practices and teaching. Unlike School Alpha, School Beta has a small learner population and a small teacher to learner ratio. School Chi is a prestigious school that focuses much of its attention on learner academic performance and less on sports. School Delta, much like Schools Beta and Chi, has a small teacher to learner ratio. School Delta places much of its attention on instilling religious practices and less on sports and cultural activities. School Epsilon, in many ways, is fairly similar to that of School Chi and is mainly driven by its values, teaching, and academic performance. Moreover, at School Epsilon, the teacher to learner ratio is fairly small.

4.3.3.2 Construction of data

Considering that I intend to employ narrative inquiry and arts-based inquiry, I will position myself as a qualitative researcher in this study. A qualitative research positioning takes on a flexible and inductive reason-making approach (Maxwell, 2013). This approach can be compared to a mouldable structure that should be built, broken down, and rebuilt into an essence that best fits the truest form of the data (Maxwell, 2013). In the upcoming sections, I provide an overview of the data construction process, I discuss narrative interviews and personal artefacts as data construction methods. I then elaborate on the sampling techniques that I employed to construct the data, specifically purposive and snowball sampling.

It is worth mentioning that although traditionally referred to as data collection, in this research study, I refer to the data collection process as data construction. The reasoning behind the

substitution of 'construction' in place of 'collection' is that the terminology used within the study was in line with the methodological decisions contouring the study. Thus, considering that I used a blend of narrative and art-based inquiries, I was not necessarily 'collecting' data from the participants through a traditional interview-like setup, such as a semi-structured interview (Pathak & Intrat, 2012). Instead, I employed the BNIM (Wengraf, 2001) and participants' personally selected artefacts, which summoned their creative beings (Eaves, 2014). Moreover, to blur the lines between the two designs (cf., Section 4.2.3: 118), I drew on tenets from the gestalt theory (Ehrenfels, 1980) and the free association method (Joffe & Else, 2014). Therefore, the participants were in control of their own constructions of their self-perceived credibility and I, as the researcher, was reporting on these constructions. Therefore, the data was not so much collected, but rather constructed.

i. Overview of data construction process

In Appendix E, I created a research schedule based on the interactions and time spent with the participants. This appendix outlines the data construction activities engaged in. The data construction and documentation followed a process that was guided by Wengraf (2001) and is also discussed in the audit trail (cf., Section 4.5.8: 154). The data construction process was grounded on three broad steps.

Firstly, upon initial contact with each of the participants, I had explained that they would be required to engage in an hour-long interview with me which was audio recorded. During this engagement, I also asked the participants to carefully think about and select an artefact that they thought best symbolised them as teachers. The participants were then asked to bring these artefacts to the interview. Once they had selected their artefacts, I asked the participants to think about three questions that would be asked at the end of the interview. I sent these three questions to the participants within the initial contact message.

The second step entailed contacting the headmasters of each of the schools. I decided that the most efficient, convenient, and professional manner to contact the headmasters was via email. I explained the topic of the study and the procedure within the email. Towards the end of the email, I asked the headmasters to read through the headmaster consent form (Appendix C), sign on the relevant pages, and return the signed consent forms at their earliest convenience.

The third and final step in the data construction process was the reading and signing of the participant consent forms (Appendix D). Once the participant consent forms were signed, I was

able to begin conducting the interviews. I asked for the participants' verbal consent, in addition to their signed consent, to audio record the interviews. Each interview began with a few general questions about the participants to break the ice and create a more comfortable environment. Some of these general questions included the participants' age, origin, and years of experience. I then created a tick box, for my guidance, at the top of the interview schedule (Appendix F), reminding me to have all consent forms signed, to audio record the interview, and to take pictures of the artefacts. I then began with the introductory section of the interview, explaining how the SQUIN (Wengraf, 2001) was going to work. Once the participants were done sharing their stories, I asked N-pointed questions and TQUINS based on the SQUIN to search for clarity in their narratives. Lastly, I asked the three artefact-related questions, which were sent to the participants prior to the interview, and these three questions were asked in a semi-structured interview manner. Each interview lasted between 40 minutes and one hour. Once I had the audio recordings of the interviews, I sent them through for transcribing after the confidentiality agreement was read and signed by the transcriptionist (Appendix G).

Throughout the data construction process, I made use of one of my researcher journals, specifically the daily schedule and planning journal, to capture notes and observations noticed throughout the interview (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). These captured notes were in addition to the notes written on the interview schedule. I used the interview schedule notes to capture the aspects of the participants stories, focusing on the main elements and order of recalled events. I tried to jot down at least 10 points for each narrative. These notes guided me in asking the N-pointed questions and TQUINS. I used my research journal to jot down any other observations that were noticed during the interviews. These notes were written down after the interview was completed (Wengraf, 2004).

ii. Narrative interviews

Narrative interviews are considered natural forms of communication that tap into participants' stories and journeys (Clandinin, 2006). The role of the researcher needs to become a passive one, which requires much attention to be paid to the researchers' verbal and nonverbal languages being conveyed during the interviews. The researcher is required to attentively and meaningfully listen to the participants' narratives, with minimal disruptions or distractions (Wengraf, 2004).

I agree with Muylaert *et al.* (2014) that narrative interviews bring about a sense of transparency in the construction of others' narratives. If used correctly, narrative interviews unearth stored

memories and experiences that support the constructions of participants' self-perceived credibility through stories. Stories are time capsules that release understanding of experiences and emotions that are socially and contextually constructed (Yilmaz, 2013). For participants to make sense of their worlds, they need to make sense of their stories, which ultimately contours their teacher credibility constructions (Murray, 2014).

I decided to use narrative interviews because it aligned neatly with the constructivist epistemology underpinning this research study (Hernández-Hernández & Fendler, 2013). In transparently exploring IP teachers' constructions of their self-perceived credibility, I refrained from inviting my personal biases as an IP teacher myself. I wanted the participants' voices to be heard, thus I decided to commit to the selected research design of inquiring, and employed the BNIM (Wengraf, 2001). By following the path suggested by Wengraf, I used the SQUIN to minimise my voice and perceptions as a researcher and redirected my researcher role into a passive state in addition to being an active and engaged listener. I found this to be the best technique to use to elicit authentic and thorough narratives from the participants. Using narrative interviews encouraged a scene of storytelling and led participants to share and construct their teacher identities and credibility based on their recalled experiences (Wellin, 2007). The use of their own words to retell their own accounts in their world views allowed for a sense of ownership of experiences and narratives.

All of the narrative interviews that I conducted began with brief and simple questions about the participants. These questions were intended to allow the participants to become comfortable in the interview and talk about themselves. These questions also provided some form of background and context for me to understand the participants upon meeting them for the first time. Since my interviews were heavily dependent on the participants' voices and stories, and did not necessarily follow a 'natural' conversational dialogue, I decided to open up the interviews with a few general questions that took on a more conversational dialogue. Here, I could also share a sense of who I am with them in order to create a more comfortable and relatable atmosphere between myself and the participants.

The main narrative interview, BNIM (Wengraf, 2001), was briefly explained to the participants, however the actual single question was never exposed to the participants. Once I had explained the introductory section of the BNIM, I allowed for the participants to engage in their narratives, uninterrupted and not directed in any way. In order to make this method feel as close to a

conversation as possible, I used nonverbal and paralinguistic cues displaying a sense of interest and undivided attention to the participants' stories (Beatty & Behnke, 1980). The idea of being so aware of my own nonverbal behaviour allowed for the participants to share their experiences without being led or influenced in any way. Employing BNIM enabled the participants to open up and share their stories in a nonintrusive manner, within their own time and space. Therefore, the order and structure of recalled events were not guided, and this element worked toward exploring the participants' constructions of their self-perceived credibility.

Unlike semi-structured interviews, following the BNIM, I could not immediately follow a line of interest during the interviews (Flick, 2018). It was challenging to retract myself from a discussion-like situation, whereby sharing relatable stories comes as second nature. However, it was in the best interest of the participants to remain focused and adhere to the process of the BNIM suggested by Wengraf (2001). Rather than interrupting the participants, my role was to write notes of what the participants were sharing. I needed to take note of what was being said, the ordering of events, and what I would like to know further from each point that was jotted down. Based on my notes that I captured during the SQUIN, I was allowed to ask N-pointed questions based on exactly what was shared by the participants. I used this as my opportunity to clarify any points during the narratives. No new lines of thoughts or information were allowed to be asked. This phase of the inquiry worked like that of a semi-structured interview; however the questions were guided by the participants' stories (Wengraf, 2001, 2004).

Once the participants stated, in their own ways, that they had finished telling their stories, I engaged in a semi-structured interview based on their selected artefacts. These questions were seen before the interview, as they were sent to the participants during the initial contact. In the next section, I discuss personal artefacts as a data construction technique.

iii. Personal artefacts

An artefact can be conceptualised as an object that represents meaning, joy, comfort, or perception that is influential to personal views about a situation, belief, or event (Sutherland, 2013). According to Coemans and Hannes (2017), visual art forms tap into a different dimension of meaning-making and enables a sense of contrast between reality and rebirth of a past reality. Some examples of artefacts include quilts, pencils, masks, images, photographs, diaries, and charms, to name but a few. Weber (2014) highlights the value of detail and maintains

that the more intricate details revealed visually, the higher the probability of audiences' ability to judge and interpret the art for what it truly is. To judge a piece of art encourages the viewer to find relevance through interpretation, and the more relatable the art is perceived to be, the higher the trustworthiness of the work appears. To this end, the viewer is left to ultimately decipher the 'visual' for themselves. Weber (2014: 11) refers to a 'ripple effect' of shared interpretations and possibly new interpretations that may or may not have been intended.

I decided to use personal artefacts as the second data construction technique to support the inquiry into exploring participants' constructions. Prior to meeting with the participants, I asked each of the IP teachers to bring along to their interview an artefact that they thought best represented who they are as teachers. The artefacts were used as a symbolic idea of how the participants saw themselves as teachers. Much like art are constructions of realities and/or emotions, stories are constructions of meaning too. In light of my commitment to following a constructivist epistemology, whereby all realities exhibit some form of truth (Larsson & Sjöblom, 2010), I needed to acknowledge the participants as social beings that unfold within social contexts, which supported my constructivist positioning. I had to think creatively and allow for the participants to think creatively too. To this end, I decided to select data construction techniques that often were not used simultaneously, but were connected in several ways (Riessman & Speedy, 2007).

Art is directly connected to culture and is moulded by time and context (Geertz, 1997). Art and artefacts do not possess qualities but rather are given the qualities by the participants (Hernández-Hernández & Fendler, 2013) and this provided another dimension to narrative inquiry. I chose personal artefacts because the participants' selections were unguided and totally left up to them as to what they would find significance in. Artefacts allowed for participants to give personal qualities from their identities and liken these qualities to an inanimate object. Deep and careful thinking was required and allowed participants to creatively engage in controlling their credibility constructions. The use of personal artefacts allowed for a larger portion of the data construction process to be left up to the participants and not directed and structured by the research study or myself, as the researcher.

iv. Purposive sampling

Purposive sampling, also referred to as judgment sampling (Etikan *et al.*, 2016), is a technique used by researchers that makes use of a pre-set criteria that serves as a prerequisite for the selection and suitability of participants (Taherdoost, 2016). The participants are assessed based

on their qualities and are then compared to the set criteria. This sampling technique is not random and falls under the category of non-probability sampling (Liu, 2016). Maxwell (2013) maintains that purposive sampling focuses on the specifics and considers the contexts, persona, and situations. These elements are deliberately chosen with the intent of gathering important information pertaining to the research focus, purpose, and question(s). In so saying, if the criterion is not adhered to, the research runs the risk of not obtaining transparent and accurate findings (Taherdoost, 2016; Maxwell, 2013) that are, to some extent, representative of the broader population (Cohen *et al.*, 2007).

Purposive sampling has its advantages in practice and allows researchers to handpick their participants (Cohen *et al.*, 2007), provided that the ethical consideration of voluntary participation is adhered to (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2018). Using this technique quite easily satisfies researchers' needs in finding the most suitable participants for their studies and creates easy access to more 'knowledgeable persons' (Cohen *et al.*, 2007: 115) who are more inclined to providing in-depth and thick descriptions (Li, 2004) of phenomena under investigation. Thus, researchers are able to select participants who are 'proficient and well-informed' with the phenomena being studied (Etikan *et al.*, 2016: 2). By employing the purposive sampling technique, the underlying aim is to reach data saturation, whereby participants provide meaningful and comprehensive answers that elicit enough information such that no new information is evident in the participants' responses (Etikan *et al.*, 2016). Furthermore, purposive sampling is cost-effective as the researcher chooses the research sites that will be travelled to; and convenient as the selection of participants could be chosen based on the travel distance. Also, employing this technique is not time-consuming as researchers could have a pre-set list of possible participants and research sites, since the selection criterion is determined by the researcher.

On the contrary, I acknowledge the possible limitations of employing purposive sampling. Some of these constraints include, however not limited to, non-generalisability of findings to a broader criterion of participants to which Cohen *et al.* (2007: 115) explain that purposive sampling 'does not pretend to represent the wider population; it is deliberately and unashamedly selective and biased'. Moreover, an overarching presence of researcher biases are evident in the selection process due to the fact that researchers are specifically selecting participants with the research questions in mind (Liu, 2016).

In this research study, the set criteria that I used included participants who were IP teachers. Next, the IP teachers ought to have had teaching experience within the IP. The participants had to be willing to share their experiences and reflections openly and in a non-defensive manner. Considering the fact that I am a fluent English mother tongue speaker, the participants needed to be able to speak English. No gender, race, religious, or cultural specifications were considered as part of the criteria for selecting the participants. It is also worth mentioning, in light of purposive sampling technique limitations, that I did not specifically handpick the participants (Cohen *et al.*, 2007) as I wanted to refrain, to the best of my ability, from inviting my biases into the data construction process. For this reason, I did not pick 'suitable' participants in anticipating the answers that they would or could provide me in answering the research questions (Liu, 2016) based on their characteristics or knowledge (Etikan *et al.*, 2016). Instead, I sought participants who were 'more' representative of South African IP teachers, in terms of age, race, gender, years of experience, social status, school districts, specialisation knowledge, and places of origin. However, by no means do I suggest that the represented population captured in this study is completely accurate in representing the IP teacher population within Gauteng, let alone the South African context (Sharma, 2017).

Therefore, rather than paying attention on selecting specific and suitable participants, I decided to focus on diversifying the population as best I could. Moreover, under the lockdown circumstances, within the South African context (Hamzelou, 2020), I welcomed any IP teachers who were interested, of course with the set criteria in mind. This led me to my decision in using the snowball sampling technique in addition to purposive sampling.

v. Snowball sampling

Snowball sampling is a technique for participant selection in qualitative, exploratory, and descriptive research (Sharma, 2017). Often, this technique is used when it is challenging to locate sample populations (Sharma, 2017) and thus an identified participant provides the contact details of another suitable participant, who then may be used to find an additional participant, and so forth (Atkinson & Flint, 2001). Hence, the name 'snowball', whereby the participant pool increases in size based on connections and referrals. A few participants are identified and approached and help in the further identification of other participants (Taherdoost, 2016). Despite the argument made by Brewerton and Millward (2001) that snowball sampling is mainly applicable to smaller, more closed, and inaccessible populations, I found this technique useful under the lockdown circumstances (Hamzelou, 2020) and bearing in mind teachers' busy and overloaded schedules

(Mahmud, 2014). Moreover, similar to that of purposive sampling, the snowball sampling technique is not random and falls under the category of non-probability sampling (Taherdoost, 2016).

The advantage of snowball sampling is that this technique encourages a sense of networking amongst participants (Sharma, 2017). Therefore, relationships of current participants with other similar participants grows a sense of community amongst IP teachers. Moreover, participants are not handpicked by the researcher (Cohen *et al.*, 2007) and thus the population is less impacted by subjectivity and researcher biases (Taherdoost, 2016). Baltar and Brunet (2012: 61) foreground a benefit to employing the snowball sampling technique and explain that each referred participant 'can act as a recruiter until the desirable sample size is reached' and in this sense the sampling selection can be controlled based on who is contacted by the researcher.

On the contrary, the disadvantage worth mentioning of snowball sampling includes the perception that this technique cannot ensure a wide and true representation of a sample (Baltar & Brunet, 2012). Because dependence on participants' relationships was present in snowball sampling, the reliability of recommendations to other participants was a source of concern, specifically in terms of selection biases from both researchers and initially contacted participants (Johnston & Sabin, 2010; Atkinson & Flint, 2001). Similarities shared amongst the participants may be prevalent and thus may decrease diversity (Baltar & Brunet, 2012). Snowball sampling is also considered very time-consuming in creating the networks and contacting the various suggested participants (Sharma, 2017; Taherdoost, 2016). Baltar and Brunet (2012) add that this technique may prove to be quite challenging during the initial contact with referred participants and requires a high degree of trust between the researcher and the referrer. Furthermore, the snowball sampling technique often invites various forms of biases, such as initial participants selecting and referring cooperative and 'most' suitable individuals (Baltar & Brunet, 2012).

Using the snowball sampling technique, I found a few participants, using the criteria outlined in purposive sampling, to collect data using narrative inquiry and arts-based inquiry research designs. I then asked these participants to provide me with contact details of other suitable participants who they knew (Taherdoost, 2016). This technique was best suited for my study, as I was introduced through referrals and did not use participants that are well known to me. This, in turn, decreased possible researcher biases in the data construction process. It is important to

note that as a qualitative researcher, directed by narrative inquiry and arts-based inquiry, my purpose was not to reach generalisable findings (Yilmaz, 2013). I intended to use word of mouth and social networks to contact referrals for the purpose of this study. Moreover, I also intended to approach participants that I assumed to be IP teachers who could be valuable to this research study.

4.3.3.3 Data documentation

To document the data, I used a researcher journal, audio recordings, transcriptions, and artefact pictures. Below, I elaborate on each of these data documentation techniques.

i. Researcher journal

I decided to use a researcher journal to enhance the reflexivity within my study (Feucht *et al.*, 2017). The consistent reflection captured within the journal gave me the ability to critically analyse my perspectives, biases, and researcher journey. Ortlipp (2008) and Feucht *et al.* (2017) set a reminder that it is of utmost importance for researchers to monitor their developing perspectives and assumptions throughout the study.

Situating myself as the researcher and an inquirer, my role was to explore and understand the participants' stories through their responses to the SQUIN (Wengraf, 2001). In addition to fully understanding the stories, I needed to be aware of the untold stories that accompanied the participants' verbal responses. Thus, I also needed to capture notes that answered the *why* and *how* behind the participants' stories. As Gouws (2019) mentions in her research, it is important to pay close attention to the upspoken cues of the participants and the combination of the SQUIN and artefacts which allow the participants to feel a sense of freedom and flexibility in their responses. I jotted down additional notes based on the participants' body language, facial expressions, temperaments, and so forth in my researcher journal.

In using the researcher journal optimally, Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest that an addition of reflexivity be considered in their quality criteria, which further strengthened the quality criteria underpinning my study. In critically engaging with my researcher journal along the research process, I realised that there were sections that began to emerge within the journal. To this end, Lincoln and Guba (1985) propose that researchers separate their journals into three sections, namely daily schedules and planning, personal notes, and a log of methodological choices and

reasonings. I decided to use three separate books for my researcher journals, of which researcher journal one was dedicated to my daily scheduling and planning, researcher journal two was used as a personal diary capturing my personal beliefs, values, and thoughts, and researcher journal three was used to write down all of the methodological decisions.

Therefore, I used researcher journal one when conducting the data construction process of planning and scheduling the interviews with the participants. Once each of the interviews were completed, I immediately sat and noted all of my thoughts, observations, things I heard, things that I noticed, my own emotions during the interviews, the physical surroundings, my overall experiences, and any other descriptive notes that came to mind, until I felt as though I had nothing left to write. This element of using a researcher journal gave a sense of transparency to the interview experiences in terms of how I perceived them and my own biases (Feucht *et al.*, 2017).

I decided to use the term ‘researcher journal’ and not ‘research journal’ or ‘field notes’ because ‘researcher journal’ is an accurate description of the purpose of this data documentation tool. The journals are used by me and are compartmentalised into three sections, as suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985). The journals are developed, created, and constructed by my thoughts, emotions, and decisions. These journals thus do not only document the data construction phase, much like field notes (Phillippi & Lauderdale, 2018), but also captured my personal research journey and the scheduling and planning phases of the research process. For these reasons, I found it fitting to use descriptive and accurate terminology that assisted the readers in understanding and referring to my choice of words throughout the research study.

ii. Audio recordings and transcriptions

I documented the narrative interviews by audio recording each interview such that I was able to preserve the narratives and accurately decode the data (Flick, 2018). Audio recording of the interviews was important in order to ensure the validity of the meanings of the participants’ stories and to accurately capture the sequencing of recalled events (McGrath *et al.*, 2019). Once an audio recording was complete, I renamed the recording, securely stored the recording in a folder on my mobile device, and emailed the recording to the transcriptionist to be transcribed.

I decided to use an accredited transcriptionist, who I had worked with during my master’s data collection process, to transcribe the recordings, as transcribing is time-consuming

(McGrath *et al.*, 2019). Prior to sending any of the audio recordings to the transcriber, I requested her to read and sign the confidentiality form (Appendix G). This form guaranteed the safeguarding of any personal information of the participants and/or schools. Once I had received the transcriptions from the transcriber, I emailed each of the transcripts to the relevant participants for their review and approval of their answers. Since I decided to listen to and read through the audio recordings and transcriptions at least three times to familiarise myself with the participants' narratives, I moderated the accuracy of the transcriptions accordingly.

McGrath *et al.* (2019) describe transcriptions as a process of replicating verbal communication and converting this to a written format that can be easily analysed. In so saying, verbatim transcriptions were used in this qualitative study, whereby the direct word-for-word form of verbal data captured during the interviews was changed into written words based on audio recordings (Poland, 1995). To relive realities within qualitative research, texts are used and thus the need for audit trails are important (cf., Section 4.5.8: 154) (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). Flick (2018) outlines three purposes served by texts within qualitative research, namely to capture important data from which findings are drawn; to revert to the root of interpretations and analyses of raw data; and to present and communicate findings through an easy and uniform medium. The verbatim transcriptions included all pauses, giggles, and external interruptions to showcase and capture the reality of the interview situations (McGrath *et al.*, 2019). I decided to keep these elements within the transcriptions as it provided the interviews with personality and transparency.

iii. Pictures of personal artefacts

In the final step of the interview, I asked three questions related to the artefacts that were selected by the participants. These three questions were sent to the participants during the initial communication for their consideration. The three questions were asked using a semi-structured interview method and thus encouraged a more conversation-friendly environment (Pathak & Intratat, 2012). The selected artefacts could have been any object that the participants believed symbolised them as teachers. I decided that instead of merely describing each of the participants, the artefacts could be used as an artistic and creative medium to further describe the participants without exposing confidentiality, privacy, and anonymity.

I used photography as an element of capturing the participants' artefacts and not so much as a technique of data collection (Schwartz, 1989). The meanings and interpretations were explained

through the use of the three questions and provided the participants the chance to explain their choice of artefact. Photography, as described by Schwartz (1989), is a medium known for its realistic features which are always open to various insights and interpretations. Taking pictures of the artefacts also seemed most convenient to capture and showcase the selection of artefacts within this research study. Some artefacts had sentimental value, so in order to best capture the essence of each artefact without having to take it from the participants, I decided to take pictures of the artefacts (Banks, 2018).

4.3.3.4 Data analysis and interpretation

Since qualitative studies are focused on exploring the contextual aspects, interpreting phenomena, and searching for meaning through inductive reasoning (Yilmaz, 2013; Soiferman, 2010), the use of inductive reasoning allowed for subjectivity and meaning-making to be foregrounded within the data (Sefotho, 2015). Inductive thematic data analysis is a popular tool used in qualitative research (Nowell, Norris, White, & Moules, 2017; Terry *et al.*, 2017; Javadi & Zarea, 2016). This analysis tool is used to analyse, organise, provide rich descriptions, and evoke themes from data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Considering that inductive thematic analysis is an iterative process rather than following a linear setup, themes and subthemes emerge from the data set (Javadi & Zarea, 2016; Braun & Clarke, 2006). Coding is crucial, thus the data must be thoroughly read through, a system of grouping should be decided upon, for example colour-coding, the generation of patterns and themes will follow, and subthemes will be derived thereof (Javadi & Zarea, 2016). Themes then need to be critically analysed in the context of the study and conceptualised by means of reasoning (Soiferman, 2010). Themes highlighted in a data set will develop into more generalised patterns which sum up the 'inductive' aspect of this tool.

Some of the advantages of thematic analysis is that it is a flexible tool that embarks on collecting thick and rich data through the use of patterns and themes (Nowell *et al.*, 2017). In alignment with aspects drawn from the qualitative approach, thematic analysis focuses on understanding and examining perspectives and insights. Thematic analysis allows for the researcher to engage with the collected data and rigorously identify underlying patterns amongst the participants' voices (Liu, 2016). This type of analysis encourages a sense of 'rawness' in the journeys shared through the data collection methods. Inductive data analysis requires deep and meaningful engagement with the data and the underlying theory (Javadi & Zarea, 2016). To this end, researchers are required to transparently and rigorously explore the participants' voices and experiences. In so

doing, researchers are able to engage in deep analyses and decoding of the data, allowing for a thorough understanding of narratives and informed reporting of data (Javadi & Zarea, 2016).

The disadvantages include the gaps identified in the flexibility of this tool. The flexibility may lead to inconsistency in the decoding of data (Nowell *et al.*, 2017). The possibility of researcher biases may occur. Due to the simplistic nature of this tool, many important elements could be missed and omitted. According to Nowell *et al.* (2017), themes may sometimes be based on researchers' presumptions instead of true analyses. Therefore, Korstjens and Moser (2018) set a reminder that researchers should employ strategies to refrain from inviting personal inferences into the data decoding, for example tracking the research journey through a journal, creating and maintaining an audit trail, and secondary checks from supervisors. Moreover, according to Javadi and Zarea (2016), when researchers employ inductive thematic data analysis, there is a risk of the researchers' scope proving to be limited based on prior engagements with literature and the urge to speak to existing knowledge. Researchers might also neglect to report on findings that might not speak to the research (Javadi & Zarea, 2016). Therefore, this analysis tends to be susceptible to researcher biases and thus may negatively impact the validity of the study.

Considering the rigour behind employing BNIM, I decided to create a framework of analyses that guided my analysis and interpretation process. Referring to the five levels of representation by Riessman (1993), I followed this model in combination with the Zucker (2002) model mapping approach. Even though Zucker's model mapping approach was intended for case study analyses, I found it appropriate to adopt for narrative and arts-based inquiry interpretation. Considering the creative and academic nature being pulled together through this study, I decided to use this creative aspect in my interpretation of data. Zucker (2002) argues that mapping requires intensive exploration into the data sets and this process yields rich and thick themes. The organisation of such data sets may be quite challenging, and in this sense, could be made simpler with the use of visual representations of the themes through models or maps (Appendix H).

According to the five levels of representation by Riessman (1993), in working toward level one, I outlined the data by closely working with the purpose and research questions in mind. In order to plan the structure and process of constructing the data, I needed to clearly outline what my intentions were as the researcher, become aware of my expectations as the researcher, and come to terms with becoming a passive agent in the SQUIN (Wengraf, 2001). Level two required me to communicate my ideas of interpretation which took place in the planning, organising and

preparing of the interview materials, as well as in discussions with my supervisor based on the plausibility of the interview structure. Once the interview planning was completed, the interviews were conducted, audio recorded, and transcribed by a credible transcriptionist. The interviews were transcribed for ease of reading, decoding, and mapping (Poland, 1995). Moreover, in level two, I continuously updated my audit trail and captured notes in my researcher journals (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Lincoln & Guba, 1982). Level three included communicating the gathered data, which meant that the narratives needed to be retold and presented in the most transparent and untainted manner possible. For this reason, I used a multimodal approach whereby I asked the participants to select a mode of presentation. By asking the participants' input, a truer retelling of narratives was possible.

Level four and five referred to the analysis and reading of the data. For level four, I listened to the audio recordings and I read through the transcriptions at least three times, to become comfortable with the voices and the narratives (Flick, 2018). Additionally, becoming familiar with the narratives in this way shed light on what may not have been mentioned by the participants in their narratives. Therefore, my personal interpretations, which were captured in my researcher journals, were necessary and references made to my own notes from subsession two were important. I then colour coded similar responses with the intent of highlighting themes, subthemes, and categories within the data sets (Terry *et al.*, 2017). Through the colour-coding, I was able to distinguish between information that was to be included and information that was to be excluded. Lastly, level five required of me to interpret the analysed data. Through my interpretation, I was able to read, filter, and understand the narratives meaningfully enough to draw conclusions based on the analyses of the emergent themes, subthemes, and categories (cf., Section 5.4: 185).

At levels four and five of the five levels of representation (Riessman, 1993), I employed the Zucker (2002) model mapping approach. It was at these levels that I was faced with large data sets that required in-depth and meaningful decoding. I was careful not to lose any meanings and messages expressed by the participants, such as intonation, highlighted expressions, and emotional outlets gripped to sections of the narratives (McGrath *et al.*, 2019). Seeing that I am a visual learner, I found it important that I used the essence of arts-based inquiry in combination with my learning preference. Thus, I decided to construct data sets that were easily readable and understandable (Appendix H). I refer to Figure 16 below to visually relay the explanation provided above. Figure 16 highlights the combination of both the five levels of representation by

Riessman (1993) and the Zucker (2002) model mapping approach which I used to analyse and interpret my data.

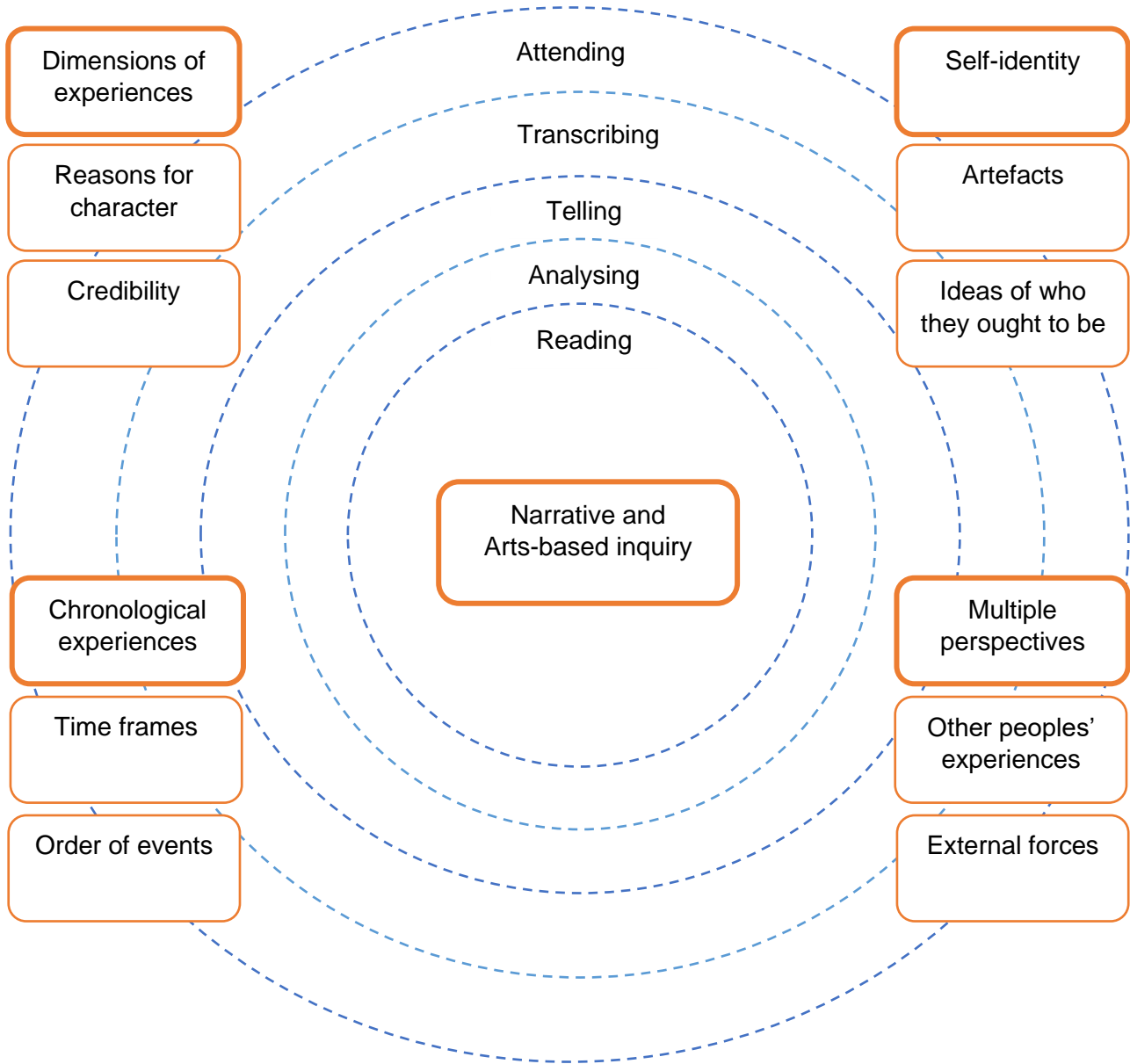


Figure 16: The five levels of representation by Riessman (1993) and the Zucker (2002) model mapping approach

In Figure 16, I suggest a combination of the five levels of representation (Riessman, 1993) and the Zucker (2002) model mapping approach. At the centre of this figure, I placed the research designs (cf., Section 4.2: 99). I then created a ripple effect visual whereby each circle represents

one of the five levels suggested by Riessman. The first inner circle refers to the first level, namely reading; the second circle from the middle refers to the second level, namely analysing; and so forth. Amongst these ripples (circles) relating to the levels in Riessman's representation, I suggest dimensions adopted and adapted from the Zucker (2002) model mapping approach. I created the four main dimensions that I considered when visually analysing and interpreting the data (Appendix H). The first dimension that I considered was the participants' dimensions of experiences which relates to their personalities and credibility. In this dimension I searched for mentioned credibility pillars. The second dimension relates to aspects in their narratives that connected with their self-identities based on their artefact selections and their views on how others' perceived them, which is linked to the phenomenology of sociology theory by Schutz (1967) (cf., Section 3.2.2: 69). The third dimension refers to multiple perspectives whereby I considered external influences affecting the choice of teaching as a career option. The fourth dimension relates to chronological experiences. This dimension is closely linked to the gestalt theory and free association method (cf., Sections 4.2.3: 118). I found it important to take note of the order in which the participants shared their stories as this often revealed which of the experiences they valued most and which experiences had the most impact on their constructions of their credibility.

In this section, I outlined the research design and methodology. I discussed the designs and methods used. I then discussed the paradigmatic positioning, which included the research methodology. Under the methodology section, I elaborated on the participant selection in which I highlighted the participant profiles and research sites, the data construction by explaining the overview of the data construction process, narrative interviews, personal artefacts, and purposive and snowball sampling techniques, the data documentation tools, and the data analysis and interpretation.

4.4 Ethical considerations

In this section, I elaborate on the ethical considerations outlining this study. The ethical considerations provided the study with a set of principles that steered the study's moral compass. I thus introduce the moral decisions that guided the research process.

The dignity and safeguarding of the participants are important aspects to researchers (Johnson & Rasulova, 2017). Thus, any knowledge of possible harm to participants are

considered with high caution (Miller, Birch, Mauthner, & Jessop, 2012). Once I successfully defended my research proposal to the Humanities Education department, I completed the mandatory ethics application which assisted in the ethical verification of my research study. To the best of my ability, I practised mindfulness, in which I constantly considered the affect that my decisions or actions could have on the participants. If any unforeseen events or situations arose, I ensured that the most appropriate steps and measures were taken to minimise any harm inflicted on the participants (Lai, 2010; Josselson, 1995).

4.4.1 Informed consent and voluntary participation

I ensured that the research purpose was clearly stated and thoroughly explained to the participants prior to their engagement within the research. Participant consent forms were developed prior to the arrangement of participants engaging in interviews (Appendix D). Additionally, a headmaster consent form was prepared to ensure that the headmasters of each of the schools were aware of the purpose of this research (Appendix C). In the participant consent form, it clearly stated that the participants were allowed to withdraw from the study at any point of the research process without facing any consequences (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2018; De Vos, Strydom, Fouche, & Delpont, 2005). The informed voluntary consent form highlights the roles and responsibilities of the participants throughout the research and thus foregrounds that their participation was completely voluntary. Furthermore, it was thoroughly explained that the purpose of their participation was purely research based. The participants were also informed about the potential benefits and risk factors of engaging in this study, if any. Participation in this research was not incentivised in any way. However, I did mention the benefit of exploring their constructions of their credibility in their practices. I ensured that I obtained written and verbal consent from each of the participants prior to their participation (Flick, 2018). The prepared participant consent form informed the participants of the purpose, roles, data collection procedures, time allocations, and potential benefits and risk factors connected to their participation within this research study (Appendix D).

4.4.2 Privacy, confidentiality and anonymity

Privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity were ensured in this study as the true identity of each of the participants was not exposed. I used pseudonyms in place of the participants' real names in order to ensure anonymity throughout the data analysis section (Anney, 2014). No schools' names were exposed throughout the research. Sensitive information pertaining to the identities of the participants in the data sets, including narratives, audio recordings, transcriptions,

participants' names, surnames, schools' locations, and schools' names were edited out. Participants' names, schools' names, and locations were captured in my journal and shared with my supervisor to maintain reliable and accurate records of each of the participants and the participants' sites. When the audio recordings of the narratives were transcribed, the personal information pertaining to each participant was removed accordingly (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Moreover, a confidentiality agreement was signed by the transcriber explaining the privacy and confidentiality responsibility to be maintained throughout the transcription process (Appendix G). All of the actual records were stored on my personal laptop and saved in a secured file with restricted access by means of a password. Furthermore, I stored the audio-generated material, transcriptions, and all collected data sets in a secured and highly protected office on the University of Pretoria's grounds where they will be stored for a period of 15 years.

Moreover, in order to ensure participants' confidentiality throughout the study, I used member checking. Member checking enhances the quality and rigour of a study (Birt, Scott, Cavers, Campbell, & Walter, 2016) and was used in my study to limit any possible personal details and information pertaining to the participants and research sites involved in the data construction process. In so doing, I emailed the transcripts to the specific participants before decoding the data, in order to allow the participants to check, change, and confirm the transcriptions and their answers during their interviews.

4.4.3 Protection from harm

Participant protection from harm was ensured by developing and explaining the content of this study to the participants by using the participant consent form (Appendix D). Participants were asked to sign the consent form to ensure that they understood what the research entailed, the purpose of the research, that their consent to participate was totally voluntary, and at any point within the research process they had the right to decline and choose to leave the research study without facing any consequences. Participants were guaranteed that they would be protected from any risks that this study might entail, if any (Ryen, 2016). I founded my study on principles such as honesty, empathy, and integrity.

4.4.4 Possible benefits

It is worth mentioning the possible benefits stemming from this research study. The study's purpose was to understand how IP teachers construct their credibility, in this attempt, it was clear that these constructions would require rigorous reflections and recollections of IP teachers' prior

experiences and how these reflections developed them into the current teachers they embody. Accordingly, by the participants engaging in this study, a narrative into who they believe they are as teachers needed to be creatively and openly shared through story-telling (Wellin, 2007). Often, teachers' views and thoughts are not called upon and may sometimes go unheard or unseen (Mullai, 2018). This study may have provided a platform of deep and critical reflection of the personal self into the emergence of the professional self by the IP teachers.

Participants were thus allowed to engage in a free and comfortable story-telling session that was characterised by their characters, life decisions, and reflections of creating and sharing their constructions of their self-perceived credibility (McAdams, 2008). Moreover, relating the personal and professional self to the likes of an artefact required meaningful and critical comparisons to be made and justified (Eaves, 2014). These justifications formulated a reflective platform of dealing with emotions and thoughts that may have been needed to unleash further professional development.

In this section, I discussed the ethical boundaries considered throughout this study. These considerations included ensuring that participants granted informed consent and were aware that their participation was voluntary. Moreover, participants' privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity were secured by means of pseudonyms in place of real names. Protection from harm was highlighted and possible benefits in participating in this study were foregrounded.

4.5 Quality criteria

As mentioned earlier, there are limitations in employing a qualitative approach, including overlooking scientific verification of the findings based on reliability, generalisability, and validity (Queirós, Faria, & Almeida, 2017). For this reason I employed the Lincoln and Guba (1985) quality criteria to assist me in ensuring that the quality of work directed into the study and the value resulting from the study were maintained. Tuli (2010) highlights the contrast between qualitative and quantitative research criteria and foregrounds the argument outlined in the work of Lincoln and Guba (1985: 101), 'research that aims to explore, discover, and understand cannot use the same criteria to judge research quality and outcomes'. Therefore, the fundamental principle underpinning qualitative research is trustworthiness.

In this section, I discuss the quality criteria, including trustworthiness, credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability, authenticity, reflexivity, and finally I provide an outline of the audit trail of the research process.

4.5.1 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness of inquiry is grounded on the degree to which the researcher is able to persuade the audience that the findings are worthy of their considerations (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Therefore, a criterion was proposed by Lincoln and Guba that was used to underpin trustworthiness, including validity and reliability. Validity relies heavily on reporting on findings truthfully and transparently (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In essence, validity questions the truth versus falsified statements, and this is referred to as internal validity in quantitative research. To employ validity throughout my study, I ensured that I engaged with various participants who were not well-known to me. Thus, I wanted my inferences to be fair and generalisable 'across different types of personas, settings, and times' (Cook & Campbell, 1979: 37), which is referred to as external validity in quantitative research.

Closely linked to validity is reliability, which functions as a 'precondition for validity' (Lincoln & Guba, 1985: 292). Reliability is largely based on replication, however for the purpose and nature of this study, I focused on reliability as the backbone of the selected theoretical frameworks and suitable employed methods for the phenomena being studied (Flick, 2018). Based on my selection of BNIM, I engaged in thorough and in-depth readings into relevant literature using interviewing techniques and strategies, specifically focusing on SQUIN (Wengraf, 2001). Moreover, in my quest to meaningfully understand this method of inquiry, I contacted a former doctoral student, who also employed this method within her research, for advice and tips. To increase the reliability in my study, I used different methods of interpretation and decoding. I followed the five levels of representation for a narrative analysis by Riessman (1993) and the Zucker (2002) model mapping approach. These trustworthiness criteria, including validity and reliability, ensured that the findings reported from my study were authentic (Anney, 2014).

4.5.2 Credibility

Credibility refers to the professional quality and integrity adhered to throughout the research process (Kumar, 2019; Guba & Lincoln, 2005), and is also commonly linked to internal validity

in quantitative studies. To ensure that research is credible, Tuli (2010) maintains that the research process needs to be just in that the purpose of the study is in line with the selected methodology and collection methods. To accurately describe the participants' narratives, I used my researcher journal to capture as many notes, thoughts, and observations as possible to preserve the truest forms of the interview experiences. Through these notes, I was able to consistently reflect on the participants' shared experiences, in combination with the interview experiences. These reflective engagements linked to the development and evidence of the criterion of reflexivity (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Moreover, I engaged in member checking, whereby I read and scrutinised the transcriptions (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Once the audio recordings were transcribed, I emailed them to each of the participants to be read, reviewed, and to ensure that the participants were satisfied with their answers. By employing the BNIM, I was able to fully utilise the time I had with each participant (Wengraf, 2001). The three steps within the method allowed for me to listen, ask N-pointed questions and thereafter ask clarifying questions.

4.5.3 Transferability

Transferability (referred to as external validity characterised with the intent to generalise findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) can be regarded as the extent to which findings from a study can be adopted in other contexts with other participants (Anney, 2014; Bitsch, 2005). Through the communication of thick descriptions and implementation of the purposeful sampling technique, a similar inquiry is believed to be transferable (Bitsch, 2005). Therefore, I ensured that I included thick descriptions (Li, 2004) of participants' experiences and stories, including the contextual and cultural elements connected to their narratives (Guba, 1981). By providing other researchers/readers with rich and thick descriptions, it is left up to the researcher/reader to analyse the findings reported on in this study to compare and transfer the findings to other similar contextual and cultural conditions and/or participants (Guba, 1981).

4.5.4 Dependability

Dependability refers to the 'stability of findings over time' (Bitsch, 2005: 86). It is regarded as an equivalent criteria to that of reliability in quantitative research and is focused on the replication of findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). However, within a qualitative approach, dependability involves participants becoming active role players in evaluating and correctly interpreting the findings

(Cohen *et al.*, 2007). The establishment of dependability can be obtained through the use of an audit trail which is the examination of the data process in which the researcher justifies all research decisions and events based on how the data were constructed (Li, 2004). More precisely, Lincoln and Guba (1985: 319) explain that ‘an audit trail cannot be conducted without a residue of records stemming from the inquiry’. Such records include raw data, interview recordings, transcriptions, and observation notes (Lincoln & Guba, 1982) which were captured and recorded throughout my study. Therefore, by maintaining an audit trail throughout my study, I securely preserved all the evidence gathered and constructed throughout the research process (Bowen, 2009).

4.5.5 Confirmability

Confirmability of findings relates to the corroboration by other researchers (Toma, 2006) and is closely linked to the objectivity outlined in quantitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Moreover, Lincoln and Guba (1985) maintain that confirmability is based on true interpretations of the events and stories, and should not be focused on researchers’ personalised constructions and complementary biases thereof. In qualitative research, confirmability could be achieved through the use of a thorough audit trail and regularly updating a reflexive journal (Bowen, 2009). Therefore, to achieve confirmability throughout my study, I acknowledged my personal biases through the use of a researcher journal (Babbie, 2016) and employing the BNIM (Wengraf, 2001). I employed member checking by emailing the transcripts to each of the participants to review their interviews. I also used the BNIM, since the second step of this method allowed for me to ask narrative-related questions based on the participants’ shared stories. Additionally, I engaged in regular discussions with my supervisor based on my interpretations of the narratives, thus minimising the invitation of my biases.

4.5.6 Authenticity

Although authenticity was not included as one of the elements by Lincoln and Guba (1985), it was later added as the fifth criterion (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). I found it important to include reflexivity in my qualitative criteria based on the multiplicity evident within the findings. Since this is a qualitative research study, there was an inevitable multidimensionality that was evident amongst the participants’ narratives. Accordingly, no two contexts, circumstances, settings, situations, experiences, belief systems, values, perceptions, and thus overall constructions were precisely the same (Schutz, 1967). Authenticity is concerned with the rationale behind interpretations

(Schwandt, Lincoln, & Guba, 2007) and therefore I aimed to provide honest accounts of the participants' narratives.

With the focus of my study in mind to follow a qualitative approach in selecting suitable inquiry methods to explore and understand socially-dependent phenomena, I ensured that a variety of realities were depicted and reported on. In order to correctly understand the IP teachers' experiences, I engaged in the second step of the BNIM whereby I was permitted to ask N-pointed questions based on the first step that relied on the teachers sharing their stories based on one question posed by myself (Wengraf, 2001). This method enhanced the accuracy of the findings. I ensured that member checking was done by emailing the transcripts to each of the participants such that the participants had a chance to read through their answers and inform me if there were any changes needed.

4.5.7 Reflexivity

The use of my researcher journal enabled me to remain aware and to scrutinise my decisions and actions. I used this journal to document my experiences, thoughts, and views throughout the research process. A final technique recommended by Lincoln and Guba (1985) was reflexivity (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). They suggest that reflexivity 'provides a base for a number of judgment calls' (Guba & Lincoln, 1989: 327) that must be made by the researcher. For this reason, a researcher journal was used to track the daily decisions and record various other relevant information pertaining to the shaping of the study, based on the self's influences on the research process (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Based on my use of a researcher journal, I was able to record my thought processes, my research decisions, my methodological choices, and my assumptions. Moreover, it was important to remain consistently aware of working under a qualitative approach, thus I employed a narrative inquiry design to understand IP teachers' constructions of their self-perceived credibility. Being a narrative inquirer in addition to an IP teacher myself, it was easy to fall into coating all the narratives with my own experiences as an IP teacher. To prevent this subjectivity from tainting the findings, I followed the advice by Lincoln and Guba (1985) of compartmentalising my researcher journal. The first compartment of the journal was dedicated to my daily schedule and planning that was used to define the study. The second compartment was used as a personal diary in which I reflected personally and academically on my beliefs, interests, and values. This

compartment was used as a means to track my subjectivity during the study and to ensure that these biases did not interfere with the findings and interpretations. The third compartment was a log of all of my methodological choices and reasonings behind these selections.

Overall, I used a GANTT graph to illustrate, outline, and monitor my research schedule and progress (Appendix A). I used the GANTT graph as a tool to manage my planning and deadline dates for each task and goal. The graph displays each component of my research journey with the start and end dates, which assisted me with my time management and organisation of goals. The graph worked alongside my audit trail and was adjusted, where necessary, throughout the research process.

4.5.8 Audit trail

Creating and using an audit trail provides direction and enforces accountability for research decisions being made (Connelly, 2016). Dependability and confirmability are elements of quality criteria and highlight the need to track the processing and capture the decisions along the research process. This tracking included researcher notes, activities engaged in during the duration of the study, and decisions taken, such as the selection of participants and what to be vigilant about during data construction in order to ensure transparency of the research process (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). In this section, I create and discuss the outline and aspects of the audit trail for this study, and further details can be found in Appendix B.

I began by contacting the IP teachers via Whatsapp or email to provide them with the details and purpose of this study, and to ask whether they would be interested in participating in this research study. The email contained information pertaining to the purpose of the study, engagement expectations, approximated dedicated time, and the selection of an object, of any kind, that they thought best symbolised them as teachers. I asked that the participants have a look at the three questions about their artefact (subsession three). If participation permission was granted, I then contacted the relevant principals via email. I also mentioned that I needed their signed consent prior to engaging in the interviews with the participants (Appendix C).

Considering that most of the interviews were held virtually, specifically via Zoom, due to the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, the participants were asked to take photographs of their artefacts from different angles and send to me. I asked once more for permission to audio record

the interviews, as explained in the signed participant consent form. I began with the introductory questions to create a comfortable atmosphere and dialogue between myself and the participants. I then began with subsession one of the SQUIN.

At this point, my role as the researcher became passive and I adopted a minimalist approach throughout the interview (Wengraf, 2001). I followed the advice provided by Squire (2013) and I became an active listener and allowed for the participants to share and narrate their stories. Whilst the participants were elaborating on their experiences, I wrote down as many notes as possible following the sequence led by the participants, specifically guided by the topics outlined by the participants which spoke to the TQUINS (McGrath *et al.*, 2019; Wengraf, 2001). I jotted down these notes in a bullet form to which I was in search of at least ten bullets representing ten topics communicated by the participants. Once the participants wrapped up their stories and concluded, I allowed for a 15-minute interval break in which I used this time to organise, brainstorm, and prepare for subsession two. During subsession two, I was permitted to ask N-pointed questions using the TQUINS relating to the topics foregrounded by the participants in subsession one (Wengraf, 2001).

With reference to the BNIM by Wengraf (2001), researchers may not change the sequencing of the topics highlighted in subsession one by the participants during subsession two. Topics were to follow the exact same order and may be left out, however they may not be returned to once passed. Hence, the 15-minute interval was crucial in planning and organising the upcoming TQUINS that were required to be posed as N-pointed questions. Thereafter, I engaged in subsession three which was the second interview. In this interview, I asked all of the semi-structured questions that I wanted answers to with regard to their artefacts.

Appendix B refers to the overall audit trail, beyond the data construction process. In this appendix, the phases of the research process are foregrounded along with the various parties involved, and the results thereof. I further refer to the relevant appendices to provide detail and cross referencing throughout the research process.

In this section, I discussed the quality criteria that guided my research study. The criteria that was followed was based on the Lincoln and Guba (1985) quality criteria. The criteria included

trustworthiness, credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability, authenticity, and reflexivity. Finally, I briefly outlined this study's audit trail.

4.6 Chapter summary

This chapter focused on the research design and methodology. The chapter began with outlining the research designs, namely narrative inquiry and arts-based inquiry, and research methods, specifically SQUIN and ABM. I also argued the need for blurring the boundaries between narrative and arts-based inquiry, using tenets drawn from the gestalt theory and the free association method. Next, I discussed the paradigmatic positioning underpinning this study, in which a relativist ontology and constructivist epistemology was followed. Moreover, the research methodology was elaborated on under this section, which included: the participant selection, whereby participant profiles and research sites were highlighted; data construction, in which narrative interviews, personal artefacts, and purposive and snowball sampling techniques were discussed; data documentation, including the researcher journal, audio recordings and transcriptions, and pictures of personal artefacts; and data analysis and interpretation. Finally, I foregrounded the moral compass directing this study by providing an explanation of the ethical considerations and quality criteria.

CHAPTER 5

Data presentation, analysis, and interpretation

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I present the data by framing the participants' stories through mediums selected by the participants. A list of possible mediums was presented to the participants at the end of the interview sessions. Each participant thus had the opportunity to select or propose a medium that they thought would best portray their stories. Additionally, the participants were asked to choose a title that was descriptive and fitting for their stories. In so doing, I used the participants' member checked transcriptions, from the SQUIN (Wengraf, 2001), to outline this chapter (Birt *et al.*, 2016). I then analyse and interpret the findings elicited from the data in response to the proposed research questions. The first research question asks, 'How do IP teachers' personal stories construct their self-perceived credibility?' and the second research question asks, 'Why do IP teachers construct their own perceptions of their credibility in the way they do?' For the purpose of analysing and interpreting such large data sets, I used the five levels of representation (Riessman, 1993) in combination with the Zucker (2002) model mapping approach to unearth themes, subthemes, and categories (Li, 2004; Zucker, 2002). The individual visual maps of each of the participants' stories can be found in Appendix H.

I refer to Figure 17 below which shows the analysis levels underpinning this study.

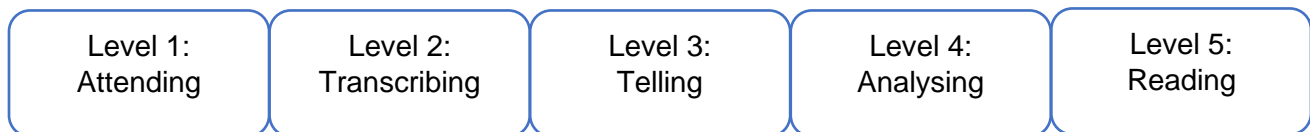


Figure 17: The five levels of narrative analysis (Riessman, 1993)

In Level 1, I outlined the participants' stories by presenting their selected artefacts. Level 2, refers to communicating, whereby I used a multimodal approach. This approach allowed for the participants to choose the medium in which they wanted their stories to be presented. Some of the choices presented to the participants included a Whatsapp conversation, magazine/newspaper articles, and so forth. Participants were also allowed to suggest their own choice, outside of the proposed choices, for the presentation of their stories. These presentation mediums and descriptive titles were selected by the participants to elicit a more meaningful and

transparent representation of their narratives. Level 3 was followed by means of audio recording the interviews and having the interviews transcribed. In Level 4, I analysed the transcriptions, coded the transcriptions, and searched for patterns which lead to the emergence of themes, subthemes, and categories. To decode the large amounts of data, I read through the transcripts thrice, circling, highlighting, and noting important information in the formation of possible themes, subthemes, and categories. In my interpretation of the interviews, Level 5, I refer to the participants word in verbatim format.

According to Babbie (2016), inclusion and exclusion indicators are important pointers to remain cognisant of, as the researcher, in order to maintain focus and relevance to the study's purpose. However, despite this argument, using the BNIM by Wengraf (2001), specifically the SQUIN, all constructed data was deemed important and was required to be acknowledged as part of reporting on transparent constructions of IP teachers' self-perceived credibility. Therefore, my data construction was not guided or restricted in any way, and I therefore could not outline inclusions and exclusions as explained by Babbie (2016).

5.2 Data presentation

In this section, I outline and present the data as suggested by the five levels of narrative analysis (Riessman, 1993). The sequencing of the participants' presentations follows the chronology of the interviews conducted: thus, the first interview is presented first, the second interview is presented second, and so forth. I begin by reporting on Caterina's story, followed by Sharylene, Mbali, Alexa, Jayal, Carlene, Laurel, Christina, and finally Katlego.

Three questions were posed in relation to the selected artefact to which the participants had to respond. These questions are:

1. Why did you choose your artefact/object to symbolise you as a teacher?
2. What about your artefact/object is significant to your experiences as a teacher?
3. What specific parts of your artefact/object do you think symbolise you as a teacher?

Their responses to these questions indicated the reasoning behind the participants' choice of artefact.

5.2.1 Caterina's reflective journal: The good, the bad, and the ugly

Caterina used a reflective journal as a medium to document her story. The reason she gave for her choice is: *Journals represent the raw and necessary emotions behind the stories.*

The artefact that she chose as a representation of who she is as a teacher is a laptop. Her visualising of this artefact is documented by means of the following:



From the answers Caterina gave, it can be deduced that she considers herself as being adaptable and multidimensional (having different components). She values both the basics of being a teacher and the 'fancy' things one can do when teaching, like showing videos, which makes for an adaptable teacher. She is able to better accommodate her learners at different levels and their preferred modes of thinking. She is someone who is well-grounded (correct wiring and foundation). She has a holistic view of herself and practice (like the internet), bringing in a multidisciplinary and authentic approach to learning by linking Mathematics with real-life challenges and integrating it with other subjects. She has an enquiring mind and is self-driven to find out more by searching the internet. Caterina is invested in her professional development and relates her laptop's continuous responses to new updates to herself as a professional developing teacher. She incorporates her learners' interests in the lesson by engaging with technology, making her more relatable to her learners. She emphasised the need to meet her learners at their specific learning needs and one way that she has found that works is by using technology. She highlighted the need to be able to adapt as a 21st century teacher and referred to the importance of technology in the classroom, especially during the pandemic.

5.2.2 Sharylene's Whatsapp conversation: The adventurous teacher

The reason for Sharylene's choice of using Whatsapp conversations as a medium to communicate her story is: *Whatsapp conversations remind me of the COVID-19 situation that we*

are experiencing. With social distancing and staying at home being our new norms, I think that Whatsapp is a good representation of my current experiences.

She chose a mug as being representative of herself as a teacher. The following visuals are used:



What can be deduced from Sharylene's responses is that she has a learner-centred approach to being a teacher. What is important for her is to recognise that every learner is different (designs on and shapes of mugs); that she needs to treat them as equals; to treat them with care as they are fragile (like the materials used to make the porcelain mug); to take care of them and comfort them; and that she has the responsibility to shape their minds as a way of uplifting them. Sharylene's choice of mug was very specific, a porcelain mug, which she felt best symbolised the responsibility that she feels as a teacher in moulding and shaping the minds of her learners. But she also refers to this mug as a metaphor of making time for herself and to fill up with energy (like drinking a cup of tea or coffee during her lunch time). She shared that the stresses and work load of teachers are immeasurable and the need to continuously give her best to her learners sometimes takes away from her own needs. Thus, in order to give her best to her learners, she needs to ensure that she prioritises self-care. She explained that it is important to realise that learners develop in real-life experiences which are filled with uncertainty, for which she feels the need to prepare them. Like her mug brings her comfort and safety, she adopts this metaphor in her classroom, by creating a safe environment for her learners.

5.2.3 Mbali's magazine article: Not just a teacher

The reason behind Mbali's choice of using a magazine article to share her story is: *I enjoy reading other peoples' stories and opinions in magazine articles. I feel that it is a better source of information in terms of being more real and emotionally relatable.*

She chose a clutch pencil as a representation of herself as a teacher. The following visuals are used:



Based on Mbali's answers, it can be deduced that she values her learning experiences as both a learner and a teacher (by making use of this very pencil as both a student and teacher). She also shared that this specific clutch pencil that she chose is the very same clutch pencil that she used when she started her teaching studies. She emphasised the significance of this artefact by explaining that this pencil was with her through many highs and lows in both her personal and professional lives. Mbali places emphasis on being able to write experiences and rewrite, where necessary, (like being able to remember special moments in life and to forget the negative memories) experiences that she may have categorised as negative experiences. She uses a metaphor of a clutch pencil, whereby taking notes and writing can be less stressful knowing that she has the option of erasing parts that she may not feel completely confident about. She explains that just like her writing process has grown, so has she as a teacher. She further states that, like having to refill the lead in a clutch pencil, teachers also need to be refilled, sometimes on their own and other times by others (like being supported by her friends and family). She seems to place a lot of pressure on herself as a teacher, and having that leeway of being allowed to make mistakes and change her story makes her feel more comfortable. Her need to be the best places a lot of pressure on her as a teacher to give her best to her learners. However, she explained that as much as she would like to continuously give, she has come to the realisation that she cannot give if she has nothing to give. Thus, she highlighted the importance of refilling her energy, much like the refilling of the lead in her clutch pencil (she made reference to her mentor teachers' impact on who she is as a teacher today).

5.2.4 Alexa's novel: Children are my passion

Alexa's choice of using a novel to present her story is: *I am an English teacher and I really enjoy reading.*

She chose a memory box that was given to her as a birthday gift by one of her own primary school teachers. The following visuals are used:

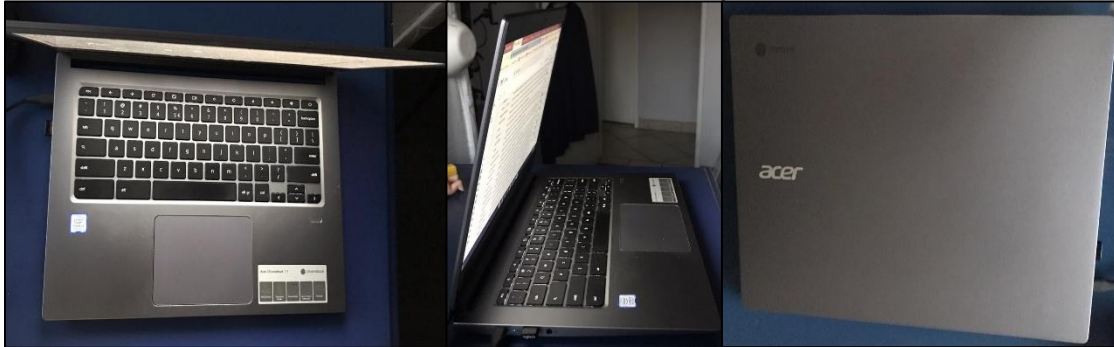


What can be deduced from Alexa's responses is that she views herself as a compassionate teacher who cares about her learners beyond the classroom. She uses her own experiences as a learner to engage with her own learners (as she is teaching at the very same school that she attended as a Grade 1 to Grade 12 learner). She explains that she gives her all as a teacher to help her learners. She uses her own stationery, from the box (selected artefact), to assist and support her learners. She highlighted that as a teacher, she shows her care through using her own stationery to assist and support her learners. She stores her stationery in her box and she believes that her learners feel loved when she uses her stationery to assist them in cutting or pasting in worksheets, for example. She explained that reading is her passion and being an English teacher, the shape of the box (which is shaped like a book) made her artefact that much more significant to her. She states that her memory box is sentimental as it is a compilation of her memories as a learner made by one of her primary school teachers, who is now her colleague, and this places her life into perspective, visually showcasing her experiences from the place where she started, as a learner, to where she is today, as a teacher. She explains that inside her box there are pictures of her in school alongside her friends (allowing her to recall fond moments as a learner and how she felt toward her teachers). She emphasises her name and elaborates that her name is her identity, as this is what her learners call her and what her learners place trust in. Her name is placed on the artefact which makes her feel like her identity is engraved on the artefact. She explained that the artefact is basically her life fitted into a box.

5.2.5 Jayal's novel: Exploring my way through teaching

The reason for Jayal's choice in selecting a novel is: *My story is a story worth telling.*

She chose a laptop to visually represent who she believes she is as a teacher. Her visualisation of herself in an artefact form is documented in the following visuals:



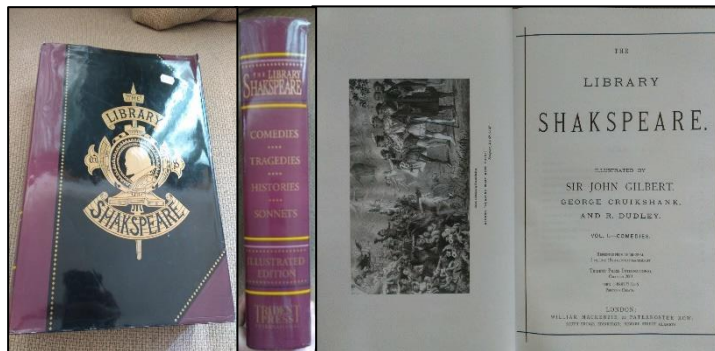
From Jayal's responses, she focuses on her development, both personally and professionally (she finds greater value in continuously learning and developing herself). She understands that as learners are changing, teachers will need to change too in order to remain relevant in the classroom. She explained that having access makes a world of difference in the classroom, as learners are changing and becoming multiliterate. She uses her laptop functions as metaphors for her teaching. Much like the evolution in the technology industry, teachers also need to grow and develop themselves (like the regular updates available for laptops, she believes that she needs to be regularly updated too by attending developmental webinars). She explains that the world of teaching has seen several changes, and she is expected to adapt to these changing times, especially during the pandemic. She shares that there was once a time that completing administrative obligations by means of paper and pen was sufficient but in today's world, she needs to be technologically literate in order to meet her learners at their learning levels and interests. She uses Google to support her development and where needed brings this information-rich world into her classroom to enable both her learners and herself to grow (becoming technologically savvy and using aspects of technology in her classroom, like YouTube videos). She explains that despite the devices having a similar look (like laptops and phones), the software is continuously updating, which is what is expected of teachers. She emphasises the benefit of being open-minded toward change and updates and explains that laptops are not one-dimensional and neither is teaching (needs to be dynamic and ready for change as we see with the regular updates on digital devices). She places emphasis on being a relatable and up-to-date teacher. She also shared that as a Deputy Principal, she has become even more reliant

on her laptop. She explained that as a leader, she encourages her team of teachers to attend workshops in order to develop their skills and methodologies (which have had to have been virtual during the pandemic).

5.2.6 Carlene's drama: My life as a drama queen

Carlene used a drama as the medium to document her story. Her reason for selecting a drama is: *I love the flair and drama that my life thrives on.*

She chose a Shakespeare book to symbolise herself as a teacher. The following are visuals of her artefact:



From Carlene's responses, she has a passion for reading and resonates professionally and personally with Shakespeare (she enjoys teaching literature). She shared that her bookshelf in her home reaches her ceiling (in order to visually highlight her love for reading). She describes herself as being quirky and relates this characteristic to elements of Shakespeare's personality (a trait that she believes her learners perceive her to portray). She also believes that her learners view her as odd (like Shakespeare, she believes). She explained that being relatable to her learners is important as she stressed her love for Shakespeare stems from being able to identify with elements of his personality (which she hopes her learners find aspects of her personality relatable). Carlene also explained that she uses slang terms and rides her motorbike to school, which she observed excites her learners and encourages them to have conversations outside of the classroom (making her feel more relatable and relevant to her learners). She described her experiences in the classroom specifically using her skill of talking in different accents. She is proud of this skill because she realised that it makes her learners laugh and motivates them to participate in her lessons. She aspires to be a writer and this is further supported by Shakespeare's life work (different elements to writing that she compares to her personality). She finds meaning in stories

and vividly engages in the novels that she reads (sparks her creativity). She likens teaching to the works of Shakespeare, describing it as varied, and she explains that teaching is changeable (much like literature and how it has developed over the years). She refers to the pandemic, in which teaching has shifted significantly, in terms of reaching learners on their levels through technology. She highlighted that the significance of her artefact lies in who she received it from, her mother, who also loves reading (the person who inspired her passion for reading).

5.2.7 Laurel's novel: A journey into the light

The reason for Laurel's choice of using a novel to present her story is: *I love reading a good story, visualising the events, allowing the book to come to life.*

She chose a painting of a road in a forest as being symbolic of who she believes she is as a teacher. The below visual is used:



What can be deduced from Laurel's responses are that she is a well-balanced individual who spends time teaching values to her learners (which she believes nature has many valuable lessons to teach). Through her engagement with nature, she places emphasis on keeping her mind in a positive space (emphasising her mental health). She explains that human interactions are largely based on the use of their senses, which she believes nature encourages people to use (she relates the importance of the use of senses to her artefact, where she uses the metaphor of taking a walk in a forest). She values teaching with an emphasis on the senses and refers to using her senses in a forest (much like learning with your senses). She livens up her teaching by encouraging her learners to make use of their senses. She explained that she shares her interests with her learners (to make her more relatable to them) by playing songs on her guitar. She adapts her songs to include teaching content, which she has noticed excites her learners. Laurel is a

reflective person who uses both her positive and negative experiences to shape her reflection of her life story. She acknowledges her hardships and appreciates her achievements and brings this aspect of herself into her teaching practice (as she explains that not all roads are easy, and there are many challenging roads that we walk in life, much like the long path shown in her artefact). She refers to the visual of the forest as a metaphor to her life and her teaching (connecting the beauty, hardships, lessons, and experiences she has endured in her life to the elements of the forest). She explains that life has a path and as she walks on her path, it is important to explore the possibilities, as she encourages this exploration in the classroom. She explains that life has many hardships to face but she reminds herself that there is a destination to look ahead to and that like the sun rays depicted in the visual, there is a guiding light in life too.

5.2.8 Christina's magazine article: The History teacher's experiences

Christina chose a magazine article to document her story. Her reason behind selecting this medium is: *Magazine articles are easily accessible and an interesting read.*

The artefact that she chose to represent herself as a teacher is a necklace with a pendant shaped like the African continent with a heart carved out in the place of South Africa. The documented visualisations of this artefact are shown below:



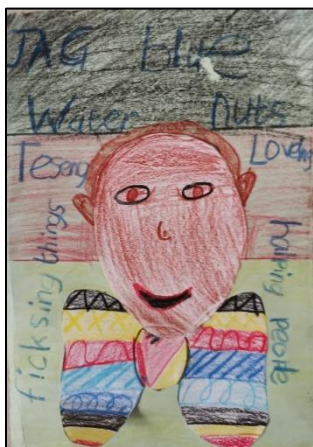
From Christina's responses, it is clear that she values her heritage and has a deep love for her country, South Africa (as she explains that her heart belongs to South Africa and a large part of her identity is built around being a proud South African; there is a heart in the place of South Africa on the pendant). As a History teacher, she explains that she finds it challenging at times to teach South African history to her learners (as she referred to her racial identity in having to relay challenging topics). She brings her life experiences and understanding of history into her classroom and uses creative and meaningful strategies to teach the subject (in order to be more relatable to her learners). She values her learners' opinions of her and takes this aspect into

account in shaping her teaching of History (like the South African-shaped pendant). Just like the heart shape in the space of South Africa on her artefact, Christina's heart belongs to South Africa. During her interview, she highlighted the significance of her artefact as a special person in her life gifted it to her. She became very emotional throughout the interview (which highlighted her passion for her subject, her love for her learners and her job, and her emotional turmoil in having to teach and address hard to talk about, let alone teach, topics to learners who are not from her racial group). She explained that in the process of her development, she is still learning (about herself, her learners, and the history of South Africa and its people). Despite her pride for her country (which she uses as an outlet of showing her care and understanding of the taught content and her engagement with her learners), much of its history makes her feel regret and heartache for the realities faced by its people. She discussed that what people wear is what they show pride in (peoples' image is important and she highlights the significance of showing others her love for her country by wearing her pendant necklace daily).

5.2.9 Katlego's reflective journal: Yesterday, today, and tomorrow

Katlego selected the medium of a reflective journal to communicate his story and decided to choose this medium because: *I actually have a deep hate for journals. I do not even own one and I never really have owned one before. I find this to be an interesting choice. Something I am not familiar with – actually come to think of it, something I am facing as a challenge during lockdown. So why not?*

He chose a picture drawn by his daughter for one Father's Day and explains that this artefact best represents him as a teacher. The following visual is used:



It can be deduced that Katlego is a dedicated parent who derives much of his passion for teaching from his own children (he values hand-made cards for special occasions from his children). He thrives on the way he is viewed by his children and uses the characteristics showcased in the visual (selected artefact) to develop his teaching identity (he referred to some of the traits that his daughter wrote on the card). He explains that his daughter sees him as a person who likes to help people and fix things, and he brings these qualities into his classroom (shares his personal identity with his learners, gives his learners advice when needed, and engages with his learners on the sports field in order to better assist them with life issues that they may be experiencing). He often engages in real life talks with his learners where he uses some of his teaching time to allow for learners to share their stories with him (making him feel more relatable and trustworthy to his learners). He uses his creativity to engage with his learners and encourages his learners to work hard to reach their dreams, much like how he has done as a father (sees himself as a father-figure to his learners, which is relatable to his choice of artefact – a Father’s Day card). He relates his fatherhood to his identity as a teacher (as he believes that his learners are his children, he explained that he tells his learners that he is their father at school). He enjoys challenging his learners (like he does with his daughter when assisting her with Mathematics – he explained that he likes to give her difficult examples to work through in order to master the content) and being a role model (also a good father figure) as a teacher. He values that his daughter asks him for assistance in completing her Mathematics homework and through this he refreshes his own understanding of concepts and is able to help his daughter, since he loves Mathematics (he finds it important to keep himself updated with new methodologies as the world is changing). He expressed that he has found it challenging to adapt to the new expectations of teachers, especially during the pandemic, as teachers were expected to actively use and integrate technology in their lessons (due to virtual learning). Katlego shared his teaching journey and highlighted the different eras of teaching (he highlighted the differences between teaching during apartheid versus teaching after apartheid). His life experiences (including his life during the apartheid era) has prepared him to become resilient and to adapt to changes when they arise throughout his teaching career.

What I report on next are the participants’ reconstructed narratives. I include the term ‘reconstructed’ as the presented stories are constructed as per my understanding of the narratives shared during the interviews. Based on the participants’ selection of medium to present their stories, as stated above, I reconstruct their narratives using the chosen medium based on our interactions, transcriptions, my observation notes, and interview experiences. Using

BNIM (cf., Section 4.2.1.1: 105), ABM (cf., Section 4.2.2.1: 114), and the Zucker (2002) model mapping approach (Appendix H), I am able to create transparent presentations of the stories.

5.3 Reconstructed stories as a research method

In this section, I refer to Levels 2 and 3 of the five levels of narrative analysis (Riessman, 1993), which refer to transcribing and telling the data, respectively. Using the transcriptions of the audio recordings of each interview, I present the participants' reconstructed stories based on their choice of medium.

The opening story entitled, *The good, the bad, and the ugly*, is presented through a reflective journal entry describing the personal encounters experienced by Caterina, a 29-year-old female who is a part-time substitute primary school teacher. She is a Grades 6 and 7 Mathematics teacher. She relates her journey through the retelling of her experiences of becoming and being a teacher in South Africa. Caterina is from Pretoria and continues to reside in Pretoria.

Caterina's reflective journal entry is followed by Sharylene's novel, titled *The adventurous teacher*. Sharylene is a 29-year-old female who is planning to teach abroad, specifically in China. She specialises in learner support and prefers working with learners of different abilities and skill sets. She has teaching experience with learners at various grade levels and abilities. Caterina is originally from the Northern Cape and has moved to Pretoria.

The third story belongs to Mbali and is presented through a magazine article, titled *Not just a teacher*. Mbali is a 29-year-old female who has been teaching long before she qualified to be a teacher. She is a Grade 6 English teacher and places a lot of emphasis on creating enjoyable lessons for her learners. She is formally from Polokwane and is currently teaching in Johannesburg.

Mbali's magazine article is followed by Alexa's novel capturing her life events. Alexa is a 27-year-old female who describes herself as a teacher who is fun, caring, and loving. Her story is titled *Children are my passion*. Alexa is a Grades 6 and 7 English, Economic and Management Science, and Life Orientation teacher. Her story is filled with passion for her learners and a desire to ensure that she is always emotionally present for her learners. Alexa is from Pretoria and continues to live and teach in Pretoria.

The fifth story belongs to Jayal, a 38-year-old female who is embarking on a new adventure of becoming a principal. She teaches Grades 5 to 7 English. Her story is presented through a novel-like medium titled *Exploring my way through teaching* and showcases a whirlpool of events that led up to her present reality of being and becoming an outstanding teacher. Jayal was born and continues to live in Pretoria.

Next, Carlene's story is presented as a drama, titled *My life as a drama queen*. Carlene is a 33-year-old female who has a deep and moving passion for English literature, specifically Shakespeare. Carlene's story highlights various aspects of her personal and professional life and this breathes life into her narrative. She is originally from Kwa-Zulu Natal, moved to Bloemfontein, and finally settled in Pretoria, where she currently lives and teaches.

Laurel's story is presented through a novel-like scenario, titled *A journey into the light*. Laurel is 32 years of age and teaches Sepedi to Grades 1 to 5 learners. Her upbringing and passion provide her with a solid foundation for who she is as a teacher. She focuses on teaching and instilling values in her practice as this stems from her personal upbringing. She is from Soshanguve and currently lives and teaches in Pretoria.

Christina's story is reported in the form of a magazine article, titled *The History teacher's experiences*. Christina is a 28-year-old female who teaches Grades 4 to 9 History. Her passion for her subject defines her personality as a teacher and plays a crucial role in who she has developed into as a person. She values South Africa's history and holds her country in high regard. Christina is originally from Pretoria.

Finally, Katlego's story is presented through a reflective journal entry titled *Yesterday, today, and tomorrow*. Katlego is a 53-year-old male who teaches Grades 6 and 7 Afrikaans and Life Orientation. His experiences are informed by a multitude of experiences and emotions derived from numerous changes and developments along his path as South Africa moved from Apartheid to a democracy. Katlego is formerly from Port Elizabeth, moved to Cape Town, and is currently residing and teaching in Pretoria.

5.3.1 Caterina's story

Caterina's story is presented in the form of a diary. The following are visual reconstructed excerpts that give a sense of her character and story.

I struggled my way through high school, and finally when I reached matric, my marks were absolutely shockingly dismal. Although my marks weren't all that great, I applied for medicine. I spent 6 months doing physiotherapy and occupational therapy but finally realised that it wasn't for me. My teaching journey started from my own negative experiences in school and so I decided to help other learners, like myself, to cope with the overall demands of learning. Part of my decision of moving into teaching was also to have a stable job.

Surprisingly, I majored in the two subjects that were my worst in high school, Maths and Science. The reason for choosing these two subjects, despite my poor performance and negative experiences were because of a teacher, a great teacher, Miss Hanlie. Miss H took the time to reteach me the steps behind Maths concepts. She shared her logical and systematic ways of teaching, and she was the main reason why my matric mark increased by 18%.

Hearing from past learners that I had taught makes me so happy. Hearing what they are up to, that they miss my lessons, and that they need my help for tutoring is really an inspiring feeling that teaching brings. I think that this relationship and foundation that teachers build with their learners is a three-part story: one component being the teacher, the second being the learners, and thirdly the parent. What is being taught at school needs to be reinforced at home for it to become meaningfully integrated into the lives of the learners. Choosing teaching as a profession takes a lot out of you as a human being and I really feel this in my practice. Some parents don't hold up their end of the bargain and teachers tend to automatically take on that responsibility.

I remember one incident in my first year of teaching when I had to climb into a bathroom stall to get a knife away from a learner because she was trying to hurt herself. It gets real and hectic really quickly in the world of teaching. Some learners manipulate their parents to believe a situation happened from their point of view (which is usually very skewed from the truth) and teachers take the flack for that too.

Being able to think on your feet and improvise despite your lessons not going as planned basically sums up the daily life of a teacher. It is for this reason that I think teachers are highly unappreciated. The rewards are minimal and the challenges are overbearing, yet teachers don't seem to be given the appreciation that they really deserve. I mean not even the pay is great, but you have to do what you have to do to get a salary and put food on the table. It isn't just about the money for me though. I know I sound pretty harsh about the profession, but it isn't easy being a teacher.

I think that during this time of lockdown, parents have definitely had a wakeup call about who their children really are and I hope that they have a newfound respect for teachers and what we put up with in the walls of the classroom before attacking us for hearing half of the story.

So, it is well-known to my learners that I am classified as the "strict teacher" – and I'm pretty okay with that. I feel that without boundaries and structure, learners become confused, so I provide this in my classroom. When it's time to work, we work, and when it's time to have fun, I am able to relate to my learners.

I am a teacher that puts my heart and soul into what I do, I do love teaching. I began a feeding scheme in Mamelodi to help the learners have food to eat. As a female teacher, you also need to be aware of the dangers of teaching in rural schools, racism and disrespect from learners are evident on a daily basis. Nonetheless, I care, I care about my learners and I think that's what motivates me to continue in this line of work.

However much I may love teaching and being a teacher to learners who want to learn, I don't really see myself staying in teaching for very much longer. I have had some pretty bad experiences with colleagues and parents and again I stress that teachers are unappreciated. I think that looking after your wellbeing is important too.

During an interview with Caterina and from the interpretation of her story, it is apparent that she invests much of her time and energy in her teaching practice. She cares for her learners and despite her belief that she is a strict teacher, she makes it clear that she wants her learners to feel comfortable with her and to ultimately trust her. She includes creative methods of teaching Mathematics to her learners to increase their attention and love for the subject.

5.3.2 Sharylene's story

Sharylene's story is presented by means of a reconstructed Whatsapp conversation. The following are reconstructed snapshots of a Whatsapp conversation that provide more information about her character and story.



Sharylene Shawe

Online



Okay, Sharylene, let's begin, if you are ready.

I am interested in learning about how teachers build their credibility through listening to their personal stories and experiences. And I would really like to hear about yours.

In essence tell me your story of who you are as a teacher.

18:20 ✓✓

Well, I never wanted to be a teacher even though my entire family consists of teachers. I kind of needed a career to fall back on, and so I decided to study teaching. Well, as the years went by during my degree, I finally got toward the end of my degree and I started to specialise in certain subjects, and so I fell in love with special needs education. This made me further my studies into special needs during my Honours degree.

18:27

Another thing that influenced me as well was the fact that we moved around a lot with my mom's job. My mom is a single mother and we moved around a lot because of her job. It was just always, me and my mom and my granny. Even though this was difficult and the adaptations and adjustments were challenging, the teachers always made it so much easier. They were kind and helpful and understanding.

I would say I am a teacher that gives a lot. I am a teacher that would buy every kid in class a beanie because it's cold, and I don't like seeing kids without a beanie because it's cold in the mornings. I would put myself in that situation. I do tend to spread myself thin, and this takes a toll on me, but no one ever promised that teaching would be easy, but it's well worth it.

I am always a teacher that tries my utmost best to go the extra mile and then even further. Yes, I always connect with the children personally. I always try and connect with the kids personally because then I can see why they are not listening today, or why you looking drowsy.

18:38

One of the most prevalent memories for me as a teacher in South Africa was how learners treat and classify teachers based on their race. It's nearly as if your look defines who you are as a teacher. This whole racist outlook on life is not on, especially in children. Kids adapt to what they hear and see.

Also, how learners view teachers is largely based on how other teachers interact and communicate about other teachers. Some older teachers don't show the level of respect that's required amongst professionals, nearly as if 'I'm older and so I know more' type of outlook.

I also ensure that my learners know that I am always there for them. Not necessarily like a buddy-buddy thing, but it's more of when kids can see they can talk to you more openly. It's good to know what learners are interested in such as songs or applications or movies, and so forth. it just makes teachers more relatable.

19:10

During an interview with Sharylene, her story was predominantly based on her care for her learners. She mentioned being trustworthy to her learners by listening to their stories and caring for their overall wellbeing. She mentioned that she always goes the extra mile in lending a helping hand to her learners. She explained that working with special needs learners, she needs to adapt her lessons often and realised that she has to be creative in order to relay the content. She highlighted that it is important for teachers to know their learners and to be able to create a safe

space for them to learn. Sharylene elaborated on making her lessons more interactive and this requires her to think on her feet.

5.3.3 Mbali's story

Mbali's story is presented in the form of a magazine article. The following reconstructed article gives a sense of her character and story.

Not just a teacher

"...the stigma of like oh you're just a teacher. You're not smart enough to study anything else, you're just a teacher."

By T Reddy

Mbali, a young, confident, and ambitious teacher shared her story of being anything besides the connotation of being "just a teacher". As many teachers know by experience, teaching is most certainly not for the faint hearted, however the stigma linked to being a teacher predominantly remains.

Mbali shared that during her former schooling years, she considered herself the "geeky one". She explained that she was the type of learner that heavily focused on her academics. Mbali went on to share her experience of how her matriculant peers reacted to her consideration of pursuing teaching as a profession and stated that becoming a teacher was "like a cop out".

After having tried out different career options and nearly giving up on chasing a career, Mbali came into contact with her former primary school's headmaster, Mrs Dwight. Mrs Dwight invited Mbali to visit the primary school to get a feel of what being on the other side of education felt like. Mbali explained that during an assembly hymn, she had experienced a "tingly feeling". She added that from that moment she knew that teaching was her calling and excitedly shared "I think this is where I'm supposed to be. And from there I never looked back at being a teacher. I really felt that like I made the right decision".

Studying through a distance education university allowed Mbali some free time to spend in the schooling environment to build her foundation as a novice teacher.

On her graduation day, as she climbed the red carpeted stairs leading to the stage, Mbali shared her moment of triumph explaining "...you feel like you've accomplished something and everybody is cheering for you, that's a really nice feeling". She added that it was in this moment that she vowed that she wanted to be more than just a teacher.

Having experience as a student teacher whilst she was studying, Mbali confirmed that teaching was by no means easier. She elaborated on this statement by sharing her scary experience during the 2010 strikes where her school gates were trampled by protestors and classroom doors were broken down. She shared another challenging experience of teaching learners Afrikaans despite it being their second or third language. She explained that her heart was saddened as she, at the time an Afrikaans teacher, was expecting a learner, who was clearly struggling, to read the Afrikaans passage. She shared that despite the learner being a 'naughty' learner, "A child just wants to be loved and a child just wants that support from you". It was through this experience that she came to the realisation that children cannot be judged based on their yearly behaviour displayed in class, "They can change and most of the time, especially the naughty ones, they just want love. They just want to be accepted and they just want that support. And if you can give them that then even the naughty children aren't naughty".

Mbali shared her teacher values and stressed that routine, humour, and discussions are factors that she uses in her practice. She emphasised that these values shine through into the style of teaching whereby if a teacher is uncomfortable with the taught subject, it is noticeable. She stressed that teachers are superheroes, not just teachers.

During an interview with Mbali, she explained that she values her life experiences and journey into the classroom, as this lays her foundation for her teaching practice. Mbali did not choose

teaching as a primary career option as her friends and family created a negative stigma toward teaching. She now constantly fights a personal battle to not just be a teacher. As a result of this ambition, she has furthered her studies and takes on more teaching responsibilities at school to be more recognised by her colleagues and learners. She explained that knowing her learners beyond their academics or classroom behaviour is important in order to build trustworthy relationships. She also stated in order to be relatable to her learners, she adds humour in her lessons and this increases their interest in the lesson.

5.3.4 Alexa's story

Alexa's story is presented using a novel-like medium. Below is a reconstructed extract from a novel which gives a sense of her character and story.

Children are my passion

"Mom, I know I have to make up my mind about varsity soon!", Alexa grunted snappily to her concerned mother. She stormed off and slammed her bedroom door. "Argh, I don't know... does anyone really know what they want to study or become?", Alexa thought out aloud. Alexa carelessly tore out a piece of lined paper from her exam pad book and picked up a blue pen. "Ok, let's try this methodically, what am I interested in?", she pondered over this question for the last two weeks, basically since her Grade 12 Life Orientation teacher asked them to complete a project based on "My career". She drew a very skew line down the middle of the page and titled the first column "Pros" and the second column "Cons". She felt her thoughts stumbling to that dead-end that she had so often visited throughout the past two weeks. She knew that her procrastination had to come to an end, as the deadline of her Life Orientation project was fast approaching. She opened up her yellow and black flip file, labelled in big bold red letters "Life Orientation – Grade 12 – Alexa Austin". She nonchalantly flipped through the various worksheets Miss Loak had handed out throughout the year and finally opened up to her current project's instruction worksheet. "Okidoki, here we go again", Alexa tiredly mumbled to herself. "Question 1: List two professions that you are interested in.". Alexa paused for a few moments, looked up to her ceiling, swinging round and round on her office chair, as she furiously clicked her blue pen. "Hmmm, alright then, I choose law and teaching". As she moved onto Question 2, which required her to list and evaluate the pros and cons of each listed profession, she immediately wrote down under law, "not a very smooth talker, I can't like convince people of why someone shouldn't go to jail, it's not the type of person that I am". That statement alone motivated Alexa to choose her latter option, teaching.

"Eerr Alexa?!", screamed Amy. Amy ran toward Alexa and gave her a big hug, "Alexa! I haven't seen you in ages, how have you been? What are you up to?", she asked excitedly. "Hi Amy! I'm well thanks, how have you been? It has been a long time, well feels that way anyway. I'm actually studying teaching now and how about you? Have you seen anyone from high school recently?". Amy paused for a while, longer than a usual response would take, and immediately zoned into the teaching aspect that Alexa mentioned, "You're studying to become a teacher? Wow, didn't see that one coming. What subject are you specialising in?". Alexa replied irritably, "English". It seemed as though Amy had read Alexa's emotion and quickly responded, "I didn't mean it in a horrible way, Alexa, I just remember that you didn't even really love English that much in school, you know?". As the conversation grew to an end, Alexa went into deep thought as she walked back to the parking lot. "What on earth was that all about? How dare she? I don't understand why people

need to judge my decisions. I know I wasn't an A student in English, but give me a break.", she angrily thought to herself.

As Alexa's journey as an undergraduate student finally came to an end, she began eagerly scouting for job opportunities. She managed to be accepted for a private school post. Alexa was smiling from ear to ear, "Mom, I'm on my way to work now, will see you a little later!", she yelled to her mother whilst grabbing her lunch and looking at her watch. She arrived at her new job, butterflies filling her stomach, she mumbled to herself whilst crossing her index fingers over her middle fingers, "first day of my career". As she entered her first ever classroom, scurrying around to place her little cards that she had made for each of her learners on each desk, she heard learners' voices in the far distance. She grew a little nervous and took a deep breath in and held it for 8 seconds, "I've got this", she whispered. Alexa's first day flew by with several waves of emotions. She finally understood the idea that many had known before her and warned her about, teaching definitely was not for the faint hearted. As she packed up her belongings and looked out of her classroom window into the distance, she recollected her thoughts and sighed.

As she approached her car parked in the teachers' parking on the school grounds, Alexa immediately reached for her cell phone and dialled her mother's number. She strapped on her seatbelt and stared through her right-hand side mirror of her car, deep in thought. "Hi mom, I have had the worst day, you won't believe it. The learners were so rude and ill-mannered, and the teachers are only to use positive reinforcement. The principal is so strict and rude, even to the teachers. She actually yelled at me in front of my learners. I felt humiliated, mom. At that moment, I could actually feel the learners' respect decrease for me as a teacher", Alexa poured out her bottled-up emotions to her mother.

As Alexa's journey as a teacher went through the motions of many highs and lows through the various schools that she had taught at, she finally landed up at her dream school, the very same school that she had started her own schooling career at, School Beta. Clinging onto her teachers that became massive role models, as teachers, she adopted similar traits that she had experienced with them, some of which included being a motherly figure to her learners, being relatable and having a few giggles with her learners, and creating a comfortable environment for her learners. Alexa decided to use these values that comforted her as a learner to breathe life into her teaching practice by being a rock to her learners and ensuring that her learners knew that she was always there for them. Alexa sat down next to her grandmother after a long day at work and engaged in their daily conversations. Her granny asked, "So how was your day today, my child?" As Alexa took in a deep breath of air through her nose and her thoughts began to shuffle, "You know grandma, I feel like I'm doing a lot of good in all my children's lives. And I think that that's important. I definitely want to be an inspiration to my kids and a lot of them have told me that I'm an inspiration to them. For this reason, I think actually, I know, I am where I'm supposed to be. Children are my passion!". Alexa and her granny smiled and her granny replied, "Your learners are lucky to have a teacher like you, my angel".

In her interview, Alexa described herself as a carefree teacher who cares for her learners. She explained that her learners trust her and feel comfortable enough to share their secrets with her. She stated that teaching is an emotional rollercoaster and children are a part of that ride. She spends a lot of her teaching time getting to know her learners and making sure that they know that they are loved and cared for. Alexa explained that she would like to be an inspiration to her learners.

5.3.5 Jayal's story

Jayal's story follows a novel-like medium. A reconstructed extract from a novel is presented below, which gives a sense of her character and story.

Exploring my way through teaching

Jayal always had a deep love for working with younger children. She had a knack with children. Her experiences rooted in being a motherly figure to her younger siblings, Jake and Jess, further grew her passion for working with children. Jayal's father, George, always prompted and insisted that she do something other than teaching despite her love for teaching. In respect of her father's wishes, Jayal began her studies toward a Bachelor of Commerce degree. As the months went on and her examinations drew to an end, Jayal finally succumbed to her internal unwilling emotions toward her degree. She mustered up the courage and put aside her fear of disappointing her father, and finally approached him with an awkward and unintended grin. "Dad", whispered Jayal. "I ... I need to tell you something ...". As her dad continued to write his notes down in his black leather note pad, Jayal sheepishly walked closer to him. Jayal thought to herself "it's now or never" and went on to explain: "Dad, I am not really enjoying my course at the moment. I know that this is what you wanted me to do and I have really been trying hard to love it and see it through, but I just can't manage to find the ...". "Ah, my angel, are you about done?" her dad asked calmly as he finished up writing the last word in his notepad and closed it gently. He confidently removed his spectacles from his face and folded them neatly and placed them into his left shirt pocket as if it were by habit. Jayal looked shocked and her awkward grin grew on her face once again. As she discussed her feelings with her father, they agreed that she could use her credits and transfer them over to an education course. After a year had passed, Jayal realised that teaching is everything that she had thought and hoped it would be. "This is where I am destined to be" she sighed with deep relief.

As Jayal's graduation date grew closer, her excitement grew deeper and her heart felt a sense of joy to go out into the classroom and make it her own. In sorting through her wardrobe to find a suitable outfit for her special day, Jayal reflected on her undergraduate teaching journey and immediately her mind raced to her mentor teacher, Miss O'Connely. Miss O'Connely was Jayal's Grade 10 to 12 teacher during her schooling years and became her mentor teacher during Jayal's teaching practical. Jayal reminisced about her experiences as a student teacher and appreciated the freedom and trust that Miss O'Connely placed in her abilities as a beginner teacher. Her positive memories connected to her student teacher experiences, mentored by Miss O'Connely, further motivated her to get into her own classroom as soon as she possibly could.

Beginning her teaching dream in a government school, Jayal found it intense and nearly overbearing at times, emotions that she never once put anywhere near the thought of her teaching dream. The administrative responsibilities and paper work grew by the minute and never seemed to cease. Optimistically thinking back to her government school days as a teacher, Jayal knew that there were plenty more details than her surface feelings about being a government school teacher that she had hidden at the back of her mind. She deeply reflected into her beginner teacher years as she sipped a cup of steaming coffee from her favourite pink glittered mug. Jayal mumbled to herself, "Maybe my beginner teacher years of experience made me the teacher that I am today". As she worked through her unintended whirlpool of emotions that her current thought process ignited, her foundation as a teacher was initiated in those valuable former years of her career.

Jayal felt a sense of anxiousness and then came to the realisation that maybe it was her time to move into the private sector. Thinking of her daily school routine, seeing over 170 learners per day and mainly taking note of the academically strong and ill-disciplined learners, Jayal realised that she spared no time for the learners in between. She stood up, stretched out both of her arms to the roof and regained her stability. She slipped her feet into her warm beige suede slippers and walked silently toward her sliding door. Staring up into the darkened sky, glistened with speckles of star dust, Jayal knew that it was her time to make her next career move, she quietly sighed “it’s now or never, Jayal”.

As the weeks passed and the month drew to a close, Jayal had begun to find clarity in her decision to move schools. As she typed out her resignation letter with tears streaming down her cheeks, she finally typed her closing statement “Thank you for all of the time, guidance, and support that you have so openly and lovingly provided me with as I took my beginning steps into the world of teaching, Mister Jacob. I am sure our paths will cross again someday.” She proofread her resignation letter a couple of dozen times and finally printed it. She softly repeated her comforting statement: “It’s now or never, Jayal”. As she sealed the envelope, almost as if making her decision more final than it had ever been before in her mind, Jayal took a deep breathe through her nose, held it for five seconds, and let it out through her mouth.

As Jayal’s final school day arrived in combination with the last day of fourth term, she was sad but excited for her new adventures that lay ahead of her. She handed out her learners’ report cards, tidied up her classroom, packed up her final belongings and switched off her classroom’s lights for the last time. Before she locked her classroom door, Jayal glanced back at her first ever classroom and whispered “Thank you, Zeta Primary School, it’s been a blast”.

Jayal moved to her new school at the beginning of the following academic year. As time went on, she grew comfortably into her new environment. Despite her obvious challenges such as having only four learners in her class and having a limited number of staff working at the school, considering it was a start-up private school, Jayal found it increasingly challenging and lonely as she was the only Grade 3 teacher at her new school. Trying to be as optimistic as possible in her new school, Jayal found that she grew into an independent teacher.

Three years later, Jayal decided to take some time off from teaching and do something that she had always set her mind on doing, traveling the world. She went to America and spent 19 months there as an au pair. Once she had explored America, Jayal returned to her teaching dream and began teaching at another private school in Pretoria. Jayal decided to return to Chi Primary School, where she had completed her teaching practical, and develop herself professionally. She began teaching Grade 5 and 6 English, became the head of the grade, then the head of department, and moved into the headmaster position. Reverting to her love and passion for working with children, Jayal knew deep in her heart that she was not yet done with being in the classroom.

During an interview with Jayal, she explained that teaching was not her primary career option as her father had bigger plans for her future. Nonetheless, she found her way to the classroom and fell in love with the profession. Jayal explained that her professional development is of utmost importance to her especially in remaining relevant and relatable to her learners. She referred to the need for teachers to become dynamic in their teaching and practices. She uses creative methods of teaching by means of technology and continuously develops her skills by attending

various webinars. She placed emphasis on her competence and explained that she was the head of English and is now the principal and enjoys every moment.

5.3.6 Carlene's story

Carlene's story is presented using a drama/play medium. A reconstructed drama piece, in five scenes, give a sense of her character and story.

My life as a drama queen

Scene 1: The very beginning

Sitting at the dining room table, surrounded by books and homework, the sun rays gleaming through the half open blinds, a seemingly quirky yet confident girl finds herself contemplating her love and integration thereof of Shakespeare in her future endeavours, despite her dad's reminder that a steady income is an aspect worth considering.

Carlene: Oh goodness, gracious me, where shall I begin with my decision-making process?

Father: Well, think carefully about your decision, my dear child, as it is one that you will need to live with.

Carlene: I know father, but oh how I love the arts and drama!

Father: There is no steady income following this dream alone. You will need to decide wisely and ensure that you set yourself up with a job that is secure.

Carlene: I understand, father. Well, I do love the English language and you and mother know that I absolutely adore reading, so what are your thoughts on a Bachelor of Arts majoring in English?

Father: Sounds interesting and right up your alley.

End Scene 1.

Scene 2: The passion-igniting journey

Carlene deep in thought sitting on a park bench. Shakespeare book in one hand and coffee in the other. Spectacle pushed up against the bridge of her nose and the spring air whistling through the leaves of the willow trees.

The entire scene is set in the thought realm.

Carlene: Hmm, now with the thought of having to choose my majors for varsity, I need to unwind a bit, hence my coffee and my favourite book of all times. I love just having time to indulge in the finer things in life. Take deep breaths that actually fill up my lungs with fresh oxygen. Oh, how I live and often, sadly, long for these moments. Well, since I majored in English, [staring deep into the cover of her Shakespeare book], hmmm maybe History. Haven't really done History since I dropped it in Grade 9. And then maybe next year, I can venture into African history, it is relevant to South Africa, and most certainly advantageous to know. Arrrgh, don't really want to learn about gold and diamonds [contemplating the selection of module]. Oooh, I didn't know that Professor Chauke is heading South African history [slight grin emergent on face]. I had one module with Prof. C and she was amazing! What a motivation - energetic, vibrant, alive - basically her in a nutshell. Definitely see this module being one of my favourites for sure! Thinking about what Uncle James said to father just before starting university: "If you don't send her to University for anything else send her because University teaches you to think". Uncle James was so right. Being a university student, especially in a field that I am so passionate about, has taught me to think. I am now encouraged to consult various sources of information and consider different interpretations. [Using this as a train of thought, Carlene glances down at her Shakespeare book once again and turns the book over to the blurb.]

Carlene: So many different acts, scenes, and plays, all of which could be differently interpreted by different people - so important to consider in English literature, and History even.

End Scene 2.

Scene 3: Choosing to become a teacher

Carlene sitting in the television lounge with father. Carlene buried in a novel and father watching the news. The lights are dimmed, curtains slightly waving from the breeze entering the gaping window. The light from the television, lighting up the room with a rainbow of colours.

Carlene: Argh this irks me so much! [Deeply concentrated on her novel]

Father: [Looks up at Carlene, with a little bit of confusion] And what is that dear?

Carlene: Nah, this character, Thomas, suggested that Casie, who is a teacher, went into teaching based on the idea that ‘those who can’ t do, teach’ . What a stupid comment. Seriously. [Anger making Carlene’ s cheeks turn red].

Father: Ah, I see. Well, I can’ t disagree more with that idea. So, your strong disagreement toward this, where is it coming from?

Carlene: Hmmm. . . [a little bit of shock growing on face], I’ m actually not sure, father. I guess, I just remember what my teachers did for me, and if I place myself in their shoes, it can’ t be easy at all.

Father: Aha. Interesting. Why don’ t you give teaching a try? I think you’ d make a spectacular teacher.

Carlene: Woah! [Amazement, confusion] Well what about my BA in English? Was that all just a waste then?

Father: Well, it doesn’ t have to be. Transfer that knowledge over and do a PGCE.

End Scene 3.

Scene 4: A year from hell

Seated in the University’ s cafeteria eating lunch with Josie, Carlene’ s friend and a fellow PGCE student. Conversing about the challenges of PGCE and the unexpected workload whilst eating fries and sipping ice-cold colas during an off period, which seldomly occurred with the hectic PGCE timetable. A slight and constant buzz of student centre chit chatting filled the cafeteria.

Josie: This off period feels like heaven [Jodie and Carlene enviously looking around the cafeteria at other students laughing, playing cards, and chilling].

Carlene: I know, right? Who knew studying education would be this taxing? It’ s super intense. Waking up at 05:00 to be at campus by 07:00 and ensuring you’ re on time for first period at 07:30 every single day is so draining [pulling a wining voice with a cringed-up face].

Josie: I knooooow, and don’ t even get me started on trying to juggle our practical on top of this hectic timetable.

Carlene: It’ s basically shoving all four years allocated to the Bachelor of Education degree into one single year. This feels like a year from hell!

End Scene 4.

Scene 5: Teaching

Sitting in her brightly lit up room, warmed by the gushing sun rays from the window, Carlene sits on her bed writing in her journal about her journey as a teacher. Clicking her pen in her right hand, disrupting the silence filling up the room. In moments of deep thought, Carlene doodles in the empty areas in her journal, helping her put thoughts into a structure that is more understandable to her.

The entire scene is set in her journal writing.

Carlene: Well, to be awfully frank here, my first year of teaching, I truly felt like I was thrown straight into the deepest end of the deepest sea. Amongst the many, many, MANY responsibilities that come with teaching, the curriculum setup, planning, and implementation was one of the most challenging obstacles I have faced as a teacher. Also, I have to admit, the ~~ADMN~~-admin!!!! Nothing, and I stress, absolutely nothing prepares you for the admin part of teaching. Coming into a new situation, faced with new learners, and then also having to be in control of the work and content is demanding and scary. I mean, just taking it into the classroom situation, there are times that you see blank faces from learners, and you begin to question whether you’ ve explained the concept correctly or what what what??

You have to be updated, stay relevant, and ensure that your methods of teaching are relatable and in accordance with the learners’ references.

I mean Tik Tok?? People, what on earth is Tik Tok? Gotta ask the learners to inform me on this one.

Even during this uncertain and very scary time that we live in with COVID-19, I mean as teachers and even learners actually, we needed to adapt. And adapt very quickly. Teaching became brand new in an instant. Learning to become nearly totally dependent on virtual platforms was and is something so new, but again, we need to adapt.

End Scene 5.

During an interview with Carlene, it was clear that she is a confident and quirky teacher who values her learners' reactions in her classroom. She makes an extra effort to ensure that her learners are provided with the best learning experience she can possibly offer them. Carlene highlights the use of various teaching techniques and engages with learners on their level of understanding. She tries to incorporate interesting and creative ways of relaying information, such as rapping or playing out a war scene. She values creativity and enhancing her teaching methodology. Carlene explained that in order to transfer knowledge, she realised that her learners needed to take an interest in her, and she explored her relatability to her learners such as using slang and including video game discussions in her lessons.

5.3.7 Laurel's story

Laurel's story uses a novel medium. A reconstructed novel-like extract is used to give a sense of her character and story.

A journey into the light

Laurel knew deep down in her heart that despite having studied and graduated with her psychology degree, she wanted to work with children. Laurel was an attentive learner at school. Throughout her former schooling years, she noticed that some of her peers experienced less attention from their parents. As she entered university, the thought of neglected children became increasingly unbearable. Her decision to study psychology stemmed from this experience.

One hot summer's day, Laurel took a stroll out into her back yard. "A little bit of fresh air would be good for me right now", she whispered to herself as she pondered over what she would want to study at university. As she reflected on her own childhood, she stumbled over her younger sister's purple Dunlop tennis racket. "Argh, Siscilia never cleans up after herself!", she exclaimed. Laurel and Siscilia grew up with fond memories of spending school holidays at grandma and grandpa's house. She recalled her memories of eating warm freshly baked chocolate chip brownies and drinking orange juice outside on the porch, playing I spy and always giggling at grandpa's unwillingness to learn the rules of the game.

Lettie was Laurel's childhood friend. Laurel, Siscilia, and Lettie were nearly inseparable which is why grandma named them "the three little musketeers". As the years flew by, Siscilia was in 10th grade and Laurel and Lettie were preparing to move into a university residence near campus, named Hentikas. Laurel finally made up her mind to study psychology and Lettie knew from the time that she was a youngster that she wanted to become the world's best teacher.

One evening, Laurel came back to their residence room exhausted from her final exam, "Phew, I think I am finally done with this degree. Done and dusted!", Laurel screamed excitedly with heavy bags outlining her eyes from the lack of sleep. "Wooooohooooo!", yelled Lettie, "It's time to get our party on!". "Right after I take a good ol' nap, that is", said

Laurel. Laurel flung her bag carelessly onto the counter top and knocked over Lettie's bowl of blue and silver glitter. "Oh my goodness, I am so sorry Lettie, I'll get the broom to sweep up this mess that I've created ... I am so sorry, I didn't", "Don't worry, Laurel", giggled Lettie, "Our party has officially begun, huh?". Laurel gave off an unintentional snorty laugh, embarrassed with this surprise laugh, Laurel asked curiously, "What are you working on?". This is where Laurel's teaching journey began.

Finally completing her PGCE, Laurel was ready to get into the classroom. After many failed attempts at landing interviews, a school finally replied with positive feedback, the email read: "Dear Laurel, thank you for your application. After careful consideration, we are excited to welcome you to our family of teachers. See you on Monday at 07:15." Laurel was ecstatic, smiling from ear to ear, she immediately grabbed her cell phone and called her mother to share this exciting news. Laurel's mother, Anne, played a massive role in Laurel's window into the world of education. Anne was a Grade R teacher and, on many occasions, Laurel stayed up late into the night helping her mother plan interesting lessons for her mother's five to six-year-old learners.

As they would work late into the night, little chats would come about, bringing smiles to both Anne and Laurel's faces. Without fail, Laurel would boil the kettle and make two mugs of piping hot tea for her and her mother. "Mom, remember when you would take away our choco treats after dinner if Siscilia and I forgot to say please or thank you throughout the day?", Laurel giggled as she sipped her tea and recalled these fond and funny memories that made her face light up. Anne would always reply with "If children are not taught the correct way, they'll never know", she grinned cheekily. Laurel took a step back from the table where they were preparing a jumping activity for the learners, and deeply sighed, "Teaching is tough though, mom". Laurel silently recalled memories that she was not so fond of as a learner. Her brain began to race. She thought back to when she used to ask questions about lessons and her teachers would get offended and shout at her. She reflected on her own practice and realised that she was not afraid to make mistakes and be a human being. This is where she learnt to openly tell her learners that she does not know the answers to all of their questions, but that she was always willing to find out. She abruptly ended this thought with the narrative that allowing her class to be a safe space for her learners to make mistakes was everything that she could offer to her learners. She reassured herself that it was important for her learners to grow into their learning experiences and to not be ashamed of their individual processes.

During an interview with Laurel, she described herself as having a calm demeanour in front of her learners, and believes that the behaviour she displays will be embodied by her learners. She focuses much of her teaching on values and supports the holistic development of her learners. Laurel explained that she prefers her learners to use their senses to engage in learning content as this stimulates meaningful learning. She linked her sensory teaching approach to her artefact (a painting of a forest and the use of senses when taking a walk through the forest). Laurel described her teaching as fluid and she considers her learners' learning needs and styles when planning her lessons. She stated that it is important to know her learners personally and to ensure that her learners feel comfortable in her classroom. She used the forest painting as a metaphor to her teaching and explained that despite there being both interesting and scary possibilities in

the forest, there was always a path to be followed. Like her teaching, she elaborated that there are positive and negative experiences that develop her practice.

5.3.8 Christina's story

Christina's story is presented using the medium of a magazine article. A reconstructed article is used to give a sense of her character and story.

A History teacher's experiences

"I really loved my History teacher – I adored her and I saw her passion and I wanted to bring that into my classroom."

By T Reddy

Christina, a primary school teacher, talks about her story of being a History teacher in South Africa. Upon opening up about her journey, Christina introduced her story by providing some background. She explained that she is a fifth-year teacher and loving every moment of it, despite her initial uncertainty in becoming a teacher. She elaborated on her hesitation to becoming a teacher by sharing that "I always thought teachers were overworked and never well respected growing up and I always said to my friends and family I think it would be really difficult to be a teacher". Using her desire to travel, Christina decided to study education. Taking into account her love for history as a selected subject in Grades 10 to 12, Christina's passion for history and teaching history grew largely because of her then History teacher's influence. She described her History teacher with a twinkle in her eyes and shared that "I really loved my History teacher – I adored her and I saw her passion and I wanted to bring that into my classroom". She went on to explain that her History teacher made her critically think about current affairs further pushing her to make connections through her own experiences and knowledge.

As Christina shared her experiences of her teaching, at many moments she explained that teaching can be utterly taxing. She likened her fourth year practical and her first year of teaching as feeling "being thrown into the deep end".

"Everything is about experience" Christina clarified. Being in the classroom and actually experiencing the reality of the classroom was where Christina felt "was the most important part of my journey".

Christina emphasised that teaching is an emotional roller-coaster, but worth every moment. She placed a lot of attention on being a History teacher and the challenges that come with teaching history to the younger generation. She explained that history is not merely teaching from a textbook, rather a continuous path of keeping updated and educating oneself. Alongside juggling the responsibilities connected to teaching, such as meetings, deadlines, providing feedback, marking, and so forth, the teaching time and engagement with content is limited. Ensuring that she continuously educates herself, Christina started her Bachelor of Education Honours degree. She further explained that she found it exceptionally helpful to further her studies as it opened up doors for her through reading and development.

Christina optimistically added that teaching at the end of the day is not to earn an income or to add more to her plate of responsibilities, instead teaching allows her to think about what message she, as a teacher, intends to leave behind with her learners. Her message to her learners would be to encourage her learners to have a passion for learning and to never stop learning. In Christina's words, "it's never just about a textbook way, it's about discovering, about learning and experiencing things."

During an interview with Christina, I deduced that she is a sensitive teacher who is highly aware of and influenced by what her learners think of her. She loves teaching and placed emphasis on ensuring that her learners view her as a role model. She explained that teaching can be taxing on

her emotional wellbeing, especially teaching the history of South Africa. Christina values her country and explained that no matter where she travels, South Africa is her home and part of her identity (which she referred to when describing her artefact, which was a necklace of Africa with a heart engraved in the place of South Africa). She stated that knowing her learners is important for her teaching. She tries various teaching methodologies to allow and encourage her learners to discover learning in their own ways.

5.3.9 Katlego's story

Katlego's story uses a diary medium. The following are visual reconstructed excerpts that give a sense of his character and story.

<p>You know, being a coloured man, I was had to attend a coloured school and so it's obvious that the teachers were friends with your parents and so the message of your behaviour and academics was nearly instantaneously sent to our parents.</p> <p>Corporal punishment was still allowed in schools – no boundaries.</p>
<p>My first school was far from home. We had to wake up early in the morning and catch a lift with the principal.</p> <p>My second school was closer to home (I went there for Gr 2-7).</p> <p>I actually hated school with a passion because of the corporal punishment. You could get into trouble so quickly for various things (incomplete homework, looking at a teacher in a certain way).</p>
<p>Grade 7 (selected as prefect) – teacher in charge was Mr Steyn (dad's friend) – get into double punishment if I was in trouble. I think, or hope, it made me stronger, enforcing boundaries.</p> <p>Grade 8 (another school) – loved it. Teachers were compassionate and attended same congregation.</p> <p>Gr 9-12 (another school) – wife's family actually worked there as teachers – haha what a coincidence.</p>
<p>Still in contact with my Afrikaans teacher (visited over Dec holidays) – chatted about past and school.</p> <p>Highschool was so strict (loved every moment). Many of my learners now ask me to tell them stories about when I was still in school. Love sharing these stories with them.</p>
<p>My Life Orientation teacher (guidance at that time), Mrs Pret, was in charge of assisting learners (matrics) with their career choice.</p> <p>Lived in the years of apartheid – option 1 was computer engineer (whites only), only open career choice for us really was becoming a teacher (costs, couldn't afford).</p>
<p>1 year worked at Pick & Pay (Bakery section) and thereafter applied for teaching.</p> <p>Accepted for a post I applied for – far from home, had to think of money, accommodation, transport.</p> <p>So, then I decided you know what, becoming a teacher that is the one thing that I will try and people told me I will be good at, because I used to help children with their schoolwork – the little ones.</p>

<p>3rd year of training (Cpt) – career began (taught Computer skills). Stayed in Cpt for 11 years. The poverty rates were so high. Met my wife, Ellie. Married. Together for 20 years. Same church. Moved my career into training for companies – but I started to miss the children and the classroom.</p>
<p>Moved to Johannesburg to teach at a high school. Then moved to Pta (2 years taught at another school). Finally moved to the school where I am at now, School Delta – Religiously-driven and teaches learners values.</p>
<p>I don't think I'll do any other profession. I am happy as a teacher. When I talk to my learners, I say that their parents come in with the biggest of cars and live in big houses. It took a teacher to get them there and I am proud to be a teacher.</p>

During an interview with Katlego, he explained that he has a lot of experience as a teacher and has seen, first hand, the changes that South African education has undergone. He discussed his hardships during apartheid and how he entered the teaching profession. He shared his experience of corporal punishment, both as a victim and as a teacher who was expected to discipline his learners. Katlego described his experiences of the changes in the curricula over the years and explained that through these changes he was expected to adapt and conform. Through these changes, he believes that he is more prepared to face challenges and to learn quickly. He spends time getting to know his learners and often engages in discussions with them regarding their futures. He acts as a father-figure to his learners (which is related to his chosen artefact of a picture drawn by his daughter for Father's Day).

5.4 Analysis and interpretation of the of the stories

In the following section, I analyse and interpret the data as suggested by Riessman (1993), using the five levels of narrative analysis, specifically focusing on Levels 4 and 5. Through my analysis and interpretation of the data, themes, subthemes, and categories emerge.

Table 10 below provides an overview of the emergent themes, subthemes, and categories stemming from the data. As explained in Chapter 4, I use inductive thematic data analysis to decode and interpret the data (Javadi & Zarea, 2016). Since I followed a qualitative approach in conducting and constructing the study, I used the audio recordings of the interviews, had these recordings transcribed, and organised and coded the data. In the data I found emergent patterns and categorised these patterns into themes, subthemes, and categories (Nowell *et al.*, 2017). These themes and subthemes provide rich and thick descriptions (Liu, 2016; Braun & Clarke, 2006), enabling the exploring and answering of the research questions.

Table 10: The emergent themes, subthemes, and categories

Themes	Subthemes and categories
Theme 1: Who I aspired to become? Backtracking into the IP teachers' entry into becoming teachers	Subtheme 1.1: Choosing to become a teacher
	Subtheme 1.2: Others' opinions of teaching – those who can't do ... teach
Theme 2: Who am I? IP teachers' constructions of own teacher identities	Subtheme 2.1: Establishing a personal and professional balance
	Subtheme 2.2: Dealing with racism
	Subtheme 2.3: Ready or not, TEACH! <i>Category 2.3.1:</i> Being thrown into the deep end <i>Category 2.3.2:</i> Colleagues' influences on teachers' identities <i>Category 2.3.3:</i> Managing the effects of COVID-19 in the classroom
Theme 3: Who I am: Pillars shaping the IP teachers' self-perceived credibility	Subtheme 3.1: Pillars influencing teachers' credibility <i>Category 3.1.1:</i> Competence <i>Category 3.1.2:</i> Trustworthiness <i>Category 3.1.3:</i> Immediacy <i>Category 3.1.4:</i> Dynamism <i>Category 3.1.5:</i> Technology
	Subtheme 3.2: Learners and colleagues' perceptions affecting teacher credibility

After noting the considerations⁵ accompanying Chapter 5, I present the themes, subthemes, and categories outlined in Table 10. In alignment with the overarching narrative and arts-based inquiry designs (Savin-Baden & Wimpenny, 2014; Caine *et al.*, 2013), I include the participants' voices

⁵ Chapter 5 is dedicated to the decoding and interpretation of the participants' narratives; thus, the following considerations are to be noted: Firstly, the complete audio recordings and transcripts from each interview can be found in PDF format on the accompanying universal serial bus (USB). Secondly, although the emergent themes are reported on, these themes are not to be viewed as isolated or complete findings from the data; since the study focuses on IP teachers' constructions, emergent themes are to be viewed as fluid and developmental. Thirdly, in order to ensure confidentiality and anonymity, the participants' names and schools' names have been edited out and replaced with pseudonyms.

throughout the analyses and interpretations through the use of verbatim quotations and observational notes. Finally, I compare the emergent themes with existing literature, whereby I foreground similarities, contradictions, and potential new insights.

It is important to note that although the themes, subthemes, and categories discussed seem to be limited, they are in fact rather fluid and interconnected. I decided to draw out the themes similar to those of the participants' stories, in which they started with a beginning, moved into their current situations, and led into a storied construction of who they believe they are as teachers. However, the delineation of the themes and subthemes is necessary in order to provide a guide for the reader. Hence, I begin where many of the participants began, who they aspired to become, followed by their identities, and finally discussing the constructions of their self-perceived credibility. Since several teachers began their stories prior to teaching, I found it necessary to include this as a theme, as it provides an important foundational aspect to the shaping of the teachers' identities.

5.4.1 Theme 1: Who I aspired to become? Backtracking into the IP teachers' entry into becoming teachers

The analysis highlighted the common trend that the teachers used in starting off their stories, starting from the beginning. I found this intriguing as these beginning parts of the participants' stories felt much like the foundation that they referred to in explaining the beginning of their teaching journeys. In observing this trend, I noticed the importance of getting to know the participants, individually, before attempting to analyse their teaching stories. Mander (2010) suggests that knowing the background of people provides an array of contributing personality traits that would often otherwise go unnoticed. Hence, in trying to understand the teachers' stories as clearly as possible, I needed to pay close attention to even the finest of details which contributed in some shape or form to their entirety of their narratives.

In retrospect, all of the participants' beginning parts of their stories differed substantially from one another. The differences related to family, friends, location, racial profile, financial circumstances, and failure or lack of interest in a primary choice of study. As shown in Table 11 below, it is apparent that all of the participants did not select teaching as their primary career choice. Although many of the participants, including Sharylene, Mbali, Alexa, Carlene, Laurel, and Christina stated that they never considered teaching as a career option, many of them did in some way relate to younger people. For instance, Sharylene was inclined to consider teaching because her family

consisted of many teachers and she was therefore encouraged to pursue teaching as a steady career option. Carlene was similarly encouraged to consider teaching instead of solely relying on her passion for drama. Mbali never considered becoming a teacher, because her friends stated that teaching was a “cop-out”. Alexa, like Christina, was in two minds about what to study after completing matric and was forced to quickly weigh up her career choices. Christina, Jayal, and Laurel all expressed their love of working with younger children and this became the impetus for choosing teaching despite their very different paths. Christina stated that she always knew that she loved working with younger children, as did Jayal. Jayal referred to herself as “a real mother to my [her] younger brother and sister”. Before choosing to pursue a qualification in child psychology, Laurel decided to complete a teaching degree instead. She explained that her university friends influenced her decision to enter the field of education, as they were education students, too.

The majority of the younger teachers ventured into other career avenues before opting for teaching. A recurring comment surfaced in response to other considered career options besides teaching. Asbury and Kim (2020) suggest that teachers are of the belief that the teaching profession is undervalued and disrespected, especially in the current pandemic circumstances. In line with their study, the participants expressed similar opinions. When elaborating on their reasoning for not choosing teaching as a primary career path, several participants shared that teaching is a ‘thankless job’. In agreement with Caterina, Sharylene explained that teaching is not entirely understood for what it really entails, including the buy in and support from government, parents, and learners. Caterina, Mbali, and Carlene stated that teaching is viewed as a ‘not good enough’ career option, stressing their frustration with the common statement of “those who can’t do, teach”. Laurel explained that teaching was never a dream of hers. Through second-hand experiences and influence from her mother and aunt who were teachers, she had a window into the teaching world. Christina had a clearer idea of how she viewed teaching, in which she believed that teachers were ‘overworked and never really well respected’.

Table 11: Teachers' entrances into education

Participant	Journey into teaching
Caterina	Personal experiences with ADD and dyslexia. Started studying physiotherapy and occupational therapy and decided to become a teacher to help learners who might be sharing similar challenges that she faced as a learner.
Sharylene	Comes from a family of teachers, however never considered becoming one herself. First studied marketing and later realised that teaching is what she wanted to do.
Mbali	Never really wanted to become a teacher based on hearing the negative connotations connected to being a teacher from friends. Initially studied accounting and worked for an auditing firm. After spending more time in her old primary school, she realised that being a teacher is what she wanted to do.
Alexa	Teaching was not her first option after completing matric. She applied for law and education. After considering the pros and cons of both professions, teaching seemed to better suit her personality.
Jayal	She always enjoyed spending time with children, especially being the eldest sibling. She started studying a Bachelor of Commerce degree, due to her dad's motivation, despite her dream to become a teacher. She then travelled overseas to be an au pair and returned to South Africa to teach. Her mother and brother are teachers.
Carlene	Initially wanted to study drama and qualified with a Bachelor of Arts degree majoring in English studies. Her father encouraged her to study teaching. Her mother was a pre-school teacher.
Laurel	The thought of pursuing teaching as a career never crossed her mind. Initially, she studied and obtained a psychology degree and intended to focus on child psychology. During her university days, she befriended a few education students and further engaged with the world of teaching. Her mother and aunty were teachers.
Christina	She never considered being a teacher. She pursued a degree in teaching with the idea of traveling the world.
Katlego	Due to the apartheid regime, he primarily wanted to pursue a career as a computer engineer, however was not allowed to. The next and only option was to study teaching due to it being accessible and affordable to study.

I used subthemes to support Theme 1. The first subtheme focused on how the participants chose teaching as a career. I looked into aspects relating to job security and negative and positive teachers' influences. The second subtheme focused on others' opinions of teaching paths and how these opinions influenced the participants' journeys into teaching.

5.4.1.1 Subtheme 1.1: Choosing to become a teacher

Subtheme 1.1 mainly focuses on the participants' choices of becoming teachers. In this subtheme, I frame the analyses by looking into factors such as job security and learner to teacher role adjustments, linking the participants' own learner experiences to choosing to become teachers.

It can be daunting to make that difficult and very uncertain career choice towards the end of a school career. From a survey of 24 teachers, only 25,8% of teachers believed that teaching is a profession valued by society (Asbury & Kim, 2020). Considering that the data showed that many of the participants also viewed and still view teaching as an underrated job that is not respected, teachers often mentioned choosing teaching for job security.

Despite the negative connotations linked to teaching and not considering teaching as a first career choice, participants expressed the need to have a secure job that could provide them with a steady income. Due to the various circumstances faced by the participants in choosing their careers, as shown in Table 11 above, acknowledging that their first-choice career options might not be suitable to earn a decent salary was an important factor that was considered, but not placed above their love for teaching.

Caterina, Alexa, Carlene, and Christina placed emphasis on job security in choosing teaching. These participants seemed to feel guilty, in a sense, for stating that they felt that teaching was a career that could provide them with a steady income, fighting to include the argument that they do enjoy helping the children. In spite of the push and pull strains placed on the teachers' moral responsibilities to their learners and professions, Rickman, Wang, and Winters (2017) discovered that lower salaries showed a decrease in education graduates. They also maintain that teachers are more likely to consider leaving the teaching profession to pursue higher salary occupations. This was the case with Caterina, Sharylene, and Alexa. Caterina expressed her disappointment in the current schooling system and explained that she has decided to leave the profession to pursue project management instead, for less pressure and better incentives. Sharylene taught in

South African schools, specifically special needs schools, and like Caterina, expressed her disappointment in the government's lack of support for teachers. She found a better teaching opportunity abroad. Alexa shared her experiences of working at a school that massively underpaid her and decided to move to a school that provided her with a suitable salary.

The data showed close relations with that of the participants' entrances into teaching and own experiences in the classroom as a learner. It can be quite a confusing time to adjust into the school environment upon entering the classroom as a teacher and no longer as a learner. Teachers spend about 12 years of formal schooling in the classroom as learners, 4 years on average at a higher education institution and return to the classroom as a teacher. The role switch can be a challenge. I realised that these role adjustments that are forced upon teachers are fused with teachers' experiences as learners (Hoadley, 2012).

Caterina discussed her struggles as a learner who had to contend with ADD and dyslexia and decided to pursue teaching to help learners, like herself, to cope with learning differences. Sharylene was surrounded by a family of teachers as she grew up. She explained that her mother would frequently travel, often resulting in Sharylene having to regularly move among different schools in various provinces. She expressed that she had to learn to quickly adapt and adjust to each school and its environments. She placed a lot of emphasis on her helpful and kind teachers who made her feel welcome and involved. She used these experiences as a backdrop to her teaching at special needs schools by ensuring that each child is noticed and welcomed in her classroom. Laurel's mother and aunt were teachers, which laid a foundation for Laurel to fully understand the realities of teaching. Laurel, as a learner, often felt that her teachers pushed aside her questions for fear that they might be corrected. So, in combination with having many education-student friends in university and observing that some learners, including herself, were neglected and not heard, she decided to be the teacher who is available to her learners. She said that she wanted to ensure that her learners were encouraged and able to tell their stories and provide their input. Caterina, Sharylene, and Laurel share similar elements in their stories, whereby teachers played an important role in how they made the learners feel and this influenced their reasons for choosing to become teachers. Teachers' influences on learners are impactful and these three participants highlighted the need for teachers to relate, to involve, and to listen, respectively. These were key concepts gathered from the three participants' stories.

Mbali was lucky enough to have started her teaching career, informally, at her very own primary school. Thus, she felt comfortable in the environment and knew many of the procedures in place, making it a little easier for her to adapt and become a part of the teaching team. She expressed that during hymn singing she experienced a “tingly feeling” and in that moment was certain she had made the right decision to become a teacher.

Jayal stated that she loved children from the time she was a child herself. Taking on the role of a mother to her two younger siblings enhanced her love for teaching and working with younger children. Jayal’s story is similar to that of Katlego’s. Katlego initially wanted to be a computer engineer, but because of the restrictions placed on people of colour during apartheid, teaching was one of the few professions available to him to pursue. Katlego worked at a Pick n Pay bakery and applied for a teaching post. Moreover, he explained that many people would tell him that he would make a great teacher because he would always help the younger children in the neighbourhood with their homework. The love for working with younger children seemed to be the root to these two stories.

Carlene’s mother shared her love and passion for reading and teaching with Carlene and this passion was passed on between the generations. This passion pushed Carlene into studying and majoring in English. While at university, the “vibrant energy” one of Carlene’s lecturers displayed affected her and sparked a need to bring her lessons alive, much like her lecturer did. However, Carlene also experienced the negative side in the way teachers influence learners and this memory stayed with her all the way to university. She expressed her hatred for Mathematics and this was partly due to her Grade 4 Mathematics teacher not liking her. She explained that teachers who compare siblings to one another could be detrimental to the learners’ learning experiences, such as in her case with her sister.

Christina shared that although she had the perception that teachers were overworked and is overall a challenging profession, she knew that deep down she enjoyed working with children. Considering that she had very little direction in school and she knew that she wanted to travel, Christina thought that teaching would be the best career path to pursue a life of travel. As a learner, Christina admired her History teacher’s passion and this influenced her choice to major in History in university.

Alexa spent 12 years at the same school and this allowed for her to engage with a constant set of teachers. She observed her teachers' behaviour and used her observations as a learner to sculpt who she would resemble as a teacher. She expressed her admiration for two teachers who displayed motherly traits and who were helpful. These characteristics resonate with her, once as a learner and now as a teacher. Carlene, Christina, and Alexa all placed emphasis on their teachers' influences on their choice of teaching as a career path. Their teachers' vibrancy, energy, passion, and sincerity were aspects that came to light through their narratives. On the contrary, teachers' negative influences, like the "preconceived idea[s]" of learners, also have a lingering effect on learners' views of learning and themselves.

In Subtheme 1.1, I analysed the data with regard to participants' choice of teaching as their career path. This provided some insight into the background stories of each of the participants. What I gathered from this subtheme is that job security is an important factor when choosing to become a teacher and thus teaching is not necessarily considered as a primary career choice. Teachers draw on their own experiences as learners in the classroom to choose teaching as a career, specifically highlighting how their own teachers influenced their learning experiences, both positively and negatively.

5.4.1.2 Subtheme 1.2: Others' opinions of teaching – those who can't do ... teach

Having dealt with how the participants decided to select teaching as their career in Subtheme 1.1 based on their own perceptions, in Subtheme 1.2 I focus on others' perceptions of teaching and the influences that led to the participants deciding to become teachers.

Overall, teachers are scrutinised for their job specifications and thus often encounter negative public opinion. These negative beliefs placed on teachers and the teaching profession have been amplified during the current COVID-19 global pandemic (Asbury & Kim, 2020). According to Asbury and Kim (2020), teachers reported that they felt offended, underappreciated, and stressed because of the impact of negative public opinion. Even prior to the pandemic, the connotation of teaching and teachers has always been poor, a view that played a role in the participants' move into teaching.

The participants were all influenced in some way or another by others' opinions, including family, friends, teachers, classmates, and the general public, among others. These external influences from others influenced whether or not the participants decided to choose alternate career paths

prior to finally choosing teaching. The demands and pressures of teaching are only really understood by teachers. Caterina justifies this by explaining that being a teacher is so much more than what meets the eye. She expressed her immense amount of respect that she has for teachers, because she is one. She explained that there is great pressure constantly placed on teachers. Caterina elaborated and used the metaphor of a food chain, stating that the mentality connected to teaching infuriates her because it is believed that teachers are at the bottom of the food chain. She highlighted that teachers tirelessly worked far beyond what was expected despite the ever-growing challenges thrown their way as a result of the global pandemic (Asbury & Kim, 2020). Much as with Caterina's story, Carlene expressed her frustration with the saying that "those who can't do, teach". She also stated that non-teachers do not know the half of what teachers do; by claiming that teaching is a half-day job, it justifies people's ignorance about what the profession involves. The flawed misconceptions about teaching are immensely disheartening to teachers.

Likewise, Mbali expressed her concern about the stigma that she had been exposed to by her classmates. She explained that it was believed that if you wanted to pursue teaching as a career, you were not seen as being smart enough to study any other degree. Laurel also explained that she has an issue with how people view teachers. She believes, like Caterina, that teachers are under-respected and underappreciated. She voiced her concern about how her friends, who are doctors or engineers, "talk down" to teachers. Katlego shared a discussion that he once had with his learners and explained his pride in being a teacher, because although learners' parents drive luxurious cars and buy massive houses, it took a teacher to implant the seed of learning. So, Caterina, Laurel, and Katlego explained that without a teacher, other professions would not exist. Mbali and Laurel argued that choosing to become a teacher does not mean that you are "just a teacher"; it goes so much further and deeper than the comparison of professions.

By contrast, Alexa highlighted a different side to peoples' views of teaching in addition to the usual negative remarks made. Alexa explained that she was not academically strong in high school and considered herself "average". People were confused as to how a person who did not excel in high school English could become an English teacher. The idea was if you mastered high school content, you were able to teach the content, which is certainly not the case and is yet another misconception about teaching. She then shared that she had experienced a lot of criticism around her choice to become a teacher, especially from her parents. Alexa mentioned a few of the remarks that she received, including a poor salary which means a poor lifestyle and demeaning comments about being a teacher. She stated that even today, people question why she chose

teaching and are surprised that people still choose to become teachers. Similar to Alexa's experiences, Jayal had to confront her father, who also had a negative view of teaching. Jayal's father is a doctor and looked down on teaching. As she stated, "he wanted a little bit more for me". Having your parents against your choice of career can be deeply disheartening and pose a massive challenge which is certainly a driving force that can make potential teachers refuse the profession overall.

Carlene, by contrast, was encouraged from a young age by both her mother and father to pursue teaching, despite her passion to pursue drama as a career. Her father's jokes about being a know-it-all propelled Carlene to at least consider teaching as a profession. Moreover, having watched her pre-school teacher mother prepare for lessons with the help of Carlene, provided a glimpse into teaching. Her mother would often point out to Carlene that she would make a good teacher considering that she "had a way with little people". She explained that because of her parental comments, she gravitated toward younger people, especially during church events. Therefore, positive parental influences play an important role in the path to choosing teaching as a profession.

Both Caterina and Carlene stated something very interesting about teaching, that one does not completely understand teaching if one has not been a teacher or knows a teacher personally. Considering that all of the participants, excluding Alexa, studied a different profession prior to choosing teaching, many of the participants were exposed to a teacher through relatives or friends and thus were exposed to the world of teaching in some way. For instance, Sharylene came from a family of teachers to a point that her surname was known for being the name of teachers. Jayal's mother and brother were teachers. Carlene's mother was a pre-school teacher. Laurel's mother, aunt, and a few friends were teachers. Katlego explained that in his close-knit community, everyone knew everyone, and so several of his teachers were family friends. Therefore, the exposure to teachers and teaching provides a more vivid illustration of the reality of teaching, which mitigates many of the misconceptions about teaching. Caterina maintained that she is appreciative for the lockdown as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. She explained that since teaching is so poorly depicted and teachers are so underappreciated, the lockdown provided an opportunity for parents to really see what teaching entails.

In Subtheme 1.2, I studied the data with regard to other peoples' opinions about being a teacher. These opinions gave more insight into why teaching might have not been considered as a primary career option. What I gathered from this subtheme is that society's views on teachers and the

teaching profession influences whether or not the participants chose teaching as a career, primarily or as a second option.

In Theme 1, I discussed the beginning segments that provided the background of the IP teachers' stories. I dissected this theme using two subthemes. The first subtheme focused on the influences on the IP teachers choosing teaching as a career. The second subtheme highlighted the effects of others' opinions of teaching whereby the teachers stressed that they were aware of the negative connotations linked to being a teacher in South Africa. The IP teachers exposed their fears of choosing a 'failed' profession as they explained their encounters with others' beliefs of teaching: those who cannot do, teach.

5.4.2 Theme 2: Who am I? IP teachers' constructions of own teacher identities

With having more insight and understanding into the participants' career paths, unpacked in Theme 1, I introduce Theme 2 whereby the participants' identity stories unfold. This theme highlights the teachers' own perceptions of who they believe they are as teachers, taking into account the underpinning theoretical framework suggested by Schutz (1967). This theme highlights the participants' personality traits, behaviour, attitudes, and perceptions through their reflective narratives. Mimicking the story-like trend that the participants' narratives followed, Theme 2 digs a little deeper into the lives and personas of each of the teachers' identities.

As shown in Table 12 below, the participants' personality traits, which they expressed formed part of their teacher identities, are briefly outlined. The content included in Table 12 will be unpacked in greater detail in the following subthemes. An understanding of the participants' teacher identities provides a framework to interpreting each of the participants' stories uniquely and more transparently (Sachs, 2005). Through Theme 2, an examination of how the participants perceive themselves as teachers based on their and others' perceptions provides great insight into who each of the participants believe themselves to be as teachers and thus exposing their identity constructions (Hagenauer & Volet, 2014).

Table 12 briefly outlines each of the nine participants' personalities and teacher identities. From this information, similarities and differences in their personalities can be identified. Caterina and Mbali seem to stress their need for structure and routine in their classrooms, creating a more organised approach to learning. Sharylene, Alexa, and Katlego base their teacher identities on

establishing and nurturing relationships with their learners and use their outgoing personalities to underpin these relationships. For instance, Sharylene explained that she goes above and beyond what is expected of her as a teacher. She ensures that, despite not having access to required resources from the government, she brings materials from home or purchases resources at her own expense. She shared that one winter's morning, she noticed that one of the learners did not have a beanie and she could not resist the urge to go and purchase a beanie for the learner. Alexa uses a different strategy in creating relationships with her learners. She uses her "chilled and relaxed" personality to relate to her learners. She focuses on creating a safe and comfortable environment for her learners to communicate to her about anything they feel that they need to. Katlego often referred to his conversations that he had with his learners about life and responsibilities. Being a more seasoned teacher, he explained that he shares many of his life experiences and wisdom with his learners.

Interestingly, the three participants who identified as having transparent and bubbly personalities, which they openly shared with their learners, were all of mixed race. A lot of thought goes into classification and finding your place in society as a person who identifies as mixed race (Carvalho-Malekane, 2015). It is a possibility that mixed race teachers, in the South African context, are more flexible in relating to various cultures, which is especially helpful in establishing teachers' identities in the classroom context.

Carlene, Laurel, and Christina all expressed that they are not the strict type of teacher. Carlene admitted that she is somewhat of a "pushover"; Laurel stated that she needs to learn to be "assertive"; while Christina described herself as very sensitive and soft-spoken. All three of these participants expressed their passion for teaching and their compassion for their learners; however, they referred to the challenges that teaching brings, such as having to deal with colleagues and tackling sensitive content, for example slavery.

Jayal and Sharylene consider themselves as motherly figures to their learners. They stressed that their need to take care of their learners plays an important part in how they identify as teachers.

Table 12: Participants' perceptions of own identities

Participant	Who am I?
Caterina	Strict. Not the creative type. Structure and order.
Sharylene	Comes from a family of teachers. Compassionate. Caring. Empathetic. Bubbly and outspoken.
Mbali	More of the academic type. Hard worker. Understanding. Sometimes insecure. Structured and routine-driven. Fair. Aware. Passionate.
Alexa	Not an extrovert but very outgoing personality. Talkative. Academically average. Content. Sensitive. Independent. Chilled and relaxed. Caring. Inspirational.
Jayal	Motherly. Curious. Love for learning and development. Passionate. Compassionate.
Carlene	Loves reading. Tries to make everything relatable and relevant. Pushover. Softie. Understanding. Open-minded. Enthusiastic. Willing to learn. Odd and quirky.
Laurel	Observant. Value-driven. Passionate. Life-long learner. Motherly. Open-minded. Creative. Musical. Peaceful. Learning to be more assertive. Accommodating. Compassionate. Role model. Enthusiastic. Draws boundaries.
Christina	Self-aware. Caring. Sensitive. Open to learning. Role model. Energetic. Passionate.
Katlego	Religious. Open to learning. Happy. Prepared. Creative. Great with Mathematics. Adaptable.

In the brief overview of each of the participants, it is interesting to note that while there are certainly some overlaps, each story is unique. In support of Theme 2, I used three subthemes. The first subtheme that I will discuss focuses on how the participants establish a personal and professional balance. In this subtheme, I elaborate on the participants' mental health, stress, and feeling under pressure. In the second subtheme, I highlight the aspect of dealing with racism. The third subtheme focuses on the participants' teacher identities. In this subtheme, I focus on three categories: feelings of unpreparedness; colleagues' influences; and managing the effects of COVID-19.

5.4.2.1 Subtheme 2.1: Establishing a personal and professional balance

In my quest to understand the participants' teacher identities, I noticed that many of the participants spoke about finding a balance between their personal and professional identities and lives. Hutchens and Hayes (2014) refer to a veil that separates teachers' personal and

professional lives. It is inevitable that, at some point in the construction of teachers' identities, their personal personas will spill over into their professional lives, and vice versa. It was interesting to hear the teachers' stories in this regard and listen to the effects that these "spills" into their veiled lives had on them. Far too often we hear and read about teacher stress and burnout (Shapiro, 2010); however these participants shared their experiences through their stories, which shed light on the realities of teaching.

Seven out of the nine participants mentioned the importance of establishing a balance between their personal and professional lives. Considering the various roles and responsibilities placed on teachers, Caterina explained that when she is in her teacher persona, she is not just a teacher, she needs to be a psychologist, a disciplinarian, and a mentor, to name a few roles. She referred to teachers as having to be able to do it all and be "wonder woman". Caterina compared herself in her role of a teacher to something like a robot; which Zembylas (2003) refers to as emotional rules that make teachers feel like objects. She explains that a lot of pressure is placed on teachers to strike a balance between their work lives and personal lives.

Sharylene expressed that she often has to remind herself that when she enters her school premises that she is a teacher and not the parent of her learners. She explained that she sometimes cares too much for her learners and tries to step in and play the role of the learners' parents. She shared that this takes a heavy toll on her personal wellbeing. She described herself as a teacher who always goes the extra mile; however, there are boundaries that teachers need to set in order not to feel burdened by the realities of teaching. She expressed that if she allows all the events of school to follow her home, the stories play on her mind, making her feel helpless, as though she is spreading herself thin. Sharylene paused for a while and became deeply thoughtful. She then composed herself and shared that, "I am a teacher and I can help only to a certain point". She explained that at the end of her day, she needs to remember to leave school behind and not allow it to interfere with her personal life.

Mbali used her artefact to explain her attempt to find a balance between her personal and professional self. Mbali chose a clutch lead pencil that she has owned since the beginning of her teaching studies. She explained the sentimental value behind her pencil, linking it to represent her teaching journey thus far. She elaborated on her choice of artefact and its symbolism by explaining that teaching is like her clutch pencil. She maintained that in order for a clutch pencil to be functional, the lead needs to be replaced. She likened this process to her teaching,

explaining that as a teacher, she needs to put in the passion, hard work, and love in order to ensure the best possible learning experiences for her learners. In so doing, she sometimes finds herself falling short and needing input from her loved ones. In Mbali's case, it is less a question of differentiating between her personal and professional lives than it is of replenishing her emotional and physical wellbeing through her friends and family. Thus, the lines between her personal and professional identities are blurred and could overlap into each other (Ticknor, 2014).

Teaching has become a judgmental profession which highlights the importance of teachers' behaviour inside and outside of the classroom (Page, 2016). This can be closely linked to teachers' professionalism whereby teachers' identity constructions are grounded on how they are viewed by all stakeholders as a person and a part of an institution (Murray, 2014). Carlene's story speaks to professional behaviour inside and outside of the classroom context. She explained that choosing to become a teacher inevitably influences her personal life. She touched on some of her own experiences and shared that she was forced to think twice about going to clubs in case she might run into some of her past learners or learners' parents. She stressed that teachers need to become aware of who they are to the wider public. She shared another experience and explained that if and when she ran into learners or colleagues at the mall over the weekends or holidays, she could not neglect her role and image as a teacher. She added that maintaining her professionalism in and out of the classroom becomes an important factor to be considered when choosing teaching as a career. Carlene elaborated on this and maintained that "you have to think about what you are as a teacher, but also outside as well".

Carlene also went on to explain that teachers are required to wear a mask of a content persona when stepping into the classroom. She alluded to the idea that emotions from her personal life should not get spilt over into her professional life (Zembylas, 2003), what Caterina referred to as robotic. Carlene discussed some of her raw emotions and experiences whereby she explained that as a person and as a teacher, life has its good and bad moments. She elaborated that having to separate the events in her personal life from her professional life is emotionally draining (Hutchens & Hayes, 2014). The year 2019 was a particularly challenging year for Carlene as she lost many of her family members. She expressed that having so much "going on in your [her] personal life and you [she] still have [had] to keep it up and keep it together as a teacher" was emotionally and physically taxing. So much so, that she added that she went through a breakdown and has been diagnosed with bipolar. She further stated that due to the workload and pressures placed on teachers, in her case specifically the marking and administrative duties, she finds

herself feeling depressed. As Zembylas (2003) suggests, teachers' emotional wellbeing needs to be prioritised and normalising emotional rules in teachers' professional lives needs to be re-evaluated.

Similar to Carlene's story, Alexa shared that her identity as a teacher and as a person are definitely intertwined and she finds it difficult to let it go at the end of her school day. She explained that her principal and her had a disagreement during the academic year and this created a lot of hostility in her workplace which negatively impacted her teaching experience. She stated that this negativity would follow her home, into her personal life. She explained that it is one of the most challenging tasks to have to separate who she is personally from who she is professionally, but that is what is expected from teachers. She shared that because of the miscommunication between her and her principal, her job and her personal wellbeing suffered, so much so that she felt the need to resign. She shared that during the process, she was seeing a psychologist weekly who also diagnosed her with depression and believed that "it all came from all the feelings and all the happenings and whatever that was going on at that school".

Like Carlene, Mbali argued the need for teachers to go back to basics and to understand the main role of teachers. She explained that teachers are expected to teach according to the curriculum in a very limited time frame, whilst attending to administrative duties, and ensure that all the prescribed protocols are adhered to. She elaborated that precious teaching time is being lost to creating files, attending meetings, and completing forms which adds so much of unexpected pressures on teachers. She described a day in the life of a teacher to be overwhelmingly exhausting. Like Mbali, Laurel shared that she sometimes feels a lot of pressure placed on her as a teacher having to attend to her heaps of admin instead of placing quality time into preparing and meaningfully executing her lessons.

Some teachers have become wary in what they share and how much personal information they expose to their learners in guarding their professionalism (Shapiro, 2010). This boundary of the self in the attempt of sharing enough without oversharing personal information can prove to be challenging. Laurel found an interesting strategy that works in her practice. In her story, she often referred to her love for music and decided that she would use her passion for music to share some of her personal traits with her learners. She maintained that her personal attributes, such as her skills, likes, and dislikes, spill over into her teaching practice and "shaped me [her] as a teacher and not just a person". Laurel further mentioned her concern about teachers trying to

“separate their professions from who they are” and that is something that she has become very aware of in her practice. She drew on her personal experiences as a learner and shared that it is important for teachers to share parts of their personal personas, such as likes and dislikes, with their learners instead of learners viewing teachers as authority and feared figures, as she once did as a learner.

Laurel continued by expressing that “who I am actually defines the kind of teacher that I become”, thus, teachers cannot simply separate their personal selves from their professional selves. Shapiro (2010: 620-621) argues the need to resist against the ‘persistent dehumanisation of the teaching profession’ and to focus on encouraging teachers to dip into their personal selves to foundation their professional selves, like Laurel. She added that she has noticed that the more she grew and developed as a person, the more she was able to grow as a teacher. So, teachers’ personal identities lay the groundwork for establishing professional identities and for commencing work simultaneously. She elaborated and shared that the more she tried to separate her personal self from her professional self, the more unhappy she grew. She explained that the immense amount of pressure placed on teachers had a negative effect on her emotional and mental health, as Carlene had experienced.

During Laurel’s interview, she reflected on the negative influences affecting her mental and emotional wellbeing. Like Sharylene, Laurel shared that she tries to do so much, that sometimes it just becomes overwhelmingly unbearable and results in her having a breakdown. She explained that some days are really tough and she pushes herself to her limit trying to keep up with the pressures of teaching and goes home in tears. She described her experience as her feeling “exhausted physically, mentally, [and] emotionally”. Caterina referred to teachers having to be Wonder Woman and Laurel mentioned having to take on duties that made her feel that way too. She explained that teachers do not just perform the duty of teaching, rather they become learners’ emotional support, parents, doctors, psychologists, caretakers, to name a few roles. She explained that teachers are required to take first aid courses which leaves learners lives in their hands and she felt “a little overwhelmed because I [she] is taking on another role”.

Both Sharylene and Laurel mentioned that drawing boundaries is one of the most important and necessary steps teachers need to take in order to ensure a healthy emotional wellbeing (Zembylas, 2005). Laurel described her challenge of tuning out of teacher mode at the end of her work days. She explained that she used to wake up at night because of nightmares about learners

not understanding the content. She emphasised the need for teachers to learn themselves, which took her about two and a half years to do. She elaborated that by learning herself, she was able to come to the realisation that her self-care is important and should be considered as a priority. Laurel likened her description of her experiences to that of her chosen artefact, like Mbali, and shared that just like in nature there are rainy days and sunny days. For a teacher, some days are tough and some happy. She highlighted the importance of emotional awareness and being able to be conscious of her own mental, emotional, and physical batteries and how to recharge them if and when needed. She shared one of her techniques that she learnt along her teaching journey, which was to create a schedule which reminds her of all of her responsibilities. This schedule, most importantly, includes having a peaceful sleep such that she can effectively recharge her energies and lead a healthier lifestyle. Laurel believes that teachers are constantly learning and one of the greatest learnings of all would be to “learn physical, emotional, and mental care through your education process in the teaching”.

Christina related her balancing of personal and professional lives by educating herself, where she felt was most necessary, about South Africa’s heritage. Considering that she is a History teacher, she expressed that she has come to the realisation of just how restricted her knowledge about South Africa and its people’s history was. She shared that having to teach her learners about the truth behind apartheid and slavery threatens to create an emotional void and this influences her personal and emotional wellbeing. As she ventured into her story, picking on her experiences, her emotions poured in and brought to light just how emotional this journey of coming to terms with her history was in society, in South Africa, and as a teacher relaying the hard truth behind these political movements. She explained that it is not easy to feel as though her personal self is less informed than her professional self. She expressed that underneath being a History teacher, she is a South African who herself needs to be educated. She stated that as hard as it may be to hear the real story of South Africa, she believes it is important, both personally and professionally. From my observations based on her reactions and body language, Christina seems to be placed under a lot of pressure from school and her emotional wellbeing is being affected.

In Subtheme 2.2, I focused on understanding how teachers established a balance between their personal and professional selves and identities. I discovered that many of the participants shared that their mental health and wellbeing is directly influenced by their professional lives. There are indeed boundaries that teachers need to become aware of and employ in order to find a balance

between these two worlds that they often simultaneously exist in. The stress and pressures that teachers face go much further than is apparent.

5.4.2.2 Subtheme 2.2: Dealing with racism

In Subtheme 2.2, I focus on the participants' experiences with having to deal with racism in their practice. Considering South Africa's rich diversity, recurring references were made to the presence of racism by the participants (Carvalho-Malekane, 2015). She argues that racism and discrimination were highly prevalent in South African schools. She suggests that there were two forms of racism to consider, direct and indirect. Direct racism is linked to physical attacks and violence, whereas indirect racism includes racial slurs and discrimination based on physical features. In this case, I focus on indirect racism, as this was what was referred to by the participants.

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, several misconceptions and stereotypes arose around the globe. Since China was named the epicentre of the virus (Velavan & Meyer, 2020), a massive misconception echoed throughout the world about China and its people. Following this uproar, Caterina explained that being a Chinese teacher in South Africa during this pandemic was a nightmare. She referred to the comments and stereotypes of her learners, and people in general, as racist. She explained that "because I'm [she's] Chinese and because of the COVID-19 everyone's busy saying it's the Chinese flu", which was certainly misinformation. She mentioned her fear now having to enter or teach in townships because of the idea that COVID-19 is a Chinese flu. She elaborated that she is aware of the attacks and stabbings of Chinese people and that it saddens her to have to fall into a category of race as a teacher in this day and age. Her experiences speak to her selected artefact, a laptop, of which during the time of the pandemic, an abundance of misinformation was shared via various platforms. Thus, technology became a viral outburst of fake news which spread panic globally.

Sharylene explained her experiences with racism and shared that she never really thought it was something a teacher would have to deal with. She quickly noticed, during her teaching practical, the differences in the way learners treated teachers based on their racial profiles. She explained that the learners would openly categorise teachers as "you are Black, you are White, you are Coloured, you are Indian". She further explained that even teachers have a preconceived idea of who you are as a teacher based on your race, which to her was shocking and disheartening. She recounted that she often has to correct the way in which learners and teachers pronounce her

name, and thereafter she has to deal with the learners' question of "what are you?". She jokingly shared her response that she identifies as a South African human being and tries to instil this mentality in her learners. She believes that learners are not born racist, and are rather taught to be racist. Sharylene explained the importance of moving away from instilling that type of faulty mentality in learners' minds and rather encouraging them to see human beings instead of races.

She added that from her experience, she can still see how learners treat teachers from various racial groups differently. She elaborated that even though a teacher knows how to teach the content and uses the best methodologies, it still boils down to what race that teacher is and that largely determines how learners behave. She stated that she finds it interesting as to how learners adapt to what they are exposed to. She explained that usually learners' first reaction to teachers is to identify their racial profile and that sets a foundation for how the learners relate to and treat that teacher. Sharylene shared her disappointment in the youth of today because, while the main aim of teachers is to assist, support, and pass on knowledge, teachers have to overcome racial stigmas first. Sharylene's experiences with race links with her selected artefact, a porcelain mug, as she described her mug as being delicate and compared this quality to the mouldability of learners' minds. She explained that learners are not born racist, instead they are taught racism. This is linked to her metaphor of her mug whereby she believes that teachers' influences on learners are lifelong and thus her beliefs and mindset is a projection onto her learners and impacts how their minds are shaped.

Similar to what Sharylene highlighted, Mbali shared that "some teachers can be quite racist". She shared that most of her learners struggle to understand and grasp the Afrikaans language which is taught as a first additional language in many South African schools (Thornhill, 2016). She described the school system as having flaws in forcing learners to speak and read Afrikaans which for most of the time is not even their second or third language. She elaborated on her experience of a learner, who was often disruptive in class, being forced to read an Afrikaans book in front of the class. She explained that the learner felt embarrassed because he struggled to read that Afrikaans passage. Like Mbali's artefact, a clutch pencil, some parts of people's stories are not perfect and sometimes require a second chance, much like her sadness toward the flawed system being pushed onto her learners. She explained that using a pencil gives her room to erase the parts she does not like.

Learning about the racial history upon which South Africa is grounded fosters understanding amongst racial groups; however, it sometimes still presents itself as a landmark of racial inequality evident in today's society (Smith, Kashubeck-West, Payton, & Adams, 2017). Both Carlene and Christina spoke about the challenge in being white teachers communicating South Africa's history to learners from different racial groups. Carlene explained that as a teacher, she is in contact with different racial groups compared to the racial groups she was surrounded by growing up. She elaborated by sharing that "most of my [her] students are Black students" and so that pushed her to become more aware of how she teaches certain content, such as slavery. She mentioned that she needs to remind herself that she needs to be more considerate in the manner in which she teaches sensitive content. Smith *et al.* (2017) argue that this uncomfortable attempt to identify with matters that were not necessarily one's own experiences is frightening but necessary. They maintain that it can be challenging for people identifying as white people to communicate sensitive content to marginalised populations and that listening to others' opinions is important.

Carlene shared one of her experiences in having to teach apartheid, and highlighted the need for teachers to be mindful. She explained that she had a mixture of South African learners and foreign learners in her classroom. Having to discuss apartheid required her to think carefully as to how she would introduce and describe the regime and its effects. She elaborated on sometimes feeling uncomfortable and out of place being a white teacher discussing white privilege (Smith *et al.*, 2017). She mentioned that one of her learners, during the lesson, asked how she experienced apartheid. Having to explain this very challenging yet very present concept is necessary but scary. She shared that it felt as though the learners had classified her as being a part of the regime, as the content highlights the racial segregations and privileges and learners immediately become aware of the racial groups surrounding them, including the teacher.

She noticed that learners, despite being taught the concept of racism and apartheid, do not completely understand racism. She shared another experience whereby a learner accused her of picking on him and ultimately of being a racist by maintaining "it's because I am [he is] Black". Carlene highlighted that "as a white teacher, with my students, I can be deemed as racist at times, if, if they depending on context, or how they perceive things". Carlene felt the need to defend herself and argued that majority of her learners are not her race. She often finds herself having to re-explain or prove to her learners that racism is not a concept that can be thrown around thoughtlessly and should be dealt with sensitively. Carlene's artefact was a Shakespearean book, which she explained encapsulates her quirkiness and ability to adapt to various situations. In this

case, she was motivated to readjust her thinking and to consider the realities of her ancestors and their possible influences during apartheid. She reminded that being open-minded and mindful about her words and behaviour was important in her practice, which were skills she learned through reading.

Christina, like Carlene, experienced similar racial events. In Christina's case, a lot of guilt burdens her as a teacher. Carlene similarly mentioned that she is not aware of what role her ancestors may have played in the apartheid regime, but she is living in a mindful manner. However, Christina seems to hold the concept of racism very close to her heart and ensures that she is enlightened and aware of her race and how that aspect fits into the history of South Africa. She painted herself to be a hypocrite by explaining that "It is hard as a history teacher, especially a white history teacher standing in front of them and trying to explain these complex things". During the interview, I observed her discomfort in talking about slavery and apartheid and she related her need to educate herself on current affairs such as the Black Lives Matter movement. She emphasised the importance of facing the facts of South Africa's challenging history and ensure that her learners know the truth, no matter how hard that might be. She referred to her selected artefact, which was a silver necklace with an African content pendant with a carved-out heart over South Africa. She explained that South Africa is engraved on her heart and she will forever be proud of her country.

Katlego, being a more seasoned teacher in comparison to the rest of the participants, lived through the apartheid regime and spoke about his experiences. He shared that coming from a "coloured" community meant that the teachers were friends with his parents, and so there were unlimited boundaries in place. He explained his hatred for school from a very young age because of having to endure corporal punishment, which was once legal. Moreover, he shared that a large reason why he is a teacher today is because of the effects of apartheid, as teaching was his only other career choice. He elaborated on his reasoning for choosing teaching and stated that teaching was the only other profession that he could afford to study. Katlego identifies as being "a product of apartheid government schools and I [he] started my [his] teaching off as a teacher". His selected artefact was a Father's Day card drawn by his daughter which highlighted some of his qualities. This artefact reminds him about his journey across the old and new South Africa and his resilience across the changes that he has endured, both personally and professionally.

From this category, it is interesting to highlight the varying and contradicting perspectives on race in South Africa. Some of the challenges shared by the participants pointed to the ways in which

learners interact differently with teachers of colour versus Caucasian teachers. Caterina and Sharylene expressed that they felt the need to have to prove themselves as teachers to their learners and, in some cases, colleagues based on their race. Upon their reflection of themselves and their practice, they became aware of the prevalent stigmas that still exist in today's youth society, which Sharylene believes is taught. She argued the need for the teachings of racism to the youth to be stopped.

Fascinatingly, six of the participants' stories touched on the realities of racism, which speaks to the aftermath of the Apartheid regime experienced by South Africans. Considering that five out of the nine participants were of colour, three out of these participants spoke about racism as experiences that influenced their personal identities which overflowed into their teacher identity constructions. These three participants, shared their experiences of feeling like victims, based on learners and teachers' behaviour and comments.

The three Caucasian participants also shared experiences pertaining to race, however, significantly differently to that of the participants of colour. The Caucasian participants, Mbali, Carlene, and Christina, shared their insight into racism by reflecting on how they have an influence to others who are not of the same racial group to them. More specifically, Mbali highlighted her empathy toward learners having to learn Afrikaans, despite the challenges faced by the learners of having to grasp the foundational skills for learning the language. Carlene and Christina explained their experiences of having to teach Apartheid-related concepts to their learners and their challenges of trying to relate to the struggles experienced by other racial groups. Considering that their learners belong to other racial groups, they both expressed their discomfort and somewhat guilt, in having to normalise the realities of Apartheid in the teaching of the curriculum.

The three teachers of colour experienced their racist recollections through the lens of how others made them feel, whereas the three Caucasian participants experienced race as incidents of becoming aware of their surroundings and contexts. The Caucasian participants visibly became uncomfortable and began to fidget and lose eye contact during these parts of their story. These participants expressed a sense of guilt, of which Christina shared that she felt the need and understood the urgency to be educated in matters pertaining to the history of South Africa in order to best teach the content of her subject. Both Christina and Carlene shared that they feel guilty on behalf of their ancestors. On the other hand, the participants of colour, Caterina, Sharylene, and Katlego looked concerned when sharing their stories regarding race, and less guilt was

displayed. These participants did not show discomfort in these parts of their stories, compared to Mbali, Carlene, and Christina.

In light of what Sharylene argued, the need to stop teaching the youth to be racists and to teach values instead is of great importance. Racism is indeed learned and taught and not genetically passed on. As Carlene highlighted, she is not aware of her ancestors' wrongdoings and cannot, at this point, take back what was done, however she highlighted the need to be mindful as a Caucasian teacher teaching various racial groups. Carlene's input ties with Christina's statement of the need for teachers to educate themselves in order to best relay the history of South Africa. She became emotional in this part of her story, as it seemed to have impacted her significantly.

The six mentioned participants' constructions of their self-perceived credibility were influenced by race. From the analysis, the participants of colour used their racial encounters as points of reflection based on comparison between their racial groups and common stereotypes, such as Caterina with the COVID-19 pandemic and Asian people, Sharylene with her learners treating her Caucasian colleagues with more respect, and Katlego with his journey into teaching and his experiences in having taught across the timeframes of Apartheid toward democracy. The Caucasian participants' constructions of their self-perceived credibility were influenced by the divide between Caucasian teachers and teachers belonging to other racial groups in South Africa. These participants highlighted the need to become more self-aware, such as Mbali feeling saddened by watching learners being forced to learn Afrikaans by stating "I am so sorry for this system", Carlene who considers the fact that her pre-descendants may have been a part of slavery by sharing "it's possible that I was a descendant of somebody who either worked on a slave ship or was a slave trader", and Christina who explained the challenge of teaching concepts pertaining to South African history by stating "It is hard as a History teacher, especially a white History teacher standing in front of them and trying to explain these complex things to little minds". Each of the three Caucasian participants highlighted the challenge of being a Caucasian teacher teaching learners who belong to other racial groups about Apartheid or aspects pertaining to the regime.

Thus, in understanding the participants' constructions of their self-perceived credibility, their perceptions on race and their experiences that influenced their perceptions were important. From the analysis outlined in this category, the participants of colour viewed their racial experiences inwardly, from a victim's viewpoint, as though racism was experienced by them from others and

the Caucasian participants experienced racism outwardly, from a viewpoint of displaying racism to others and thus becoming more aware and mindful of their behaviour and words. A possible way to redress teaching challenges with regard to race would be to educate teachers to become mindful in terms of their behaviour and language use when teaching content and interacting with all school stakeholders. This taught mindfulness may encourage teachers to become more self-aware with regard to what is said and how it is being said as well as how to address and react to potential racial events in practice amongst learners and colleagues.

In Subtheme 2.2, I discussed the participants' stories with regard to their experiences with racism and how they dealt with these experiences. From this subtheme, I realised that six out of the nine participants spoke about racism in their stories and thus is a common challenge evident in South African classrooms. Moreover, the two Caucasian participants felt uncomfortable and defeated in having to teach concepts related to apartheid, racism, and slavery, placing themselves into the regime in the eyes of their learners which takes an emotional toll on their wellbeing. Being a teacher has a lot to do with the way you are perceived by others, especially school stakeholders, whereby teachers are classified and categorised based on the colour of their skin. This results in teachers having to prove themselves beyond their racial profiles.

5.4.2.3 Subtheme 2.3: Ready or not, TEACH!

In Subtheme 2.3, I sort through and analyse the data based on the participants' influential teaching experiences using three categories. Category 2.3.1 refers to feeling overwhelmed and underprepared, Category 2.3.2 relates to colleagues' influences on teachers' identities, and Category 2.3.3 focuses on managing the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

i. Category 2.3.1: Being thrown into the deep end

The participants highlighted that teaching was not what they had expected, which Botha and Rens (2018) refer to as experiencing reality shock. Upon stepping into their practices, beginner teachers often experience a large and unexpected gap between their dense theoretical knowledge and the reality of teaching (Ünver, 2014). Five out of the nine participants mentioned that they felt like they were thrown into the deep end at some point in their teaching careers. They had explained that teaching was not what they had expected or even prepared for.

Sharylene explained that she felt as though she had been “thrown into the deep end from the beginning” because she had seen the realities faced in both mainstream and special needs schools. Despite having studied her Honours degree in special needs education, she quickly realised that her theoretical knowledge was not sufficient to tackle the reality that she was expected to face. She shared that the learners had different abilities and were all grouped together as if they were to be treated and taught in the same manner, which was next to impossible. Sharylene expressed her disappointment in the government as she believes that they are unaware of what the needs and realities are in special needs schools.

As with Sharylene’s story, Jayal expressed her concern about her time teaching at a government school. She felt the pressure of having to complete the endless administrative duties in combination with having to teach over 170 learners per day. She explained that she felt overwhelmed and defeated and this resulted from her noticing that she really only knew her very strong learners and her weaker learners, which left the average learners to cope on their own. Christina, like Sharylene and Jayal, explained that she felt that student teachers were not adequately equipped for the teaching world. She argued that as fourth year university students, they had no teaching experience and were then expected to jump into the classroom and keep their heads above water. Christina elaborated on her overwhelming emotions as she recalled those challenging experiences and said that “We didn’t know what to expect in the classroom, we just, it felt like we were being thrown into the deep end”. Like Sharylene, Jayal, and Christina’s stories, Carlene expressed that she “felt like I [she] was drowning that first year”. She elaborated that on top of the several tasks that needed to be completed within deadlines, as a beginner teacher “I [She] felt like I [she] was thrown in the deep end”.

Caterina, Alexa, and Katlego shared some of their unexpected experiences going into teaching. They explained that hearing about children in poverty and feeding schemes compared to actually seeing and having to help these children are worlds apart. All three of these participants were involved and assisted in feeding schemes and explained their experiences as making them “really heartsore”, “heart-breaking and sad”, and “thrown in the deep end”. These participants shared that it forced them to think differently about teaching and made them open their eyes to a world that their studies had never prepared them for.

Katlego shared some of his insight into teaching in the apartheid years. In university, he explained, teachers are taught about methodologies and specialised content, however they are not taught

about the several other duties expected from them, he added. Katlego elaborated on the discipline system under the apartheid regime and recalled having to follow orders provided by his principal, despite having had to go against his own values. He described one incident where learners were stoning cars and he was asked to handle the situation using corporal punishment. Katlego paused and said: “I was part of that era”.

In having to deal with learners’ discipline, which is another aspect that is not really taught in university, Caterina, Alexa, and Sharylene pointed out the importance of parental involvement. These three participants argued that university fails to communicate that teaching is not just about the learners, instead that teachers are expected to deal with colleagues and parents, too. Caterina suggested a theory that she created using her years of classroom experience and referred to it as a “tri part story”. The first part, she explained, is the teacher, the second is the learner, and the third is the parent. Both Sharylene and Caterina expanded on this theory and explained that as teachers, they teach values and manners, and share knowledge, and this needs to be consistently reinforced outside the classroom. Thus, they elaborated that teaching needs to happen at home and in the classroom in order for meaningful and consistent learning to take place. Sharylene mentioned that from her experience “parents don’t pay attention” and this negatively impacts the learners’ overall development.

Sharylene, like Laurel, added that teaching has its good days and its tough days, and sometimes teachers need a break. Sharylene used her selected artefact, which was a porcelain mug, and explained that although her days are hectic, and she often forgets to eat, her cup of tea or coffee a day consoles her and forces her to give herself a break.

In Category 2.3.1, the participants highlighted their experiences of feeling like they were thrown into the deep end and not being adequately prepared for the realities of the classroom. They mentioned aspects such as feeling exhausted, confused, and overworked from the pressures placed on teachers. The participants expressed their views on dealing with the effects of these pressures and their experiences of feeling emotionally, physically, and mentally drained.

ii. Category 2.3.2: Colleagues’ influences on teachers’ identities

Botha and Rens (2018) argue that there is great importance and development behind reflection with colleagues. More related and relevant content needs to be included in the theory behind

studying to become a teacher (Reeves & Robinson, 2014). Many of the participants explained their experiences with colleagues and how these experiences influenced their teacher identities. Some participants spoke about negative encounters with colleagues and not knowing how to manage conflicts in the workplace, whilst others recalled their fond memories with their mentor teachers which they believed shaped who they are as teachers.

Mbali mentioned that teaching sometimes is the easy part and that dealing with colleagues is the real challenge. Noting that she prefers to refrain from conflict at work, she stated that it makes it so much more challenging to have to try to deal with such situations in a professional manner. She discussed some of her experiences as a student teacher and discovered that it is challenging to step away from the image of being a student teacher and to recreate her image as a qualified teacher. She explained that her colleagues made that a difficult adjustment to make as there were “still teachers looking at you [me] like oh you’re still a student teacher, so you have [I had] to do this and I’m like no, I’m actually a teacher now”. As a result of trying to change her colleagues’ perceptions of her as a teacher, she needed to re-evaluate and re-establish her teacher identity. Mbali shared that despite the endless pressures placed on teachers, “a lot of the time and energy is spent more on colleague relationships”.

Alexa described the discrepancies between two schools that she worked at and maintained that the atmosphere of the school is important in how teachers’ feel about their jobs. She spoke about how in her first school, she had a fallout with her principal and felt like she was “shunned and disrespected”, whereas in her second school, she felt as though she was a part of a family. In her experience of feeling underappreciated and disrespected at her first school, Alexa shared that she felt terrible as a teacher and she did not want to teach there anymore. She began questioning herself as a teacher and would ask questions like “is it my teaching? Like what is it that I’m not doing that you need me to change?”. Both Alexa and Caterina shared their conflicts with their principals, whereby Caterina described feeling a lack of support from her principal and this resulted in her questioning her worth as a teacher, ultimately forcing her to leave the school and the profession. Sharylene argued that “teachers don’t get the assistance that they need in South Africa. Because of schools and environments, that’s not the same, the teachers are not the same” and that is an aspect that stakeholders need to keep in mind when dealing with education.

Caterina explained that her colleagues play an important role in her teaching identity in that she considers herself less innovative and more analytical. She observes her colleagues’ creativity in

lessons and learns from their approaches on how to best adapt her teaching. Like Caterina, Carlene adopted a strategy from her colleague that she thought would be a good idea to use in her lessons. She explained that having other teachers around her to be able to share information and ideas with can be really helpful in developing herself as well as her practice. On the contrary, teaching without the support of and interaction with colleagues can be quite lonely (Shapiro, 2010). Jayal shared that at one school there were only a few staff members and this made it “quite a lonely environment” because “there was nobody to bounce ideas off” of. Similar to Jayal’s experience, Alexa found herself in a similar situation. Alexa was the only English teacher at her school and was required to prepare and teach all of the English following a different curriculum, as a beginner teacher. None of her colleagues could assist her and she described this experience as being “very tough” and emotionally taxing on her. She explained that as a newer teacher, you turn to your colleagues for guidance and support and in her case, there were no teachers to turn to.

Laurel highlighted that she has been pushed out of her comfort zone throughout her teaching career and these uncomfortable experiences helped her to grow both personally and professionally. She elaborated on all the learnings that she had experienced during her years of teaching and highlighted that “it is not easy to get along with all your colleagues” and still try to maintain your professionalism at all times. Teaching is a profession that requires a strong heart in order to manage the overwhelming emotions that come with it (Botha & Rens, 2018). Christina shared her experience, with tears in her eyes, recalling her first encounter with her colleagues as “being thrown into the deep end”.

Botha and Rens (2018) report on the lack of innovation in education as a result of continuing with what works. Sharylene explained her disheartenment with older teachers and was shocked to realise the struggles that she would experience with more seasoned teachers. She mentioned the difficulty she had encountered when she looked for the support of her colleagues, especially the more experienced teachers. She was surprised to find that “the older teachers’ behaviour towards the new teachers that come in” was not as accommodating and supportive as what she had hoped for. She explained the importance of teachers’ sharing knowledge and good practices amongst one another to ensure growth and quality teaching, like Caterina and Carlene. She, unfortunately, soon realised that some of “the older teachers want to like hold all their knowledge” and continue with their ways of teaching.

Like Jayal and Alexa highlighted the importance of having colleagues' support, mentorship is necessary in sharing methodologies and reflecting with colleagues as part of their daily practices and thus influences teachers' identities (Vuori, 2015). For instance, Mbali shared her experiences and recalls her mentor teachers playing an important role in her teacher identity. As a student teacher, she admired her mentor teacher for the manner in which she managed the learners, describing her as "she would never scream and she had this soft way of handling the children". She explained that this was an eye-opener for her in a sense that it exposed her to a new approach of teaching that she had never really given much thought to. Mbali went on to add that she learnt the importance of establishing some form of class routine from her mentor teacher and these experiences certainly impacted her teacher identity.

In another aspect of mentorship, Mbali explained that guidance is a fundamental element that she received from her mentor teachers, which she was not taught in her studies (Botha & Rens, 2018). She elaborated on how professionalism was an underpinning aspect to her establishing her teacher identity. She shared that her mentor teacher would sometimes take the time to discuss with her appropriate attire in a transparent way and this made her more aware of her professional image as a teacher. Mbali recalled another mentor teacher of hers that had an impact on her teacher identity, describing her mentor as someone who would point out her wrongs in a kind way, taking the time to develop her as a teacher. She explained one experience that she remembered about her mentor, stating that teachers should treat learners fairly and not based on merit. Her mentor teacher's advice stuck with Mbali as she was reminded by her mentor teacher's words of wisdom, "You must lure them in another way to work for better marks".

Similar to Mbali's experiences with her mentor teachers, Jayal related in that she expressed her appreciation for the time that her mentor teacher invested in her growth and development as a beginner teacher by sharing that "I think also that she was willing to put effort into me to make me the teacher I am today". Jayal explained that because of the time her mentor teacher dedicated to her, she decided to become a teacher and provided a foundation to who she wanted to be as a teacher. Jayal referred to her mentor teacher as helpful, like Alexa, who described her mentor teacher as having taught her a lot in a comfortable environment. Jayal and Alexa highlighted that their mentor teachers allowed them freedom to become a part of the teaching practice and gave them the opportunity to establish who they were as teachers.

In Category 2.3.2, I discussed how healthy and professional interactions with colleagues may foundation a comfortable and safe environment for teachers to establish and construct their identities. Schools' atmospheres and environments play an important role in the shaping of teachers' identities.

iii. Category 2.3.3: Managing the effects of COVID-19 in the classroom

Having discovered that the participants experienced aspects from both their personal and professional lives influencing their wellbeing, in some way or form, the global pandemic certainly has added immense pressure on teachers and their identities (Asbury & Kim, 2020). In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers were expected to work over time to compensate for lost academic time. Teachers needed to quickly adapt to the rapid changes that influenced the world. This certainly took a toll on their emotional wellbeing and affected their teaching identities, as the pandemic brought about an unexpected wave of new methodologies and platforms of teaching.

Caterina recalls her experience of having to communicate ideas and suggestions with her colleagues in how to best work as a team to recover from the effects on schooling from the pandemic. She explained that due to the lockdown, teachers were faced with a mighty challenge of having to change their ways of teaching. She said that teachers "saw there was a problem but they tried to find ways to overcome it" and that, in her eyes, was admirable and brave. Like Caterina's explanation, Mbali expressed that the current situation that teachers found themselves in, due to the pandemic, was stressful and confusing. She explained that schools are expected to open on a specific date and teachers are expected to plan and prepare for the learners' return only to be notified the day before that the schools' opening is postponed. Moreover, Mbali added that with the sudden closure of schools, teachers are still expected to perform their regular teaching duties, except it makes it so much more challenging having to execute school-related tasks from home. This is where Caterina referred to having to communicate with colleagues and work as a team becomes really important.

Like Caterina explained, teachers faced the pandemic head on, Sharylene explained that this pandemic, for her, has been demanding. She referred to her selected artefact, a teacup, and elaborated that her cup of coffee or tea during her day keeps her going. She stated that the handle might break, like teachers may breakdown, but she can still wrap her hands around the mug, just like teachers face difficult situations, they find new ways to manage and "keep going".

The COVID-19 global pandemic has placed pressure on the education sector and forced its stakeholders to consider and use virtual platforms (Mhlanga & Moloji, 2020). This is another overwhelming change that teachers were faced with and expected to incorporate into their practices, for the first time ever. For some teachers, the change into the virtual teaching world was easier than for others. In either case, the pandemic forced teachers to reconsider their planning and execution of lessons with their learners, in some way. In Katlego's case, he described his experience during the pandemic as challenging as he had to learn to use online teaching resources and tools. His optimistic attitude in tackling this challenge was admirable as he shared that dealing with the challenges of trying to adapt the curriculum, his planning, and engagement with his learners during online lessons was totally new to him. However, he confirmed that it is a challenge which he remains open-minded about.

Katlego mentioned the challenge of adapting his online lessons and trying to ensure that all learners are participating and understanding, and similarly Laurel shared one of her experiences with her learners. She explained that lockdown has been really tough and having to change her teaching so drastically has been challenging. Her school, like Katlego's, used online teaching to continue with teaching during the lockdown. Laurel explained that lockdown felt like forever, and for the learners, it seemed like it felt even longer as they would ask her if she had remembered their names during the online lessons. Laurel shared that during one of her online lessons, she had called on one of her more reserved learners by name, and this learner's reaction was filled with excitement and shock that Laurel had remembered her name. Laurel elaborated that by using that learner's name, she participated more actively during the next lessons. She explained that this takes a lot more effort from teachers to keep up with each learner virtually and to try to engage with the learners personally whilst teaching through a screen.

Jayal, like Katlego, had to gather her thoughts when reflecting on the effects that the pandemic had on her teaching. She, too, tried to remain as optimistic as possible when dealing with the pandemic in her practice. She explained that the pandemic has forced her to develop professionally by attending various webinars. In her new position, as a principal, Jayal expressed how important teacher professional development is, especially in current times. She explained that she tries to be supportive to her team of teachers and invites them to attend relevant virtual seminars.

Carlene has adapted her teaching to include the reality of the pandemic, allowing the learners to be more aware of current affairs. She explained that as weekly assignments, she requested for the learners to conduct research about COVID-19 and to keep updated with the latest news. She explained that since the pandemic has lasted much longer than was anticipated, she encouraged her learners to begin researching other global current affairs and not just COVID-19-related issues and statistics. She stated that teachers are required to keep updated with new online teaching tools, methods, and platforms. She shared that she has been using YouTube more regularly now during the pandemic to search for teaching ideas. Carlene elaborated on her new virtual classroom and explained that she shares links with her learners to explain content and assignments.

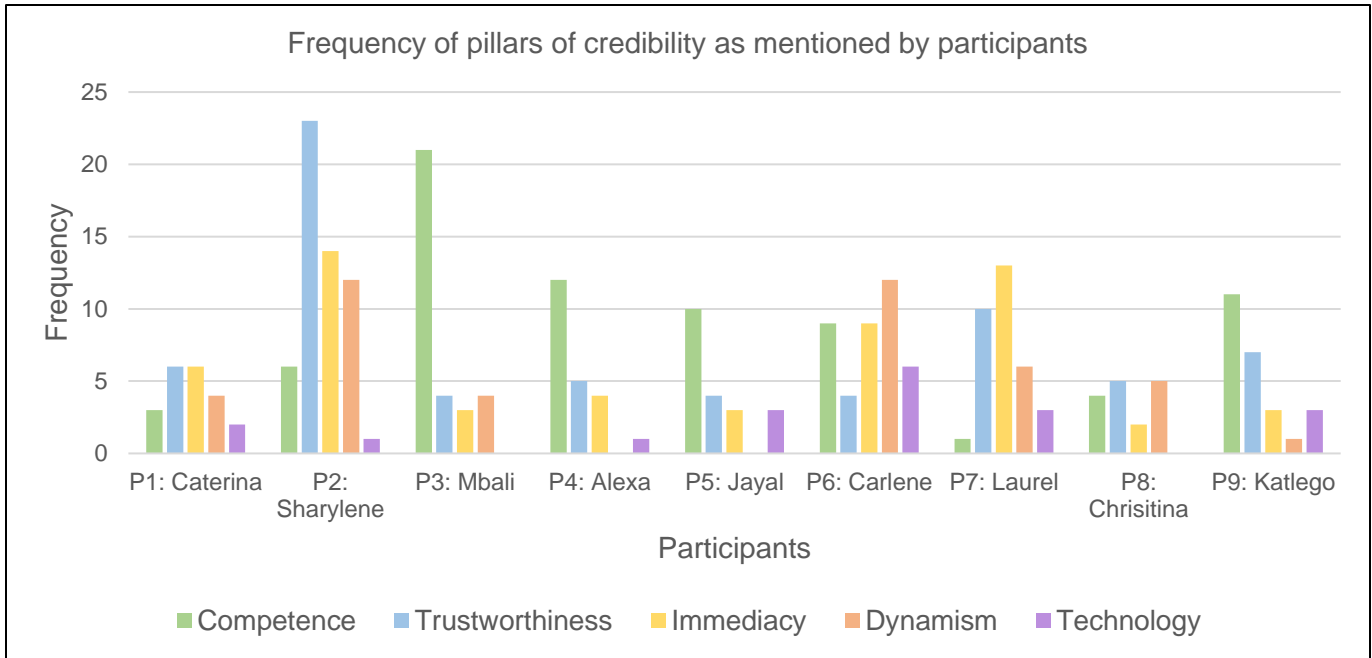
In Category 2.3.3, I discussed the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on teachers, their practices, and ultimately their identities. The participants dealt with the effects differently, where some found the adaptation a little more challenging than others. Participants stressed that working as a team is important, now more than ever before. Teaching has never been so drastically changed and the shift into virtual teaching comes with its own set of challenges that teachers are expected to face and manage.

Overall, in Subtheme 2.3, three categories were outlined in support of the subtheme titled 'Ready or not, TEACH!'. The first category focused on the participants' feelings of being underprepared for the realities of teaching. The second category stressed the influences that colleagues have on the shaping of the participants' teacher identities. The third and final category referred to the participants' experiences of managing the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in their practices. From this subtheme, I have noticed that many of the participants expressed their feelings of apprehension and stress upon entering the teaching profession. Several of the participants referred to these experiences as feeling as though they were pushed into the deep end as their university experiences did not adequately prepare them for teaching. Additionally, I found that teachers depend on each other, and this was especially noticeable during their experiences of working through the pandemic. Colleagues play an important role in the atmosphere of the participants' working environments. Massive and unexpected changes, like the pandemic, forced the participants to work as a team to support one another, which ultimately influenced their teacher identities.

5.4.3 Theme 3: Who I am: Pillars shaping the IP teachers' self-perceived credibility

In Theme 2, I analysed the data with regard to the participants' teacher identities laying the foundation to understanding their self-perceived credibility which will be unpacked in Theme 3. Under this theme, I attempt to explore the participants' self-perceived credibility in relation to the proposed pillars (cf., Section 2.6: 30). I use the participants' shared narratives to justify their relation to each of the mentioned credibility pillars. Since several authors argue that credibility is largely dependent on how others perceive teachers (Ramos & McCullick, 2015; Freeman, 2011; Teven, 2001), I included the element of learners and colleagues' perceived (by the participants) behaviour as an influence to the participants' self-perceived credibility.

This theme is an important puzzle piece to this study as it directly supports the study's purpose. Graph 1 below outlines the highlighted credibility pillars mentioned by each of the participants. This graph assists in demonstrating which credibility pillars each of the participants most identified with as being relevant and important to their credibility constructions. Based on the literature and the current global pandemic, it was interesting to sort through the trends in the data. There were several overlaps amongst the participants' stories, however each story was viewed as a unique contribution in the analyses. The graph includes the participants' names, the mentioned credibility pillars, and the frequency of each of the pillars. I decided to include the frequencies of each pillar to provide an indication as to how many times that specific pillar was stressed by the participant.



Graph 1: Frequency of credibility pillars as mentioned by the participants

From Graph 1 above, the differences amongst the participants' stories, in terms of the credibility pillars, clearly demonstrates the influences, if any, of the pillars in their practices. All nine of the participants mentioned experiences related to competence, trustworthiness, and immediacy. Dynamism, as argued by Burgoon *et al.* (1990), was to be omitted as a determining dimension of credibility. However, I counterargue the need to include dynamism as a credibility pillar in the younger phases of teaching, specifically the IP. As per the data, Caterina, Sharylene, Mbali, Carlene, Laurel, Christina, and Katlego included dynamism within their teaching practices and considered it as an important and necessary element to include in their lessons.

The fifth proposed pillar relates to technology, which emerged as a subtheme in the data. Including technology in the classroom and becoming technologically literate is more important now than ever before. As the world continues to face the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers are expected to incorporate new platforms and tools for teaching and learning (Mhlanga & Moloj, 2020). As per the nature of the pandemic, these teaching platforms and tools needed to be virtual, hence the push toward the use of technology. Technology was not necessarily included in the dimensions of credibility, however, as times have changed, teaching has followed suit. Seven out of the nine participants mentioned technology in their stories.

Caterina, Sharylene, Alexa, Jayal, Carlene, Laurel, and Katlego stressed the need and importance of being technologically savvy in their practices.

In support of Theme 3, I refer to two subthemes. The first subtheme focuses on establishing the pillars that influence the participants' credibility. I specifically focus on competence, trustworthiness, immediacy, dynamism, and technology and thus I created categories for each of these pillars. The second subtheme refers to learners and colleagues' behaviour as a means of feedback to the participants in establishing, perceiving, and constructing their own teacher credibility. My reasoning for including credibility pillars mentioned in the participants' stories and learners and colleagues' behaviour as a form of feedback is to highlight the focus on the participants' self-perceived credibility.

With reference to Figure 18 below, I outline self-perceived credibility with regard to Subtheme 3.1 and Subtheme 3.2. I highlight the link between perceived credibility and self-perceived credibility which underpin and visually demonstrate both subthemes. The participants have their own set of beliefs and perceptions of who they are as teachers, and this is underpinned by their teacher identities, as discussed in Theme 2. The perceived perceptions by learners and/or other stakeholders, such as parents, remain perceptions that are often insignificant and separate to that of the teachers' perceptions (Freeman, 2011). So, this study focuses on the teachers' self-perceived credibility, whereby teachers become aware of their own perceptions which is based on their own beliefs and on how they think they are perceived by others (Schutz, 1967), such as learners, parents, or colleagues, based on displayed behaviour used as a form of feedback.

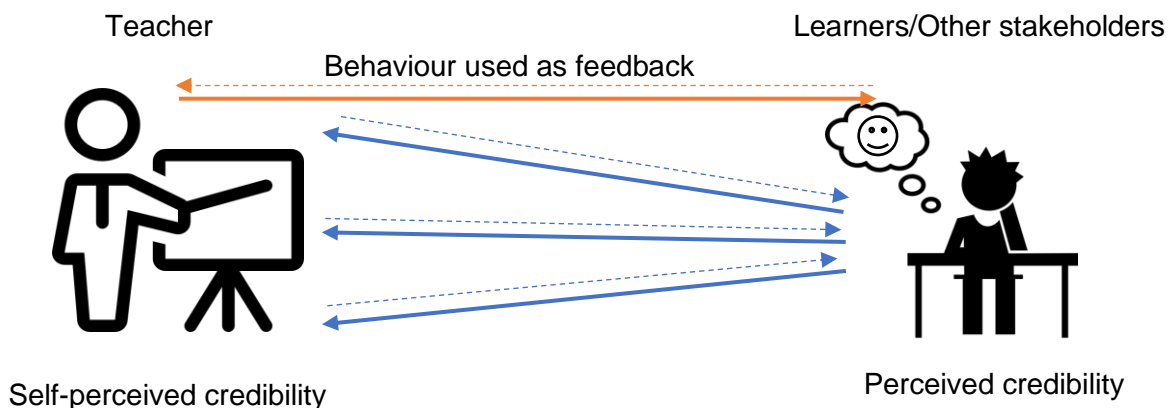


Figure 18: A visual demonstration highlighting the link between Subthemes 3.1 and 3.2 in support of Theme 3

5.4.3.1 Subtheme 3.1: Pillars influencing teachers' credibility

In Subtheme 3.1, I discuss the pillars of credibility that were highlighted in the data. The data showed five pillars which related to the participants' constructions of their credibility. The presentation of the five pillars is ascendingly ordered, thus the most occurrences per all nine participants per credibility pillar was presented first, and so forth. For categorisation purposes, I have created five categories which house each of the pillars, namely competence, trustworthiness, immediacy, dynamism, and technology.

i. Category 3.1.1: Competence

Competence is based on how knowledgeable a teacher is in their subject (Kuivila *et al.*, 2020) which includes their skill set, abilities, and number of years of experience in practice. Competence is closely linked to the development of teachers' identities (Van Lankveld *et al.*, 2017), and directly influences how teachers' credibility is perceived by others (McArthur & Bostedo-Conway, 2012). With reference to Graph 1 above, the data shows a trend in participants referring to their competence when perceiving and constructing their own credibility, as all nine participants mentioned their competence in their stories.

Qualifications

According to Graph 1, Mbali placed the most emphasis, compared to the rest of the participants, on her competence as a teacher. She immediately started her story by mentioning her qualifications. She elaborated on her self-initiated self-discipline that drove her to study and work simultaneously. She proudly added that she had graduated with distinction for her first degree and this made her want to study even further. She explained that being competent at her job and being the best is very important to her and stated that she felt the need to "show others and show myself [herself] that I'm [she is] not just a teacher, I'm [she is] smarter". She further highlighted that she has graduated with her Education Honours degree and is currently studying toward her Master's degree. Like Mbali, Sharylene described her academic journey by sharing that she has completed her Bachelor of Education degree and her Honours degree, specialising in special needs education. Similar to Mbali and Sharylene, Alexa completed her Bachelor of Education degree and her Honours degree. Unlike Mbali, who was an overachiever at school, Alexa explained that "I [she] wasn't good at school" and that two of her school teachers played an important role in her passing her matric with a bachelor degree pass.

Similar to Christina and Alexa's experiences, Jayal shared that once she qualified with her teaching degree, she managed to find a teaching post, which increased her competence as a beginner teacher and an overseas au pair. Like Jayal, Katlego was lucky enough to have applied and got accepted for a teaching post after his studies, making him feel confident in his abilities as a teacher. She elaborated that she went on to complete her Honours degree, and is currently studying toward her Master's qualification, like Mbali. Unlike Mbali, Alexa, Sharylene, and Jayal, Carlene mentioned that she studied her Postgraduate Certificate in Education (commonly referred to as a PGCE) after completing her English studies. Similar to the path taken by Carlene, Laurel also studied toward her PGCE. Christina completed her four-year bachelor degree in education specialising in FET, which is more subject specific and detailed than that of IP, and is currently studying toward her Honours degree. She elaborated saying that she finds great importance in developing herself and continuously learning, like Mbali, Jayal, Laurel, and Katlego.

Beginner teacher experiences

Mbali explained that having the opportunity to be a student teacher whilst studying gave her a chance to experience what teaching really entailed and thus eliminated her reality shock upon entering her practice (Botha & Rens, 2018). She elaborated that she had the experience of being viewed as both a student teacher and a "real teacher". Her colleagues' perceptions of her as a student teacher versus a qualified teacher was a challenge for her especially that Mbali's focus was on having "a big[ger] influence than just a teacher". As Mbali's years of teaching increased, she described herself as being "quite established as a teacher" explaining that she knew the procedures of the school, understood her role as a teacher, and felt comfortable teaching the subject content. Like Mbali, Jayal was lucky to have had some teaching experience before stepping into her own practice, allowing her more time and space to navigate her teacher identity and overall, positively influencing her competence.

Beginner teachers expect accommodating and supportive working environments which is reinforced by their seniors or mentor teachers (Cubukcu, 2013); however this was not the case for Alexa. She described her negative experiences at the beginning of her teaching career whereby her Head of Department senior created a conflicting and hostile work environment for her. She explained that her senior would belittle her and "tell me I'm [her she's] useless" in front of the learners and this resulted in Alexa feeling beyond incompetent. She elaborated that the learners' behaviour changed toward her as they viewed her as "weak" which further decreased her confidence as a teacher. Alexa explained that her senior blamed her for the learners' failures

and accused Alexa of not doing her job adequately, specifically not being able to effectively discipline the learners, resulting in a viscous cycle of blame. After finally coming to the realisation that she no longer could work in that toxic environment, Alexa resigned from her first school and decided to apply to other surrounding schools. She explained that being a beginner teacher is not easy at all as “most of the places just said no, you’re a first-year teacher, we don’t take first-year teachers”. Alexa recalled this experience with a disheartened look on her face and shared that she had her teaching degree and she had one-year worth of teaching experience, which meant she was a competent teacher, but that was not enough, apparently.

Alexa stressed the importance of experience as a teacher by explaining that “You need to get your experience” as a part of being a competent teacher. Similar to the challenges Alexa and Mbali had faced as beginner teachers, Carlene shared that she felt unprepared for the teaching world, stressing her dislike, till today, for administration duties. Like Alexa, Christina highlighted experience as an important factor to consider when referring to her competence as a teacher stating that “it’s not about textbooks, it’s about your experience in that field”. So, Christina used her studies specialising in FET as a backdrop to feeling competent in teaching her subject to her IP learners. Much like Katlego’s story, Christina and Katlego believe that teaching should not be grounded on a textbook and should go deeper into the methodologies and meanings behind the content, as mentioned by Sharylene who explains that depending on a textbook is “just reading”. Katlego shared a fond memory of two of his school teachers, whereby he recalled that both these teachers were prepared and flawless and all without the use of a textbook. He identified these two teachers to be competent in knowing their content so well that a textbook was of very little use to them.

Subject expertise

Mbali likened her competence to that of feeling confident by explaining that “to be confident as a teacher or what makes me confident is when I know my syllabus and I know the curriculum”. She explained that when she had relocated to her second school, she felt less established and she was placed to teach Natural Science and Technology, which was not the subject she had majored in. This made her feel unhappy and unprepared as she believed that “feeling confident in the subject I [she] teach[es]” is an important aspect of feeling established and competent as a teacher. She explained that knowing her subject content and being able to answer subject-related questions that her learners had asked made her feel competent and prepared. Additionally, moving to a new school and a new environment, she described her experience of replacing a

teacher in the middle of the school year. She explained that the learners were already so used to the previous teachers' routine that they often compared her to their previous teacher, which made her feel insecure. She stressed the importance of "Knowing the subject content and knowing what is expected of you in that subject" as it is crucial in establishing teachers' credibility.

Sharylene shared that she aims to be a knowledgeable teacher who "actually knows what's going on in the world. And not just what's going on in this class". She explained that she pushes herself to fulfil several roles, like Mbali, and stressed that as a teacher she is responsible for fulfilling these roles competently. She referred to being able to effectively relay knowledge to her learners in an interesting and relatable way, which requires her to know her content well. Like Mbali and Sharylene, Alexa highlighted that with experience, she becomes more knowledgeable in teaching her subject content and explained that as a teacher, she needs to "feel comfortable because you're [she's] confident in your [her] subject". Both Sharylene and Laurel viewed competence differently to the rest of the participants and expressed that much of their competence lies in their ability to effectively manage their classrooms, including classroom rules, respecting each other's abilities and differences, and so forth.

Carlene explained that she needed to quickly find a way to manage her planning, teaching, preparing, and additional duties and she often questioned her competence by asking "Am I doing the right thing? Am I conveying this properly to my students?". She further added that when her learners spoke to her disrespectfully, she felt incompetent as a teacher. She explained, like Alexa, that discipline has become part of teaching, one of many other responsibilities, and this aspect of teaching influences her feelings of being capable. Carlene also stressed the need for teachers to feel confident and comfortable with the content that they are teaching, like Mbali stated. Carlene recalled one of her experiences having to teach Mathematics, a subject that she disliked and believed she was not good at, and began to panic and question her abilities as a teacher.

Like Mbali mentioned that learners can certainly notice when teachers are uncomfortable or unprepared in teaching their subject content, both Laurel and Katlego recalled experiences whereby teachers were not confident in their practice. Laurel explained that as a learner, she was victim to teachers writing on the board the entire lesson only to have to copy down the work without meaningful explanations, which she believed was not teaching. She explained that there is no competence in teachers writing line by line filling up the board without meaningfully relaying the information to the learners. Similarly, Katlego shared that many of his learners have

complained to him, in confidence, that one of his colleagues does not know how to teach because this teacher fills the board with writing, the entire lesson. He stated that learners felt confused and expressed that they knew she did not know what she was teaching.

Others' perceptions of own competence

Like Mbali, Katlego shared that he helps learners in his community and his high school daughter with their Mathematics homework and this keeps his knowledge and methodologies updated. He expressed that the learners turn to him for when they do not understand the Mathematics concepts, although he is not a Mathematics teacher. Caterina explained that “my [her] knowledge is very vast” whereby she assists her learners with complex Mathematics questions and motivates them to be the best, similar to that of Katlego’s story. Caterina stressed the importance of learner achievement as a result of her competence by explaining that many of her learners aim to be in the top 10. In Alexa’s case, she was reprimanded by her senior for being the cause of the increase in learners’ failures, which negatively impacted her sense of competence.

Katlego shared that he had computer skills which made his application for a teaching post that he had applied for stand out compared to the rest of his colleagues. At his school, he thoroughly enjoyed the environment and made several friends including the vice principal. He felt like he had established himself and his confidence as a teacher. He was supported by his colleagues and seniors, which played an important role in how he perceived his own competence. Moreover, in obtaining new and relevant knowledge and skills, Katlego stressed the importance of developing professionally throughout his career, like Jayal and Christina. He explained that he has travelled a long and challenging path coming from teaching in apartheid. He shared that he had to adapt from the apartheid regime to the Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) system to the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), and now having to become a teacher that is comfortable in teaching virtually. He believes that all of these experiences in teaching have certainly made him a more confident and competent teacher.

Mbali mentioned that being a younger teacher with less experience placed her in a position where she felt that she always had to prove her competence to herself and her colleagues. She explained that her feelings of being incompetent, based on what she believed and how others made her feel, made her draw to the conclusion that she was still young and had a lot more to learn. Mbali mentioned that she places much of her credibility as a teacher on her involvement and management of school-based tasks. For instance, she referred to her heading the under-13

netball team, being the organiser for the golf team, and being the team manager for athletics. She explained that she thrives on taking on these “small roles of responsibility that you have [she has] above others”.

The power of positions and rankings

Mbali expressed that she views competence as climbing the professional hierarchy as she stressed her sense of fulfilment when taking on additional roles and responsibilities although she is “not a HOD or a grade head”. She shared that another factor that influenced her competence was when her deputy principal would ask her to proofread letters and this made Mbali feel like she knew what she was doing as a teacher. Like Mbali, Alexa linked competence to being a Head of Department for a subject. She described one of her experiences whereby she needed to prepare English lessons for the entire IP as there were no other English teachers, and stated that “I was basically the Head of English for the whole Intermediate Phase”. This made her feel respected by her colleagues as she was a beginner teacher who was deemed competent enough to manage the preparation for her phase.

Like Mbali and Alexa view positions to be a form of competence, Jayal explained that she was a founder teacher at one of her schools and this made her experience the power behind positions. Furthermore, she explained that she applied for an English post and managed to get that position. In this post, she grew into the Head of English, then to the Head of Department for languages, and recently moved into the principal position.

In Category 3.1.1, I discussed the participants’ experiences and stories regarding their competence as teachers. I structured this section by highlighting the participants’ qualifications, followed by beginner teachers’ experiences and years of experience in practice. Then, I reported on the importance of knowing subject matter which was followed by others’ perceptions of the participants’ competence. Finally, I discussed how climbing the hierarchical ranks in school influenced the participants’ perceptions of their own competence.

ii. Category 3.1.2: Trustworthiness

According to Graph 1 above, all nine participants referred to trustworthiness as being a pillar which influenced their self-perceived credibility. In this study, trustworthiness refers to how attentive, caring, concerned, transparent, open, and dependable a teacher is perceived to be (Johnson Lachuk, Gísladóttir, & DeGraff, 2019; McArthur & Bostedo-Conway, 2012) by other

stakeholders, including learners, parents, and colleagues. According to Cubukcu (2013), learners expressed that the most important aspect of highly perceiving their teachers was based on their teachers' interactions with them. Cubukcu further found that learners indicated that they preferred their teachers to be more caring compared to being competent or authoritative.

Caring

Learners know when they are truly cared for or if the care received from their teachers is merely a façade (Bruney, 2012). Caterina explained that she establishes meaningful connections with her learners by showing that she genuinely cares about them, beyond the walls of the classroom. She expressed that caring goes far beyond just caring about learners' academics. She stated that she prefers to care for their whole wellbeing with the aim of trying to allow them to develop holistically as individuals. Caterina shared a frightening memory that she had experienced whereby one of her learners locked herself in a bathroom stall and attempted to harm herself using a knife. In this situation, Caterina used her relationship with this learner as a starting point of trying to manage the situation. She went on to add that teachers' caring has been foregrounded during the pandemic as she faces some of the toughest situations in her teaching career. She explained that this pandemic has proved that teachers care so much about their learners as they work tirelessly amidst the pandemic.

Sharylene reported on trustworthiness the most out of all the participants. Working with special needs learners, Sharylene explained that caring for her learners is important. She believes that learners look for love and affection from their teachers, as Cubukcu (2013) mentions. Like Caterina, Sharylene expressed that the foundation to teaching is caring. She described her joy when learners show development, whether that be personally, such as making friends or a change in their attitude, or even academically, such as being able to read two words as compared to one word. As Caterina stated about teachers' caring through the pandemic, Sharylene explained her care for her learners through her selected artefact, which was a mug. She compared her mug of tea or coffee to that of her learners, whereby she is like the mug and her learners are like the tea or coffee in that mug. She elaborated by saying that she tries to hold everything together, ensuring that her learners are taken care of and loved. She added that just like tea or coffee requires ingredients, so too do her learners, who require the correct ingredients to grow and flourish.

Sharylene added that to show learners that teachers believe in their potential is a powerful starting point for establishing bonds with her learners (Teven & Hanson, 2004). She expressed that she became aware of this as a learner who attended various schools in different provinces as she heavily relied on her teachers' guidance in catching up missed work. She described her teachers as being helpful and welcoming which made her feel cared for. She explained that her teachers played an important role in her understanding the importance of care from teachers as she stated that "wherever I went there was always a teacher, a helping hand, a smile and wanting to help". Sharylene expressed that these experiences shaped her as a caring teacher and pushes her to be empathetic with her learners. She stated that she sometimes over cares for her learners to a point that she would be willing to purchase items for them if they are in need, such as beanies for winter.

Alexa shared her care as a teacher with reference to her selected artefact, which was a memory box filled with stationery that was gifted to her by one of her primary school teachers and now colleague. Alexa explained that being a caring teacher can be challenging because she often needs to place her learners' needs before her own. She expressed her care through being there for her learners, in both emotional and mental capacities. She referred to her experiences of learners forgetting their stationery at home and having to use her own stationery to cut and paste in worksheets for her learners because she knows that they will lose it. She described her care as being an older sister to her learners. Like Alexa, Jayal describes her care as motherly, as one of her colleagues stated that the learners look to her as their mother.

Christina shared that her experiences as a teacher have been both challenging and rewarding. However, she stated that she relies heavily on her belief that she wakes up every day to be there for her learners, like Alexa. She explained that she values being supportive and caring toward her learners. Katlego recalled a memory as a learner whereby he explained that he had teachers who were terrible and would hit them, but he also had teachers who were compassionate, like Christina.

Openness

Caterina described herself as being an open teacher who always sets aside time, outside of teaching, for her learners and stated: "I [She] always had an open-door policy". Like Caterina, Sharylene explained that she "always connect[s] with the children personally" as she has realised over the years that sometimes learners need a person to listen to them. She compared herself to

her colleagues and stated that because she spends time on creating personal connections with her learners, she believes that her learners feel a lot more comfortable and open with her than her colleagues. Alexa shared that she spends a lot of time, like Sharylene, on developing personal bonds with her learners. She explained that her learners are “always open with me [her], they’re honest with me [her], we [they] can laugh, we [they] can cry together, we [they] can do everything together and I [she] think[s] that’s definitely something that I [she] feel[s] is important” in her practice.

Jayal referred to the habit of her mentor teacher of spending time on creating connections with her learners. She explained that when she creates open relationships with her learners, she enjoys her teaching more because the learners are aware of who she is as a person. Both Alexa and Jayal mentioned that despite creating an open and safe environment, it is not guaranteed or possible to expect for every learner to open up the way teachers expect them to. However, they both mentioned that getting through to even one learner is rewarding in itself. Jayal stressed the importance of fostering safe learning spaces, because “children thrive in an environment where they can be the best they can be, where they’re comfortable, where they’re cared for, where they’re noticed”.

Christina shared that she establishes open relationships with her learners by having personal conversations with them and allowing her learners to talk to her about their problems or feelings. She explained that having her learners know that she is always there for them and on their side makes her learners feel closer to her. She mentioned that spending a few minutes allowing the learners to have their own conversations, and to move away from the curriculum for a while, does wonders in her practice. Christina said that the learners begin to open up differently to how she expected in a formal lesson. She mentioned that some learners would describe their favourite holiday memory whilst others might open up about their emotions.

Facilitating a safe environment

Sharylene stated that despite everything outside of the mug being uncertain for the learners, like the pandemic, she tries to ensure calmness within her mug, which is her classroom. She explained that in her practice she ensures that her learners know that they are always welcome to talk to her about their feelings. In her attempt of creating a safe and open classroom space, she uses lessons such as Life Orientation to introduce difficult social topics, such as drug abuse. She explained that these lessons are important to foster a safe environment for the learners. Mbali

shared that she often catches herself worrying about her learners and their safety, which was triggered by one of her experiences. She explained that on one school day, a group of protesters vandalised their school and disrupted the entire school day. She expressed that she was frightened and worried for her learners. Mbali shared her concern that learners are highly impressionable and experiences like these could dampen their holistic development. She found herself having to take the time to explain to the learners what protests are and provide comfort to her learners in order to recreate a safe environment for them.

Both Sharylene and Alexa expressed that creating a safe environment for the learners is very important to them. They shared that they expect their learners to feel comfortable enough to be honest with them, from the smallest of situations, such as not having a pencil, to the more serious situations, such as abuse at home. Alexa maintained that learners search for safety and her classroom should be a safe zone for them to develop. Also, Katlego mentioned that he draws from his experiences as a learner watching his compassionate teachers and tries to bring this compassion into his practice when dealing with his learners. He explained that as a teacher, it is part of his job to think about the learner holistically and take into account what might be happening at home or how the child might be managing emotionally. He elaborated that the teachers need to be mindful about what type of environment they create in their practices as he realised that often teachers are not aware of what lies beneath the surface behaviour displayed by learners.

Like Sharylene, Carlene explained that she noticed the importance of having those heartfelt and open discussions with her learners. She expressed that despite the limited time, she sometimes steals some time from literature and Social Science periods to facilitate and listen to her learners' emotions and stories. She maintains that it is helpful to know her learners personally because then she has an opportunity to understand the 'why' questions she might have. Like Sharylene and Carlene, Christina explained that it is a must for her to use some time from her History lessons to listen to her learners' stories, outside of the curriculum. She noticed that once learners become comfortable, they tend to link their experiences to the content, which allows her more time to listen to her learners.

Providing a safe classroom environment requires teachers to eliminate elements that may tarnish learners' self-worth (Hoy & Tschannen-Morgan, 1999), such as belittling, name shaming, or bullying. Laurel explained that she tries to ensure that her classroom is a safe haven for her learners to express themselves openly without feeling ridiculed. She mentioned that one of the

methods that she used to establish a safe space was to show learners that she was open to sharing aspects of herself first, such as her likes and dislikes. She elaborated that at the beginning of the academic year, she has an open discussion about making mistakes and learning from the mistakes without being judged.

Katlego described his process of establishing a trustworthiness relationship with his learners as being on the learners' side. He explained that he spends a lot of his time talking to his learners and getting to know them. He included the component of being his learners' parent when they reach school and stated, "I will take your [their] side at any time, so you [they] are my children." and this makes him more trustworthy to his learners because they believe that he cares for them and about them.

Transparency

Teachers who show vulnerability and transparency and take ownership of not knowing all information allows learners to realise that teachers are only human (Teven & Hanson, 2004). Carlene and Laurel maintain that it is important for learners to understand that teachers do not know everything and should not be viewed as feeders of knowledge to their learners. Instead, Carlene argued that teaching and learning happens simultaneously and there should not be any embarrassment in that. She came to the realisation that learners often do not view teachers as humans as she jokingly explained an experience where she saw one of her learners at the mall over the weekend. To both her and her learner's surprise, the learner was stunned to see that her teacher visits the mall like she does. For something as simple as learners not seeing their teachers as mall-visitors, learners' perceptions of teachers are nearly robotic. Carlene shared that transparency is important in teachers admitting their mistakes to their learners. She said it should be normal for learners to point out a teacher's mistake and for a teacher to apologise for the mistake, fix it, and move on. Carlene confidently owns her mistakes and justifies them by explaining to her learners that she is human and also a learner, like they are.

By contrast, Laurel shared her experience as a learner whereby she was too afraid to let her teacher know that there was a mistake on the board as she knew she would be reprimanded for it. She explained that it made the classroom environment unfriendly and scary. In response to Laurel's experiences, Carlene stated that once learners are aware that mistakes are acceptable and part of the learning process, they are more willing to listen to their teachers because that teacher would be more relatable to them. She added that it is also a good idea to facilitate debates

and discussions with the learners as a platform for learning content and learning to respect others' opinions in a safe space. Alexa also shared that she encourages her learners to feel comfortable enough to tell her when she has made a mistake, as she believes this strengthens her bond with her learners by making them feel smart and involved.

From Laurel's experience as a learner, she knew what aspects she would like to include in her practice as a teacher and those that she knew she did not want to represent as a teacher. She explained that she would never want her learners to have the same experiences that she had as a learner. Bruney (2012) maintains that fostering a safe and open environment enhances teacher authenticity. So, Laurel decided that as a teacher she would base her practice on the teaching of values. She believes that she is a part of the learners, as she is learning along the way too, like Carlene. She stated that when her learners are comfortable enough to tell her that she has made a mistake, they are showing that they trust her. Laurel explained that her learners "feel free to ask questions. They are very open with me [her]. And some of them actually called me [her], mom", which makes her feel trusted by her learners. Like Carlene, Laurel also stated that she welcomes her learners to challenge her, in a respectful manner, and is willing to take the time to have debates with her learners.

Others' perceptions of own trustworthiness

Caterina and Alexa shared that they keep in contact with many of their past learners and they mentioned that they are glad that they managed to maintain a good relationship with them. As Caterina mentioned the need to establish meaningful relationships with learners, Mbali believes that learners want to be loved and supported and often do not receive this support at home. She explained that her mentor teacher taught her not to judge her learners, including their parents, their academic performance, or their behaviour. She added that learners watch teachers and their reactions (Page, 2016) and expressed that being fair shows learners that you care beyond the surface level of school.

Mbali expressed that it makes her feel good when people trust her to manage and complete tasks. She referred to assisting her deputy principal with the completion of documents and explained that "It makes you [her] feel established and it makes you [her] feel they trust you [her] with doing their work". Alexa referred to visits and messages from her previous learners and shared that she felt happy when they told her that they wished she was still their teacher. She explained that her

learners trusted her enough to continue to be their teacher even as they moved onto the following grades, which made her feel valued.

Learners are more likely to trust their teachers' competence if meaningful and honest teacher-learner relationships are formed (Cubukcu, 2013). Carlene shared, from her experience, that if learners are able to trust their teachers, they are more likely to trust their knowledge in delivering the content. She shared that she altered the way she taught specific lessons due to personal conversations that she had with her learners. This again, she stated, was a means of building and sustaining trustworthy and open relationships with her learners. She explained that by allowing an open and safe environment in her classroom and building her teaching persona to be one considered trustworthy by her learners, she was able to adapt her assignments accordingly. She explained that using class activities was another method that she used to build trustworthy relationships with her learners. For example, she asked her learners to write essays about specific topics and this allowed her to get to know her learners personally whilst giving the more reserved learners a chance to be heard too.

Laurel stated that she is more willing to learn from someone that she trusts, as Carlene explained (Cubukcu, 2013). She explained that she feels less comfortable having to trust someone who judges her. This is evident in classroom situations, too. Learners are certainly more aware of their learning when a teacher is perceived as being trustworthy. Laurel shared that the learners need to be heard. She expressed that when she takes the time to listen to her learners, like Sharylene explained, her learners are more willing to listen attentively and engage actively in her lessons. Laurel shared that her learners “learn to express themselves by seeing me [her] express myself [herself]” which she believes is important in developing trustworthy teacher-learner relationships.

Christina shared her experience in stepping into her first classroom as a beginner teacher, fresh out of university. She paused and pondered, “I didn’t understand why people so quickly trusted me as a new teacher”, she said. Moreover, she explained that because her learners trusted her, she often got to listen and have those needed discussions with her learners, whereby she sometimes just needed to listen and other times, she needed to offer advice. Katlego explained that he believes that his learners feel comfortable with him because he is relatable and often creates opportunities to have personal discussions, both as a class and with individual learners. He explained that at his first school, he was well-respected by his colleagues and the learners because he was close friends with the vice principal. Like Mbali, his vice principal would also ask

for his assistance with school-related matters, and this made Katlego feel dependable and needed. He added that his learners felt comfortable to share their stories and opinions with him. He referred to an example of his learners confiding in him when explaining that they do not like one of his colleagues. Katlego stated that sometimes it is challenging to get to listen to every learner during class time and so he decided to use his extramural time instead, as he is a soccer coach. He explained that learners are not all ready to open up to teachers, however, being in a different environment, especially one that is outside of the classroom, assists with opening up another opportunity to listen to his learners.

In Category 3.1.2, I discussed trustworthiness as described through the participants' stories by referring to sections. The first section focused on caring, followed by an analysis on participants' openness with their learners as the second section. The third section included a discussion on how the participants created a safe environment for their learners. Section four was based on the participants' transparency in their practice in which they elaborated on the importance of showing learners that they are human too. The fifth section referred to how others perceive, including learners and colleagues, the participants' trustworthiness.

iii. Category 3.1.3: Immediacy

Perceived immediacy is conceptualised as the interactions and intensity between teachers and learners (Mehrabian, 1967). Immediacy includes the verbal and nonverbal closeness between teachers and learners. In this section, the importance of the participants knowing their learners well enough to adapt their own behaviour, body gestures, tones, facial expressions, and so forth will be discussed. Interestingly, according to Graph 1 above, all nine participants included aspects of immediacy in their stories which influence their self-perceived credibility. This category will be unpacked using three sections, participants' verbal and nonverbal communicative acts; knowing your learners; and reaching learners on their level by being relevant and relatable.

Participants' verbal and nonverbal communicative acts

Despite the need to virtually conduct the interviews, much of what was relayed through the participants' stories relied heavily on their verbal and nonverbal communication. Guyer, Briñol, Vaughan-Johnston, Fabrigar, Moreno, and Petty (2021) maintain that vocal features include emotional expressions which provide information far beyond the speaker's feelings. This was true in the participants' stories as various messages were being communicated through their

paralinguistic cues and their verbal characteristics. Each interview encapsulated various stories which were driven by the participants' verbal and nonverbal cues.

Considering that the interviews took place over Zoom in combination with using BNIM, the interviews were untraditional in three ways: the interviews occurred over a screen, which may have been experienced as a barrier in the communicative events, the conversations heavily relied on the participants (Wengraf, 2001), and both the participants' and researcher's nonverbal behaviour were not completely in view over the screen.

Immediacy includes aspects of verbal and nonverbal behaviour in evaluating the closeness or distance experienced in communicative events (Mehrabian, 1967). Since the participants' full body was not entirely visible through the screen, paralinguistic features were significant in decoding the shared stories and making sense of the participants' experiences. Caterina, Sharylene, Alexa, Carlene, Laurel, and Christina shared emotional experiences in their interviews in which their pace and pitch changed during the telling of their stories. During their thought processing, there would typically be a pause before sharing a sensitive experience. In addition to the pause, these participants often looked away from the screen when dealing with the emotions that they were recalling during the interview. Both Alexa and Christina moved out of the screen view during the emotionally intense parts of their stories, which highlighted their discomfort and need for privacy in those moments.

Moreover, when the participants went into deep thought, their eye contact seemed to become less important as they shuffled and sorted through their memories. In these cases, it seemed as though some participants were thinking about what they were comfortable with sharing and suppressing the memories that they were not ready to share during the interviews (Schutz, 1967). It was noticeable to observe the change in their body language when they grew uncomfortable with choosing the experiences that they would like to share versus those that may have been too sensitive to share. Mbali, Jayal, and Katlego were methodical in their interviews whereby they did not want to completely share all that they were thinking. Their tone, pitch, and pace changed when dealing with possibly difficult recollections and as a result they quickly changed topics or stated that they were done with their interviews.

When observing the participants during the interviews, some participants were clearly uncomfortable as they would fidget with a nearby object or simply rush through the interview. Jayal showed nonverbal behaviour that exposed her discomfort as she would often move her

seating position and lose eye contact. During Jayal's interview, I realised that she preferred to be looked at when talking as this perhaps showed more interest toward her story, whereas, Christina preferred not to be looked at as often. Christina seemed to have opened up more freely when I was jotting down notes. I noticed that the participants who experienced intense emotions preferred to talk at the screen and to simply be heard and not watched. These participants, Alexa, Carlene, and Christina were clearly upset by some of their recollections and required a sense of privacy during the interviews. Thus, eye contact was needed in certain cases, or specific parts of the interviews, whereas other parts of the interviews required less eye contact to no eye contact at all.

As a researcher conducting interviews during the pandemic, it became a necessary skill to learn and read the participants' needs in order to make them feel comfortable during their interviews. Thus, it was important to know when to sympathise with facial expressions, body language, and body gestures, in conjunction with learning when to simply remain still and quiet. Additionally, as a researcher using BNIM, less attention was paid to my verbal communication and more focus was directed to the participants' verbal and nonverbal behaviour.

During the parts of the interviews where the participants shared interesting, funny, or happy experiences, it was important to consider my nonverbal behaviour being communicated to the participants, such as nodding, smiling, raising of eyebrows, and widening of eyes. When the participants felt unsure or uneasy during the interview, they would state that they did not know what else to say or they would refer to the posted guidelines in the chat section on Zoom. Sharylene, Mbali, Jayal, and Christina often referred to the guidelines and tended to rush through the remainder of the interview due to feeling uncomfortable. These participants displayed varied paces during the telling of their stories and fidgeted frequently. More probing and reassuring verbal and nonverbal communication was required from the researcher for these interviews.

Overall, noting and observing the participants' verbal and nonverbal behaviours as well as remaining cognisant of my own cues was important throughout the data collection process. It was necessary to read the participants in a short space of time and to adapt my own verbal and nonverbal communicative cues accordingly throughout the different stages of each interview. Finding a balance between actively listening and showing genuine interest was key, however proved to be challenging in having to read the situation, analyse the experiences, capture important notes, and understand participants' expectations of the researcher listening to their stories. Both verbal and nonverbal behaviour of the participants were significant in understanding

what was being said, what was being suppressed, and making meaning of the essence of each story.

Knowing the learners

Mbali explained that she believes that knowing her learners well enough to assess a situation is crucial as a teacher. She expressed that she knows her learners based on which learners need encouragement and which learners need to be treated more sensitively. She elaborated by stating that she is aware of learners in her class that do not respond to her raising her voice and instead completely shut down in response to this type of verbal reaction. On the other hand, she explained that other learners need that form of discipline now and again to bring them back to order. She explained that learners vary and so teachers need to be attentive and mindful in their reactions and behaviour displayed throughout lessons. Similarly, Sharylene explained that she believes that learners want love and affection. She elaborated by stating her learners feel the need to give her hugs and be told how well they are doing. She stated that a smile goes a long way in making a learners feel included and loved.

Sharylene and Katlego shared that their learners enjoy joking and laughing during their lessons and this is how they ensure that all learners feel happy and included. Like Mbali and Katlego, Sharylene shared that creating a personal connection with her learners allows her to get to know them better. In so saying, she stated that with this type of inside information about her learners she is more attentive to their behaviour during lessons and is able to follow up immediately, instead of instinctively shouting at them. Sharylene referred to her selected artefact and elaborated that her learners are like her tea in her mug that she holds in her hands. Like the tea or coffee take on the shape of the mug, her learners take on the shape of her input as a teacher because they are malleable. She explained that her behaviour and words affect her learners and influences their behaviour in return (Bruney, 2012).

Sharylene highlighted another interesting aspect relating to teachers' behaviour. She explained, with reference to her artefact, that if teachers make a wrong move, raise their voices at the wrong times, or even wave their hand in the wrong way, it tarnishes the entire image of that teacher. She likened her explanation to her mug by explaining that based on teachers' behaviour, one incorrect gesture or expression is like dropping and shattering a glass mug. She added, it then becomes the teachers' responsibility to have to pick up all the shattered parts and try to piece them together to make a new mug of tea. From her metaphor, she concluded that teachers' reactions and

behaviour are crucial to how learners respond to various situations. She shared that the teachers need to know their learners such that they are able to respond to situations appropriately.

Sharylene stated that learners are more attentive than they let on (Page, 2016) because “they pick up on what you do”. As previously mentioned, learners watch teachers’ reactions and so when learners raise their hands and the teacher ignores them, or gives them a one-word answer, or even slightly shows irritation through their body language or facial expression, learners detect differences in how teachers respond to their classmates compared to them. This might result in a decrease in immediacy as learners might feel less involved than their peers or even a little neglected. Sharylene explained that from her experience in the classroom “it’s always a thing of how you say, what you say to kids” that has a major influence in how her learners respond to her.

Mbali highlighted that she uses eye contact as a form of feedback to assess whether or not her learners are following the lesson (Pogue & AhYun, 2006). She explained that nonverbal immediacy plays a critical role in her practice as learners rely heavily on her gestures and facial expressions throughout her lessons. She stated that as much as her immediacy is important to her learners, she relies on her learners’ behaviour too. She elaborated by stating that when she notices a “glassy look” in their eyes or they tend to interrupt her, she knows that they are not paying attention. Moreover, Mbali mentioned that she ensures that she walks around her classroom regularly throughout her lessons which, from her experience, keeps learners on their toes and accountable for their learning during the lesson. She explained that she also used verbal immediacy techniques in her classroom by sometimes using jokes to determine whether or not her learners are concentrating. She stated that if the learners laugh or react to the joke that she made, she knows that they are focused.

Both Alexa and Christina explained that one of the greatest advantages of getting to know their learners personally was that they were able to read their characters during their lessons. Thus, Alexa expressed that she knew when her learners enjoyed her lessons because they would raise their hands to answer a question and be excited to share their input. She explained that she uses nonverbal immediacy to observe whether or not her learners have understood the taught content. She added that she also uses verbal immediacy from her learners whereby some of her learners personally tell her how much fun they had during her lessons. She expressed that this nonverbal and verbal feedback from her learners motivates her and reassures her that she has successfully relayed the subject content. Alexa stated that by simply observing her learners on a daily basis,

such as listening to the words they use or watching their body language, she is able to predict their moods and headspace. She further explained that her younger learners, especially in the IP, tend to want affection, as mentioned by Sharylene. She said that they often hug her when entering and exiting her class and this allows them to feel safe and noticed. Jayal also pointed out that her learners need to be noticed by her, so she has to make positive comments throughout her lesson and make sure to include all of her learners.

Like Alexa and Jayal mentioned, the younger learners rely on nonverbal immediacy, including hugs and pats on their backs. In the same breath, Carlene stressed the importance of using nonverbal immediacy techniques in her lessons as she shared that from her experience with working with younger learners versus the older learners, she noticed that the younger learners “want to be close” to her. Carlene argued that verbal immediacy is just as important as nonverbal immediacy. She shared that when she worked with younger learners, she had to learn to change her vocabulary and decrease her tempo when teaching so as to ensure that her learners were able to understand and follow her instructions. Carlene reflected on her experience having to teach apartheid to her learners and stressed the importance of knowing her learners in order to be mindful in selecting her terminology as to not offend the learners. She explained the challenges of having to teach such a concept and how this might affect learners’ behaviour and perceptions toward her.

Laurel explained that the simple task of teachers learning the names of their learners makes all the difference in the world. She remembered that during an online lesson, which her school used in response to the pandemic, she called on one of her learners by her name. As a result of using the learner’s name, she engaged actively throughout the lesson. Laurel believes that verbal immediacy is important, especially during the lockdown period where teaching occurred virtually. She elaborated on the changes she noticed after calling the learner by her name and shared that she was a reserved learner, up until that moment she realised that her teacher knew her name. Laurel also highlighted a memory from when she was a learner. She stated that her teachers did not take the time to really get to know the learners in her class and she noticed this as a child. She described an incident where she was a fearful learner and was called upon by her teacher to answer a question that she did not know the answer to. Laurel explained that after that incident she felt ridiculed. From this incident, Laurel realised the value behind verbal immediacy in the classroom and has created a classroom value that no judgment is allowed in her classroom.

Relevance and relatability

Caterina discussed the importance of meeting her learners on their level. She explained that she often observes her colleagues using techniques to relate to learners' experiences. She added that she adopts some of her colleagues' techniques and tries to relate learners' situations to games that may be popular or music that might be relevant to the learners and this, she noticed, works well when trying to communicate with the learners. She stated that it somewhat narrows the gap between teachers and learners and allows the learners to relate to teachers and the content. Caterina referred to another technique that she saw her colleague use that caught the learners' attention. She explained that her colleague managed to get to the learners' level and use a rap song to teach a lesson. As Caterina watched the lesson unfold, she noticed that the learners were excited about the lesson. The learners were smiling, laughing, and really gripped throughout the lesson, she recalled. Caterina included that her colleague used relevant examples in her rap song, such as McDonald's, which the learners loved. The rap song even included Caterina, as the Mathematics teacher, which made the kids even more excited because these were two aspects that the learners could directly relate to.

Caterina explained that sometimes learners do not display an interest in their academics and so she needs to find different ways to reach them. She stated that sometimes all it takes is a pat on the back or a gold star in their workbooks to make the learners feel included and noticed. She further explained that considering the rapid changes that the youth are faced with, it is increasingly important for teachers to keep up and stay relevant. She explained that teachers should use and refer to real life examples that the learners can relate to during lessons. She shared her experience of having to create a catchy song about quadrilaterals to ensure that her learners were able to remember the properties as she had noticed that her learners were able to memorise songs. So, during Caterina's story, she referred to her selected artefact to support her shared experiences, which was her laptop. She elaborated on her artefact by stating that just like laptops require regular updates and are able to reach various programs simultaneously, teachers are expected to keep updated and ensure that "if the students don't understand your [her] way of thinking then you have [she has] to try and reach them on their level".

Like Caterina, Jayal also used her artefact to describe having to meet her learners at their level. She explained that she "had to evolve because the children in front of me [her] are very different from when I [she] started teaching" and like her laptop, she needed to keep updating herself and her methodologies. She shared that meeting her learners at their levels required her to push herself to try to understand what their trends, likes, and dislikes were.

Carlene also expressed her need to keep up with the youth of today. She made reference to her selected artefact, which was a Shakespeare book, and explained that being an English major, she still uses Shakespearean terms which the learners have no connection to. She highlighted that Shakespearean terminology was no longer part of their vocabulary reference list. Carlene spoke about one of her discussions she had with her learners whereby they were teaching her the new slang. She jokingly admitted that she felt really old. On the brighter side, she found herself being more relatable to her learners by riding her motorbike to school. She explained that her learners' views of her changed completely and suddenly she was deemed cool. She also tries to include relevant lingo and trends in her lessons to ensure that she meets her learners on their levels. She recalled a fond memory of when her learners taught her how to floss, which was a popular dance move, and she was reminded of how much they had enjoyed that lesson, by observing their laughter.

Laurel expressed the importance of being able to converse with her learners on their level. Like Carlene, Laurel explained that learners become so excited when they realise that their teacher knows something that is trending or popular. She stated that it makes her more relatable to her learners. She agrees with Jayal in that the learners are very different today and their trends are constantly updating, so it places a lot of pressure on her to keep up. She recalled one of her memories whereby she referred to a popular book called 'Dork Diaries'. Despite not having read the book, the fact that she knew the name, caught her learners' attention. Laurel argued that her learners are more attentive when she makes herself and her lessons more relevant and relatable "because I [she] can speak to them in the kind of slang they will understand because they use that with my [their] friends".

In Category 3.1.3, I discussed the importance of immediacy in the IP classroom. Interestingly, the IP teachers highlighted that the younger learners require for teachers to use various techniques of verbal and nonverbal immediacy in order to feel recognised and included in the lessons. This credibility pillar was unpacked using two sections, namely knowing your learners and relevance and relatability. Thus, it was explained that knowing the learners personally and holistically allowed for the IP teachers to find mutual points of interest to foundation their lessons. The IP teachers stressed the importance of taking an interest in the learners' likes, dislikes, and trends in order to create lessons that are relatable to the learners.

iv. Category 3.1.4: Dynamism

Dynamism refers to the presence and degree of intensity and activity displayed during lessons (Berlo *et al.*, 1969), much like acting in a drama. In this study, dynamism highlights the energy and willingness to adapt and differentiate lessons to best suit the various learning needs. Despite Burgoon *et al.* (1990) arguing that dynamism shows a weaker relationship with persuasion, dynamism is certainly a factor that the participants expressed influenced their credibility. According to Graph 1 above, six out of the nine participants highlighted dynamism in their practice. In this category, I will discuss dynamism under two headings, namely thinking on your feet and adapting and differentiating lessons.

Thinking on your feet

Caterina described teaching as a blind walk in the park. She explained that she prepares and plans weeks and months in advance, however the lessons never quite go as planned. Caterina stated that teachers need to be able to “always think on their feet”. She reflected on her lockdown teaching experience and highlighted that the teachers were not prepared for the pandemic and were required to find new ways and methods of managing and conducting their lessons. She stated that today’s teachers need to be able to adapt to changes and be quick thinkers. She believes that schools are overloaded with various influences and teachers need to be ready to overcome the most unexpected challenges. Caterina described one of her experiences having to climb through a bathroom stall to ensure that a learner would not harm herself. She stressed that teachers need to be spontaneous in being able to take charge and action in various situations.

Sharylene discussed that she tries to be lively with her learners. She stated that when she was selected to be the domestic teacher, despite her not knowing how to cook and her learners knew that about her, she decided to use this to her advantage and create a joke out of it as an introduction to the learners. She recalled that memory with a smile on her face and shared that the learners laughed so much and this made them try out the taught recipes at home with their families. Furthermore, she stressed that teachers often are not provided with all the necessary resources to teach effectively and as a result requires teachers to purchase resources and materials with their own money. Like Caterina, Sharylene stated that today’s teachers need to be able to improvise. Much like Sharylene, Mbali keeps her lessons “light and with a bit of humour and a bit of fun” as she noticed that without adding energy and creativity to her lessons, her learners get easily distracted and bored. She explained that in her practice, she finds it important to know when to add in that extra bit of light-heartedness in order to grab the learners’ attention.

Mbali added that not every day is the same in the classroom, as mentioned by Caterina. Mbali stressed the importance of teachers being ready to take on different moods, behaviour, and situations in every lesson. She stated that some days she notices that her learners are feeling less energetic than others and this forces her to have to think on her feet and use their current states in her lessons. She explained that these types of elements cannot be prepared for and when she notices that her learners are tired, maybe returning from break, she uses jokes in her lessons to liven up the classroom atmosphere. She explained that by using jokes throughout her lesson, she can evaluate which of her learners are concentrating and which are not. She mentioned that she often uses herself as the joke and this makes her learners really happy and active in the lessons.

As mentioned by Mbali, Carlene recalls her university lecturer being an “Energiser bunny” because she had a way of walking into lessons bringing a “vibrant energy, this ball of energy and she just made the subject come alive”. Carlene explained that her lecturer had a way of talking about the content as if her students had experienced it. She remembers that module as being a memorable moment in her teaching career. She decided to embrace and include that type of energy in her own lessons as a teacher. Interestingly, Carlene and Christina highlighted that they would love to be enthusiastic and energetic in every lesson, but that is not the case. Carlene stated “that generally speaking, I [she] can get carried away. I [She] get[s] really enthusiastic” and referred to her passion as a teacher when describing lessons that are more energetic. However, she tends to be less energetic when lessons cover sensitive topics, like apartheid or slavery. Carlene was reminded about one of her lessons whereby she asked her learners to dress up in army attire and she set the classroom scene to mimic a war setting. She explained that learners’ imagination is key in allowing them to understand the content and that if teachers “are passionate about your [their] subject, it comes across your [to the] learners”.

Like Carlene, Christina relates passion to being enthusiastic and energetic in lessons. She also recalled a previous teacher who she describes as passionate. She explained that “I [She] saw her passion and I [she] wanted to bring that into my [her] classroom”. Christina elaborated on her admiration for her teacher sharing that her teacher had a way of involving the learners in the lesson, making her learners feel like they had made the connections from the content to the real world. Christina mentioned that class discussions are important and seldomly can be prepared for. That is where her teacher managed to get her learners involved. As mentioned by Carlene,

Christina stated that she wants to be “that energetic teacher”, however she finds that recently she is “less energetic after a few years now of teaching and less enthusiastic about certain topics”. She stated that her learners certainly notice that and somewhat decreases their enthusiasm in her lessons (Bruney, 2012).

Both Christina and Katlego mentioned that several teachers rely heavily on textbooks and this makes lessons rather redundant. They explained that teaching without a textbook, or being less reliant on textbooks, forces teachers to think about the content differently. Using a textbook as a guideline and not as a map, assists teachers in being more creative and passionate about their subject. They explained that textbooks should provide a guideline, however teaching should grow from the teachers’ passion as they should be aware of what methodologies work and which do not, what their learners are interested in, and how to relay content in different ways. This less textbook-orientated teaching will result in teachers showing more passion toward their subject and teaching as each lesson will be different.

Adapting and differentiating lessons

Sharylene explained the importance of making her lessons “a little bit more interesting” considering that she works with special needs learners. She elaborated that she puts in a little more thought when preparing her lessons such that lessons are different and fun. Sharylene mentioned that in so doing, she tries to make herself part of her lessons and dramatises characters in a book that the class is reading, for instance. Moreover, she described an incident whereby she was trying to teach her learners the difference between past and present tense. She stated that just using theory or reading through examples is not enough. Instead, Sharylene used one of her learners to run an errand by dropping off a note to the next-door teacher. When the learner returned to her classroom, she paused, smiled, stood in front of the class, mimicked the learner’s action, and asked the class to name the action. She then linked it to the tenses. She explained that instances where she uses concrete examples to relay the theory entices the learners to want to concentrate and engage in her lessons.

Carlene shared that she often finds herself watching her learners’ reactions to her teaching as this provides her with a framework as to whether or not her learners’ grasped the content (McArthur & Bostedo-Conway, 2012). She explained that she tends to question herself and her teaching when she receives strange facial expressions from her learners. She then immediately knows to “think of another way to explain this” content. She noticed that when her learners are

not following it means that it might be too theoretically based and thus requires her to find a more fun and relatable way to teach the content. Caterina, like Carlene, stressed the need for teachers to change their teaching methods regularly in order to ensure that the learners remain engaged in the lessons. Caterina explained the importance of spontaneity in the classroom and believes that learners enjoy entertainment, songs, and social media, so teachers need to adapt in order to be heard. She recalled her colleague rapping English content to her learners, instead of traditionally teaching the content by reading. She was stunned by the learners' intrigue and involvement and now believes that learners receive spontaneity well.

Caterina explained that it is sometimes easier to adapt lessons in certain subjects compared to others. She stated that she finds it rather challenging to adapt her Mathematics lessons as it requires a considerable amount of time to plan. However, she mentioned that she tries to make use of songs when explaining rule-based concepts and the learners tend to enjoy these lessons. Furthermore, she highlighted that it is largely dependent on teachers' personalities whether they can be dynamic. For example, her colleague was known as the more fun and friendly teacher, whereas she was known as the strict teacher. Therefore, she stated that the level of energy put into lessons works hand in hand with the teachers' character (Teven & Hanson, 2004). In agreement with Teven and Hanson, Sharylene explained that she has a bubbly and outspoken personality and this supports her lessons in creating fun and new ways of relaying her content. She stated that she seldomly asks boring and obvious questions, instead she takes the lesson further. She explained that she is not afraid to be direct with her learners and to discuss difficult topics such as domestic abuse. She highlighted that it is the manner in which teachers introduce and relay the content that makes the difference.

Sharylene added that especially with her younger learners, she finds it important to allow them to explore the content outside of the classroom. For instance, when she taught the parts of a flower, she allowed for her learners to bring flowers from home and took them outside to analyse and smell the flowers. She explained that bringing the theory to life makes it more interesting for the learners.

Similar to Sharylene and Carlene, Mbali uses additional reading time as a goal for her learners to complete their work as she realised that they really enjoy the impersonations that she adopts whilst reading. She shared that reading a book to the learners is boring, especially to the younger learners. One way in which she noticed that she could increase her learners' attention was when

she made herself part of the book by dramatising characters and their voices. She admitted that she sometimes feels silly for sounding the way she does, but she feels that it is worth it. She said that she notices her learners paying more attention and enjoying the lesson more than if she were to read it using the punctuation. Mbali linked the learners' love for movies to teachers having to be like actors. Furthermore, Caterina, Mbali, and Carlene shared that the learners show more interest when teachers use YouTube videos and make their lessons interactive.

Carlene mentioned that during one of her literature lessons, she allowed a learner to create a beat and another learner to rap the contents of the chapters, similar to Caterina's experience. Carlene explained that it is important for learners to feel like they are a part of the lesson, and sometimes it does not go as planned, like Caterina and Mbali mentioned, but that is what makes the lesson so much more fun and memorable for the learners. Laurel stated "I [She] allow[s] myself [herself] to have fun while getting a message across" by using music and allowing for learners to sing along. Laurel shared that by including music in her lessons, she learns her learners' learning styles. She referred to her selected artefact, which was a painting of a forest, and explained that as a walk in a forest emphasises her senses, learners' senses need to be stimulated in the same way during lessons. Laurel explained that she uses singing, dancing, and rhyming as learning strategies that accommodate for her kinaesthetic, auditory, tactile, and visual learners. Like Sharylene explained, younger learners enjoy moving and feeling their learning much like Laurel described her lessons as being interactive and enjoyable for all her learners' learning styles.

In Category 3.1.4, I elaborated on dynamism as a pillar of the IP teachers' self-perceived credibility. The IP teachers stated that bringing dynamism into their practices included being able to think on their feet. As each lesson is different, the ability for teachers to be able to swiftly and appropriately react to situations, highlights the importance of dynamism in the IP classroom. It was also highlighted that dynamism is largely dependent on the IP teachers' personalities which is directly influenced by their identities. The teachers explained that bringing life into the content creates for more interesting lessons which they have noticed learners pay more attention to. In unpacking this category, I used two sections, specifically thinking on your feet and adapting and differentiating lessons.

v. Category 3.1.5: Technology

Since the world continues to fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, it was crucial for the teachers to remain optimistic and find new ways of teaching. One of the common methods used by the participants were technologically related (Mhlanga & Moloi, 2020). Many of the participants highlighted their frustrations and challenges with having to teach virtually, however the pandemic made technology the most viable option for the education sector. From Graph 1 above, seven out of the nine participants included the influence of technology in their practices. From my observations, having met with the participants virtually via Zoom, all nine of the participants had expressed their use of technology in their practices. Some explained that they were obliged by their schools to have to teach virtually and thus were forced to include technology, and others explained that technology was their next best option in continuing with teaching and decided to incorporate it.

Considering that the world was already aiming to include technology in the education sphere, before the pandemic (Aziz, 2018), teachers were quickly motivated to take on the use of technology in response to the pandemic (Mhlanga & Moloi, 2020). Some participants explained that they were already competent in using technologically based platforms in their teaching, whilst others were less experienced with the use of technology and thus meant having to adapt to the new ways of teaching.

The more seasoned teachers, like Jayal and Katlego, explained that teaching with technology has been a learning process. Jayal elaborated by stating that when she began teaching, “technology wasn’t such a big thing”. She compared her teaching today to when she first began teaching and shared that technology has become so necessary and integrated into her practice that she cannot remember the last time that she put a pen to paper. Katlego expressed that he experienced his fair share of struggles with technology during his career. He explained that it can be quite challenging to become comfortable with a certain way of teaching and then be expected to have to change it so significantly, like relying on technology. Sharylene also mentioned that she has noticed that the mature teachers in her school prefer to stick to their routine and they expect the newer teachers to follow suit. Both Jayal and Katlego stated that they have become accustomed to using technology in their practices now and enjoy using it to be creative.

Jayal and Katlego highlighted an interesting aspect of technology in teaching. They believe that in order to remain updated and continue to understand the learners in their classrooms, they need

to become aware of trends in the youth which affect education. Jayal shared that despite technology being new to her and her practice, she “can’t expect the children to be doing things, while as [a] teacher(s) we [she] can’t”. Like Caterina, Jayal linked this thought to her selected artefact, her laptop, and explained that just like a laptop requires regular updates, so too do teachers. She specifically mentioned Google, and likened this search engine to teachers. She maintained that information is updated on Google, like knowledge needs to be updated in teachers and so teachers need to “continuously adapting [adapt] to meet with the times”.

Katlego highlighted that technology opens up several other ways of perceiving knowledge and allows him to use ideas that could enhance his lessons. He added that being a teacher that embraces and uses technology is empowering and shows learners that the content being taught to them can be relatable and relevant through the use of technology. Caterina agreed with Katlego in that technology stimulates learners’ interests and shows learners that education meets them at their levels of understanding. Since the youth is so reliant on technology, education needed to move with the times, as Jayal stated. Caterina described her teaching as flexible because she believes that “if the students don’t understand your [her] way of thinking then you have [she has] to try and reach them on their level” which is through technology. Carlene noticed that learners need to be able to identify with their teachers because “it helps them see you [her] as a person as well”. She found that showing an interest in her learners’ interests allows her an opportunity to learn and include these aspects in her lessons to make it more interesting and relatable to her learners. She explained that her learners enjoy lessons that they can link trends to, such as the Floss, which is a dance move, TikTok, which is a social networking service, and Fortnite, which is an online video game.

Caterina, Mbali, Laurel, and Carlene explained that they make use of YouTube and PowerPoints, which are used to supplement their lessons. Mbali also mentioned that at any point in her lessons where she feels she may not know an answer to a learner’s question, she would simply use Google. Technology was certainly integrated during lessons, where resources permitted, however with the pandemic, Caterina, Sharylene, Alexa, Jayal, Carlene, Laurel, Christina, and Katlego mentioned that online teaching is the platform that is being used for their daily lessons. The participants expressed that being technologically literate and capable in this day and age is important for a teacher in order to adapt with the times. They explained that their learners rely on them to be able to work with, use, and manage technology in their classrooms. They all agreed that technology has influenced their practices in some way or form and has impacted their

self-perceived credibility. The younger participants added that although they are familiar with technology, the way in which it has drastically changed their teaching has certainly changed how they view themselves as teachers.

Like Mbali, Carlene expressed that she relies on the internet to assist her in finding creative and fun activities for her learners to practise and physically engage with taught concepts, such as the solar system. She explained that teaching about the solar system can be quite challenging because it can be abstract for learners to have to imagine objects that are so far away from them and their frames of reference. However, she shared that she found usable templates on the internet that allowed her learners to create their “own” solar systems, which makes learning more interactive for the learners (Aziz, 2018).

The participants explained that it was challenging, especially at the beginning of the pandemic, to have to change their lessons and adapt their teaching methodologies. They admitted that it placed a lot of pressure on them to have to keep up with the demands of online teaching and “threw us [them] for a loop”. The participants explained that teaching has become more challenging during the pandemic: Jayal likened it to her artefact and explained that like software on a laptop, education and technology need to be updated, which pushes teachers to grow and develop. Carlene summed up the experience of having to teach amidst the COVID-19 pandemic stating:

“We had no idea what, what we were getting ourselves into. But we have learned how to do it. It’s, it’s been a really good experience for us. So, if at some point, we do want to move over to online teaching completely, ... we will understand what, what is supposed to be happening. ... I am physically teaching, but also making sure that that work is on Google Classroom for the students who are staying at home.”

The demands of teaching have drastically changed and require a new set of skills from teachers (Aziz, 2018). Carlene pointed out that technology is changing rapidly which directly impacts changes in the classroom. She stressed the need for teachers to be acquainted with popular platforms so that their knowledge grows, as mentioned by Jayal. Carlene highlighted the current exponential technological growth, explaining that she belongs to the generation of Mxit, which was a very popular messaging application in the year 2005. She added that the social media platform, like Facebook for example, is considered outdated and referred to as “old school” by the youth, which indicates how quickly technology is being updated. She added that the learners’

vocabulary is constantly changing and she believes that it is important for teachers to know a little bit about learners' world references. Laurel agreed with Carlene, and explained that learners were more willing to listen to her and engage in her lessons when she used terminology or slang in her lessons.

Katlego, Laurel, and Carlene mentioned the inevitable challenges that accompany the use of technology in South African classrooms (Mhlanga & Moloji, 2020). Katlego noted that the shift toward technology is a first for South Africa and has propelled him to change his teaching methods and to consider using other methodologies in his practice, which he admitted has been challenging. He added that, with online teaching, it becomes increasingly difficult to maintain social relationships with his learners, as teaching through a screen can lose human interaction especially with younger learners. Laurel agreed with Katlego and explained that learners look at their screens and view it as a television, thinking that the other person is not necessarily directly engaging with them. She stated that simply knowing her learners' names made all the difference in her online classroom. Carlene and Katlego highlighted the challenge of data access in South Africa (Mhlanga & Moloji, 2020), whereby some learners do not have access to data and thus are unable to attend online sessions. As Carlene mentioned, when schools were permitted to welcome learners back, two groups of learners emerged, namely those who attended school and those who attended the online classroom, leaving teachers to have to prepare for both classrooms, equally.

In Category 3.1.5, I discussed the importance of technology in response to the pandemic and the advantages of incorporating technology in the participants' practices. Next, I highlighted the demands that have been placed on teachers having to shift toward virtual teaching. I then discussed the challenges that were highlighted by the participants in relying on technology as a teaching platform.

In Subtheme 3.1, the five credibility pillars which influenced the participants' self-perceived credibility were unpacked under five categories, namely competence, trustworthiness, immediacy, dynamism, and technology. During the analysis of the data, these five pillars occurred frequently and thus were highlighted as categories in support of Theme 3.

5.4.3.2 Subtheme 3.2: Learners and colleagues' perceptions affecting teacher credibility

In Subtheme 3.2, I discuss the participants' perceptions of stakeholders' perceptions based on the stakeholders' displayed behavioural and verbal feedback. For clarification purposes, stakeholders refer to learners, parents, and colleagues. I found this to be an underlying subtheme that needed to be highlighted during the analysis. Based on the proposed conceptual framing (cf., Section 3.4: 88), Schutz (1967) argues that in order for own perceptions to be constructed, an element of co-constructions from others' perceptions influences own perceptions (Squire, 2013). In essence, others' perceptions of the self, influences how the self constructs perceptions. Since several studies focus on how others' perceive teachers (Hutchens & Hayes, 2014; McArthur & Bostedo-Conway, 2012), I included Subtheme 3.2 to support the participants' perceptions of how they think others' perceive them, and overall how they think others' perceptions of them influence their self-perceived credibility.

As shown in Figure 18 above, perceptions are constructions of several deconstructed experiences that are influenced by own beliefs and others' perceptions of the self (Squire, 2013; Schutz, 1967). Thus, in order to holistically analyse the data in search of understanding the participants' constructions of their self-perceived credibility, I needed to take into account the participants' perceptions of what they believed others' perceptions were of them. In this subtheme, I created three sections to analyse the data, namely teachers' perceived challenges with learner discipline, teachers' perceived learner interest and motivation, and teachers' perceived colleagues' perceptions.

Teachers' perceived challenges with learner discipline

Dealing with learners' discipline was reported to be one of the main challenges that teachers faced within the classroom (Botha & Rens, 2018; Cubukcu, 2013). Sharylene highlighted that "It's always an uphill battle with a teacher" as she recalled on experiences of having to manage learners' misbehaviour. She explained that on top of all the additional responsibilities placed on teachers' shoulders, she also has to deal with learners swearing, displaying bad attitudes, and disinterest in their academics (Francis & Le Roux, 2011). Sharylene added that learners' behaviour affects teachers, both personally and professionally, as she explained that it makes teachers feel incompetent and unappreciated.

Sharylene, Carlene, and Katlego stressed the change in learners' behaviour in comparison to when they were learners. They explained that the learners' behaviour today is certainly not what they were taught when they were learners at school. Carlene expressed that she feels

disheartened by the manner in which her learners sometimes replied to her. She described that the learners today believe that their disrespectful behaviour is acceptable. Carlene and Sharylene shared that their learners' discipline influences their moods throughout the day. Carlene explained that the toll that her learners' misbehaviour has on her sometimes causes her stress and makes her question her profession. She added that this aspect of having to deal with discipline issues affected her mentally. Much like Carlene, Caterina mentioned that teaching is not what it once used to be, where respect needs to be shown to teachers. Unfortunately, Caterina explained that learners' attitudes and ill-discipline had such an effect on her that she stated "I can't do teaching anymore because of how the mentality of the students are nowadays". Like Sharylene, Caterina explained that teachers are unappreciated and this makes it challenging to remain in the profession (Asbury & Kim, 2020).

Mbali shifted the angle on managing learner discipline and explained that learner discipline is directly influenced by how prepared a teacher is. She explained that teachers are being watched all the time (Page, 2016), so learners are able to read whether or not a teacher knows what they are teaching. Mbali recalled one of her experiences whereby she was asked to teach a subject she knew very little about. She emphasised feeling incompetent and unprepared which influenced her learners' behaviour in the classroom. She explained that through her shuffling around and trying to piece together information for the lesson, her learners noticed that she was flustered. Mbali added that in moments of unpreparedness, learners "are going to know if you are unprepared and then they are going to take chances and they are going to be naughty". Cubukcu (2013) supports Mbali's claim and suggests that incompetent teachers influence learners' attitudes toward learning.

Teachers' perceived learner interest and motivation

Vuori (2015) maintains that learners' reactions and misbehaviour allow teachers to reflect on their own behaviour. It is important for teachers to be aware of their learners' expressions and use their reactions as a form of feedback in the classroom. This feedback from learners' behaviour allows for teachers to position themselves and reflect on their lesson swiftly. Laurel shared that the simple act of calling on learners by their names makes all the difference in a classroom. She explained that a reserved and soft-spoken learner has grown into a learner who "now participates in every lesson" because Laurel called the learner by her name. Laurel believes that ensuring closeness between teachers and learners, especially in the younger grades, is important (Pogue & AhYun, 2006). Laurel further added that now, more than ever, using verbal immediacy techniques with her learners is necessary to fill the gaps that the pandemic has brought along

with it, such as knowing learners' names, using affirmative language, and changing her tone of voice frequently throughout her lessons.

Alexa, Laurel, Carlene, and Sharylene mentioned that they measure the success of their lessons and evaluate themselves as teachers by observing their learners' behaviour and listening to their feedback. Alexa believes that her learners are happy and enjoy her lessons because "they're always excited to come to my [her] class" and they shared with her that her lessons are their favourite part of their day. Alexa mentioned that these comments from her learners make her feel happy and confident as a teacher. Like Alexa, Laurel shared that her learners show excitement when they have learnt something new and are able to put their new knowledge into practice. Laurel explained that through this behaviour, she is able to assess whether or not her learners have grasped the taught content. Laurel believes that her learners' enthusiasm is key in their learning and is a display of her teaching being effective for that lesson. Carlene explained that learners' reactions vary (Vuori, 2015) and their enthusiasm about certain content is directly influenced by the teacher's enthusiasm (Bruney, 2012). As Laurel mentioned, Sharylene highlighted that the learners become more excited about content when they are able to demonstrate their understanding. Thus, just as teachers use learners' behaviour as a form of feedback (Vuori, 2015), learners' understanding needs to be reinforced too. Laurel, Alexa, Carlene, and Christina noticed that when their learners are engaging and interactive during lessons, they feel good about their lesson which makes them feel confident about their teaching. Katlego agreed with these four participants by explaining that in response to the pandemic, online teaching has made it challenging to use learners' behaviour as feedback.

Interestingly, I noted that most of the younger teachers were more willing to review their learners' behaviour and alter their teaching methods, which Schempp and Graber (1992) refer to as social shock therapy. Carlene mentioned that she relies on her learners' facial expressions when she introduces new content as their expressions provide her with instant feedback on her teaching. She explained that the planning and preparing time that needs to be spent on making effective lessons is strenuous, especially when she was a beginner teacher (Shapiro, 2010). She explained that when she knows her learners, it becomes easier to identify, by their facial expressions, when they have misunderstood a taught concept. She elaborated that she notices raised eyebrows, open mouths, squinting of eyes, frowns, and scrunching of the lips, to name a few telling expressions from her learners. From this feedback, she explained that she quickly evaluates how she could adapt and improve on her teaching style or method to best convey the message (Vuori, 2015). She asks questions such as:

“What am I doing? Am I doing the right thing? Am I conveying this properly to my students? ... the students are looking at me weirdly. Okay, did I explain that ... in a complicated manner? Okay, let me think of another way to explain this. They are still not getting it. ... and then learning from my students”.

While Laurel emphasised the increasing importance of using verbal immediacy techniques in her practice, Mbali stressed the use of nonverbal immediacy in her practice. Mbali highlighted that she uses her learners' eye contact as a means of feedback to evaluate whether or not her learners are paying attention. She explained that when she teaches, she expects that her learners are fully engaged, not fiddling, and do not interrupt her lessons. Mbali added that throughout her lessons, she enjoys making a joke or two and she observes her learners' responses to the jokes to assess whether or not they are concentrating. She explained that in order to maintain their attention and ensure that she actively engages with her learners during her lessons, she needs to use both verbal and nonverbal immediacy techniques. She mentioned that from her learners' behaviour, she is able to identify the learners who have not grasped the content and she is able to adapt her lessons accordingly, like Carlene (Vuori, 2015).

Teachers' perceived colleagues' perceptions

Cubukcu (2013) mentions that teachers expect their superiors and colleagues to create and sustain supportive and friendly work environments. Alexa stressed that she needed her superiors to “show me [her] appreciation that I [she] felt [she] needed” and explained that when teachers' worth goes unnoticed, it can become a very toxic and frustrating environment to work in. Caterina agreed with Alexa and explained that she felt unappreciated by her colleagues and superiors and this made her leave her job, like Alexa. Both Alexa and Caterina described their experiences of feeling unworthy as teachers and this negatively impacted their views on their own teacher credibility.

Since Mbali spent plenty of time in her school as a student teacher, her colleagues' perceptions of her were created around viewing her as a student teacher and this negatively impacted Mbali's credibility when she became “a real teacher”. She explained that having to work at a school where colleagues had seen her as only being a student teacher was challenging because she believed she had grown as a teacher in many ways. Although Mbali did not want to care what her colleagues thought of her, she admitted that “I [she] was scared that they would still see me [her] as a little student”. She recalled an experience during teachers' awards when she was crowned

“rookie of the year” and this made her feel small and embarrassed, an image that she had worked hard to replace.

Like Mbali, Alexa highlighted that when colleagues and superiors have an idea about who she is as a teacher, it plays on her mind and makes her believe that she is less of a teacher. She explained her experience of feeling undermined by her superior, stating that “she used to humiliate me in front of all the learners” by snatching papers out of her hands and yelling about how useless she was in front of Alexa’s learners. Alexa expressed that the way in which her colleagues and superiors viewed her made her feel unworthy and this destroyed her credibility. She stated that “when an authority figure already puts down a teacher then students start losing respect for the teacher because they see it as the teacher is weak”. When she thought of her own credibility, therefore, she viewed herself as being weak. She explained that she began questioning and second-guessing everything she was doing, thinking, teaching, and feeling. She shared that she no longer felt confident or enthusiastic as a teacher.

On the contrary, Mbali expressed that she felt most valued when she was assigned additional tasks by her superiors or colleagues, as this made her feel more competent and needed. She explained that several times she was asked to check documentation for her superior which made her feel confident in her ability and knowledge as a teacher, although she “wasn’t the head of the subject”. She added that having her deputy principal trust her enough to assist in the checking of documents made her feel as though her superior held her in high regard.

Both Alexa and Mbali expressed that their mentor teachers played an important role in establishing a safe work environment for them to establish their teacher identities (Cubukcu, 2013). Alexa shared that having a healthy relationship with her colleagues made her feel welcome and “part of a family”. She explained that she “felt amazing” about herself as a teacher and overall, as a person, because of how her colleagues perceived her and made her feel. Like Alexa, Mbali shared that having supportive colleagues created a safe working environment that allowed her to grow as a teacher. She elaborated on the challenges that she faced as a beginner teacher and what an important role her mentor teacher had played in her development throughout her teaching career. Alexa and Mbali highlighted that when their colleagues looked down on them, their perceptions of themselves changed and as a result negatively influenced their perceptions of their own credibility.

In Subtheme 3.2, I discussed learners and colleagues' perceptions which affect teachers' credibility. I used three sections to unpack this subtheme, namely teachers' perceived challenges with learner discipline, teachers' perceived learner interest and motivation, and teachers' perceived colleagues' perceptions. It was important to include others' perceptions as an influence in understanding the participants' self-perceived credibility.

Overall, in Theme 3, I highlighted two subthemes. The first subtheme was dedicated to discussing the five credibility pillars which influenced the teachers' credibility, specifically competence, trustworthiness, immediacy, dynamism, and technology. The second subtheme focused on learners and colleagues' perceptions of teachers and the influence from others' perceptions on teachers' self-perceived credibility.

5.4.4 Summary of similarities, contradictions, and new insights in Themes 1, 2, and 3

The IP teachers' personal stories took on the format of traditional stories which began from the start of their lives, leading into their teaching professions, to where they are today. Their stories provided a backdrop of who they are as teachers and people in society, and this highlighted the influences in constructing their self-perceived credibility.

In Theme 1, the teachers opened up about where their life journeys began, mainly focusing on who influenced their decisions in becoming teachers and how family, friends, and society's opinions impacted their professional decisions. Considering that all of the participants did not choose teaching as their primary career choice, except Alexa, the IP teachers really began constructing their teacher identities when placed in the field. The teachers explained that teaching was not what they had been prepared for or even anticipated during their higher education studies and concluded that higher education does not adequately prepare teachers for the reality of the classroom. It was also mentioned that having teachers go into the classroom in their fourth year, as student teachers, did not constitute sufficient experience.

Because of the way society views teachers, as not being smart enough to study any other qualification and not receiving a high salary, many of the younger participants expressed that those were contributing factors that made them consider choosing a different career path. From the data, most of the younger IP teachers did not choose teaching as a primary career choice and thus attempted a different career avenue before becoming teachers.

Since Alexa had somewhat known that teaching might have been a career option for her once completing matric, she had the opportunity to observe her own teachers' behaviour, teaching styles, and methodologies, which she used to her advantage in slowly preparing and constructing her own teacher identity. Interestingly, it was noted from the analysis that the IP teachers referred to their own experiences in the classroom as learners. They used these experiences to evaluate what they enjoyed and disliked as learners seated in a classroom which created a framework in which they evaluated themselves as teachers. Many of the participants explained that they were too afraid to ask their teachers questions or highlight a mistake which made them aware of having to accommodate for these situations in their own practices by creating a safe classroom environment for their learners.

During the telling of the IP teachers' stories, Jayal, Alexa, Carlene, Christina, Sharylene, Caterina, and Katlego came to the realisation that their own experiences with their teachers affected them more than they had believed. The IP teachers seemed to be quite surprised as they came to this realisation and concluded that specific teachers played an important role in their schooling careers which positively impacted their choice of becoming teachers. It was also interesting to note that Jayal, Sharylene, and Caterina believed that the South African government does not support teachers sufficiently in ensuring that adequate resources and time frames are adjusted to the reality of the classrooms. As a result, Sharylene mentioned that she found more value in teaching abroad than locally.

In Theme 2, the teachers expressed that they had experienced a sense of drowning as a result of feeling that they had been thrown into the deep end as beginner teachers. Despite having mentor teachers who were supposed to support and guide newer teachers (Cubukcu, 2013), Sharylene, Caterina, and Alexa exposed that mentor teachers are sometimes overrated and do not necessarily fulfil their responsibilities. Sharylene pointed out that many of the seasoned teachers like to continue with methodologies that they think work, however Laurel and Katlego testified that continuing with what once worked is certainly not effective in meeting the needs of the learners seated in the classroom today. In so saying, the older IP teachers admitted that in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, it has been a challenge that they never thought they would have to prepare for. They explained that moving toward online teaching has placed a lot of strain on them and has changed teaching as they once knew it.

Surprisingly, although the more mature participants highlighted the challenges that came with the pandemic, they seemed to be the most optimistic in stressing that what they expect the learners to do, they need to be able to do too. It seemed as though the private sector schools were more affected by the response to the pandemic in having to quickly transition into the online way of teaching in order to restore normality to their daily teaching and school functioning. Katlego, Laurel, Jayal, Carlene, Sharylene, and Caterina expressed that they were teaching at private schools and thus were required to accommodate learners online and in the classroom, when legally permitted.

It was surprising to learn that several of the younger IP teachers shared that, at some point in their short teaching careers, they had experienced a mental breakdown. It is reported that beginner teachers experience a reality shock upon entering the practice (Botha & Rens, 2018), however the demands that are placed on teachers are increasing, which adds a lot of pressure and stress on the teachers. Furthermore, the IP teachers expressed that the pressures they experience inevitably follows them into their personal lives. The IP teachers stated that these experiences are lifelong and do not leave them when they leave the school premises. Caterina, Alexa, Carlene, Laurel, and Christina admitted that they feel emotionally, physically, and mentally drained in both their personal and professional lives.

The IP teachers expressed that they were aware that not every learner will like them or get along with them, as teachers; however, the way in which others perceived them, they confessed, directly impacts how they view themselves as teachers. Although there is great value in considering others' opinions of teachers, Carlene and Laurel highlighted the need for teachers to reflect on themselves and their practices for there to be transparent and effective development. Jayal and Sharylene referred to the limited time available to get to know their learners and so ensuring that teachers reach every single learner is nearly impossible. The IP teachers were aware of how perceptions of them on the part of parents, learners, and colleagues influenced their self-perceived credibility, and highlighted the inevitable influence these perceptions have on their wellbeing and mental states.

In Theme 3, through the analysis of the data, five credibility pillars arose. The first pillar, which was competence, focused on the IP teachers' qualifications and experience, which they highlighted early in their stories. Teacher competence is reported as an important element when reviewing teacher quality (Cubukcu, 2013) and so the IP teachers believed that they were more

established due to their qualifications, especially Sharylene, Mbali, Jayal, Alexa, and Christina. The second pillar referred to trustworthiness, whereby the IP teachers worked on establishing safe and open environments supporting their learners' needs. Immediacy was the third pillar, in which the teachers used various verbal and nonverbal techniques to ensure learners felt included in lessons. Teachers reported knowing their learners and genuinely caring for them, which helped to set comfortable learning atmospheres (Cubukcu, 2013). The IP teachers stressed the importance of showing their learners that they are cared for, which, they believed, strengthened the teacher-learner relationship. The fourth pillar was dynamism, whereby the IP teachers referred to being passionate and enthusiastic about their subject, which they believed directly influenced their learners' enthusiasm and interest (Bruney, 2012), especially in the younger-aged learners. Finally, the fifth pillar, was an added and unexpected pillar that was highlighted during the analysis, which was technology. The IP teachers expressed that being technologically savvy was important in how they perceived their credibility, especially teaching amidst the pandemic.

Interestingly, as reported by Cubukcu (2013), learners value being cared for by their teachers the most. This is then followed by the teaching skills displayed by teachers, followed by teachers' confidence and effectiveness in conveying content knowledge, as mentioned by Katlego and Mbali. Next, it was reported that the learners appreciated teachers' verbal skills, linked to verbal immediacy as included by Sharylene, Mbali, Carlene, and Laurel. Lastly, the learners mentioned competency as an element of judging the quality of their teachers, which is, interestingly, valued most by all of the IP teachers due to the reality of needing to be qualified before becoming a teacher in practice.

In trying to understand how IP teachers construct their self-perceived credibility, it was important to listen to the teachers' beliefs about others' perceptions of them. This included their learners and colleagues' perceptions, as the IP teachers mentioned this to be a factor that impacts their credibility. Despite all the IP teachers expressing their love and passion for teaching, they highlighted the constant challenges that they face in the classroom. Many of the mentioned challenges included learners' misbehaviour and conflict amongst colleagues. The IP teachers expressed their concern about learners' ill-discipline in the classroom and expressed their disappointment toward these types of behaviour. The teachers shared that dealing with learners' disrespectful behaviour negatively influences their constructions of their self-perceived credibility. Although Allen, Rowan, and Singh (2019) report that just under 50% of beginner teachers leave the teaching profession due to the workload and pressures, one out of the nine participants have

decided to leave the teaching profession (Caterina) due to colleague conflicts and learners' misbehaviour.

It is important to highlight that throughout the IP teachers sharing their stories, they sometimes searched for guidance to steer their stories and I noticed that in these moments the teachers referred to their artefacts. The IP teachers used their artefacts to elaborate on difficult to explain topics and also provided a mask to talking about sensitive topics. Through the use of their artefacts, I realised that the participants felt more comfortable to open up about their experiences more transparently and the artefacts encouraged them to think critically about their experiences by connecting them to inanimate objects.

5.4.5 Conclusion

These stories were based on the participants' experiences as teachers and their credibility thereof. To unearth the participants' stories, I started with a simple yet wonderfully powerful single question about who they are as teachers. This question included all experiences that they had encountered in their journeys to becoming and being teachers in the South African context. In fact, the single question was extensively grounded on the participants' own lived stories and specifically what they understood of their own stories. Throughout this thought-provoking and surprisingly deep-rooted single question, I became an active listener. To withhold from engaging in traditional and habitual conversational techniques, I zoned into observing and jotting down important cues and notes.

The research questions that I answered in this chapter are 'How do Intermediate Phase teachers construct their own perceptions of their credibility?' and 'Why do Intermediate Phase teachers construct their own perceptions of their credibility in the way they do?'. I answered these questions by working through the data and performing meta-analyses of the participants' stories. By finding common themes, subthemes, and categories across the participants' stories, I was able to foreground how the IP teachers constructed their self-perceived credibility in the ways that they chose to. Through the emergent themes, connections were outlined amongst the stories, which further highlighted the various influences that affected the participants' shaping of their stories and overall constructions.

As I thoroughly explored the participants' voices through their stories, I was enticed by their lived experiences, recalled memories, and evoked thoughts. I began to sort through the data until I

managed to categorise the information into three major themes: who the IP teachers aspired to become; the IP teachers' constructions of own identities; and pillars that shaped the IP teachers' self-perceived credibility. I shaped the analysis story much like the participants' stories, with a beginning, middle, and ending.

As I followed the stories of the participants, I found that the various themes were intertwined to each other. Their thoughts of who they aspired to be as teachers and outside of the teaching profession played important roles into who they eventually developed into as teachers in practice. The participants usually started their stories off with how and why they chose to become teachers and their reasons were influenced by others' opinions of teaching. This prologue of their stories flowed into the next theme which focused on the IP teachers' identities. They referred to how they had chosen to become teachers and used their personalities, including their likes and dislikes, as backdrops to establishing and distinguishing between who they were as people and teachers. In sorting through their many thoughts of separating their identities transparently, several untouched thoughts arose resulting in many of the IP teachers analysing their journeys. In their analyses, the element of racism recurred and feelings of uneasiness surfaced. In these moments, the teachers referred to their artefacts to escape their raw thoughts and found comfort in continuing with their stories. In the mixture of their confident and troubled thoughts, the teachers agreed that teaching felt like drowning as a result of being thrown into the deep end. The next theme focused on the teachers' constructions of their credibility using the five pillars, namely competence, trustworthiness, immediacy, dynamism, and technology. It was important to mention how the teachers thought others perceived their credibility alongside their self-perceived credibility. The second part to this theme highlighted how the IP teachers thought their learners and colleagues perceived their credibility and this influenced their own perceptions of their credibility.

The fabrics of each of the participants' stories added texture to their shared narratives, which were in many ways interwoven amongst each another's stories in different ways. Having the participants simply tell their stories foregrounded their voices transparently. During the moments of uncertainty or the fear of oversharing, the teachers were encouraged to continue with the support of their artefacts and the connections that they made to the inanimate objects. These artefacts introduced a different angle to their narratives and allowed for spaces of thought and relief. The teachers' perceptions were messy and untamed. However, in the last theme, all the messiness made sense. Although the inflow of others' beliefs and opinions of their self-perceived credibility was ever-present, the IP teachers still grounded their perceptions of who they are as

teachers on their final credibility constructions. Interestingly, it was their choice of artefact that emphasised this discovery. As others' perceptions influenced their constructions, the teachers were free to choose and motivate their choice of artefact artistically and abstractly, which openly showcased their constructions of their self-perceived credibility.

All three themes were facets of the participants' greater stories and were to a degree overlapping and isolated at the same time. I discuss this complexity in the following chapter whereby I pay respect to what I have learned, the knowledge that I have gained, and the conclusions that I draw through my thematic analysis and meta-analysis. In presenting my findings, I use the participants' stories to propose answers to the research questions and elaborate on possible conclusions and future recommendations.

CHAPTER 6

Conclusions and recommendations

6.1 Introduction

In Chapter 6, the emergent findings reported from Themes 1 to 3 were informed using inductive thematic data analysis. The results were interpreted and compared to existing literature. In so scrutinising and locating the findings in literature, I foregrounded the similarities and contradictions within this research study in comparison to that of existing literature.

In this chapter, I provide an overview of the chapters supporting this study, followed by situating the findings unearthed from this study in accordance with the proposed conceptual framework. I then provide informed answers to the two posed research questions and reflect on the limitations encountered throughout the research study. Next, I outline the research assumptions and my contribution in addressing the proposed niche and potential innovation. I discuss the possible recommendations on two accounts. The first account refers to the recommendations suggested for future research and the second account relates to recommendations for practice and future training and development.

6.2 Overview of prior chapters

In Chapter 1, I introduced the study's topic and explained the background and context underpinning this research. I discussed the rationale, from different angles, which outlined a holistic picture of the reasons behind embarking on this study. Moreover, I foregrounded the purpose and research questions supporting this study, which led to the situating of the topic theoretically. A synopsis of the research methodology was provided which was followed by the clarification of concepts.

Chapter 2 focused on meaningfully engaging with existing and topic-related literature. In reviewing the vast and broad literature, my searches and insights needed some form of organisation and structure. Therefore, I engaged in literature that would support the systematising and structuring of the literature, whereby I followed the guidance provided by Hart (2018). I used bibliometric analysis, specifically VOSviewer, to visually represent some aspects supporting the literature review. Next, I discussed credibility by referring to global literature and then unearthed the history

of credibility in an education context. This discussion led to contrasting between what makes a teacher more credible and less credible. I then discussed the credibility dimensions and the pillars which were used to underpin this study. Since credibility was highly dependent on social encounters, I focused attention on unpacking the social aspect connected to credibility, including elements such as teachers' constructions, perceived versus self-perceived credibility, communication, and reflections. I then contextualised the study within the South African arena and finally synthesised the findings based on the literature review.

Chapter 3 was dedicated to theoretically framing the study. Two theories were used, specifically the McCroskey *et al.* (2004) model for instructional communication and the phenomenology of sociology theory established by Schutz (1967). Both of these theoretical underpinnings were individually adapted in light of supporting this study's purpose. Hence, fundamentally, both frameworks began to develop into conceptual frameworks, respectively, and elements from each theory were used to construct an overarching conceptual framework supporting this study. The proposed conceptual framing was focused on teachers' credibility by referring to credibility dimensions suggested by McGlone and Anderson (1973). This proposed conceptual framework was thoroughly discussed and unpacked in terms of how the framework was applied.

I used Chapter 4 to shape the research design and methodology of this study. The research design was informed by the Maxwell (2013) interactive model of research design and the five levels of representation for a narrative analysis by Riessman (Riessman & Speedy, 2007; Riessman, 1993). I then discussed the two research designs used: narrative inquiry (Clandinin, 2006) and arts-based inquiry (Savin-Baden & Wimpenny, 2014), whereby I used the following methods and tools, respectively: BNIM, specifically SQUIN (Wengraf, 2001, 2004), and ABM using personal artefacts (Eaves, 2014). I used Chapter 4 to propose the blurring of boundaries between narrative and arts-based inquiries, whereby my argument was supported by the gestalt theory (Behrens, 1998) and the free association method (Galton, 1879). Paradigmatically, the study adopted interpretivism and thus followed a relativist ontology and a constructivist epistemology. The research methodology was discussed, focusing on the participant selection, construction of data, data documentation, analysis, and interpretation (Liu, 2016). The research was morally guided by the mentioned ethical considerations and quality criteria.

In Chapter 5, I introduced the stories of the participants based on the selected medium of presentation, which was chosen by each participant toward the end of the interviews. This multimodal nature supported a more transparent and informed presentation of the data. The participants' stories were unpacked in three parts. The first part focused on the participants' selected artefacts. The second part was the reconstruction of their stories using a multimodal approach. The third part was the analysis and interpretation of the stories. Through this analysis, in addition to the five levels of representation (Riessman, 1993) and the Zucker (2002) model mapping approach, three themes emerged. These themes were discussed with the support from the accompanying subthemes and categories which were identified during the data analysis. Throughout the discussion of the themes, I referred to the participants' verbatim words by quoting from their narrative interviews. Additional information, where necessary, was extracted from my researcher journals (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Finally, I highlighted the congruencies, contradictions, and new insights drawn from Themes 1, 2, and 3 when comparing the findings.

6.3 Situating the findings within the conceptual framework

As the puzzle pieces to the research story started to find their place, the information emerging from the IP teachers' stories about their constructions of their self-perceived credibility began to take shape. From the rigorous data analysis, the question of how these stories influenced the proposed conceptual framing surfaced (cf., Section 3.4: 88).

Guided by the focus of the research study to contextualise the South African IP teachers' constructions of their own credibility, I was reminded of the purpose of the study: to understand the IP teachers' constructions of their self-perceived credibility. The focus and purpose laid the groundwork for situating the emergent findings into the proposed conceptual framework. In unravelling the participants' constructions of their self-perceived credibility, I realised that much of their constructions was based on their stories. Thus, the IP teachers used their personal stories and experiences to shape their constructions of who they believe they are as teachers, which directly influenced their own perceived credibility. Through exploring their stories, I theorised that much of their perceptions were coated with who they are as social beings, which was ultimately influenced by their personal and professional personas. Amongst the numerous influences affecting the IP teachers' constructions, perceptions from others in combination with their own beliefs of how others perceive them, both personally and professionally, impacted their narratives. Although their credibility constructions were not necessarily evident to them through the telling of

their stories, it was evident that there were several influencing factors through their journeys, which became evident through the use of their selected artefacts.

The proposed theory focuses on how constructions are born based on the IP teachers navigating through their journeys in perceiving their own credibility. As discussed, teacher credibility is complex and sensitive to various factors, including time and context (Freeman, 2011; McGlone & Anderson, 1973). So, to understand how the IP teachers constructed their self-perceived credibility, I needed to thoroughly explore the data. The analysis showed that the IP teachers grounded their constructions of their own credibility on their experiences prior to considering teaching as a career choice. Thus, their stories were initially centred on their childhood memories and personalities, including their likes and dislikes. With this in mind, the conceptual framing accounted for the personal attributes of the teachers, such as their attitudes, which influenced their behaviour, which in turn led them to reflecting on their behaviour in various situations and ultimately influenced their perceptions. In this process, outlined by Schutz (1967), I realised that the IP teachers' perceptions were constantly under construction, deconstruction, and reconstruction (Van Lankveld *et al.*, 2017). By listening to the IP teachers' stories, it was evident that several aspects of their personal personas flowed into their professional personas, and at times they themselves were challenged to segregate these two façades (Shapiro, 2010). Therefore, with the proposed conceptual framework, the format of the untraditional Venn diagram showcases a continuous flow amongst the variables influencing IP teachers' credibility constructions.

With the IP teachers firstly acknowledging themselves as social beings before perceiving themselves as teachers, it was interesting to listen to the unfolding of their stories in which their characters began to meaningfully develop based on their former years of development. In connecting the elements proposed by Schutz (1967), I used the quantitative findings from McGlone and Anderson (1973). According to their findings on measuring teacher credibility, they suggested four major credibility factors, namely expertness-personality, expertness, trustworthiness, and personality. Based on my analysis of the data, it proved to be that the IP teachers focused much of their stories on their personalities, by referring to who they are, expertness, by highlighting their competences and qualifications, and trustworthiness, by emphasising their need to care for their learners and be there for them (Graph 1). So, the IP teachers' constructions were largely based on their perceptions, past experiences which

influenced their personalities, their qualifications, and how trustworthy they were to their learners and colleagues.

As suggested by McGlone and Anderson (1973), the teacher credibility dimensions, as mentioned in my conceptual framing, are categorised under major credibility factors. I proposed minor considerations (credibility pillars) to their factors which were better suited to the 21st century IP teacher. According to the findings and data highlighted in Graph 1, I suggested that competence, trustworthiness, immediacy, dynamism, and technology be considered as credibility pillars when exploring IP teachers' constructions of self-perceived credibility. Both competence and trustworthiness were recurrent and constant pillars that the teachers highlighted in their stories which worked alongside the theory outlined by Schutz (1967) and the findings suggested by McGlone and Anderson (1973). The IP teachers stressed that when working with younger learners, it was important to show their learners that they genuinely cared for them and to be energetic and passionate about the content being taught (Bruney, 2012). So, both trustworthiness and dynamism were important credibility pillars to include when understanding the IP teachers' constructions. It was also mentioned by the teachers that verbal and nonverbal immediacy made a difference in how their teaching was received by their learners. The IP teachers explained that the use of immediacy and dynamism in their lessons created a safer and more approachable atmosphere for their learners (Cubukcu, 2013).

I proposed that technology be considered as a credibility pillar, especially in the 21st century as we prepare to move toward the fourth industrial revolution, which was further propelled by the current COVID-19 pandemic (Mhlanga & Moloi, 2020). From the findings, it emerged that being technologically savvy was becoming an important asset for teachers to have in order to survive the reality of teaching in the 21st century. The data exposed the need for technology in the classroom and also highlighted how dependent teachers have become on technology. Therefore, in the below conceptual framework, I have adapted the elements to include technology, as discovered by the findings. The pillar of technology has influenced all of the mentioned elements in the framework, from the IP teachers' personal lives to their professional personas, and I therefore added technology as a border to the framework to highlight the significant influence on the teachers' constructions. As Jayal argued, although technology is fairly new to her teaching career, as she is a more seasoned teacher, it has invaded both her personal and professional spaces. She stressed that as human beings, especially teachers, it is required that they keep

updated. Jayal added that as a teacher, she believes that teachers are expected to do what the learners can do.

I refer to the Figure 19 below whereby I propose a teacher credibility conceptual framing. In this framing, I adopt elements from the McCroskey *et al.* (2004) model and the Schutz (1967) phenomenology of sociology theory. For this conceptual framework, I adapted elements based on the findings outlined in this study in addition to literature. The centre of this framing is teacher credibility. I used the McCroskey *et al.* (2004) model to contextualise the framework to the classroom, specifically highlighting teachers' and teachers' perceptions in relation to classroom situations, such as learners' behaviour. I then highlighted Schutz's (1967) theory to create the next layer of the model, taking into account aspects that influence teachers' personalities by focusing on attitudes, behaviour, reflections, and finally perceptions. Overall, in this fluid-like model, built using various adopted and adapted components, I foreground the four credibility pillars, namely competence, immediacy, trustworthiness, and dynamism. The insight gained from this study based on its findings was that a new pillar emerged, specifically technology, which is represented by a border around the framework.

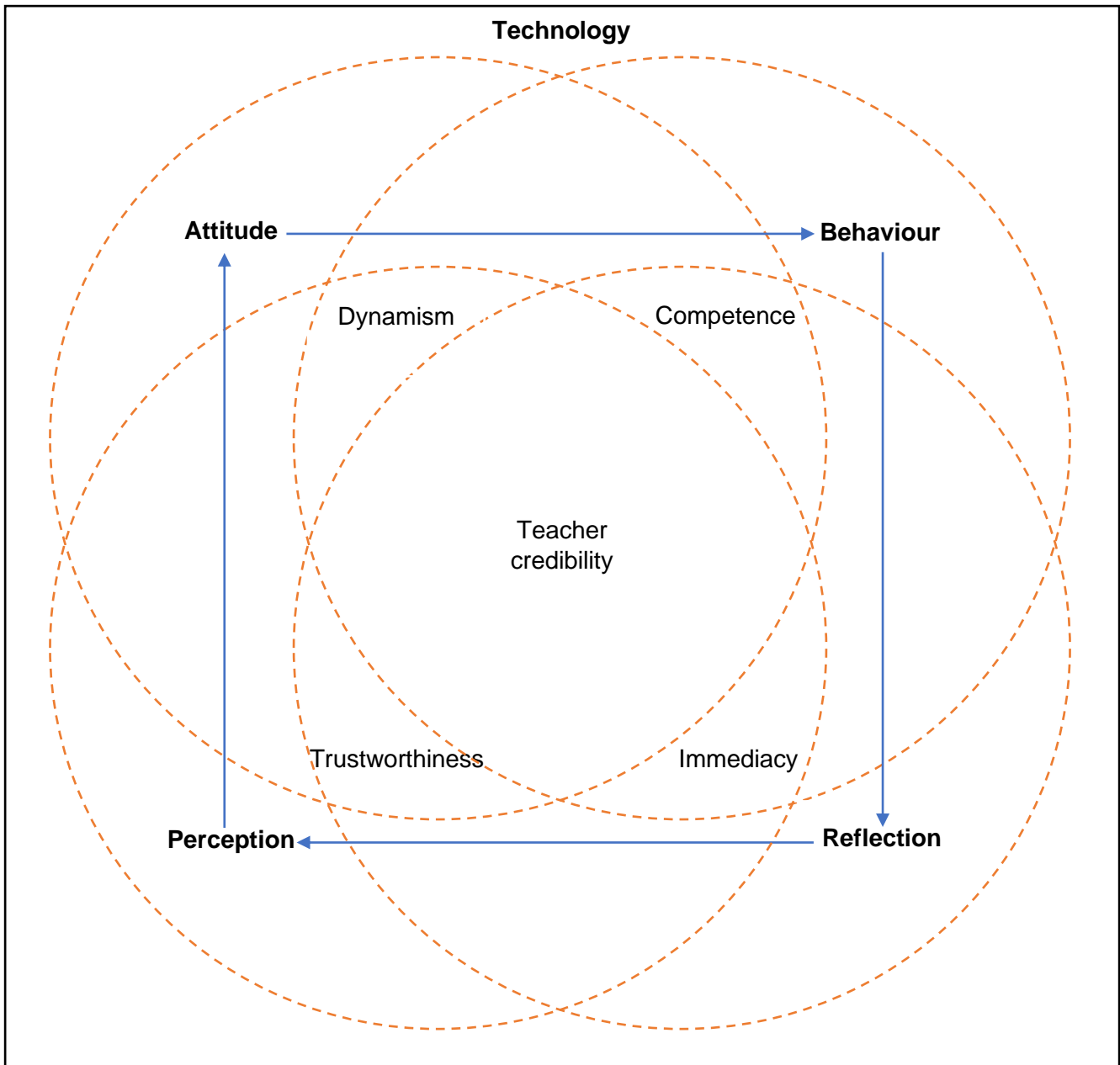


Figure 19: Proposed teacher credibility conceptual framing adopting elements from McCroskey *et al.* (2004) and Schutz (1967) [Adapted based on findings]

In tying together any loose strands of information pertaining to the conceptual framing, I refer to the McCroskey *et al.* (2004) model which sheds light onto the various elements evident in the classroom context. Using their model assisted in contextualising the framework to support the teacher credibility dimensions outlined by McGlone and Anderson (1973) and the acknowledgement of teachers being social beings as highlighted by Schutz (1967). So, the McCroskey *et al.* (2004) model includes the instructional environment, whereby all of the

participants referred to their classrooms and occasionally mentioned the sports grounds and malls. The model refers to learners and teachers being the main components in the classroom and stressed the importance of verbal and nonverbal immediacy, which is one of the proposed credibility pillars in this study based on all of the IP teachers referring to immediacy as an important aspect in their stories (Graph 1). The model further highlights the instructional outcomes which were explained to be important factors in constructing own credibility by Caterina, Alexa, and Sharylene. Moreover, learners' perceptions were included in the model, which was mentioned in my analysis as a subtheme influencing the IP teachers' constructions of their self-perceived credibility. However, this study argued the need to include the IP teachers' perceptions, too.

In testing the need to consider the IP teachers' perceptions, as proposed in the adapted version of the McCroskey *et al.* (2004) model, it was evident through the findings that by listening to the IP teachers' stories, an abundance of significant information came to light, some of which is easily neglected when focusing on others' perceptions of teachers. Additionally, using the personally selected artefacts alongside each of the IP teachers' narratives proved to be an excellent multimodal dimension that made for a richer study.

6.4 Inferences of research questions

This research study was underpinned by two research questions, namely:

- How do Intermediate Phase teachers construct their own perceptions of their credibility?
- Why do Intermediate Phase teachers construct their own perceptions of their credibility in the way they do?

By following the interactive model of research design suggested by Maxwell (2013), I used my research questions as a tool to shape my research study. As Maxwell (2013) explains the importance of achieving design coherency, whereby the research questions became the core of his model. Using the research questions as the centre of his interactive model of research design (Maxwell, 2013), he highlights the importance of the research questions within this research study. Below, I discuss each of the research questions and respond to each question based on a combination of existing literature and the emergent findings from this study.

6.4.1 Research question one

To address the first research question, ‘How do Intermediate Phase teachers construct their own perceptions of their credibility?’, I refer to my proposed conceptual framework. I answer this research question in three parts. The first part of my address focuses on the personality aspect of the IP teachers. From my analysis of the data, it was evident that the IP teachers, nearly instantaneously, referred to their childhood as their starting point to their stories. They referred to family experiences, friends’ influences, and their career choices. The IP teachers often reverted to highlighting their likes and dislikes as children and learners and emphasised that these experiences influenced their teacher identities. In navigating my way through their stories, they expressed that they found it challenging to differentiate between their personal and professional personas and somewhat referred to this blend as messy and interrelated (Rolling, 2010; Shapiro, 2010). Laurel stressed the importance for her to integrate her personal and professional façades in order to be a more transparent and content teacher. She explained that through her experiences of trying to separate her personal and professional world (Hutchens & Hayes, 2014), she felt overwhelmed and unhappy. She added that her personal likes and dislikes pour into her teaching world and colour her classroom with fragments of her personality, which positively influences her relationship with her learners. With this in mind, I refer to aspects of the theory by Schutz (1967) whereby he highlights that experiences, attitudes, and behaviour directly impact personalities which influence perceptions. Thus, in attempting to answer the first part of the first research question, the IP teachers used their personalities as a backdrop to introducing their characters and building their perceptions.

The second part to my address includes the participants’ teacher identities. Using the McCroskey *et al.* (2004) model, I used the components in their model to situate the participants as teachers in a classroom context. Considering that eight out of the nine IP teachers did not consider teaching as a career choice, it was important to explore how they went about constructing their teacher identities. Due to differing circumstances, the participants shared an array of reasons for not considering teaching as a profession, often referring to how others perceived the profession in a negative light. The participants explained that teaching was nothing that they could have ever imagined and the majority of the them agreed that they felt like they had been thrown into the deep end when stepping into the classroom (Botha & Rens, 2018). In their attempt of constructing their teacher identities, it was evident from the findings that they used what was known to them and that constituted their personal identities. So, in the challenging process of keeping their heads above the water, as expressed by Carlene, the IP teachers

explained that using their personalities provided a platform to constructing their teacher identities. However, this came with several negative effects of feeling overwhelmed, stressed, and anxious. These negative feelings overflowed into the personal lives of the teachers and resulted in them dealing with mental and emotional fatigue and breakdowns (Shapiro, 2010). Therefore, the classroom context, IP learners, IP teachers, and learners' perceptions were important components to consider in the IP teachers' narratives, as suggested components in the McCroskey *et al.* (2004) model. However, it was evident from the hidden stresses experienced by the teachers to include the IP teachers' perceptions, which was the proposed component in this study.

The third part to my address to the research question refers to the credibility factors recommended by McGlone and Anderson (1973). These factors work alongside the theory (Schutz, 1967) whereby the IP teachers' perceptions, as proposed and considered in the McCroskey *et al.* (2004) model, overlap. The IP teachers' perceptions are grounded on their personalities which are shaped by their experiences and recollected memories, as told through their stories. I used the credibility factors to explore the IP teachers' constructions of their perceptions of their credibility. McGlone and Anderson (1973) outline the major factors of expertness, which I referred to as competence, personality, which was considered through the underpinnings of the theory by Schutz (1967), and trustworthiness, which was also used as a credibility pillar, as the IP teachers often referred to being trustworthy to their learners and colleagues.

In analysing the findings with the conceptual framework, I found a pattern of credibility pillars that the IP teachers recurrently referred to throughout their stories. These pillars, namely competence, trustworthiness, immediacy, dynamism, and technology, surfaced during my analysis and shaped the answer to the first research question. The IP teachers constructed their own perceptions of their credibility by reflecting on their prior experiences and recalling memories (Schutz, 1967) which influence their personal and professional identities. In allowing for the IP teachers to talk freely, by using the free association method, the narratives were untamed and raw (Rolling, 2010). The IP teachers used time as an underpinning factor that drove their stories, so they tended to start from the beginning and flow through to the middle, building up to their current stories. When the IP teachers had gathered their thoughts and positioned their time frames, they began to contextualise their stories (Mehrabian, 1971), which inevitably led to the classroom. In dealing with their classroom-related thoughts and experiences, the IP teachers referred to the five recurrent credibility pillars (Graph 1). All nine of the IP teachers strongly referred to their

competence by means of their qualifications and being trustworthy, by showing they care for their learners (Cubukcu, 2013; McGlone & Anderson, 1973). Also, all of the IP teachers referred to immediacy in their practice, emphasising the need to include both verbal and nonverbal behaviour (McCroskey *et al.*, 2004). Dynamism and technology were fairly new pillars foregrounded during the analysis, as seven of the participants argued that being dynamic, enthusiastic, and technologically literate is important, especially when teaching younger learners (Bruney, 2012). Carlene, Laurel, and Mbali referred to teachers being a drama show for the learners, thus the more teachers display passion and energy, the more the learners are bound to reflect this energy (Bruney, 2012).

As for being technologically literate, seven out of the nine IP teachers referred to the need for teachers to keep updated with the times and to be able to meet their learners at their needs and levels (Mhlanga & Moloi, 2020). Interestingly, Katlego and Jayal, both mature teachers, explained the shift in teachers' skills and stated that despite the discomfort that technology brings with it, the current pandemic has pushed them to remain optimistic about such developments as it has made a world of difference in their new virtual classroom realities. Caterina and Jayal chose their laptops as their artefacts and used them to highlight the positive influence that technology has had on their teaching practices. The IP teachers expressed that having to integrate technology has certainly been a shift in their teaching that they had to quickly adapt to. They explained that the learners nowadays are technological proficient which requires teachers to be too.

6.4.2 Research question two

In addressing the second research question, specifically 'Why do Intermediate Phase teachers construct their own perceptions of their credibility in the way they do?', I refer to two parts. I used the gestalt theory (Behrens, 1998) and the free association method (Galton, 1879) to assist me in answering this research question. By using BNIM, specifically SQUIN (Wengraf, 2001, 2004), I was able to extract myself, as the researcher, from the IP teachers' narratives and allow their stories to really be heard. Thus, in asking the IP teachers to simply tell me about themselves as teachers, they were encouraged to start anywhere and anytime they felt most comfortable. This made the story-telling process all the more transparent and fluid. By using gestalt, the IP teachers' stories were uninterrupted and their thoughts were encouraged by means of the silence, which was underpinned by the free association method. Whatever thoughts or memories that were sparked in the minds of the IP teachers could be shared or reserved, as per their choice and levels of comfort.

The first part of my address to the second research question refers to the story-like nature that the IP teachers' narratives adopted. When I had asked the participants to tell me about themselves as teachers, all nine of them expressed emotions related to shock, discomfort, or an overwhelmed expression. They stated that the single question was a loaded question which resulted in many of them taking a moment or a deep breath before getting started with their stories. Naturally, the majority of the IP teachers framed their stories much like the structure of traditional stories, a beginning, middle, and somewhat ending. The IP teachers generally began their stories off with where their teaching careers had started, childhood experiences that influenced their teaching journeys, family members' comments, or friends' remarks. As mentioned previously, the IP teachers' stories were time-specific and it was evident that they had used certain periods of their lives, that they had categorised in their minds, to foundation their stories. As they had worked through these time-bounded experiences, they sometimes got caught off-guard with prephenominal memories (Schutz, 1967) which resulted in long pauses, moments of distress, or overwhelming emotions which resulted in bursts of extreme emotions, such as crying or laughing out loud. In these moments, some of the IP teachers tended to move away from these memories whilst others simmered in them.

In remaining neutral, the silences in the IP teachers' stories were either filled with moments of reflective thinking out aloud moments or moments of insecurity that were shut down. As their stories manifested, the IP teachers grew comfortable and they freely and openly shared their experiences and thoughts. Their thoughts would jump between time frames and that is when the IP teachers would use contextual experiences and memories to guide their stories. In using contexts, it was evident that more so in the middle of their stories, the teachers zoned into the classroom, focusing much of their attention on defining themselves as teachers. It was in these parts of their stories that the credibility pillars came to light, showcasing why the IP teachers refer to certain pillars more than others. Having listened to their beginning parts of their stories created a backdrop scene for me to understand the reasoning behind some of their shared experiences and emotions. From simply being a bystander, onlooker, and attentive listener, the IP teachers' body gestures and facial expressions provided much insight into aspects that their stories might not have covered. For instance, some teachers were overly emotional from the beginning of their stories whilst digging into their childhood experiences whereas others only showed raw emotion when sharing their teaching experiences. On the other hand, some IP teachers did not show much emotions at all, until the very end of their stories. All in all, it was evident that in some shape or

form, the IP teachers' stories were guided by emotions and this exposed important information on why the IP teachers construct their perceptions of their own credibility in the ways that they do.

In my second part of the address, I focus on the IP teachers' selection and use of their artefacts. In establishing gestalt and using the free association method, asking the teachers to think about and choose an inanimate object that best describes them as teachers opened up a world of meaningful insight into the IP teachers' constructions of their self-perceived credibility. I used the IP teachers' descriptions of their artefacts and answers to the three related questions as a means of an additional and more artistic method of analysing their perceptions (Rydzik, Pritchard, Morgan, & Sedgley, 2013). In the moments where the IP teachers felt uneasy, they asked for direction from me, posed questions to me, or reverted to talking about their artefacts and how they relate to it. Using the artefacts added a different and more meaningful dimension to the data and the findings. Where some of the teachers were more reserved or shy, their selection and explanation of their artefacts provided sufficient information regarding gaps in their stories. This artistic element brought along a fluidity to the IP teachers' narratives which added to the significance of the findings. Using the artefacts and following a multimodal approach in presenting the data allowed for the IP teachers to be more in control of their stories (Weber, 2014). The artefacts were used as visual representations of the IP teachers' stories, which accounted for many unanswered questions.

To answer the second research question, the IP teachers construct their own perceptions of their credibility in the way they do because they used time and context to guide their thoughts and memories (McGlone & Anderson, 1973; Schutz, 1967). They followed a structured approach, where possible, to share their stories and used experiences that they had grouped according to time and context to guide their narratives (Wertheimer, 1944). In the moments where the IP teachers had found their gestalt, belongingness of each recalled memory fitted into their whole life story, they had used the free association method in allowing their thoughts and memories to flow fluidly. This usually happened during the middle parts of their stories, where they felt more comfortable and less vulnerable to share their experiences, and continued toward the end of their narratives. By allowing for the IP teachers' recollections to flow freely, they each created their own 'road map' that guided their stories, which I visually mapped out as suggested by Zucker (2002) (Appendix H). In the moments where the free association was interrupted by uninterpreted thoughts or surprising connections amongst experiences and choices, the teachers referred to their artefacts. They tended to naturally relate to their artefacts as they attempted to find aspects

of themselves, as teachers, in inanimate objects. This made them critically analyse their self-perceived credibility in an untraditional and artistic manner.

6.5 Reflection on limitations of the study

Reflections form the roots to self-awareness and self-monitoring (Shapiro, 2010; Ortlipp, 2008) and encourage sustained growth and development, both personally and professionally (Freeman, 2011). Referring to this study's purpose, to understand and explore IP teachers' constructions of their self-perceived credibility, constructions were central to the study. The IP teachers' constructions were framed by reflecting on their personal and professional perceptions (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011; Schutz, 1967). Hence, it is clear to note that the IP teachers' constructions were grounded on their experiences, contexts, attitudes, behaviour, views, and perceptions (McCroskey *et al.*, 2004; Schutz, 1967). For these stories to be unearthed, the IP teachers were expected to reflect deeply, transparently, and meaningfully. The importance of reflections and reflexivity (cf., Section 4.5.7: 153), as acknowledged and required from the participants, I, as the researcher and an IP teacher, also needed to become a reflective being (Clandinin, 2006). According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), for reflexivity to become interwoven into the research process, they suggest that researchers maintain three researcher journals, specifically for capturing notes on planning and scheduling, methodological decisions, and personal beliefs and assumptions. These journals assisted me in keeping track and monitoring my research decisions, progress, and overall shaping, such that I could holistically and critically reflect on the research process, much like I will be doing in this section.

On the 27th of March 2020, the South African president, Cyril Ramaphosa, declared a national lockdown to combat the COVID-19 pandemic (Naidu, 2020). This lockdown was one of many other lockdowns worldwide. In light of the South African lockdown, various restrictions were implemented, with the intent of slowing down the rate of infections amongst people. These restrictions included, but were not limited to, social distancing, quarantining, closed schools, closed nonessential shops, and travel restrictions (Hamzelou, 2020). With these restrictions in mind, life as we once knew it had changed forever. This restricted lifestyle affected this research study and the proposed research plan. Finding the participants proved to be quite a challenge, as seven out of the nine participants were not previously known to me, hence I used the snowball sampling technique to find these participants (Baltar & Brunet, 2012). The challenge in contacting the participants lay in the teachers feeling overwhelmed, uncertain, and anxious about the reality

that we, as a global community, were facing. Hence, being a participant in a research study did not seem of great importance to them in comparison to the reality that was being faced.

Moreover, I planned on personally meeting the headmasters to explain the research study and to get their verbal and signed consent to conduct the interviews with their teachers (Appendix C). Instead, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I had to email the headmaster consent forms to each of the headmasters, once I had received acknowledgement and acceptance from the participants, via Whatsapp messages. I was then faced with two challenges in this regard. Firstly, many of the contacted teachers took a long time to reply to my Whatsapp messages, a few did not even respond, and two of the participants who I had contacted had stated that they were not IP teachers. The second challenge, to this end, was that even though I had emailed the headmaster consent forms to the respective headmasters and briefly explained what was required of them, none of the headmasters signed the consent forms, as requested. One of the headmasters responded to my email with a few questions as to how and when I was planning to meet with the teachers under lockdown circumstances and stated that he agreed to me interviewing the teachers. I received email and verbal confirmations from the various headmasters after several attempts to get hold of them. I also asked some of the participants to assist and follow-up with their headmasters to read and sign the headmaster consent forms.

Meeting with headmasters and participants took much longer than I had initially anticipated, due to the lockdown circumstances. The time to complete the study was thus constrained, and my scheduled interviews needed to be postponed. However, I used the lockdown time to plan and organise the chapters, as far as possible, in order to prepare for the interviews. Moreover, since the proposed dates of returning to schools were shifted and uncertain (Mahlati, 2020), I could not definitely schedule interview appointments with each of the participants and headmasters, as I would have done under normal circumstances. I then was required to adapt the research collection method to virtual Zoom interviews in place of face-to-face interviews, as planned. Thus, I had to reapply to the ethics committee to motivate this modification to the research study.

Considering that this research study followed a qualitative approach, the sample size that I had used was significantly small, specifically using nine participants, and thus limited in comparison to that of quantitative sample sizes (Queirós *et al.*, 2017). Moreover, the identified teachers were all IP teachers, and thus the sample group was not representative of all South African teachers, such as FP, SP, and FET teachers. However, despite the small sample group, I am certain that

the narrative interviews were in depth and meaningful, in their own right and with regard to the focus and purpose of this study. Moreover, I ensured that I provided rich, thick, and transparent (Li, 2004) presentations and reporting of research sites, participant profiles, and the narrative interviews, such that if the readers would like to use the data or findings elicited from this study, this may assist with the transferability to other comparable contexts and cultures (Anney, 2014).

As mentioned throughout the study, my role within this study was twofold: I was both a researcher and an IP teacher. The possibility of diluting my biases into the study was evident and acknowledged throughout the research process. Being wary of these two roles from the beginning of the study, I followed the advice given by Lincoln and Guba (1985) by keeping and maintaining the three researcher journals throughout the research study. In so doing, I consistently engaged in reflexivity, and thus I also interwove this element into the research. I acknowledged that as much as I was intending to understand and explore IP teachers' constructions of their self-perceived credibility, I needed to remain cognisant of my own constructions and perceptions of the IP teachers' constructions, as elaborated on by Schutz (1967).

Moreover, I employed suitable methods which focused heavily on the input of the participants, and placed me in the role of becoming and being an active listener (Wengraf, 2001, 2004). The two methods and tools that I used were BNIM (Wengraf, 2001), specifically SQUIN, and ABM (Eaves, 2014), namely artefacts that were personally selected by the participants (Eaves, 2014). Additionally, I ensured that the interview transcripts were emailed to each of the participants for member checking purposes (Birt *et al.*, 2016) and I engaged in continuous reflective discussions with my supervisor. Furthermore, in reporting on and presenting the findings, I asked the participants to select, from a list, or add, if necessary, the medium in which they wanted their stories to be presented in the study. The participants were also allowed the opportunity to create their own titles for their presented narratives to best represent their stories. This multimodal element made for a richer, more creative, and transparent study.

Hence, there have certainly been a fair share of limitations that this study has encountered along its journey, however each challenge was met with a possible solution which ensured the completion of the study and the credibility of its findings.

6.6 Research assumptions

In this section, I will state each of the research assumptions and then I will respond to each of these assumptions based on the reported findings emergent from this study alongside existing literature.

6.6.1 Research assumption one

The first research assumption was that teacher identity is 'dynamic and fluid' (Woest, 2016: 155). This fluid nature could provoke drastic changes in teachers' identity over time and contextual variances. Beginner teachers might be more open to sharing their experiences more transparently due to being more self-aware and consistently comparing and reflecting on their actions versus more experienced teachers who might be more set in their ways leading to less transparent experiences being shared to protect their competence.

In responding to this research assumption, the IP teachers' identities were indeed both dynamic and fluid, as suggested by Woest (2016). As the teachers' stories began to take shape, my analysis of the findings highlighted that the IP teachers' stories were guided by time and contextually grouped experiences (Schutz, 1967). Their narratives were messy and unbounded, which emphasised the fluid nature of their identities.

Interestingly, the newer teachers were more open to sharing their experiences coated in raw emotions. Several of the newer or younger teachers were more comfortable in sharing their true feelings about situations and experiences. They seemed to be more direct in their explanations shared in their stories. I noticed that a lot more time was used, by the newer teachers, to reflect on their experiences and share their narratives. All of the newer teachers shared their emotional and mental challenges that they experienced as a result of facing the demands of teaching in the 21st century. Three out of the seven newer IP teachers displayed intense emotions throughout their stories and used their feelings as a backdrop to expressing themselves. Five out of the seven newer teachers selected sentimental artefacts which supported their thinking processes during their narratives.

As for the two more seasoned IP teachers, they seemed to be more reserved when sharing their stories. Their narratives were not as in depth as those of the younger teachers and thus consequently resulted in shorter interviews. Jayal and Katlego seemed slightly more

uncomfortable than the remainder of the participants and tried to remain positive throughout their stories, despite observing the opposite behaviour in their reactions and expressions. These two teachers also did not engage meaningfully with their selected artefacts; however, several unanswered questions or rushed experiences were covered through their explanations related to their artefacts. Thus, the older teachers were certainly more concerned about the way they were perceived compared to the younger teachers. I specifically noticed this when they both referred to including technology in their practices, in response to the pandemic, where both teachers only stated positive remarks.

Overall, research assumption one was accurate based on the findings emergent from the data analysis.

6.6.2 Research assumption two

The second research assumption highlighted the possibility of IP teachers' recalled memories being significantly different compared to their actual experiences. This may have been due to lapsed time which might have blurred the intensity of their connected emotions to their recalled experiences (Zeferino & Carraro, 2013; Schutz, 1967). As Schutz (1967) explains, although experiences can be recalled and retold, they cannot be precisely relived due to lapse of time. He explains that recollections are prone to fading over time and the possibility of alterations, insertions, and exclusions is ever-present.

In reflecting on this assumption, I noticed that the IP teachers explicitly shared some of their experiences which resulted in them summoning their raw emotions. However, they often seemed to swiftly digress from these uncomfortable memories. At times, the teachers seemed to have to carefully think through their memories in order to recall the specific details of their recollections. This indicated that the intensity of their emotions had somewhat faded. Sometimes, the IP teachers attempted to explain specific experiences, however they stated that they had forgotten the minor details. In these instances, they either took a few seconds to try to recall the actual memory or they decided to substitute the details with other relating information. For example, Sharylene explained that she tries to include relevant explanations in her teaching such that her learners are able to create the connections between the content and their contextual experiences. She wanted to share the example of using a learner to run to another teacher's classroom to deliver a message. However, her intent with this request was to explain present continuous tense.

She intended to emphasise the verb ‘running’ in her lesson. In her recollection, she had remembered the overall experience, but had forgotten the details and decided to substitute the example with another verb instead of ‘running’.

Moreover, I could detect when the IP teachers felt uncomfortable and altered their stories slightly so as not to be judged or exposed. On several occasions, the teachers who had modified their recalled memories displayed fidgety body language, hurriedly changed the subject, overcompensated in their explanations, left the view of the screen, or referred to their artefacts. In these instances, I noticed that the teachers were not willing to share their experiences or were not confident in the truth behind their experiences, and as a result interrupted their own train of thought.

I realised that the experiences that the teachers had believed were more important held greater value to them. When sharing these experiences, they seemed to display confidence and transparency in their recollections by remembering details with ease. Often, it was in relation to these experiences that the IP teachers displayed more intense emotions, which led them to cry, laugh, sigh out aloud, or even show anger. For instance, when Carlene, Caterina, and Alexa had shared their negative experiences, they tended to talk more naturally and openly. I noticed that Laurel, Christina, Jayal, Mbali, and Katlego cut their stories short so as to not overshare their experiences that were connected to deeper emotions. Caterina, Sharylene, Mbali, and Christina all used their artefacts to distract them from exposing their true emotions that were summoned through their emergent recollections.

This assumption required an abstract answer in that it proved to be a challenge to differentiate the teachers’ true recollections when having to intently listen to what they have chosen to share in their stories. As an unbiased researcher, I had to believe that the IP teachers were genuinely sharing their stories. I could not influence the degree to which they felt comfortable to share certain memories. However, based on my observations of the teachers’ facial expressions and body language, I could distinguish between their raw and surface-level emotions. The more sensitive and controversial experiences were shared with greater detail and emotion, whereas the shallower experiences were somewhat merely shared, without as much thought and feelings.

Overall, research assumption two was true, to some extent, grounded on this study's findings. I state 'to some extent' because I cannot be certain about the degree to which the participants decided to share their stories transparently. Thus, I was not able to accurately evaluate the effect time had played on their recalled memories.

6.6.3 Research assumption three

The third research assumption referred to the IP teachers possibly facing a challenge to shift focus onto the self and critically reflect on all experiences, good and challenging, and be able to share these with a researcher. To this end, IP teachers may keep their stories strictly within their current classroom situations, similar to the elements outlined in the McCroskey *et al.* (2004) model for instructional communication.

Upon reflecting on this assumption, it was interesting to note that the teachers used a story-like approach to dissecting their experiences. This meant that the IP teachers did not solely share their classroom or teacher-specific experiences, but rather opened up about various other influencing facets that they believed were of value to their stories. Underpinning these other facets of their stories, the teachers seemed to refer to their artefacts to elaborate and support their recalled memories, which were both related and unrelated to their teaching worlds. As the IP teachers began their stories from their childhood experiences, it became clear that the influences from their friends and families played an important role in shaping their perspectives of teaching. The teachers seemed to rely heavily on these prior recollections as a foundation to their credibility constructions. Considering that eight of the nine teachers did not consider choosing teaching as a profession, it was important to note that the IP teachers, at some point in their childhood recollections, referred to aspects of teaching. For instance, Jayal shared that she often played a motherly role to her siblings and this sparked her interest in spending time with children. Laurel and Sharylene pulled on their experiences as learners in the classroom and expressed that their primary school teachers played a significant role in them eventually choosing teaching as their profession.

I noticed that the teachers used the beginning parts of their stories, where they introduced their childhood experiences, as "ice breakers". They seemed to assess the situation of the interview and began to feel more comfortable with the nature of the interview. As they grew more comfortable with me, as the researcher, and the virtual setting of the interview, the teachers began

to dig deeper into their thoughts and emotions, and at some point, in the middle of their stories, nearly let loose and felt free to share their raw emotions. In this fluid and uninterrupted recollection of memories, I believe that the teachers had reached gestalt and were in the zone of using the free association method. The teachers shared that teaching for them had felt like being pushed into the deep end. Carlene expressed that she felt like she was drowning (Botha & Rens, 2018). At this point in their stories, many of the teachers shared their emotions, which resulted in them crying, laughing, leaving the interview for a moment, or swearing. The teachers shared that as a result of dealing with the pressures and demands of teaching, they had experienced emotional and mental breakdowns. They explained that being a teacher does not start and end at their classroom doors, but follows them into their personal lives too. Laurel shared that she often found herself being woken by nightmares relating to school and explained that in those moments she had realised that she was emotionally worn out. The teachers stressed the challenging yet important task of drawing boundaries in their personal and professional identities in order to safeguard their overall wellbeing (Shapiro, 2010).

The teachers frequently connected their personal identities to their professional personas and explained that it is important to find a healthy balance between the two. Laurel stated that her personality pours into her teaching practice and this made it easier for her to manage her emotions. Alexa and Caterina explained that their character traits are present in their teaching. Alexa shared that she is a fun and light-hearted person which she brings into her teaching persona. On the other hand, Caterina explained that she is a strict teacher because of her background and the way she was brought up and this follows her into her practice. Mbali described teachers as actors who need to perform their lessons as if they were on a stage. She explained that teachers are required to “wear a mask” to hide their true emotions and other times the emotions are too profound to hide. Overall, the participants expressed that the teachers, ultimately, are human too. They explained that being human invites bursts of emotions and teachers are required to silence their emotions in order to continue with the show (Shapiro, 2010).

So, research assumption three, according to the emergent findings from this study, was untrue. The IP teachers shared in-depth emotions based on their experiences which shaped their stories. Considering that the teachers followed a story-like approach to relay their narratives, information, both related and unrelated, to their teaching was shared. They shared their childhood memories, their upbringing, their family and friends’ influences, their prior career choices, their mental and emotional breakdowns, their conflicts with colleagues, and so much more. Hence, it was clear

that the teachers did not simply discuss teaching-related experiences, but were more inclined to dig deeper into the essence behind their experiences which threaded through their stories. They used their artefacts to navigate their way through unpacking their stories and eventually the artefacts led them to using the free association method, where their thoughts were permitted and encouraged to roam freely without disruptions.

In this section, three research assumptions were highlighted and analysed in line with the study's focus and purpose. Each research assumption was responded to with the support of various literature and the findings from this study. Toward the end of each assumption, I accepted or rejected the postulation.

6.7 My contribution: Addressing the proposed niches and possible innovation

In this section, I justify and substantiate my contributions conceptually, methodologically, and theoretically. As discussed in Chapter 2, the identified and argued niches unearthed from this study were threefold (cf., Section 2.8: 59).

6.7.1 Conceptual contribution

In terms of this study's conceptual contribution, IP teachers' self-perceptions were foregrounded. Perceptions have been popularly studied, however they have mainly focused on how others perceived the communicator (Freeman, 2011; Georgakopoulos & Guerrero, 2010; McCroskey *et al.*, 2004). In this study, the focus was placed on teachers, more specifically, IP teachers' perceptions forming constructions of their own credibility, which according to Basch (2012), requires more attention in literature. Since there is limited research conducted on teachers' perceptions of their own credibility (Freeman, 2011), this study conceptually contributed to the body of literature by focusing on IP teachers' constructions of their self-perceived credibility.

Understanding perceptions is important in depicting transparent views of various situations from different angles. In this study, I used the McCroskey *et al.* (2004) model for instructional communication as an underpinning theory. I thus pulled on tenets and adapted the model to better suit the purpose of this study. In my proposed adaptation of the model, I argued the need to include IP teachers' perceptions as a component in exploring IP classroom situations. As the IP teachers explained, younger learners are more susceptible to change and development. Thus,

these learners are more influenced by slight changes in immediacy, learning outcomes, and classroom atmospheres (Bruney, 2012), as suggested in the model.

According to Schutz (1967), perceptions are fragments of various truths and when evaluating the McCroskey *et al.* (2004) model with this in mind, the need to consider teachers' views were highlighted. As the teachers' stories unfolded, their perceptions, surprisingly, relied heavily on their beliefs of how others perceived them (Bem, 1972). The teachers stressed the influences on their perceptions from their learners and colleagues. So, the dual nature of perceptions grew more important in my exploration. To truly understand the IP teachers' self-perceptions of their own credibility, I needed to explore who they believed they are as teachers and who they believe others perceive them to be as teachers. Thus, it became more evident how important it was to explore the IP teachers' self-perceived credibility in the functioning of education in South African IP classrooms.

Hence, conceptually, I proposed an adapted conceptual framing to underpin the focus of this study. In my proposed conceptual framework, I included three theoretical underpinnings. The first theory included an adapted version of the McCroskey *et al.* (2004) model for instructional communication, drawing on their suggested classroom components to contextualise my study. The second theory referred to a constructed outline of the phenomenology of sociology theory by Schutz (1967), referring to the tenets of perceptions and constructions. The third theory focused on the dimensions influencing teacher credibility suggested by McGlone and Anderson (1973), stressing the credibility pillars emergent from the IP teachers' stories. I therefore propose that the conceptual framework be used as a model by IP teachers, to support them in reflecting on their credibility in practice. By becoming aware of the elements influencing teacher credibility, the IP teachers could be more aware of finding suitable methods or strategies that could support them in developing themselves and their practices (Cubukcu, 2013). This model might also be used by the teachers as a guide to reflecting on the importance and complexity of their credibility. Moreover, exploring their self-perceived credibility through their personal stories could emphasise to the teachers that their credibility is woven into their identities, personally and professionally. The model provides a gateway of empathy for teachers' narratives to be heard and felt, and not segregated from their professions, as traditionally believed (Shapiro, 2010).

6.7.2 Methodological contribution

Methodologically, this study contributed to the understanding of IP teachers' constructions of their self-perceived credibility using a qualitative approach instead of the several quantitative studies in the field of credibility (Freeman, 2011; McGlone & Anderson, 1973). As Freeman (2011) argues the need to qualitatively explore teachers' perceptions of their own credibility, credibility-related literature often focuses on higher educational contexts and not specifically at school-level (Freeman, 2011; Georgakopoulos & Guerrero, 2010; Simonds *et al.*, 2006). Although several studies focus on aspects relating to credibility, such as the dimensions of credibility, many of them highlight the angle of how others perceive the source (Pena *et al.*, 2017; McCroskey *et al.*, 2004). In sorting through the literature, I found great insight from McGlone and Anderson (1973) in which their findings elicit quantitative measurements relating to teachers' credibility, one of the few pieces of literature to redirect the focus on teachers' credibility. I thus used their findings to further shape and refine my proposed conceptual framing to better ground the suggested credibility pillars.

In this study, I also proposed the blurring of boundaries by overlapping elements drawn from the arts-based inquiry and narrative inquiry (cf., Section 4.2.3: 118). In adopting a qualitative approach, I aimed to meaningfully listen to and explore the IP teachers' narratives. Hence, I wanted the teachers' voices to guide their narratives as much as possible, with minimal interference from my side in my dual role as both an IP teacher and researcher. I thus moved away from the traditional techniques of employing narrative inquiry, following a question-answer format, and moved toward using BNIM, specifically SQUIN (Wengraf, 2001, 2004). By making use of a single question in introducing and developing the interviews, I assumed that the IP teachers might feel uncomfortable and confused in sharing their stories in this one-sided manner. This led me to researching the arts-based inquiry in combination with the narrative inquiry. I realised that the teachers' stories were constructions and deconstructions of relived memories and summoned experiences which could be coated in major and minor variances (Luchetti *et al.*, 2016; Schutz, 1967). According to Rolling (2010), art can be used as a science of digging beyond the surface level of answering questions. Arts-based inquiry opened doors into reliving the teachers' stories through their narratives, as much as they allowed me to journey with them (Schutz, 1967). Thus, I placed the control in the hands of the IP teachers by allowing them to select their artefacts, narrate their stories, select from an array of story presentation modes, and create a suitable title for their narratives. These aspects to research were new and highlighted the blend between narrative inquiry and arts-based inquiry.

Thus, integrating aspects of narrative inquiry and arts-based inquiry offered opportunities for the teachers to reach gestalt in their interviews. Also, through my use of the free association method, the SQUIN allowed the teachers to feel comfortable enough to fluidly share their rawest memories and emotions in transparently shaping their stories. The rationale that the teachers had in connecting their teacher credibility to inanimate objects encouraged them to critically reflect on their practices and perceptions prior to the interviews. Hence, when they displayed discomfort, confusion, or blanked out, as expected from the use of SQUIN, they referred to their artistic thoughts in sharing their stories. Thus, the use of arts-based inquiry included a different angle in the teachers' constructions of their self-perceived credibility. Several important aspects relating to their credibility were unearthed by their explanations and motivations in relation to their choice of artefacts.

The literature suggests that the SQUIN interviews would vary in duration and depth (Gouws, 2017; Wengraf, 2004), however with the inclusion of arts-based inquiry, I was stunned to have received the outpour of emotions and vulnerable memories that the IP teachers had recalled during their interviews. Through qualitatively understanding how the IP teachers' perceptions developed into constructions of their credibility, I discovered that the arts does indeed take the research deeper than that of the other sciences (Rolling, 2010). Through attentively listening and observing the IP teachers, I was able to highlight and connect spoken and unspoken references to frequently referred to credibility dimensions, specifically focusing on teachers (McGlone & Anderson, 1973).

6.7.3 Theoretical contribution

This study's theoretical contribution related to the emergent credibility dimensions of understanding IP teachers' constructions of their credibility in the 21st century. Using an interpretivist paradigm to understand the IP teachers' stories, outlined by the presented findings from other studies, framed the credibility pillars highlighted in this study. The teachers' narratives and artefacts supported the credibility dimensions suggested in literature (McGlone & Anderson, 1973; Berlo *et al.*, 1961) and also included additional dimensions that were suitable and necessary for the phase and context of the learners and teachers.

The participants mentioned that when constructing their perceptions of their own credibility, it was important to consider the level of thinking, understanding, and contextual experiences of the learners. According to Jayal and Caterina, who both selected their laptops as their personal

artefacts, technology was an element that begged to be considered in their stories. They explained that being a teacher in the 21st century required them to keep updated in order to relate and relay content to their learners. Both Katlego and Jayal explained that, being more seasoned teachers, they have experienced the different eras of teaching, which included apartheid, corporal punishment, teaching without technology, and presently teaching virtually through a global pandemic. Thus, it was important to consider the era in which this study was being conducted and to adapt the proposed conceptual framing accordingly.

In regard to the suggested dimensions of credibility, it was evident from the findings that credibility was time and contextually dependent and thus required adjustments. Using the recommended major credibility factors as guidelines (McGlone & Anderson, 1973), in my analysis I discovered that technology was a credibility pillar that required more attention, especially in the 21st century as we prepare to move toward the fourth industrial revolution and as teachers are required to teach virtually amid the COVID-19 pandemic (Mhlanga & Moloji, 2020). Additionally, as outlined in the McCroskey *et al.* (2004) model, teachers' verbal and nonverbal immediacy was an important component that contextualised this study to the IP classroom. The IP teachers stressed the importance and value in using verbal and nonverbal immediacy techniques in their practices in order to ensure that learners were concentrating, interested, and engaging in their lessons. Mbali specifically highlighted that she noticed that when her learners were distracted or tired, she had to walk around the classroom to ensure that the learners were focused. Mbali and Sharylene also explained that they used humour to brighten up their lessons and used their learners' reactions to their jokes to assess whether they were listening or distracted.

Although Burgoon *et al.* (1990) argue the omission of dynamism in future studies of credibility due to dynamism and immediacy being so closely linked, Bruney (2012) argues the need for dynamism especially when dealing with younger learners. The findings from this study support Bruney in which younger learners require more frequent displays of passion, energy, and willingness on the part of teachers to adapt. Mbali and Christina explained that IP teachers are like actors, whereby IP teachers need to show energy and passion in their lessons in order for their learners to buy into the content being taught. Laurel elaborated by stating that if teachers show a lack of energy and lack of interest, learners' tend to mimic this energy (Bruney, 2012).

Thus, the five proposed credibility pillars when understanding IP teachers' constructions of their self-perceived credibility included competence, trustworthiness, immediacy, dynamism, and

technology. These five pillars were based on literature (Aydin *et al.*, 2013; Teven & Hanson, 2004; McCroskey, 1992; Berlo *et al.*, 1969) and findings emergent from this study.

Interestingly, several of the participants highlighted the influence of their race in constructing their self-perceived credibility. The analysis of the data showed that the participants of colour discussed race as a factor that makes them feel that their credibility needs to be proved to their learners and colleagues and thus race could be considered as an inward experience to these participants. On the other hand, the Caucasian participants who discussed race in their stories explained the need to be mindful of their past and how they configure and relay Apartheid and slavery to their learners in their lessons (Smith *et al.*, 2017). Thus, these participants, unlike the participants of colour, experienced race as an outward experience of which they explained that they feel less like the victims and more like the offender. These participants explicitly expressed their discomfort in having to acknowledge their race and how this aspect fitted into the retelling of South Africa's history to differing races in the most neutral way possible. These participants also felt the need to prove their credibility, but to themselves, whereby becoming and remaining aware of their verbal and nonverbal communicative acts was important.

In this section, I responded to the contributions that my study has made to the existing literature. This study's contribution was threefold, namely conceptually, methodologically, and theoretically. I grounded each contribution on the highlighted niches of this study, as mentioned in Chapter 2. Overall, conceptually, I proposed a conceptual framework underpinned by two adapted theories; methodologically, I suggested the blurring of boundaries between arts-based and narrative inquiry; and theoretically, I outlined five distinctive and commonly discussed pillars of credibility as mentioned in literature and highlighted in the findings of this study.

6.8 Recommendations

Grounded on this study's findings, I propose recommendations with regard to future research within the Faculty of Education, in practice, and future training and development of researchers and teachers alike.

6.8.1 Future research

Based on the results and limitations foregrounded in this study, I outline a few possible future research avenues.

Considering the limitations accompanying qualitative research (Yilmaz, 2013), this study solely focused on IP teachers and so future studies could include exploring FP, SP, and/or FET teachers' constructions of their self-perceived credibility. Moreover, a comparative study could also constitute a possible research path, whereby constructions of self-perceived credibility could be compared amongst different phase teachers based on the age, context, and needs of learners. Also, since this study was limited to South African-based schools, specifically located in the Gauteng province, a broader contextual study could be considered. A study including various schools across different contextual circumstances could prove to be an important exploration in dissecting the contextual variances in understanding teachers' credibility constructions (Freeman, 2011; McGlone & Anderson, 1973). Additionally, since eight IP teachers explained that teaching was not their first career choice, or even considered as a career because of others' negative attitudes toward teaching, another important study would be to explore how teachers from different countries construct their self-perceived credibility based on societal views of teaching (Asbury & Kim, 2020).

Considering that this qualitative study was non-generalisable due to its small population size of nine participants (Creswell *et al.*, 2007), I would suggest conducting a mixed methods approach in collecting data on a larger population whilst being able to interpret the data somewhat inductively. I recommend a mixed methods approach to preserve the emotional essence of the participants (Freeman, 2011) whilst supporting their input with quantitative data, allowing for findings to be more generalisable.

Additionally, where time permits, a longitudinal study of teachers' credibility constructions could be an interesting research output. This study could aim to explore credibility development from participants starting as student teachers developing into beginner teachers and finally maturing into more seasoned teachers in practice. This could prove to be an important study in exploring the variances influencing teacher credibility, suggested by McGlone and Anderson (1973). This study could also provide more insight into the nature of teachers' credibility and the possibility of developments or deconstructions of credibility.

The category regarding race highlighted important insight for potential future studies regarding understanding IP teachers' credibility. As many of the participants' stories included aspects of race as influencing factors to how they construct their self-perceived credibility, their perspectives on race in South Africa foregrounds the need to explore South African-specific teaching

challenges and possible ways of redressing these outlined challenges experienced by South African teachers.

6.8.2 Practice and future training and development

From this study's findings, I outline possible recommendations pertaining to teaching practice and future training and development.

The IP teachers expressed that they felt they had been ill-prepared for the realities of teaching and that their student teaching experiences were limited and time constrained (Shapiro, 2010). The teachers also expressed that their higher education institution experiences and learnings did not expose the true pressures and demands of teaching. Caterina, Mbali, Laurel, and Carlene emphasised their negative experiences in having to manage and deal with the heavy workload of teaching. Moreover, Caterina, Alexa, Laurel, Carlene, Christina, Sharylene, and Mbali highlighted the need for higher education institutions to update their theory relating to the realities of teaching. They referred to their experiences in dealing with colleague conflicts and shared that this had never been discussed while they were students as something that formed part of their perceived world of teaching.

In response to the abovementioned challenges faced by the IP teachers, I propose that South African higher education institutions be in contact with various surrounding schools for teacher placement opportunities as per subject specialisation and phase requirements. This communication between universities and schools will create more career opportunities for beginner teachers. As Alexa mentioned in her story, she found it challenging to gain more experience when schools required teachers to have at least a few years of teaching experience. This requirement proves to be impossible to meet when schools are less inclined to hire beginner teachers. If universities and schools created a platform of open communication, it is more likely that beginner teachers could be better prepared to apply for vacant teaching posts after graduation.

In analysing the data, I noticed that the teachers expressed that they felt ill-prepared for the realities of the classroom. The IP teachers highlighted having to establish strategies that supported their classroom management, dealing with parents, and meeting each learner at their levels and needs. They explained that not being exposed to these elements of teaching widened the gap between theory and practice. As universities attempt to best prepare teachers, theoretically, for their teaching careers, the important classroom elements are often neglected.

My first suggestion would be for the teachers to be given an opportunity to work in practice in each year of their studies, possibly one month per semester and then to continue with the usual six months in the students' fourth and final year of undergraduate studies. My reasoning behind allowing students to experience the classroom realities in each year of their studies, twice per year, is that it would allow them greater and more transparent insight into the challenges and functioning of schools, which more effectively supports the theory in their various other modules. Thus, the reality shock, to which Botha and Rens (2018) refer, will be limited when the student teachers encounter their own practices. Hence, through this approach, the beginner teachers will be more prepared for entering the classroom and facing the realities that confront the 21st century teacher. Moreover, for this recommendation, I suggest that each school that the student teachers visit, per semester, be a different school, so as to allow the student teachers to gain various experiences relating to different classrooms and school climates.

My second suggestion would be for modules to incorporate virtual classroom situations. This could be done through role plays, dramas, or even observing different scenarios on YouTube and reacting to the situation from a teacher's perspective. Again, the student teachers will be encouraged to link their theoretical learnings from that specific module directly to a practical situation, guided by their lecturer and receiving input from their peers. These virtual situations allow student teachers to reflect critically on their developing teacher identities before entering the actual classroom. Also, these situations could be dissected as a group and the student teachers are thus placed in a safe and supportive learning environment, building their confidence, strengthening their characters, and constructing their self-perceptions of their own credibility. Through this approach, the student teachers are provided with more time to think about and reflect on the practical side to teaching, resulting in them feeling less anxious and apprehensive upon entering the classroom. This supportive method encourages student teachers to form professional learning communities which will support sustainable professional development (Voelkel & Chrispeels, 2017).

In this section, I recommended possible research avenues stemming from the focus, purpose, and findings of this study. I also suggested approaches and strategies that could be considered by higher education institutions for practice and future training and development of their students.

6.9 Final reflection

This chapter has served as the conclusion to this thesis. I provided a brief overview of the contents of each of the chapters. This was followed by situating the emergent findings within the proposed conceptual framework. I then answered the underpinning research questions, as posed in Chapter 1. My responses to the research questions were grounded in related existing literature and the IP teachers' stories. I reflected on the limitations encountered during the study and justified each of the posed research assumptions, which were ultimately supported or rejected based on insight gained from literature and this study's findings. Next, I discussed the contributions made by this study on three accounts: conceptually, methodologically, and theoretically. Finally, I elaborated on possible recommendations in terms of future topic-related research and practice and future training and development of teachers.

My research explored the IP teachers' personal stories couched in an array of varied experiences and recalled memories. Their thought processes and categorisation of life events shaped their narratives and ultimately informed their constructions of their self-perceived credibility. Our stories define our legacies, and so although the IP teachers were not directly speaking to their credibility constructions, their narratives framed the lenses through which they built their perceptions about themselves as teachers. The teachers who were more reflective and aware of their credibility and its influences in their teaching practices seemed to be more confident in conveying their self-perceived credibility. Generally, the teachers were aware, to some extent, about their credibility; however, they did not pay much attention to their underlying raw emotions that would be unleashed in dealing with their prephenomenal experiences during their interviews. As overwhelmed as some of the teachers felt by sharing their stories, they seemed to dig deeper into their narratives during the uncomfortable moments. It was nearly as though they had not given their stories a chance to unfold and be heard. The teachers had seemed to neglect the uncomfortable yet necessary process of allowing themselves to share their constructions of their self-perceived credibility and in the process deconstructed their emotions and experiences to shape and reshape their stories.

Finally, this study has proposed a conceptual model for IP teachers to explore and reflect on their personal stories in the process of understanding their constructions of their self-perceived credibility. The IP teachers could possibly use this model to become aware of their narratives and provide a starting point for dissecting their perceptions grounded on their personal identities. In

the Epilogue, which follows, I reflect on my own personal and professional story which was interwoven into this thesis.

Epilogue

Final thoughts

As I reflect on my journey of peeping into the worlds of the IP teachers, I have come to realise that my reflections were co-constructed alongside the teachers' stories. As part of my quest of exploring teachers' constructions of their self-perceived credibility, I was awakened to the dual nature of my presence interwoven into this study. My first role, which largely shaped my own story, was being able to closely relate to the stories based on my own experiences as an IP teacher. In this regard, I acknowledged that my perceptions and experiences could have altered and ultimately tainted the participants' narratives. In response to this possible risk, I ensured reflexivity throughout the research and especially during the data decoding and analyses. I needed to push myself to become more self-aware and sensitive to my possible biases and overall influences, to which Feucht *et al.* (2017) highlight the importance of continuous internal conversations with the self. In order to ensure consistency in transparently shaping the study, I captured my research journey through researcher journals, as suggested by Etherington (2009). My second role was as a researcher, in which I aimed to understand the importance of credibility in teaching. More specifically, the purpose of the study, which steered the overall research process, was to understand IP teachers' constructions of their self-perceived credibility. Hence, the teachers' narratives breathed life into the credibility concept and allowed greater insight into the functioning of credibility. As credibility can be viewed as a complex and fairly abstract concept, the teachers' stories allowed more of a realistic overview of conceptualising credibility.

The unusual combination of research designs, specifically narrative and arts-based inquiry, created some uncertainty in the development of my study. I recall questioning the success of combining these designs nearing the data construction component of the research. In pushing my boundaries, both personally and professionally, I was encouraged to integrate my own creativity throughout my study. Just as I had so enthusiastically asked the participants to embrace an ABM, I, too, was faced with having to pursue various angles in combing through the findings and moulding the study. Surprisingly, with thorough editing and reconstructing the data construction component, I eventually developed a structure to my interviews that coherently fitted the purpose, research questions, and research designs. By choosing to use BNIM, specifically SQUIN, alongside an ABM, in which I used the participants' personally selected artefacts, my vision of understanding the IP teachers' stories came to life. Referring to my previously mentioned

concern about my interjections of my role as an IP teacher, these research designs acted as further boundaries to limit my biases throughout the research process. Allowing the IP teachers to take the reins of their stories, in all aspects, intensified the transparency and rawness of their constructions.

Completing this research study during a global pandemic proved to be challenging. As a result of facing these challenges, I had to learn to be resilient and agile in my solution-seeking process. Due to the social restrictions that accompanied the pandemic, I was faced with having to re-evaluate my data construction plan. I thus had to meet with the participants virtually, which I anticipated would dampen the social aspect of the interviews. Interestingly, I noticed that the participants used the screen between us as a somewhat protective shield. The participants generally began their stories cautiously and progressively grew more comfortable and confident throughout their narratives. I was privileged to experience first-hand the beauty of attentively listening to the IP teachers' stories, as I had the opportunity to listen to what was being shared and observed what was not being shared. Moreover, the art element that I included in this study invited a more creative approach to the participants' stories. In so saying, the participants were eager to explain their sentimental attachments to their artefacts which thus were also used as an escape when their narratives became uncomfortable and/or too intense.

As my study draws to a close, I critically reflect on the research road I have travelled. It is well-known and openly shared that undertaking a doctoral study is draining, taxing, and demanding. Through this rigorous journey I experienced a multitude of emotions, including confidence, indecisiveness, feelings of discomfort, and insecurity. It was a journey that consisted of a constant battle between building and breaking of my character. I feel a mixture of relief and curiosity. Relief, because I made it through this journey feeling stronger than I had ever anticipated. Curiosity, to see what is to follow, more specifically where this experience might lead me. With all that I have endured, encountered, and learnt from engaging and completing this doctoral study, I am hopeful that somewhere, somehow, the findings emergent from this study will be helpful, in some way, to a reader, researcher, teacher, or education stakeholder. Having embarked on this strenuous journey, I am pleased with the findings emerging from this study. My interest and passion in exploring teacher credibility has been empowered through this study. I continue to see the importance and need for teachers to acknowledge the hidden and blinding power behind their credibility. I hope to continue my journey in research and to propose further research into the influences stemming from teacher credibility.

In writing the final few words of this thesis, I found myself enjoying the thrill of it all finally coming together, similar to the satisfaction of fitting the last puzzle piece into place and standing back to view the image. I am left with the whispers of endless stories that tug on my curiosity as stories have a beauty where they 'thrive in cycles of never ending telling ...' (*Zeitz Art Museum in Cape Town, South Africa, titled: 'And so the stories ran away'*).

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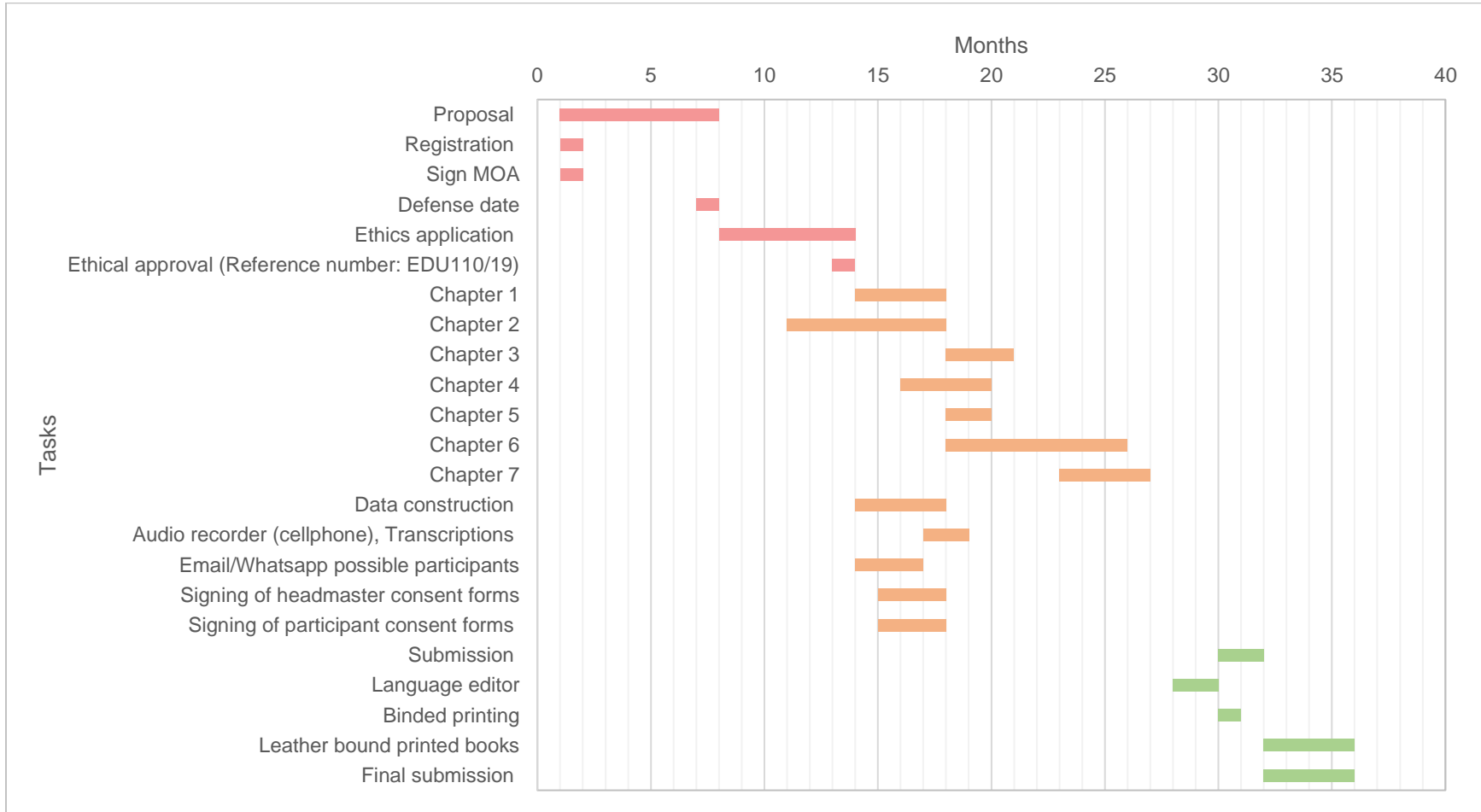
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Appendices

Appendix A: GANTT graph



Appendix B: Audit trail

Phases of the research study	Parties involved/ Appendices	Result
Proposal defence	Dr Y Woest T Reddy	Successfully defended on 31 August 2019.
Ethical application	T Reddy	Applied for ethics on 4 February 2020. Amended ethical application due to the COVID-19 global pandemic.
Ethical clearance	Humanities Education ethics committee Dr Y Woest T Reddy	Certificate reference number: EDU110/19. Approved on 27 February 2020. Final ethical clearance received on 06 April 2021
Initial contact with headmasters	Headmasters T Reddy	Via email
Initial contact with participants	Participants T Reddy	Via Whatsapp message. Two participants were known to me and the remainder of the participants were contacted using the snowball sampling technique.
Signing of headmaster consent forms	Appendix C Headmasters T Reddy	Via email, due to COVID-19 pandemic.
Signing of participant consent forms	Appendix D Participants T Reddy	Participant consent forms were signed on the day of the interview and sent to me electronically due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
Conducting interviews	Appendix F Participants T Reddy	Audio recordings (stored on a USB and submitted for storage) BNIM – SQUIN: Subsession 1: Single question, Subsession 2: N-pointed questions and TQUINS, Subsession 3: Three questions about selected artefact (pictures were taken of the artefacts, specifically from various angles including top, side, back, and front) Conclusion: Select title and medium of presenting stories.
Research study schedule	Appendix E	A research schedule was created to record and capture all of the specific dates of sent and received documents concerning contacting headmasters and participants, signing of headmaster and participant consent forms, scheduling and conducting interviews, and member checking.
Audio recordings transcribed	Appendix G J Martinelli (transcriptionist) T Reddy	Transcriptions Extracts of transcripts attached; full transcripts submitted for storage.
Member checking	T Reddy Participants	Transcriptions emailed to each of the participants for approval or adaption.

Presenting the data	T Reddy Participants	Participant approved transcriptions. Chosen title and medium of presentation by participants (Chapter 5).
Decoding, analysing, and interpreting of data	Appendix H T Reddy	Emergent themes, subthemes, and categories (Chapter 5).
Research journal	T Reddy	Used throughout the research process. Divided into three separate journals based on purposes: planning and scheduling, methodological decisions, and personal beliefs and assumptions.
Language editing	D Rudman T Reddy	09 August 2021

Appendix C: Headmaster consent form



Headmaster consent form

Research title: Intermediate Phase teachers' constructions of their self-perceived credibility

I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Dear Headmaster,

My name is Tanita Reddy and I am currently studying towards my Doctorate degree specialising in Humanities Education at the University of Pretoria. I am engaging in a research study of which I am required to explore Intermediate Phase teachers' constructions of self-perceived credibility. I am welcoming various Intermediate Phase teachers working in and around South Africa, Gauteng.

II. PROCEDURE

- I (as the researcher) will conduct a single question interview with Intermediate Phase teachers in your school based on their perceptions, experiences and observations of themselves as teachers in order to collect information that will support the purpose of this research study. Moreover, I will ask the Intermediate Phase teachers to choose any artefact (object) that they think best symbolises them as a teacher. The Intermediate Phase teachers will then be asked a few questions relating to their selection of their artefacts.
- If acceptable by participants, I will utilise a voice recorder throughout the conducting of the interviews in order to ensure that I refrain from possible researcher biases throughout the decoding process. Moreover, I will record important information throughout the interview in a researcher journal, such that I capture all necessary details relating to answers provided by the teachers.
- The interviews will take place at a time suitable to the participant and a venue that is most convenient for the participant. Furthermore, the interviews will not exceed an hour. The interviews will not be conducted during school time and thus will not disrupt any lessons or extramural responsibilities.

III. PARTICIPATION

- It is crucial that all participants are aware of the fact that participation within this research study is **completely voluntary**. All participants are permitted to withdraw from this study at any point with no consequences.
- All participants should understand that there are **no risks** in engaging in this research study grounded upon the ethical principle of *safety in participation*.
- Additionally, this research study provides participants with a possible platform to engage in critical self-reflection based on their current classroom practice and teacher credibility through creating awareness of their constructions of self-perceived credibility within the classroom context.
- There are **no rewards or monetary value** in participating within this study.

IV. PRIVACY, CONFIDENTIALITY/ANONYMITY

- At all costs, **all personal information and identities will be protected**. Only my supervisor and I will have access to personal information.
- All collected information will be securely locked away in a safe place. After the completion of this research study, the material will be stored on the University of Pretoria property, specifically at the Humanities Education Department. The information collected will only be utilised for research and academic purposes.
- All personal information including names, surnames, ages, school names and so forth will not be used or exposed under any circumstances. I will make use of **pseudonyms** throughout the study. Participant names will be confidential to me and my supervisor.
- The University of Pretoria would also like to request your permission to use your data, confidentially and anonymously, for further research purposes, as the data sets are the intellectual property of the University of Pretoria. Further research may include secondary data analysis and using the data for teaching purposes. The confidentiality and privacy applicable to this study will be binding on future research studies.

V. CONTACT DETAILS

- If you have any further questions or queries, please feel free to contact me via email at TanitaReddy93@gmail.com or on my cell phone on 071 926 1726.
- If further information is required in terms of your rights as a participant within this research study, please feel free to contact my supervisor:

Dr Yolandi Woest
University of Pretoria
Department of Humanities Education (Lecturer)
Faculty of Education
yolandi.woest@up.ac.za
071 203 5381

By signing this consent form, you are providing consent that you are fully aware of what this research study entails and that you are permitting teachers to participate in this research study.

Name of Headmaster: _____

Signature of Headmaster: _____

Date: _____

Consent form

I, _____ (your name), Headmaster of _____ (name of school) agree/do not agree (cross out what is not applicable) to allow Tanita Reddy to conduct research in this school. I understand that the topic of the study is **Intermediate Phase teachers' constructions of their self-perceived credibility**. I am fully aware that Intermediate Phase teachers will be interviewed about the abovementioned topic for approximately one hour at a venue suitable for them outside of school hours. I understand that the interview will be audio taped for accuracy purposes.

I understand that the information gathered from the interview and the reflective notes will be utilised for research and academic purposes. The researcher will remain objective at all times and questions will be asked in a non-intrusive manner.

I understand that the researcher pledges to the following principles:

- Voluntary participation* in the research study, ensuring that participants have the right to withdraw from the research at any given time.
- Informed consent* relating to participants being fully aware and knowledgeable about the research procedure and purposes, thus participants are required to consent to their participation with a signature on the consent form.
- Safety in participation* ensuring that the participants should not be exposed to any form of risk or harm throughout the duration of the research process, e.g., physical, psychological or emotional harm.
- Privacy/Confidentiality and Anonymity* entails pseudonyms being utilised in all publications with the security of personal information being assured e.g., names, surnames, and school names.
- Trust* relating to participants being fully aware of the intentions and purpose of this research study with the absence of deceptions or acts of betrayal throughout the research process or publications stemming from this research study.

Signature: _____

Date: _____



Appendix D: Participant consent form

Participant consent form

Research title: Intermediate Phase teachers' constructions of their self-perceived credibility

I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Dear Participant,

My name is Tanita Reddy and I am currently studying towards my Doctorate degree specialising in Humanities Education at the University of Pretoria. I am engaging in a research study of which I am required to explore Intermediate Phase teachers' constructions of self-perceived credibility. I am welcoming various Intermediate Phase teachers working in and around South Africa, Gauteng. By partaking in this research study, you will be contributing to the findings of this study in terms of how Intermediate Phase teachers construct their self-perceived credibility in their practices.

II. PROCEDURE

- If you consent to partake in this research study, I (as the researcher) will conduct a single question interview with Intermediate Phase teachers based on their perceptions, experiences and observations of themselves as teachers in order to collect information that will support the purpose of this research study.
- Moreover, I will ask the Intermediate Phase teachers to choose any artefact (object) that they think best symbolises them as a teacher. The Intermediate Phase teachers will then be asked a few questions relating to their selection of their artefacts.
- If acceptable by participants, I will utilise a voice recorder throughout the conducting of the interviews in order to ensure that I refrain from possible researcher biases throughout the decoding process. Moreover, I will record important information throughout the interview in a researcher journal, such that I capture all necessary details relating to answers provided by the teachers.
- The interviews will take place at a time suitable to the participant and a venue that is most convenient for the participant. Furthermore, the interviews will not exceed an hour. The interviews will not be conducted during school time and thus will not disrupt any lessons or extramural responsibilities.

III. PARTICIPATION

- It is crucial that all participants are aware of the fact that participation within this research study is **completely voluntary**. All participants are permitted to withdraw from this study at any point with no consequences.
- All participants should understand that there are **no risks** in engaging in this research study grounded upon the ethical principle of *safety in participation*.
- Additionally, this research study provides participants with a possible platform to engage in critical self-reflection based on their current classroom practice and teacher credibility through creating awareness of their constructions of self-perceived credibility within the classroom context.
- There are **no rewards or monetary value** in participating within this study.

IV. PRIVACY, CONFIDENTIALITY/ANONYMITY

- At all costs, **all personal information and identities will be protected**. Only my supervisor and I will have access to your personal information.
- All collected information will be securely locked away in a safe place. After the completion of this research study, the material will be stored on the University of Pretoria property, specifically at the Humanities Education Department. The information collected will only be utilised for research and academic purposes.
- All personal information including names, surnames, ages, school names and so forth will not be used or exposed under any circumstances. I will make use of **pseudonyms** throughout the study. Participant names will be confidential to me and my supervisor.
- The University of Pretoria would also like to request your permission to use your data, confidentially and anonymously, for further research purposes, as the data sets are the intellectual property of the University of Pretoria. Further research may include secondary data analysis and using the data for teaching purposes. The confidentiality and privacy applicable to this study will be binding on future research studies.

V. CONTACT DETAILS

- If you have any further questions or queries, please feel free to contact me via email at TanitaReddy93@gmail.com or on my cell phone on 071 926 1726.
- If further information is required in terms of your rights as a participant within this research study, please feel free to contact my supervisor:

Dr Yolandi Woest
University of Pretoria
Department of Humanities Education (Lecturer)
Faculty of Education
yolandi.woest@up.ac.za
071 203 5381

By signing this consent form, you are providing consent that you are fully aware of what this research study entails and that you are willing to partake within this research study.

Name of participant: _____

Signature of participant: _____

Date: _____

Consent form

I, _____ (your name), teacher at _____ (name of school) agree/do not agree (cross out what is not applicable) to participate in this research study titled: **Intermediate Phase teachers' constructions of their self-perceived credibility**. I am fully aware that I will be interviewed about the abovementioned topic for approximately one hour at a venue suitable for me outside of school hours. I understand that the interview will be audio taped for accuracy purposes.

I understand that the information gathered from the interview and the reflective notes will be utilised for research and academic purposes. The researcher will remain objective at all times and questions will be asked in a non-intrusive manner.

I understand that the researcher pledges to the following principles:

- Voluntary participation* in the research study, ensuring that participants have the right to withdraw from the research at any given time.
- Informed consent*, relating to participants being fully aware and knowledgeable about the research procedure and purposes, thus participants are required to consent to their participation with a signature on the consent form.
- Safety in participation* ensuring that the participants should not be exposed to any form of risk or harm throughout the duration of the research process, e.g., physical, psychological or emotional harm.
- Privacy/Confidentiality and Anonymity* entails pseudonyms being utilised in all publications with the security of personal information being assured e.g., names, surnames, and school names.
- Trust* relating to participants being fully aware of the intentions and purpose of this research study with the absence of deceptions or acts of betrayal throughout the research process or publications stemming from this research study.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix E: Research study schedule

	Participant			Headmaster consent form		Participant consent form and interview		Member checking
	School	Pseudonym	Initial contact	Sent	Received and signed	Signed	Date conducted	Transcripts sent
1	Own school	Caterina	23 April 2020 (Whatsapp)	4 May 2020 (Email) Emailed again on 28 May 2020	Signed <i>per procurationem</i> ⁶ by participant on 28 May 2020.	23 May 2020	28 May 2020 Artefact images received	12 July 2020 (Emailed)
2	Own school	Sharylene	4 May 2020 (Whatsapp)	8 May 2020 (Email)	Signed <i>per procurationem</i> by participant on 2 June 2020	2 June 2020	2 June 2020 Artefact images received	Sent on 12 July 2020 (Emailed) Received 17 July 2020
3	School Alpha	Mbali	11 May 2020 (Whatsapp)	11 May 2020 (Email)	19 June 2020	19 June 2020	3 June 2020 Artefact images received	12 July 2020 (Emailed) Received 4 July 2020
4	School Beta	Alexa	12 March 2020 (Whatsapp)	4 May 2020 (Email) Emailed again on 28 May 2020	4 May 2020	5 June 2020	5 June 2020 Artefact images received	12 July 2020 (Emailed)
5	School Chi	Jayal	4 May 2020 (Whatsapp)	4 May 2020 (Email)	29 June 2020	29 June 2020	8 June 2020 Artefact images received	12 July 2020 (Emailed)

⁶ The Latin phrase *per procurationem* means 'to take care of' in terms of signing on someone else's behalf. Since some participants were not working within a school or under a principal at the time of the interviews, the headmaster consent forms were signed by the participants as their own acting principals.

6	School Delta	Carlene	4 May 2020 (Whatsapp)	4 May 2020 (Email)	9 June 2020	9 June 2020	14 June 2020 Artefact images received	12 July 2020 (Emailed) Received 17 July 2020
7	School Epsilon	Laurel	4 May 2020 (Whatsapp)	28 May 2020 (Email)	9 June 2020	17 June 2020	17 June 2020 Artefact images received	12 July 2020 (Emailed)
8	School Beta	Christina	4 May 2020 (Whatsapp)	4 May 2020 (Email) Emailed again on 28 May 2020	4 May 2020	19 June 2020	19 June 2020 Artefact images received	12 July 2020 (Emailed)
9	School Delta	Katlego	4 May 2020 (Whatsapp)	4 May 2020 (Email)	9 June 2020	Participant agreed via Whatsapp messages on 4 May 2020 (screenshots have been taken as evidence of proof)	20 June 2020 Artefact images received	12 July 2020 (Emailed)

Appendix F: Interview schedule

Date: _____	Time: _____	Interview number: _____
Participant name: _____	Pseudonym: _____	
School: _____	Artefact: _____	
Where are you originally from: _____	Headmaster consent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Number of years teaching: _____	Participant consent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Age: _____	Picture of artefact	<input type="checkbox"/> (front, back, side, top)
Current grade and subject teaching: _____	Recording	<input type="checkbox"/>
Email address (member checking): _____		

Subsession one: Single question

I am interested in learning about how teachers build their credibility through listening to their personal stories and experiences and I would really like to hear yours.

You may jot down notes if needed.

You may begin wherever you like.

Please take all the time that you need to share your story.

I will listen first and I will not interrupt.

I will just take some notes in case I have further questions for after you have finished telling me about it all.

Let's begin,

Please tell me your story of how you became a teacher, what and who influenced your journey to becoming a teacher, your past and current experiences of being a teacher in South Africa, the good, the bad, and the ugly of being a teacher, all of your experiences and events which are important to you personally and professionally. In essence, tell me your story of who you are as a teacher.

Researcher notes and observations:

Presentation of data (Chapter 5)

I will be presenting the data using various modes and I wanted you to choose how you would prefer your story to be presented.

Below is a list of options for you to select your method of presenting your story in this study. Also, based on your story, I would like for you to create a suitable title that best describes you as a teacher.

The title to represent your story:	
<hr/>	
<hr/>	
<hr/>	
<hr/>	
Select your preference of how you would like your story to be presented.	1. A reflective journal (e.g., Dear diary, ...)
	2. A newspaper article/magazine article
	3. A television show/Drama
	4. A novel/book
	5. A Whatsapp conversation/Email
	6. Skype call/House party/Zoom call
	7. News report
	8. Poem
	9. Any other mode
Why?	Please specify: _____
<hr/>	
<hr/>	
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<hr/>	
<hr/>	

Appendix G: Transcriber confidentiality form



Confidentiality agreement

Research title: Intermediate Phase teachers' constructions of their self-perceived credibility by Tanita Reddy (researcher)

I, _____, the transcriptionist, agree to preserve complete confidentiality in regards to all audio recordings and documentation received from the researcher related to her doctoral study titled: **Intermediate Phase teachers' constructions of their self-perceived credibility**. I agree to store all audio recordings and transcriptions, and any copies thereof, in a safe and secure location; to not share any copies made of the audio recordings and transcriptions; to hold in strictest confidence the identity of any of the participants revealed during the transcriptions of audio recordings of the interviews; and to delete all electronic copies containing research documents once the process of transcription is completed.

As the transcriptionist, I am aware that I can be held liable for any breach of this confidentiality agreement, and for any harm caused to the participants if disclosure of identity information is released through the audio recordings and transcriptions to which I will have access.

Transcriber's name (printed): _____

Transcriber's signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix H: Participants' visual maps inspired by the Zucker (2002) model mapping approach

This appendix visually represents the nine participants' stories and the possible connections that I noticed whilst decoding their transcript interviews. By constructing visual maps as suggested by Zucker (2002), I was able to more meaningfully engage and understand the participants' stories. The visual maps showcase the sequencing of events and the links that the participants stressed throughout their telling of their stories. I used arrows to display the influences from different elements mentioned in their stories. The maps guided me in visually constructing frameworks to answering the two research questions, focusing on how and why the participants' constructed their stories in the way they did.

