

INVESTIGATING GRADE R TEACHER  
INSTITUTIONAL IDENTITY PRESENTED IN  
POLICY AND EXPRESSED THROUGH  
NARRATIVE IN A TIME OF TRANSITION

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of  
the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY  
(Education)  
of

RHODES UNIVERSITY

by  
ROXANNE LONG

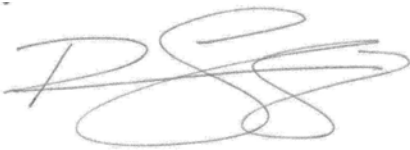
SEPTEMBER 2020

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## DECLARATION

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I, Roxanne Long, confirm that this Research Project represents my original work and ideas. Where ideas from other writers were used, these were acknowledged in full using full references and in accordance with the university's referencing guidelines. It is being submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of Education at Rhodes University, Makhanda. It has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.



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**Signature**

16 September 2020

**Date**

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## ABSTRACT

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This study investigated Grade R (reception year) teacher institutional identity presented in policy and expressed through teacher narratives. The study was conducted in the context of a major national policy transition that involved the physical and contextual shift of Grade R out of the Early Childhood Development sector and into the formal schooling sector. This study highlighted the way in which this shift has resulted in mixed policy messages, which have implications for Grade R teachers' institutional identities and learning trajectories across their landscapes of practice.

The thesis begins by exploring the South African Education context in general as well as the Early Childhood Development context in particular. In order to understand the institutional identities of Grade R teachers as both storied by others (in policy) and by themselves, the study conducted a documentary analysis of policy relating to Grade R teachers and Grade R teacher narrative expressions of their identities. The methodological approach of the study involved a qualitative approach, drawing on grounded theory analytical techniques to closely examine policy documents and teacher generated data gathered through interviews and questionnaires.

The study was guided by a sociocultural perspective and drew on three key sociocultural theorists whose work provided complementary perspectives on teacher identity. Sfard and Prusak's (2005) operationalization of identity as narratives was used to define the unit of analysis for the study (i.e. identities as stories). Gee's (2000) definition and conceptualization of institutional identity was supplemented with Wenger-Trayner, Fenton-O'Creevy, Hutchinson,

Kubiak, and Wenger-Trayner's (2015) notion of identity as journeying across landscapes of practice. This complementary framing allowed for focused and detailed analysis of policy documents and Grade R teacher identity stories. The study addresses the research gap of an under-representation of identity research in early childhood teacher education and particularly in the South African context. This study is significant as it is the first study of its kind to explore the importance of identity formation for Grade R teachers as newcomers to the formal schooling landscape.

Findings from the policy analysis point to mixed messages moving across a spectrum of descriptors from the not yet qualified 'mothers and 'caregivers' to qualified 'specialised' educators. These descriptors have implications for the differentiated roles and responsibilities (institutional identity) of Grade R teachers. The findings from teacher identity narratives highlighted tension in the navigation of the policy promoted institutional identities. Teacher narratives pointed to vastly contrasting experiences of teachers with specialised and qualified institutional teacher identities to those with not yet qualified institutional identities. For the former, there were high levels of confidence in their job security and in terms of recognition received from others. For the latter, however, there was vulnerability in terms of the stability of their jobs and remuneration as well as low levels of recognition from others.

The study draws on the findings from the analysis to suggest recommendations for Grade R policy, Grade R teacher education (both in-service and pre-service); as well as Grade R professional development initiatives.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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My research journey has been impacted by many people from different communities along the way. I specifically acknowledge the following people and their individual contributions:

- The empirical field of this study involved a large group of Grade R teachers, and without this vibrant and collaborative community, this study would not have been possible. I thank all of the teachers involved, but in particular want to share my gratitude to the four teachers featured here: Funeka, Thandi, Maria and Anita, who so willingly shared their personal and professional experiences with me. Working closely with these diverse teachers contributed both to this study and to my own personal growth as a researcher.
- I am forever indebted to my supervisor Professor Mellony Graven. Mel encouraged me to take those first tentative steps on my journey to becoming a researcher, and has provided encouragement and support every step of the way. Her researcher lens is well developed, and she provided insights and invited discussions that were, and continue to be, invaluable. She has also introduced me to various communities across the research and development landscape throughout the duration of the study.
- This research project formed a part of the research and development aims of the South African Numeracy Chair, of which I was fortunate to be a member. This Chair was an initiative of the National Research Foundation, and I wish to acknowledge their continued financial support.

- To my colleagues at the Education Department at Rhodes, and in the SANCP, thank you for supporting me throughout the years – with words of encouragement or messages of commiseration, and for always welcoming me into your academic space.
- Critical friends throughout this journey have been Dr. Pamela Vale and Dr. Vanessa Malila. Thank you both for broadening my thinking, challenging my work, putting in many hours of editing, and most importantly, showing me the exciting potential of life post-PhD.
- I also recognize my fellow PhD students, Samu Chikiwa and Wellington Hokonya, who throughout our shared journeys have been consistent in their support and encouragement.

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## DEDICATION

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**“I can't go back to yesterday - because I was a different person then”**

– Lewis Carroll, *Alice in Wonderland*

This thesis I dedicate, as with everything I will ever do, to the four most amazing people in the world. To Fred, I loved you from the minute I saw you. And I love you every day, foreverlong. To Jude, Dylan and Eli, thank you for inspiring me every day to be better – I will never accomplish anything that brings me as much pride as the three of you do. You are, every one of you, remarkable.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

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ACE	Advanced Certificate of Education
ANAs	Annual National Assessments
BEd	Bachelor of Education
C2005	Curriculum 2005
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements
CAPS FP Gr1-3:M	CAPS Foundation Phase Grades 1 -3: Mathematics
CAPS FP GrR:M	CAPS Foundation Phase Grade R: Mathematics
CDE	Centre for Development and Enterprise
CoP	Community of Practice
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DoE	Department of Education
DSD	Department of Social Development
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECDoE	Eastern Cape Department of Education
EDO	Education Development Officer
ENF	Early Number Fun
eNICLE	Early Numeracy Inquiry Community of Leader Educators
FET	Further Education and Training
FP	Foundation Phase
GHS	General Household Survey
HoD	Head of Department
I-id	Institutional Identity
Int.	Interview
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
JP	Junior Primary
L	Line number
N&S	Norms and Standards for Educators
NAPTOSA	National Professional Teachers Association of South Africa
NCS	National Curriculum Statements
NEEDU	National Education Evaluation and Development Unit
NELDS	National Early Learning Development Standards
NEPA	National Education Policy Act
NICLE	Numeracy Inquiry Community of Leader Educators
NPDE	National Professional Diploma in Education
NPO	Non-Profit Organisation

NQF	National Qualifications Framework
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PD	Professional Development
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
PLCs	Professional Learning Communities
RNCS	Revised National Curriculum Statements
SA-SAMS	South African School Administration and Management System
SACE	South African Council of Educators
SACMEQ	Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality
SADTU	South African Democratic Teachers Union
SANCP	South African Numeracy Chair Project
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SGB	School Governing Body
StatsSA	Statistics South Africa
TIMSS	Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study
TQ	Teacher Questionnaire
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
USD	United States Dollar
Vid-stim rec	Video Stimulated Recall Questionnaire

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## CHAPTER 1: Introduction

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**“Who in the world am I? Ah, that's the great puzzle.”**

— Lewis Carroll, *Alice in Wonderland*

### 1.1. INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

This study investigates Grade R (the year before formal schooling, often referred to as Reception) teachers' institutional identity (Gee, 2000) through a documentary analysis of selected South African education policy and an analysis of teachers telling of their identity stories (Sfard & Prusak, 2005). The teachers' stories utilised for the analysis emerged during participation in a numeracy-focused community of practice (CoP), discussed in detail later. A community of practice is defined in this study as “a group of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do, and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly” (Wenger-Trayner, 2011, p. 1). This numeracy-focused CoP exists within a broader landscape of practice (Wenger-Trayner, 2011) which these teachers navigate professionally. This navigation meanders through the teachers' experiences of the numeracy CoP, their school sites and the education policy landscape guiding their professional practices.

A broad and in-depth literature review indicates that teachers' professional learning and identities, and subsequent teaching practices, benefit significantly from the collegial exchange of ideas and resources through a community of practice. Although this study does not focus theoretically on professional learning communities (PLCs) specifically, they are in many respects synonymous with CoPs: “Although conceptually distinctive, the underpinning values of the approaches to organizing teacher professional

communities are complementary” (Lee & Shaari, 2012, p. 457). It must be noted that the South African Department of Education rhetoric promotes the establishment of PLCs as a key part of the national teacher development strategy (Department of Higher Education and Training [DHET] & Department of Basic Education [DBE], 2011). While there is local research on the value of teacher communities for supporting teacher development (DHET, 2011; Bertram, 2011; Graven, 2004; Graven, 2019; Pausigere & Graven, 2014), I have found little research on pre-school (Grade R) teacher communities. This is despite the fact that “the professionalisation of pre-school teachers needs to continue” (Department of Basic Education [DBE], 2011c, p. 29). Thus, a gap exists regarding insights into the nature of teacher identity for Grade R teachers participating in in-service learning communities, as part of the broader education landscape, and in understanding of Grade R teachers’ positionality within this landscape.

Amidst the South African education ‘crisis’ (Fleisch, 2008), there have been, both locally and internationally, shifts towards acknowledging and recognising Grade R teachers and their role in the improvement of teaching and learning in the early years of schooling and beyond. It is important that research addresses those involved in the very beginning of our schooling learning and teaching journey, that is Grade R teachers. Both local and international research has seen a surge of advocacy for the provision of quality learning opportunities for the youngest members of the schooling system, and this rhetoric is now filtering into national media (e.g. Nt'sekhe, 2018; Mahlokwana, 2018; Mere, 2017). This surge has been spurred on by the acknowledgement and understanding that a solid foundation of learning is a strong predictor of future success throughout schooling (Duncan et al., 2007;

Bakken, Brown, & Downing, 2017). This has also been acknowledged in education policy in South Africa, which notes “for continued improvements, it will be necessary to reap the benefits of better schooling in the lower grades. There is a limit to what can be fixed in the final two or three grades of the system” (DBE, 2015, p. 12).

As a result of this acknowledgement, much progress has been made locally in the policy provision of Grade R schooling for all. This began in 2001 with the release of Education White Paper 5 on Early Childhood Education, which has been “the primary guide to implementation of universal access to Grade R by 2010”<sup>1</sup> (DBE, 2011c, p. 4). While there have been significant increases in access to Grade R (Kotze, 2015), it is not yet being offered in all schools across the country. This could be as a result of the policy which “targets to provide UNIVERSAL ACCESS by 2014” (emphasis in original) (DBE, 2011c, p. 3). Enrolments in Grade R between 2000-2013 grew by 244% (van der Berg, Spaull, Wills, Gustafsson, & Kotze, 2016), with “81% of 5 year olds attending educational institutions in 2013” (Spaull, van der Berg, Wills, Gustafsson, & Kotze, 2016, p. 27). The General Household Survey (GHS) “points to 96% of all first-time Grade 1 learners in 2014 having received schooling in the previous year” (DBE, 2015, p. 28). However, for this increase in access to yield a positive and sustainable impact, Grade R needs to provide quality learning opportunities (Excell & Linington, 2011).

In a country where 63% of children live in poverty (Fleisch, 2008), there are many challenges to the provision of ‘quality’ Grade R education. There are

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<sup>1</sup> In 2009, the Presidency shifted the Universal Access deadline from 2010 to 2014 with the release of the Action Plan to 2014: Towards the Realisation of Schooling 2025. This policy document was replaced in 2015 with the Action Plan to 2019: Towards the Realisation of Schooling 2030.

currently numerous conversations happening in research and in the media relating to resources, infrastructure, accountability and other socio-economic debates on education in South Africa (e.g. Gibberd, 2007; South African Human Rights Commission, 2014; Spaul, 2013a). This study focuses on contributing to research discussions regarding the institutional identities of Grade R teachers, who in South Africa are currently experiencing a professional transition within this complex, changing terrain of producing quality Grade R for universal access. Part of the recent changes have seen a reception year (Grade R) being added to the formal schooling of South African learners. This has shifted those working with 6 year olds from the previous Early Childhood Development [ECD] policy context (applicable to 0-9 year olds) under the governance of the Department of Social Development to the formal schooling education context. This shift comes with major shifts, including the way those who work with 6 year olds are labelled – so within the ECD context terms like child minders, practitioners and mothers abound, while in the schooling context the terms educators and teachers are foregrounded.

In this respect, I am interested in the teacher who is currently journeying through this Grade R landscape, both as she traverses the ECD/formal schooling context, and as she tells the story of her professional and institutional journey through time. Drawing on the opening quote, I ask: who are these teachers in this rapidly changing world of early years' education? And, how is their great puzzle changing and how are they grappling with the changing pieces of the great puzzle? In the 'telling' (after Sfard & Prusak, 2005) of these teachers' stories, the complex and nuanced nature of their institutional identities and their positionality is brought to the fore. This is done with the aim of contributing to the understanding of the identity stories

of these teachers during this stage of policy transition, which has been accompanied by a physical transition from ECD sites to schools.

Although my professional interest is more broadly in Early Childhood Development (ages 0-9), in this study I have chosen to specifically focus on Grade R teacher learning. This decision was influenced by two factors: first, the numeracy-focused community of practice mentioned earlier. This CoP was formed with Grade R teachers at my institution as I was beginning my doctoral study. This provided an opportunistic empirical field for me to study the nature of early childhood/Grade R teacher self-expressions of identity. The project is one of several community in-service professional development projects run by the South African Numeracy Chair Project (SANCP) at Rhodes University. I am a research student in this broader research and development project, which has a position of “advocacy for the emergent linked research and development model as ethical imperative and for quality research” (Graven & Venkat, 2017, p. 12).

Secondly, I have chosen to focus specifically on Grade R teacher self-expression of policy-promoted institutional identity because in recent years, these teachers have been moved out of the pre-school setting and merged into the Foundation Phase (FP) landscape of schools. In South Africa, the FP now includes Grades R, 1, 2 and 3, whereas prior to this universal access policy development it only included Grades 1-3. This is due to the recent rollout of Grade R policy by the Department of Basic Education in South Africa (DBE, 2011c, p. 3), which lists as one of its goals to “improve the access of children to quality Early Childhood Development (ECD) below Grade 1”.

As a result, these Grade R teachers could be said to be grappling with multiple 'regimes of competence': "the community's social negotiation of what constitutes competence" (Wenger-Trayner et al., 2015, p. 14). These 'regimes' stem from policy, society, fellow professionals and their own historical narratives – and as a cohort are not yet recognised as professionals in their field (Petersen & Gravett, 2014). There is potential within this transition into this new space to understand the professional identity of these teachers; and the transition provides a potentially data rich space within which to conduct research around the nature of burgeoning institutional identity in a time of transition.

To better understand these teachers' journeys of being and becoming recognised and respected as professionals in their field, this study supports the much-needed move from a 'discourse of deficit' and towards a 'discourse of possibilities' (Graven, 2014, p. 1039). In so doing, a key objective of the study is to explore the potential within this Grade R cohort of teachers for being and becoming contributors towards striving for the improved quality of the teaching and learning in the first year of schooling in South Africa. This study draws on qualitative, interpretative, narrative and reflexive methodologies, to present the voice of the teachers themselves as a "texture of our everyday experience" (Wenger-Trayner et al., 2015, p. 3), as designated identities are "a pivot between the social and the individual" (Wenger, 1998, p. 145) and a product of "collective storytelling" (Sfard & Prusak, 2005, p. 21).

This study focuses specifically on 'institutional identity' after Gee's (2000) approach towards viewing identity as an analytical tool. In particular, he outlines four faces of identity, namely Nature Identity; Institutional Identity;

Affinity Identity; and Discourse Identity (Gee, 2000). He claims that “all people have multiple identities connected not to their ‘internal states’ but to their performances in society” (Gee, 2000, p. 99). Focusing in this study on one aspect of identity, the institutional identity of Grade R teachers, is not to deny the significance of the ‘multiple faces of identities’, but rather narrows the lens (Lerman, 2000) in order to provide a fuller and richer picture of one aspect of identity. An in-depth picture is important because identities can “change from moment to moment in the interaction, can change from context to context, and, of course, can be ambiguous or unstable” (Gee, 2000, p. 99).

Institutional identity derives its ‘power’ from, or is authorised by, the “authorities within institutions” (Gee, 2000, p. 100). For Grade R teachers, the participants and focus of this study, the authorisation of their institutional identity is conducted by the South African Department of Basic Education, and is communicated to these teachers through policy documents. Institutional identity is not something a person can be ‘born with’ nor is it something which can be designed by the individual herself. Its power relies solely on the authentication and authorisation awarded by her position within an institution. Although no one entity can design an identity, as it is too complex and unstable for simplistic standardised design, we can design the roles and responsibilities which contribute to the forming of an identity (Wenger, 1998).

In order to understand the institutional identity of Grade R teachers, I acknowledge the social, professional and context dependent nature of identity. For my study, I incorporate the work of Wenger-Trayner and

colleagues (Wenger-Trayner et al., 2015) on landscapes of practices. Their work offers the view that the 'dynamic construction of identity':

reflects our trajectory through that landscape. This journey within and across practices shapes who we are. Over time it accumulates memories, competencies, key formative events, stories, and relationships to people and places. It also provides material for directions, aspirations, and projected images of ourselves that guide the shaping of our trajectory going forward. In other words, the journey incorporates the past and the future into our experience of identity in the present. Participation in a landscape provides the constitutive texture of an experience of identity.

(Wenger-Trayner et al., 2015, p. 6)

Therefore, understanding Grade R teacher expressions of identity requires examination of the teachers' historical journey (what brought them to inhabit their current landscape of practice?), as well as an interpretative analysis of the teachers' current journey (how are they travelling across and through the landscape now?). We need to know where they have come from and where they are at in this moment in order to view their journey ahead with greater understanding. To do this, this study looks at the Grade R teachers' history in terms of how, for the teachers in this study, growing up in apartheid South Africa influenced their own schooling; and how they found the path towards teaching and, in particular, Grade R teaching. This study also looks at the teachers' current positioning through analysis of policy-promoted institutional identity (Gee, 2000) as presented in broader ECD policy, as well as Grade R specific curriculum documents. It is also envisioned that this study will contribute to research to professionalise and standardise ECD (Grade R) teaching and learning, through recommendations for professional development opportunities for these teachers.

In order to increase understanding of Grade R teacher expressions of policy-promoted institutional identity, this study investigates this phenomenon of Grade R teacher identity, in a time of transition by addressing and answering the following research questions (discussed further later in this chapter):

- How are Grade R teachers represented in policy documents in terms of the identifying descriptors used across both ECD and Grade R focused policy?
- How do Grade R teachers express their institutional identities through the telling of their stories across time and through different landscapes of practice?
- How do Grade R teachers' experiences of policy and practice come together to illuminate a picture of institutional identity in a time of transition?

Analysis is conducted in relation to the above questions as outlined in the following table:

**Table 1.1: Analysis Framework for Research Questions**

Research Sub-Question	Data	Method of analysis	Guiding frame concept
1. How are Grade R teachers represented in policy documents in terms of the identifying descriptors used across both ECD and Grade R focused policy?	Policy documents and supporting documents in the official landscape	Thematic documentary analysis	Gee's (2000) institutional identity
2. How do Grade R teachers express their institutional identities through the telling of their stories across time and through landscapes of practice?	Teacher interview utterances	Thematic analysis	Gee's (2000) institutional identity; Wenger-Trayner et al.'s (2015) landscapes of practice
3. How do Grade R teachers' experiences of policy and practice come together to illuminate a picture of institutional identity in a time of transition?	Analysis chapters 4 and 5	Merging insights from policy and teacher narrative analysis chapters.	Gee's (2000) institutional identity; Wenger-Trayner et al.'s (2015) landscapes of practice

The study draws on official policy and policy-related documents for the first phase of the study, and through documentary analysis addresses and responds to the first research question. The study draws on teacher questionnaires, interviews and researcher journal notes for the second phase of the study, in which I respond to the second and third research questions. The combination of documentary analysis and interpretive analysis of qualitative teacher data provides insights into Grade R teachers' institutional identities as promoted in official documentation and as expressed through the teachers' identity story-telling, as they navigate their landscape of practice in the context of policy transition.

Four Grade R teachers were purposively selected from the SANCP Early Number Fun (ENF) empirical field<sup>2</sup> to address the latter two research questions

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<sup>2</sup> The empirical field of this study is a group of 31 Grade R teachers, teaching assistants and district officials from Makhanda (previously Grahamstown) and surrounds (in the Eastern Cape), participating in a professional development (PD) Community of Practice (ENF, described earlier as part of SANCP). Most teachers are from schools who participated in the SANCP phase 1 (2011-2015) project and who elected to participate in the SANCP phase 2 Grade R Early Number Fun (ENF) programme (2016-2017). See Graven (2017) and Graven (2019) for broader elaboration on these PD communities of practice.

which provide the opportunity for in-depth case study interpretive analysis. The ENF programme was explicitly designed as a community of practice (Graven & Coles, 2017), as it meets the requirements of:

- sustaining mutual engagement (harmonious or conflictual) through regular meetings and discussions with members;
- shared ways of engaging in doing things together;
- substantial overlap in participants' descriptions of who belongs;
- specific tools, representations and other artefacts;
- a shared discourse reflecting a certain perspective on the world.

(Wenger, 1998, pp. 125-126)

These aspects are emphasised in the introduction to the SANCP ENF discussion document<sup>3</sup> (see Appendix 1). The SANCP ENF programme also reflects the following definition of a community of practice as both:

a living context that can give newcomers access to competence and also invite a personal experience of engagement by which to incorporate that competence into an identity of participation...are a privileged locus for the *acquisition* of knowledge.

and

a good context to explore radically new insights without becoming fools or stuck in some dead end. A history of mutual engagement around a joint enterprise is an ideal context for this kind of leading-edge learning.... a privileged locus for the *creation* of knowledge.

(Wenger, 1998, p. 214, cited in Graven, 2015)

The focal research on teacher identity feeds into the aims of the SANCP of searching for sustainable ways forward to the challenges of numeracy education. This is evident as the findings simultaneously speak to the potential

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<sup>3</sup> To view the complete SANP ENF PD discussion document, please refer to [www.ru.ac.za/sanc](http://www.ru.ac.za/sanc)

for strengthened Grade R teacher support in the context of policy transition, and to understanding current efforts directed at the professionalisation of Grade R teachers, conceptualized here in terms of policy-promoted 'institutional identity'. It is also the aim of this study to contribute to finding ways to enable transformative and sustainable professional learning opportunities that support the teaching and learning of Grade R learners, in South Africa and beyond.

The four teachers purposively selected from the larger pool of 31 participants (see selection process discussed in Chapter 3) range in their years of teaching experience, levels of qualification, and official positions and roles in and out of schools. They also differ based on the schools they come from, which vary in terms of socio-economic status and the language of learning and teaching at the schools. In addition, the schools differ in terms of their historical racial background under apartheid.

Wenger-Trayner and colleagues' (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998; Wenger-Trayner et al., 2015) socio-cultural work on identity and landscapes of practice provide broader theoretical framing for investigating Grade R teachers' policy positioning and self-expressions of institutional identity. This frame coheres with the work on institutional identity by Gee (2000), which provides a useful analytical frame for my study.

In the next sections I briefly capture the South African Education context, followed by an outline of the Early Childhood Development and Grade R contexts, in which I also explore the role of the early years in education and the research possibilities in this context.

## 1.2. SOUTH AFRICAN EDUCATION CONTEXT

Currently, and for some time now, South Africa is facing what many have termed a continuing 'educational crisis' (Bloch, 2009; Fleisch, 2008; Spaul, 2013a). This 'crisis' has ramifications which spread far and wide – more so for those most vulnerable in our society: young children from low socio-economic backgrounds, as “disadvantaged schoolchildren are typically exposed to inappropriate teaching” (Fleisch, 2008, p. 138). This is important to acknowledge as “poor school performance in South Africa reinforces social inequality” (Spaul, 2013a, p. 8).

South Africa has seen many attempts to transform and improve both access to and the quality of education. Access has been significantly improved (Spaul, 2013b), and policy changes have included three new curriculum designs from 1994 to 2011. These include the Curriculum 2005 (C2005), introduced in 1998, the Revised National Curriculum Statements (RNCS) in 2002, and, finally, the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) introduced in 2011 and still in use today. Despite much effort and important increases in access to education for all, the South African education system is still considered to be in 'crisis' and numerous reports continue to highlight the underperformance of the majority of our learners [see, for example, the TIMSS studies, reports by the Department of Basic Education (ANAs; National Senior Certificate), SACMEQ, NEEDU, etc.]. Simply put, South Africa is progressing steadily towards achieving 'equal treatment' for all but less so in achieving 'equal educational opportunities' for all (Fiske & Ladd, 2004).

This cycle of inequality can and should be broken by access to quality education for all. The post-apartheid government has acknowledged this, and since 1994, education in South Africa has become “the vehicle for transforming society” (Graven, 2014, p. 1039). This is re-iterated by Harley, Barasa, Bertram, Mattson, and Pillay (2000, p. 287), who speak of a nation’s hopes placed at the door of education “as means of transforming and developing South African society”. Fiske and Ladd (2004) emphasise the role the education system played in the transition out of apartheid:

Just as a racially delineated education system had been central to the maintenance of apartheid, a completely new education system that eliminated all vestiges of racial inequity would be essential for the creation and functioning of a democratic South Africa.

(Fiske & Ladd, 2004, p. 3)

Unfortunately, although great improvements have been made in terms of providing universal access to education, the current system is not ensuring quality of education for all. The poorest schools continue to underperform in the crucial FP (Grades R-3) (Spaull et al., 2016). Although it is necessary to acknowledge that this system was broken when it was inherited from the apartheid state, it is alarming that “after 19 years of democratic rule most black children continue to receive an education which condemns them to the underclass of South African society” (Spaull, 2013b, p. 8). Graven (2014), in referring to the Reddy (2006) report on the Trends in Mathematics and Science Study [TIMSS], highlights the gap in education achievement across racial divides: “Average scores of SA learners in African schools were almost half of that of historically White schools (whose average was close to the international average) and mathematics scores for African schools decreased significantly from TIMSS 1999 to TIMSS 2003” (Graven, 2014, p. 1043).

This slow progress in post-apartheid South Africa is evident in international studies of student performance, such as the TIMSS and the Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ). Between the 1995 and 2003 TIMSS results, there was no improvement amongst South African learners and this is mirrored by the 2000 and 2007 SACMEQ results which also showed no improvement for Grade 6 South African learners (Spaull, 2013b). This is especially concerning, considering South Africa is consistently ranked as one of the lowest performing countries of those which participate in these assessments and other cross-national assessment benchmark tests (e.g. the Progress in International Reading and Literacy Studies [PIRLS]) (Reddy, 2006; Spaull, 2013b). Overall, findings point to a lack of foundational knowledge. South Africa's own national assessment benchmark tests of 2011 (the Annual National Assessments [ANAs]) also showed that the majority of our learners are "seriously underperforming" (Spaull, 2013b, p. 3). This underperformance manifests across grades and regardless of subject; and, unfortunately, as the National Education Evaluation and Development Unit (NEEDU) report of 2012 states: "It is widely known that South African schools perform below expectations. But much less is known about why it should be so" (NEEDU, 2012, p. 6).

The challenges relating to poverty, which are shown to impact on school readiness, are exacerbated in the Eastern Cape context (where this study is situated). A recent education report focusing on the Eastern Cape released by Statistics South Africa [StatsSA] revealed that of the "approximately 601 000 learners in the Foundation Phase (in the Eastern Cape), about two in ten learners were considered deprived, with an overall deprivation intensity of

39.1%” (StatsSA, 2016). The deprivation index used to classify these children was developed by considering variables such as “access to facilities and services critical for effective teaching and learning, learner-classroom ratios as a measure of overcrowding and learner-teacher ratio” (StatsSA, 2016). This, coupled with the revelation that the number of children who received social grants has increased from about 3% to about 60% in just 10 years, means that the Eastern Cape has the highest percentage of people receiving social grants, as well as accommodating the second largest group of children who do not pay school fees (StatsSA, 2016). The Eastern Cape has also consistently performed poorly (either ranking as the worst or second-worst province) in regard to learner-teacher ratios, lack of resources, assessment underperformance, lack of district support and unqualified teachers (van der Berg et al., 2016).

In one of the poorest provinces, the cycle of inequality appears to be deep-rooted and long-lasting. The average Grade 9 pupil in the Eastern Cape is “1.8 years’ worth of learning behind the average pupil in Gauteng” (Spaull, 2013b, p.6), and the province’s dire conversion rate (the number of pupils who begin school in Grade 1 versus the number of pupils who pass the National Senior Certificate 12 years later) provides “a good indication of the quality of education offered” (Spaull, 2013b, p. 5).

Since the empirical field of this study is a Numeracy-focused professional development (PD) opportunity, and numeracy is an integral part of Grade R teaching, I briefly discuss mathematics education in the broader South African context. However, Grade R teachers are considered ‘generalists’, as they teach a range of subjects and topics. The relationship between this study, mathematics education and teacher institutional identity is discussed further

in Chapter 2. Although not the focus of the study, understanding the mathematics teaching and learning context of South Africa remains integral to understanding Grade R teacher policy positioning and self-expressions of identity.

In terms of understanding the mathematics education context in particular, South African mathematics education is experiencing dire levels of underperformance, with “many performance-related challenges” (Tlou & Feza, 2017, p. 1).

Since South Africa’s first democratic elections in 1994, many studies have been conducted in South Africa in relation to mathematics-specific challenges across contexts, provinces and grades, and these studies have focused on both the teaching and the learning within classrooms (e.g. Carnoy & Arends, 2012; Howie & Hughes, 1998; Reddy, 2006; Fleisch, 2008; Schollar, 2008; Taylor, Muller, & Vinjevold, 2003; Venkat & Naidoo, 2012). In response to the acknowledgement both locally and internationally that interventions in the earlier grades of schooling have the greater long term educational gains and improvements (Atweh, Bose, Graven, Subramanian, & Venkat, 2014), and that there is “worldwide consensus that the quality of education should already be addressed in the Foundation Phase (Grades R-3)” (Hartell & Steyn, 2019, p. 175), ECD and Grade R in South Africa are receiving increasing attention. The most significant response to the acknowledgement of the importance of early interventions was the national decision to introduce universal access to Grade R across South Africa. This forms part of the Department of Basic Education report *Action Plan to 2r014: Towards the realisation of schooling 2025* released in 2011. It has also been highlighted that

for access to ECD to be effective, “the pivotal factor is quality...quality ECD has the potential to drive redress and realise the promise inherent in the South African Constitution” (Excell, 2016, p. 1).

However, issues of quality still abound. Because of the wide variety of ECD and Grade R programmes available across the country, which range from day-care type centres to rigorous educational programmes (Excell, 2016), it is difficult to hold each unique setting to the same standard of quality. This has resulted in discouraging findings:

Two recent government-commissioned studies raise concerns regarding the quality of Grade R (Reception) in South Africa. The ‘Baseline Study Report’ findings on Early Childhood Development [ECD] stressed that “the quality of learning and teaching in 250 reception year classrooms ...is exceptionally low.”

(Eastern Cape Department of Education [ECDoE] 2008, p. 89-96, cited in Barnard and Braund, 2016, p. 1)

It is in this context of education ‘crisis’, while acknowledging the importance of quality Grade R/ECD teaching and learning in contributing to social redress and educational gains that policy transitions in South Africa have taken place. The Grade R/ECD and FP policy context are further discussed in Chapter 2, which notes and positions the important ECD and Grade R policy transitions within the broader South African education transformation context (post-Apartheid), and the continuous efforts to move towards improving the quality of teaching and learning. It is noted here, and discussed in further detail in Chapter 2, that South Africa has one of the widest gaps in performance between the private and public sectors (Reddy, 2006) and investing in ECD and Grade R is noted as a key factor for intervening in learning (Atweh et al., 2014).

### 1.3. MY RATIONALE: RESEARCHING OPPORTUNITY WITHIN THE ABOVE CHALLENGES FOR GRADE R TEACHER EDUCATION

My study emerges from the context described above. Both my personal experience of working in the ECD sector and, more recently, in teacher education of primary school teachers have developed my awareness of the importance of understanding the positioning of Grade R teachers within the evolving policy context. My sense (and my literature review concurs) is that Grade R teacher voices have tended not to be heard or reported on throughout this transition. This, coupled with my assumption that learning and identity are inextricably linked, led to my research focus on Grade R teacher expressions of identity.

In response to the educational crisis in South Africa, a number of initiatives have been established contributing to understanding teacher professional development. One such initiative is the South African Numeracy Chair Project Early Number Fun programme. My involvement in the South African Numeracy Chair as a full time doctoral student provided me the opportunity to become involved as a participant and an administrative assistant in the Early Number Fun programme. This provided the opportunity for ENF to serve as the empirical field from which my research participants were selected.

Situated in the South African context, and concerned with the nature of teaching and learning in Grade R classrooms, this study specifically situates itself within the realm of understanding teacher identity of localised in-service

communities - a key part of the national teacher development strategy - as well as across and through the broader educational landscape of practice. Much international and local research has been done on mathematics teacher learning in teacher in-service communities (e.g. Graven, 2004; Graven, 2012; Brodie, 2011; Pausigere, 2014; Adler & Pillay, 2017, Ndlovu, 2018). However, there exists a gap in insights into the implications for pre-school (Grade R) teacher identity in such communities. This could be because of the ongoing work being done to fully integrate Grade R into the formal schooling landscape. The DBE's 2011 report *Universal Access to Grade R – Policy Framework*, acknowledges the “lack of clear legislation” (p. 3) related to Grade R, and outlines as a priority long term goal the “consolidation of Grade R as part of the Foundation Phase as it relates to the regulatory framework, curriculum implementation, resourcing, employment of teachers and monitoring of the impact and implementation of Grade R” (p. 10).

Some researchers, such as Brodie (2011), have focused on professional learning communities (PLC's) and some, such as Pausigere and Graven (2014), have chosen to focus on CoPs. I have chosen to draw on Wenger's (1998) conceptualisation of a CoP and Wenger-Trayner et al.'s (2015) notion of a 'landscape' for the following reasons:

- The SANCP ENF programme (the empirical field) is explicitly designed as a CoP (Graven, 2013);
- Wenger's (1998) theory of learning as participation in communities of practice is a well-established and respected theory which has shed interesting insights into South African teacher learning within such communities (Graven, 2004; Pausigere, 2014);

- The conceptualisation of a 'landscape of practice' provides a useful perspective on learning trajectories through broader landscapes, as it is "a broad social perspective on professional learning, and learning more generally" (Wenger-Trayner et al., 2015, p. 13). In this respect this provides me with a broader theoretical perspective on teacher identity as they navigate their journeys through the complex landscape of Grade R policy and practice – which involves participation in multiple communities.

While I had initially thought of using Wenger's (1998) theory of learning in communities of practice as my analytic frame for analysing the teacher stories, it soon became apparent that the teacher stories shared with me did not focus on their learning, but foregrounded grappling with their professional identity, their positioning in schools and society as Grade R teachers, and their experience of the major policy transition. In this respect, Wenger's (1998) theory of 'learning' and 'learning as identity', while broadly relevant to my research assumptions about the nature of learning and identity, did not provide me with an analytic frame for analysing the nature of teacher identities in relation to their stories which was my main source of data. Similarly, the work of Wenger-Trayner and colleagues (Wenger-Trayner, Fenton-O'Creevy, Hutchinson, Kubiak, & Wenger-Trayner, 2015) on landscapes of practice broadly informed the study but did not provide the analytic frame for analysing teacher stories.

Through reading various sources, and after multiple reads of my initial data, I found that Gee's (2000) four views of identity and, in particular, his notion of institutional identity (I-id), resonated strongly with the data from the teachers, as well as the policy documents selected for analysis. Gee's notion of

institutional identity became the focal identity lens in my study because it was the face of identity that dominated my data set and his unpacking of this served as the analytic frame for analysing my data.

This study, therefore, draws on both the broad theoretical assumptions of Wenger and colleagues (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998; Wenger-Trayner, 2011; Wenger-Trayner et al., 2015) and Gee's (2000) work on the four faces of identity. These works cohere well, as they share the same broad socio-cultural assumptions of learning and identity. More on the literature and theoretical frames can be found in Chapter 2.

My own experiences as a teacher indicated the need, as well as the desire, to develop a connection and collegiality amongst Grade R teachers and other teachers in the FP, as it is often the case that Grade R teachers and children are 'left-off' the educational discourse. In my personal experience as a pre-primary teacher, I noted that sometimes the prevailing view that Grade R is pre-school and not 'real' school is often alienating to those working within this realm. Furthermore, although I have experienced some previous attempts to establish communities which bring these teachers together, these have mostly been un-sustained. It, therefore, became important for me to understand what influences teachers in this sector to become and remain Grade R teachers in order to contribute significantly to current efforts to establish successful and sustainable learning communities. It has also been very important to understand the professional identity of pre-school teachers, as they essentially straddle the before-school/formal schooling divide, and are responsible for the transition of children from one to the other.

The professional status of Grade R teachers is not just a local challenge, as defining professional standards for early childhood educators (Grade R included) is also a global challenge. It was in these terms that Gee's institutional identity became especially relevant and allowed for the framing of the policy analysis in Chapter 4. Given the socio-cultural nature of this study, and my own experiences of learning, it is important to recognise teacher learning and identity as a social process (Wenger, 1998; Lerman, 2000). Where teacher learning includes the process of implementing what they are learning and reconciling 'who' they are becoming with their school and official communities, as well as identifying their history and future learning trajectories.

I experienced the challenge of defining the professional identity, and status, of a Grade R teacher during my own teaching career. I spent just over nine years teaching both Grade R and pre-Grade R in a school where the pre-primary was on the same property but in a separate area to the rest of the FP (Grades 1-3). The pre-primary teachers seemed to 'speak past' the Grades 1-3 teachers in terms of what we valued educationally and how we believed children learn best. In an attempt to bridge both the physical and the philosophical divide between the two 'phases', the management of the school made the decision to move the Grade R group of learners and teacher out of pre-primary and into the FP. This included a physical move of the Grade R classroom from the pre-school grounds to the FP building and a shift in who the teacher reported to. Many challenges were faced by myself and my colleagues during this transition phase and I experienced first-hand some of the difficulties experienced by Grade R teachers as they navigate their new FP teaching landscapes and professional identities.

In the following section, I provide a rationale for the research questions that guide this study.

#### 1.4. THE RATIONALE FOR MY RESEARCH QUESTION

As noted above, because Grade R has only recently been officially added to the FP in most schools in South Africa, the teachers involved in this process are relatively new to primary schools. Many schools have already established close-knit communities of Grade 1 to 3 teachers, thus the Grade R teachers are largely ‘newcomers’ and their practice of Grade R teaching is simultaneously a ‘newcomer practice’ in schools. There is currently also little cohesion available in South Africa as to what constitutes ‘quality’ ECD: although prioritised in documents such as the *Early Childhood Development Policy Document* (Department of Social Development [DSD] & UNICEF, 2015), there is little attempt to define exactly what is meant by ‘quality’ or how it can be measured (Excell, 2016).

In South Africa, there has been increased focus placed on teacher learning and development, and policy documents now “specify occupational, professional and academic roles and competences for teachers” (Harley et al., 2000, p. 287). However, there is little local or international research aimed specifically at Grade R teacher learning and identity. This could be as a result of the relatively recent national implementation of Grade R in government policies and the subsequent rollout project in South Africa (DBE, 2011), but globally education research on early years and ECD teacher learning is also relatively recent.

### **1.4.1. The Research Questions**

This study seeks to investigate Grade R teacher institutional identity in policy and through narrative. In order to fully investigate this overarching goal, I look at:

Research Question 1:

How are Grade R teachers represented in policy documents in terms of the identifying descriptors used across both ECD and Grade R focused policy?

Research Question 2:

How do Grade R teachers express their institutional identities through the telling of their stories across time and through landscapes of practice?

Research Question 3:

How do Grade R teachers' experiences of policy and practice come together to illuminate a picture of institutional identity in a time of transition?

In order to answer the first research question, the context these Grade R teachers find themselves in will be discussed and policy documents will be analysed. As these teachers negotiate their position in relation to the official policy landscape, it is pertinent to first provide insights into the representation of these teachers and their 'institutional identity' as promoted by policy

through a documentary analysis. This is conducted as a thematic analysis, and includes analysis of the following policy documents:

*The White Paper No. 5 on Early Childhood Development* (DoE, 2001);

*The Norms and Standards for Educators* (DoE, 2000);

*The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement: Grade R Mathematics* (DBE, 2011a).

*The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement: Grades 1-3 Mathematics* (DBE, 2011b).

In order to answer the second research question, it is important to understand the current South African context as well as what significant historical education events brought our country to this place of 'crisis'. Exploring the possible causes of this 'crisis' is significant as the education system is currently perpetuating the cycle of inequality and poverty inherited from our turbulent past. However, provision of quality early childhood education (in particular, Grade R) has been found both locally and internationally to disrupt this cycle of inequality.

South Africa is a unique context in that our history of apartheid and 23-year young democracy means many of our adults have lived during a time of apartheid that segregated and differentially treated population groups based on defined racial categories. This influence cannot be ignored, as it would have affected every part of their lives and continues to do so today. The teachers in this study are all South African born, and come from different racial and socio-economic backgrounds. This has had a significant effect on these teachers' own schooling, as well as on the power structures at play when they decided which career path to follow. It is also important, not just in terms of the South

African context, but in terms of the unique roles and responsibilities of a FP (specifically Grade R) teacher, to understand what inspires these women to become teachers. The importance of writing these teachers' historical journeys is also supported by the literature and theoretical frames used here, in that we cannot understand identity without looking to the past and acknowledging the influences thereof (Wenger, 1998).

Each of the teachers who participated in both the wider empirical field of ENF and in the smaller sample of four selected teachers have several things in common. These include, for example, the roles and responsibilities placed on them by the Department of Basic Education. They also have several differences in experiences, such as their current remuneration and job security provided by the schools employing them. These similarities and contrasts will be presented, not as a comparison study, but rather as a contiguity study, as I attempt to contribute to the understanding of these teachers' stories within a time of transition. Through the interpretive, narrative design and reflexive, open-ended questions in interviews, teachers' histories will be constructed, taking us on a journey through the teachers' schooling in South Africa towards their entrance into the field of education in adulthood. This will assist in understanding their self-positioning and institutional identity.

In order to answer the third question, this study looks at the navigation of the policy landscape in relation to the four selected teachers' narrative vignettes of their institutional identity, making explicit the links between the four selected teachers' stories, the policy analysis, as well as the theoretical and literature framework discussed in Chapter 2. This weaving together of the findings across the Grade R teachers' broader landscape of practice is done in

order to contribute to understanding Grade R teacher institutional identity in the South African context of crisis and transition.

### 1.5. OUTLINE OF THE THESIS

In this chapter, I have presented the context of the study as well as the rationale for undertaking this research. I have discussed the development of the research question and briefly summarised how they are addressed in the study. I have briefly engaged with the broader theoretical assumptions and framework to be utilised in later analyses. The methods used in the data gathering process and a brief outline of the empirical field was also noted in this chapter, but will be further expanded in Chapter 3.

In Chapter 2, I discuss the broad socio-cultural stance I take in the study and note the epistemological and ontological assumptions thereof. I argue my position and reason for adopting this stance, and reflect on critique of the theory as a whole. I also discuss theoretical challenges as they relate to my study. In addition, I relate the work of Wenger and colleagues (Wenger, 1998; Wenger-Trayner et al., 2015) and Gee (2000) to one another, and discuss in detail my choice of institutional identity as the focus and analytic frame for analysis of teacher stories in this study. This chapter also presents the literature reviewed for this study.

Chapter 3 presents the methodology of my study. Situated in a socio-cultural perspective, and with identity as the focal point, certain methodological considerations were made in order to adequately and accurately generate, collect and analyse data which would meaningfully

contribute to the purpose of the study. These provide the focus of Chapter 3. These considerations, as well as a description of the empirical field and participants of the study, are presented in the chapter. Issues of validity, reliability, ethics, generalisability and trustworthiness are also grappled with in this chapter.

Chapter 4 is the first of my data analysis chapters and responds to research question 1. In this chapter, I present, through documentary analysis, an examination of the officially promoted 'institutional identity' (Gee, 2000) of Grade R teachers as presented in select South African education policy documents. I examine both the descriptors used to refer to these teachers, and the officially promoted roles and responsibilities ascribed to these teachers across policy from ECD and policy related to the Grade R in the FP field. This chapter aims to provide an understanding of the policy-promoted institutional identity for Grade R teachers.

In Chapter 5, I present in-depth narrative vignettes of this study's four selected teachers in relation to their navigation of, and reconciling with, the institutional identity messages emanating from the policy discussed in Chapter 4. This chapter responds to research questions 2 and 3, and illuminates teachers' lived experiences and self-positioning of their institutional identities. It is also in this chapter that I weave together the teachers' stories, the policy message, the theory and literature employed for the study, together with the analytical framework.

In the final chapter, Chapter 6, the various elements that have been presented throughout the thesis are synthesised as part of a discussion which

aims to bring the literature reviewed, the theoretical framing of the study, the data and the analyses thereof together in an effort to finally address the main research goal and the three corresponding sub-questions. This chapter also outlines the limitations of this study, and explores further research possibilities.

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## CHAPTER 2: Conceptual Frame and Literature Review

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### 2.1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I provide the background of the conceptual framework informing this study. A broadly Vygotskian sociocultural frame informs my approach to the research and underscores much of the literature reviewed, as well as the resultant analyses. As this study foregrounds identity, I also draw on the work of leading identity theorists such as Lave and Wenger (1991), Wenger (1998) and Gee (2000), whose work cohere with Vygotsky's broad sociocultural perspective of learning. In addition, this chapter is not purely concerned with the theoretical inspirations, but also includes the nuanced literature which largely shares the theoretical framing and which builds on these understandings in efforts to 'demystify' identity.

Furthermore, this chapter outlines the development of the analytical framework used to deepen understanding of teacher identity in policy and in teacher narrative vignettes. The Grade R policy analysis is presented in Chapter 4 and analysis of the teacher narrative vignettes appear in Chapter 5. The analytical frame is informed by the theoretical assumptions and Gee's (2000) identity framework, and supported by the literature discussed herein.

Finally, this chapter reports on a review of literature related to teacher professional identity. Since Chapter 1 provided a broad overview of the context of education in South Africa and Chapter 4 provides detailed discussion and analysis of the policy impacting on Grade R teachers, this chapter reviews

only literature relating to teacher identity, and particularly primary teacher identity within the South African context.

## 2.2. SOCIOCULTURAL THEORY

This study is informed by a sociocultural perspective, a framework chosen because of its resonance with my own assumptions of learning and due to the nature of this study's focus – an investigation into the identity of Grade R teachers during a time of policy and practice transition. As a sociocultural approach “emphasizes[s] the interdependence of social and individual process in the co-construction of knowledge” (John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996, p. 191), this approach was seen as appropriate for my purposes.

Although sociocultural theory as an approach has many names and different perspectives on what this approach fully entails, what binds them is the allegiance to the Vygotskian school of thought and the promotion of “the vision of human thinking as essentially social in its origins” (Sfard, Froman, & Kieran, 2001, p. 5). Vygotsky, as a pedagogue, focused much of his theories and studies on children and their learning. In particular, he saw the process of learning amongst children not as a solitary activity or process, but as a ‘process of appropriation’ (Kozulin & Presseisen, 1995) and this foundational notion has resulted in his theory “engender(ing) a number of educational applications” (Kozulin & Presseisen, 1995, p. 73), making it a relevant theory for this study, as it is situated in education.

Sociocultural theory, as outlined by Vygotsky (1978) and in particular his developmental theories related to learning and pedagogy, “have had the

greatest impact on instruction and curriculum design because they seem to be the most conducive to integration into current educational approaches.” (Jones & Brader-Araje, 2002, p. 1). Although his work largely dealt with the interrelatedness of learning and development in children, Vygotsky’s theories provide valuable insights into all learning. He was acutely aware of the complexities of human development:

a...dialectical process characterized by periodicity, unevenness in the development of different functions, metamorphosis or qualitative transformation of one form into another, intertwining of external and internal factors, and adaptive processes.

(Vygotsky, 1978, p. 73)

Vygotsky’s main concerns (and resultant contributions to the field of constructivism prevalent during his time) include the significance of the ‘knowledgeable other’; the role of language and signs; the Zone of Proximal Development; the mediation of knowledge by community and context; and the focus of the problem of the interrelatedness of learning and development (Jones & Brader-Araje, 2002; Karpov & Bransford, 1995; John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996; Kanselaar, 2002; Wood, 1989; Van der Veer & Valsiner, 1993; Kim, 2001; Das, 1995).

All of these concerns have resulted in his ideas influencing, in particular, educational theory long after his death (1978). However, it is his apparent foundational belief “that all higher mental functions are social in origin and are embedded in the context of the sociocultural setting” (Jones & Brader-Araje, 2002, p. 5) and his view that learning is not a solely internal, solitary process but a process of “appropriation” (Kozulin & Presseisen, 1995, p. 67) that informs this study, as learning and identity is integrally connected.

His emphasis on the “transformations that constitute human growth” (Cole, John-Steiner, Scribner, & Sauberman, 1978, p. 121) and foundational sociocultural musings continue to influence educationalists and education researchers alike. His work has been acknowledged and used successfully in studies, like this one, concerned with teacher learning and professional development (van Huizen, van Oers, & Wubbels, 2005, p. 273), as well as proving to be a “huge stimulus in all domains” (Lerman, 2000, p. 35).

The increasing acknowledgement of the advantages of the theoretical shift towards the sociocultural underpinnings in educational research, especially in the realm of mathematics education, provides the “intellectual resources” (Lerman, 2000, p. 87) to address the previously backgrounded issue of culture. Lerman (2000, p. 36) further argues that this allows researchers to “develop accounts that bring together agency, ‘individual trajectories’ and the cultural, historical, and social origins of the way people think, behave, reason and understand the world”. This resonates with the intent of this study, as I explore the Grade R teachers’ individual narratives of their teaching and learning journeys, while acknowledging the influence of the broader educational landscape on their experiences.

Following the increased interest by educational researchers of social theories (Lerman, 2000), a sociocultural framework was chosen because it aligns with my own experiences as a teacher and a researcher of learning by both adults and children; and learning as a process of growing and changing influenced by external factors. In addition, it was chosen because of the

versatility and ‘vitality’ of this framework, which has a “range of interpretations and applications” (John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996, p. 191).

Therefore, although focused on the individual participants’ (the Grade R teachers’) identity, this study takes into account the societal and (other) human influences on the potential shifts in their individual identities. This is done by situating their learning within, across and through the landscape of practice. The study also relates analysis of individual participant identities to the institutional identities portrayed in the evolving policy. Widely referred to as “situated learning” or “distributed cognition” (Kanselaar, 2002, p.3), the construction of the Grade R teachers’ learning and identity is investigated in terms of socially and culturally constructed human activity through a ‘social process of engagement’ in social activities (Kim, 2001).

By making the teacher the focus of the research, but situating her within a landscape of practice, this study takes “into account how the object (of research) is constituted in relation to the wider macro-situation and micro-situations” (Lerman, 2000, p. 90). For this study, the unit of analysis (discussed further in the Methodology chapter) are teacher stories and the storying of teachers as written in policy. I take these as indicators of teachers’ institutional identities in my analysis. The following sections of this chapter outline the key literature regarding identity, teacher identity and the context of Grade R teacher identity in South Africa.

### 2.3. IDENTITY

This study has as its focus the identity of Grade R teachers (the object of the research), and aims to both situate them in and understand their societal contexts, in relation to the broader landscape of practice in which their identities are being navigated. This is in line with the role of the sociocultural researcher as he or she must be cognizant that “the study of identity forms a critical cornerstone within modern sociological thought” (Cerulo, 1997, p. 385).

In acknowledging these, and in order to complement the macro and the micro, the object of this study remains the identity of the ‘person-in-practice’ (Lave, 1991) and is consistent with the conceptual framing of the study discussed earlier in this chapter. Taking this focus does not preclude an either-or stance in which the ‘person’ subsumes the ‘practice’ or vice versa. Rather, this study utilises identity “as an important analytical tool” (Gee, 2000, p.99) in an effort to contribute to understanding teacher professional development and identity. In relation to the Vygotskian theoretical framing adopted by this study, it is acknowledged that although Vygotsky was not directly concerned with ‘identity’, he was concerned with “the individual development” of the person, which it is understood to include an individual’s’ identity negotiation, while cognizant that “individual functioning has sociocultural origins” (Peneul & Wertsch, 1995, p. 85). This study therefore looks at teacher identities as they are situated in a broader sociocultural context, namely the educational landscape.

An aim of this research study, and the broader research Chair that this research is part of, is to contribute to sustainable ways to overcome the challenges of primary education (Graven, 2015). It is thus imperative that the ‘people’ functioning in teaching practice are heard. Identity also “lies at the

intersection between one's personal history and individual psychology; and between one's cultural history and community of practice" (Goodson & Cole, 1994, p. 71).

The decision to use identity as the 'zoom of the lens' (Lerman, 2000) coincides with the recent (last two decades) increasing interest in (and development of) identity research (Heyd-Metzuyanim, Lutovac & Kaasila, 2016). This has seen what Middleton, Jansen and Goldin describe as "a break [from the] individual versus social dichotomy" (2016, p. 25). Sfard and Prusak (2005, p. 15) state: "We believe that the notion of identity is a perfect candidate for the role of "the missing link" in the researchers' story of the complex dialectic between learning and its sociocultural context". Researchers conducting studies on identity are "directed to study identity in local activity settings where participants are actively engaged in forming their identities; to examine the cultural and historical resources for identity formation as empowering and constraining tools" (Peneul & Wertsch, 1995, p. 83), as this study attempts to do.

The origins of identity theory can be traced back to two seminal theorists, namely Mead (1934) and Erikson (1968). Mead's (1934) perspective on identity has been described as "seeing identity as developed in interactions with the environment" (Graven & Lerman, 2020, p. 597) and as "a sense of oneself as a participant in the social roles and positions defined by a specific, historically constituted set of social activities" (Holland & Lachicotte Jr, 2007, cited in Darragh, 2016, p. 27). Stryker and Burke (2000) describe the framework developed by Mead as follows: "In highly simplified form, Mead's framework asserted a formula: "Society shapes self shapes social behaviour."

(p. 285). This notion of the relationship between the influence of society on the self and of society in how we behave socially is further explained as “Mead suggests people not only act on themselves to achieve goals...but also they adjust and change their environment as well as themselves and their behaviour” (Burke & Stets, 2009, p. 20). It can be summarised that the Meadian perspective on identity is an “action, it is something one does, and it is multiple, contradictory and socially constituted” (Darragh, 2016, p. 27); yet appears “unified to the individual” (Graven & Lerman, 2020, p. 597).

Erikson’s (1968) perspective on identity, on the other hand, is described as understanding it “as an acquisition” (Darragh, 2016, p. 27). Holland and Lachicotte Jr (2007, cited in Darragh, 2016, p. 27) describe an Eriksonian identity conceptualisation as “overarching. It weaves together an individual’s answers to questions about who he or she is as a member of the cultural and social group(s) that make up his or her society”. This perspective also presents the idea that identity is “something that develops throughout one’s life, and is seen as more unified [for the individual]” (Graven & Lerman, 2020, p. 597). Most of the identity work done in the social sciences in the 70’s and 80’s looked to Erikson’s (1968) perspective and tended to “fold the sociocultural processes involved in identity into structures of individual cognition” (Peneul & Wertsch, 1995, p. 83).

Some authors (Côté & Levine, 2002; Peneul & Wertsch, 1995) have challenged the notion that Eriksonian identity was wholly concerned with the individual. They further questioned whether his writing disregarded or ‘side-lined’ the societal influence on identity development, as his view on adult identity is that it is “shaped in flexible response to changing contexts” (Peneul

& Wertsch, 1995, p. 83). It is suggested that, in fact, Erikson's work can be interpreted by researchers from two 'starting points' or "analytic primacy" (Peneul & Wertsch, 1995, p. 83). One which views the role of "individual mental functioning in identity formation"; the other involving viewing Erikson's work as "sensitive to the shaping forces of cultural, historical and institutional contexts of identity formation" (Peneul & Wertsch, 1995, p. 84).

Nevertheless, mathematics education research has predominantly drawn on work and theorists who situate their conceptualisation of identity within Mead's perspective. This has resulted in identity in mathematics education research being "generally agreed to be multiple or referred to in the plural [and] influential theorists treat identity in terms of an action rather than an acquisition" (Darragh, 2016, p. 27).

Although identity research can have different framing perspectives from varied fields of research, the most widely used is sociocultural theory (Heyd-metzuyanin, Lutovac & Kaasila, 2016). As such, the sociocultural framing chosen for this study acknowledges that identity is:

Being recognized as a certain "kind of person," in a given context, is what I mean here by "identity." In this sense of the term, all people have multiple identities connected not to their "internal states" but to their performances in society.

(Gee, 2000, p. 99)

Resonating with this, the indicators of identity can be seen in the stories we tell and that others tell of us – these reveal how we recognise ourselves and how others recognise us. Drawing on Sfard and Prusak, "identities may be

defined as collections of stories about persons or, more specifically, as those narratives about individuals that are reifying, endorsable and significant” (Sfard & Prusak, 2005, p. 16).

Identity is a complicated and dynamic construct (Goodson & Cole, 1994; Heyd-metzuyanin, Lutovac & Kaasila, 2016), as is evidenced by the term ‘identity’ carrying different definitions (Heyd-metzuyanin, Lutovac & Kaasila, 2016). Added to this complexity and dynamism are the various definitions developed and utilised by different researchers, while still drawing on the same (sociocultural) framework, resulting in a ‘variety of definitions’ (Heyd-metzuyanin, Lutovac & Kaasila, 2016).

Some examples of identity definitions in the literature include:

- “identity is linked to histories and membership in communities of practice, identity is in progress, identity is dependent of context, identity is not a checklist of stable traits” (Goodson & Cole, 1994, p. 72).
- “our stories are not only our own personal accounts; we live embedded in biographies that are simultaneously personal, cultural, institutional and historical” (Weber & Mitchell, 2002, p. 9).
- “narratives that people create to explain themselves” (Sfard & Prusak, 2005, cited in Nesje, Canrinan, & Strype, 2018, p. 132).

Those who align with a socio-cultural perspective focus more specifically on the interactions between the individual, culture and society. In this sense, identity is located both within and external to the individual, and it is developed through social and cultural practices.

However, as has been noted by researchers before, identity in mathematics education research often suffers from a lack of clarity in defining what exactly is meant by identity (Darragh, 2016). It is said that “The common usage of the term identity, however, belies the considerable variability in both its conceptual meanings and its theoretical role” (Stryker & Burke, 2000, p. 284) and that “The term ‘identity’ is problematic and variously defined” (Grootenboer, 2013, p. 322).

Although the concept of identity has been identified as useful “for a number of reasons” (Darragh, 2016, p. 19), and helps us to “understand the participative experiences of the individual” (p. 20), a comprehensive review of identity research in mathematics education found “support for the notion that identity literature within mathematics education is poorly defined” (p. 24). Beyond the field of mathematics education, Sfard and Prusak (2005, p. 15) offer the following:

we now wish to claim that the notion of identity, although promising and potentially better suited to the role of a "tool for the study of human conduct," cannot be declared free from similar weaknesses unless its definition is spelled out and proved operational. Such a definition has yet to be found. In the current literature, the use of the word identity is rarely preceded by any explanations. In the absence of a

definition, the reader is led to believe that identity is one of those self-evident notions that, whether reflectively or instinctively, arise from one's first-hand, un-mediated experience.

The argument has been made for a definition of identity that “takes a sociological perspective and enables an analysis that takes account of the wider context” (Darragh, 2016, p. 20). There is the further notion that identity as a construct can be defined as ‘participative, narrative, discursive psychoanalytic or performative’, however, all of these definitions allow consideration of “the social context as constructive of identity” (Darragh, 2016, p. 24). Darragh further suggests that:

by defining identity as something we do, be it identity-work or identity as performative, we form a sociological understanding and distinguish this concept from the others of a psychological paradigm. This sociological perspective of identity provides us with the opportunity to differently view peoples’ experiences of mathematics learning and teaching; it provides something new. We also widen the lens from the individual to address issues of context, social groupings and power (Gutiérrez, 2013).

(Darragh, 2016, p. 29).

For the purposes of this study, I largely draw on a practice-based ontology and, therefore, define identity as something which manifests in our actions (specifically the actions of Grade R teachers) in different social contexts, as a ‘way of being’, and indicated (and operationalised) through the stories we tell of ourselves and the stories others (including policy makers) tell of us.

### **2.3.1. Wenger and colleagues work on Identity**

In their seminal work *'Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation'*, Lave and Wenger (1991) discuss identity as it relates to their work in various communities of practice (CoP) and in a person's participation and learning therein. Looking specifically at different groups of apprenticeship learning and teaching, Lave and Wenger positioned their work as understanding that "learning involves the construction of identities" (1991, p. 53). This view is supported by Sfard and Prusak, who "concur with the increasingly popular idea of replacing the traditional discourse on schooling" (2005, p. 15) with the idea of identities as being 'constructed'.

In discussing this construction or 'reforming' of the identity of an alcoholic participating in an Alcoholics Anonymous community of practice, Lave and Wenger define identity as: "the way a person understands and views himself, and is viewed by others, a perception of self which is fairly constant" (1991, p. 81). This view of identity is consistent with the sociocultural framing used in this study. In addition, Lave and Wenger's work has been used extensively in research on the identity of learners and teachers in schools: "The largest outside influences on identity appear to be Wenger (1998) and/or Lave and Wenger (1991): 41 % of articles drew from these writers when defining identity" (Darragh, 2016, p. 24).

It has also been argued that identity and learning are a part of the 'same phenomenon' and therefore 'inseparable' (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 115). Because of this, much of their work is focused on learning and identity, sharing the view that "legitimate, peripheral participation in a community of practice

as central for increasing understanding and identity” (1991, p. 85). In their work, they also acknowledge the complexities that exist in the ‘construction’ of identity and learning development in social settings, and reject the view that learning can be simplified to ‘transmission’ of knowledge and ‘acquisition’ of skills. Rather, they posit that there exist “contradictions and struggles inherent in social practices and the formation of identities” (1991, p. 57), and that identity formation is never “unproblematic” (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 116).

Building on his earlier work with Lave, Wenger argues in his work *‘Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning and Identity’* (1998) that learning and identity are two facets of the same phenomenon. He situates learning within the social realm, focusing on participation, which he describes as “a more encompassing process of being active participants in the practices of social communities and constructing identities in relation to these communities” (Wenger, 1998, p. 4).

For Wenger, the interconnectedness of learning and identity lies in the practical expression of our learning experiences – this participation in social practices has an influence on our actions. It also influences the type of people we become and, because of this, the way in which we “interpret what we do” (Wenger, 1998, p. 4) shifts. In order to further explain how identity and learning (in practice, through participation) are linked, Wenger offers this definition of identity (as a part of his four-component social theory): “a way of talking about how learning changes who we are and creates personal histories of becoming in the context of our communities” (Wenger, 1998, p. 5).

From the above, it is evident how identity is interpreted in terms of practice ontology – Wenger’s use of the terms ‘way of talking’ and ‘becoming’ indicate the centrality to his work and, therefore, to this study the importance of the actions which are observed in order to further understand identity in practice.

He further explores the interrelated nature of learning and identity by describing learning as the “vehicle for the evolution of practices and the inclusion of newcomers while also (and through the same process) the vehicle for the development and transformation of identities” (Wenger, 1998, p. 13). This is important for explaining learning as it relates to identity, as he links learning, practices, newcomer membership and identity with the same process through which changes occur. He further expands on our understanding of learning as more than a process of ‘acquisition’, but rather as a “formation of an identity. Our experience and our membership inform each other, pull each other, transform each other” (Wenger, 1998, p. 96).

From this perspective, it is also important to highlight the dynamics of this ‘transformative’ relationship – that practices in the social context influence the person and so the person’s practice in the social context changes – otherwise known as the person-in practice-in person (Lerman, 2000). Wenger-Trayner (2014) reiterates that identity is a highly important concept, central to our understanding of learning in practice and the becoming of a certain type of person. This is because meaning-making goes beyond the acquisition of knowledge and relates to your sense of who you are becoming. Below I discuss Wenger-Trayner and colleagues most recent work on landscapes of practice. The notion of navigating and negotiating identities as we travel through and

across landscapes of practice, over time and space, forms a key aspect of the analysis of the teacher stories presented in chapter 5.

### **2.3.2. Negotiating identity trajectories journeying through landscapes of practice**

An important consideration in discussions around learning and identity is that experience across multiple communities, rather than a single community of practice, will influence identity. These multiple communities that connect teachers form a 'landscape of practice'. A landscape of practice is described by Wenger-Trayner et al. (2015, p. i) as "the body of knowledge of a profession". A profession, such as that of 'teacher' or 'doctor', constitutes a "complex" landscape of practice, made up of multiple different communities of practice and can thought of as a "social body of knowledge" (Wenger-Trayner et al., 2015, p. 15). The Grade R teachers in this study are part of three key educational communities: i) their school community (teachers and learners); ii) the Foundation Phase (FP) Department of Education run district community of Grade R, 1-3 teachers; and iii) the ENF PD community that they participate in monthly run by the SANCP, Rhodes University. The stories of the teachers weave across their experiences in all of these communities.

The shift in the literature saw a greater focus placed on the larger landscape, as well as a focus on the increased understanding of the potential for learning and identity shifts across the boundaries between individual communities within the landscape. This shift came as a result of criticism levied at the communities of practice work which placed too "great a focus on single communities" (Wenger-Trayner et al., 2015, p. 1). This criticism took into

account the risk that a single community focused view may neglect discussions around and engagement with multiple communities, as well as “the likelihood that [practitioners] eventual destinations lie outside” of a single community (Wenger-Trayner et al., 2015, p. 2). This shift in the literature also suggests that, if we view the ‘body of knowledge’ of a profession as a landscape, then our “personal experience of learning can be thought of as a journey through this landscape” (Wenger-Trayner et al., 2015, p. i).

As we attempt to further our understanding of this learning journey through the landscape, it is imperative to remember that learning encompasses far more than “merely the acquisition of knowledge” (Wenger-Trayner et al., 2015, p. 19). Learning and identity, as theorised in the participatory ontology of this study, is as Wenger (1998) and Wenger-Trayner et al. (2015) describe as the process of ‘becoming’ a certain type of person. This ‘becoming’ is continual and non-linear: we do not become a certain type of person at a specific moment in time, never to change. Rather, our becoming is in constant flux as we navigate and reconcile our experiences on our journey through the landscape. It is a “dynamic construction [which] reflects our trajectory through that landscape” (Wenger-Trayner et al., 2015, p. 19). Therefore, it is also important to consider that in this dynamic process of learning and identity shifts through the landscape, an individual’s personal journey is “more complex than might appear on the surface” (Wenger-Trayner et al., 2015, p.2), while it also remains “part of the texture of our everyday experience” (p. 3).

But, how do we identify the significant ‘practice’ within the complex landscape? What is a practice, and where does it stem from? Wenger-Trayner

et al. (2015) note that traditionally, knowledge was thought to come from a particular practice (such as teacher college training) and was transferred to the practice that receives the knowledge (such as the teaching in the classroom). However, in the more modern view, which looks at the 'body of knowledge' as a 'complex system', they argue that "no practice can claim to contain or represent the whole" (Wenger-Trayner et al., 2015, p. 16). They explain:

There is an internal logic to any practice because it is the production of the community that engages in it. A mandate or a set of standards may give rise to a practice, but they do not produce the practice; the practitioners do. It is their practice even if it is produced in compliant response to a mandate. Similarly, regulations inform practice in the sense that they become an influential element of a judgement; but regulations do not produce practice: even a practice of strict compliance is produced by practitioners.

(Wenger-Trayner et al., 2015, p. 16)

Thus, in response to the question 'where does a practice come from?', one may argue that it comes from the practitioners in the practice. And the practice is what the people mutually decide it should be. Because practitioners can, as mentioned, be 'compliant', but they can also reject (or 'shrug off') the demands from within their field because they view it as "too disconnected to be relevant" (Wenger-Trayner et al., 2015, p.15). If observed closely, some practitioners may even appear to be complying with the regulations and mandates prescribed by the community to which they belong, while in reality, are "doing their own thing" (Wenger-Trayner et al., 2015, p. 15). This contributes to the complexities involved in attempting to define a practice. It is in the doing that the 'what' of the practice is seen.

In light of this, Wenger-Trayner et al. (2015, p. 17) caution that practitioners' "engagement in lived practice is too complex and dynamic to be a mere implementation of prescription". This is because "meaning is produced in each practice", and a landscape of practice is a complex and dynamic combination of multiple different communities of practice, each producing their own meanings, and "mini-cultures" (Wenger-Trayner et al., 2015, p. 17). As such, the concepts of 'boundaries' and 'boundary crossings' become relevant in our discussion of landscapes: "The metaphor of a landscape ensures that we pay attention to boundaries, to our multimembership in different communities and to the challenges we face as our personal trajectories take us through multiple communities" (Wenger-Trayner et. al, 2015, p. 2).

Each individual community is involved in the active production (by practitioners) of practice, and each community has different mandates and regulations, each interpreted differently by different people, who each have different experiences of the world. As such, the "words and objects are not guaranteed to have continuity of meaning across a boundary" and there will be a "lack of shared history" (Wenger-Trayner et. al, 2015, p. 17) between different communities. Wenger-Trayner and colleagues (2015, p. 17) highlight the potential of 'conflict' in the influences on practice:

What researchers find, what regulators dictate, what management mandates, what international development agencies try to make happen, and what practitioners end up deciding, all these attempts to colonize moments of practice can be in conflict – hidden or open.

It is this potential for conflict and the influence in particular of 'what

regulators (such as the Department of Education) dictate' through policy on Grade R teacher expressions of institutional identity, that this study explores.

### **2.3.3. The need for an operationalised definition of Identity**

Even though the works by Lave and Wenger, and Wenger, have been influential across identity research domains, there continues to be a need for an operationalised definition of identity not offered in their work. As Sfard and Prusak (2005, p. 15) state:

Although identity is one of these writers' [Lave and Wenger] pivotal ideas, no conceptual preparations precede sentences such as "Learning ... implies becoming a different person [and] involves the construction of identity" (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 53), or "The experience of identity in practice is a way of being in the world" (Wenger, 1998, p. 151).

They (Sfard & Prusak, 2005) propose a definition of identity as narrative, in that identity is the stories we tell of ourselves, which are "reifying, endorsable and significant" (p. 16) and "equate identity-building with story-telling" (p. 21).

This need to define and operationalise identity for use in research is in response to their findings that in "current literature, the use of the word identity is rarely preceded by any explanation" (Sfard & Prusak, 2005, p. 15). Although some authors such as Gee (2001), and Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner and Cain (1998) offer "promising beginnings" (Sfard & Prusak, 2005, p. 16) towards defining identity, specific indicators that allow the researcher to 'decide' what constitutes a person's identity are yet to be established.

Beauchamp and Thomas (2009, p.176) share their own struggles experienced while conducting identity research (on teacher professional identity):

A major hurdle in gaining an understanding of identity is resolving a definition of it, as a variety of issues surface in any attempt to reach a definition. One must struggle to comprehend the close connection between identity and the self, the role of emotion in shaping identity, the power of stories and discourse in understanding identity, the role of reflection in shaping identity, the link between identity and agency, the contextual factors that promote or hinder the construction of identity, and ultimately the responsibility of teacher education programs to create opportunities for the exploration of new and developing teacher identities.

Although various understandings of identity present in current literature are useful, “defining the concept has often proved difficult for authors” (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009, p. 177). In studies on teacher professional identity, it was found that “researchers conceptualize professional identity differently, investigate varying topics within the framework of teachers’ professional identity, and pursue a diversity of goals” (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004, p. 108). In research studies focused on mathematics related teacher identity emerging during the last 20 years, it was found by Heyd-Metzuyanim, Lutovac and Kaasila (2016, p. 16) that there exist in the literature “a variety of definitions and often an absence of them altogether”. Graven and Heyd-Metzuyanim (2019, p. 363) echo these findings in their ‘state of the art’ review of identity research in mathematics education, citing that the “most prevalent critique of identity research has been the vagueness of the ‘identity’ concept and the lack of clarity around its operationalisation”.

Although their work and this review, as well as the work of Darragh (2016); and Heyd-Metzuyanim, Lutovac, and Kaasila (2016) is focused on mathematics education, they make clear that the difficulties in defining identity are not unique to this field of research, and “there have been several challenges to the way in which the term is used across fields” (Graven & Heyd-Metzuyanim, 2019, p. 363). They refer to the ‘widely cited and thoroughly considered critique’ used to explain how identity became hugely popular in the 1960’s, and as a result now suffers a ‘crisis’ due to “overproduction and consequent devaluations of meaning” (Beauchamp & Cooper, 2000, cited in Graven & Heyd-Metzuyanim, 2019, p. 363).

For this study, situated in the sociocultural framework, and interested in contributing to Grade R teacher professional identity and institutional identity in particular, the analysis that follows in chapters 4 and 5 draws on the broad theoretical framing of Wenger and colleagues. Specifically their work on navigating identity across landscapes of practice. As I am particularly interested in teachers institutional identities, I draw on:

- i) Gee’s (2000) work on institutional identity as an analytic lens.
- ii) For my unit of analysis and indicators of identity I draw on Sfard and Prusak’s (2005) notion of narrative as identity, and their operationalisation of identity as the stories we tell of ourselves and that significant others tell of us.
- iii) Conceptually, the study is also guided by Wenger Trayner et al.’s (2015) work on trajectories through landscapes of

practice, as teachers journey through multiple communities influenced by the policy context as well as their experiences thereof.

Gee's (2000) work is discussed in detail below, providing the reader with a background to the development of this study's indicators of identity: namely, the stories told of Grade R teachers in policy and the stories told by Grade R teachers of themselves.

#### **2.3.4. Gee's four views of identity with a focus on Institutional identity**

The teachers in this study articulated narratives of various facets of their identities as they navigated their landscape of practice. They made little reference to their learning in relation to their participation in the ENF CoP or their learning through participation in the various overlapping communities as FP teachers at their schools or in their district.

Through the process of data analysis, discussed further in chapter 3, it became apparent that the teachers' stories primarily captured their navigation of their professional identities within the rapidly changing landscape of Grade R policy and practice. In particular, their stories foregrounded their navigation of their institutional identities. While Wenger's (1998) conceptualisation focuses on identity as learning, specifically within a CoP, Gee's framework provided tools for analysis of the teachers' institutional identity (I-id) as told in their stories to me during our interviews and in the 'stories' told of Grade R

teachers in the changing policy. Thus, Gee's four faces of identity frame, with its focus on institutional identity became useful for informing my study and the analysis of the data. It was for this reason that I drew on Gee's (2000) identity frame as the analytic framework for my study. Furthermore, I focused on only one of Gee's (2000) 'four faces' of identity, namely, 'institutional identity' because this was the face that teachers foregrounded in their narratives.

Gee acknowledges in his writing, as do others (as discussed above), that "the term identity has taken on a great many different meanings" (2000, p. 99) In response, he offers an approach to viewing identity which does not exclude other definitions, but draws together the common strand of the literature which asserts that a person's identity is the result of being 'recognised as a certain type of person' through their actions and interactions. This view is in line with Wenger's (1998) work which situates identity as a person's 'way of being' and of 'becoming' in the world. This further relates to Wenger's (1998) concept of becoming a member, through recognisable 'regimes of competence' (2015) in communities of practice and across landscapes of practice.

However, Gee makes clear that the way a person is recognised is not a fixed or linear phenomenon, but in fact changes from context to context "and, of course, can be ambiguous or unstable" (Gee, 2000, p. 99). This too follows Wenger's (1998) and Wenger-Trayner et al.'s (2015) descriptions of how people, through the development of different 'ways of being' or 'regimes of competence', become members or remain peripheral participants in multiple communities of practice across a landscape.

Gee (2000, p. 100) proposes four ways to view identity. These he summarises in a table as follows:

	Process	Power	Source of power
1. Nature-identity: a state	developed from	forces	in nature
2. Institution-identity: a position	authorized by	authorities	within institutions
3. Discourse-identity: an individual trait	recognized in	the discourse/ dialogue	of/with “rational” individuals
4. Affinity-identity: experiences	shared in	the practice	of “affinity groups”

**Figure 2.2: Four Ways to View Identity**

These four ways to view identity were discussed in detail in Chapter 1. Here, I focus on the ‘view of identity’ that is the focus of this study, namely Institutional identity (I-id). Gee’s conceptualisation of the four ways to view identity offers “a set of interpretive tools that lead us (like all interpretive tools) to look more closely at certain issues and less closely at others” (2000, p. 100). It is the purpose of this study to look more closely at institutional identity, as promoted in policy and as expressed through narratives by Grade R teachers in a time of transition.

As explained above, this focus on the institutional identity, and my decision to use this concept as an analytical frame, emerged from the data gathered during the course of the study, explained in detail in Chapter 3. The teachers involved in the study spoke consistently and across all of their different contexts about their institutional positioning and the tensions which they were experiencing during the policy transition which saw them move into the FP of schooling. In section 2.5, I discuss in detail the South African

Education context in which this transition occurs. That section provides the reader with background to the context in which Grade R in South Africa and internationally is becoming a focus in research aimed at understanding ways to improve the quality of education, especially for those most vulnerable in society.

Gee's contribution to identity research across domains has been acknowledged as 'important', particularly his suggestion that "a person's identity is related to being recognised in a given context" (Bjuland, Cestari, & Borgersen, 2012, p. 408). His work on identity as an analytic frame has been used extensively within education research. Darragh (2016) found that, in mathematics education research, Gee's (2000) work was utilised in 18% of the papers she reviewed. She also notes that the studies which draw on his work do so in order to contribute to their "discussion and development of a definition for identity" (Darragh, 2016, p. 24), and do not simply cite his work. She also found that those who draw on Gee's work are likely to discuss "participants as they use language to communicate, interact and act" (Bishop, 2012 cited in Darragh, 2016, p. 25). This study too focuses on participants' use of language in the analysis of their identity stories. Gee's work was also chosen for this study not only because of the prevalence of his influence on mathematics education identity research, but also because of his work's usefulness in studies on Early Childhood teacher education research (Chang-Kredl & Kingsley, 2014); on teacher professional identity (Beijaard, Meijer & Verloop, 2004; Bjuland, Cestari & Borgersen, 2012); and on work looking at identity in policy documents (Thomas, 2005), all of which this study is concerned with.

The first part of this chapter has established the broader sociocultural framing of this study, discussed the theoretical assumptions of Wenger and colleagues (1998; 2015), and examined the influence of Gee's (2000) view of identity on the definition of identity utilised by this study. The next part of this chapter is focused on teacher professional identity (generally) and South African primary teacher identity specifically (section 2.4); the early childhood education context in South Africa and the educator roles therein (section 2.5); and the Grade R policy context in South Africa (section 2.6).

## 2.4. TEACHER PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY

In the previous sections (2.1-2.3), I have discussed the sociocultural theoretical framing that informs this study, as well as the conceptual and analytical framing of Wenger (1998) and Gee (2000) on identity. In the following sections (2.4-2.7), I narrow the 'lens' to focus on teacher professional identity and the context of Grade R teaching and learning in South Africa. I briefly discuss the implications of and influences on teacher professional identity and the nature of FP/Primary teacher identity. I then focus on our research on primary teacher identity in the South African context. Finally, I provide a detailed outline of the Grade R/ECD context and policy, both internationally and locally. This is done in order to provide the reader with an understanding of the contextual background of the study, as well as the 'social conditions' (Day, Kington, Stobart & Sammons, 2006) which have influenced Grade R teacher self-expressions and policy representations of institutional identity.

It is acknowledged in this study that “sociocultural perspectives can provide insights into the developing identities of teachers” (Lerman, 2001, cited in Bennison, 2016, p. 3). As this study ultimately aims to contribute to sustainable ways of responding to the educational ‘crisis’ in South Africa, I focus on the teacher and her role in the education system. This focus is due to an understanding that “the most critical variable in the provision of quality learning is the teacher” (Jorgensen, Grootenboer, Niesche & Lerman, 2010, p. 161). Research of this nature deals with professional identity development, as identity is the “direct component of the decision-making model where teaching practices and identity are directly linked” (Goodson & Cole, 1994, p. 71), and there is “growing recognition that becoming a teacher begins long before people ever enter a Faculty of Education” (Weber & Mitchell, 1995, p. 5).

Both the practice of teaching, and the resultant simultaneous and continuous identity development endure shifts, conceptualizations and reconceptualizations. This is because of who we are before (our histories), our contexts, and what each different situation requires of us, both personally and professionally. This is uniquely influenced by the fact that teachers’ identities “stem from both individual and collective life history” (Weber & Mitchell, 1995, p. 9).

#### **2.4.1. Teacher Professional Identity in general**

Regarding teacher professional identity, it is important to emphasise that identity is “dynamic, fluid and multifaceted” (Dixon, Excell, & Linington, 2014, p. 141). This concept of teacher identity as ‘multifaceted’ and in line with

the institutional identity analytic framing discussed above, is captured in the following excerpt from Day, Kington, Stobart and Sammons (2006, p. 601):

In much educational literature, it is recognised that the broader social conditions in which teachers live and work, and the personal and professional elements of teachers' lives, experiences, beliefs and practices are integral to one another, and that there are often tensions between these, which impact to a greater or lesser extent upon teachers' sense of self or identity. If identity is a key influencing factor on teachers' sense of purpose, self-efficacy, motivation, commitment, job satisfaction and effectiveness, then investigation of those factors which influence positively and negatively, the contexts in which these occur and the consequences for practice, is essential.

In light of the above quote, this study aims to acknowledge the 'broader social conditions' in which Grade R teachers construct their professional identity. In particular, the social conditions in which these teachers work, and the policy context which impacts on and guides their work. In line with the chosen analytic frame of institutional identity, the focus on teacher professional identity stems from the understanding that it "stands at the core of the teaching profession. It 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" (Sachs, 2005 cited in Dixon, Excell & Linington, 2014, p. 141). This study is also concerned with understanding professional identity in relation to the way teachers are represented in policy, as well as understanding their own self-expressions of their institutional identity. It acknowledges that teacher identity "includes both the subjective sense of individuals who engage in the occupation of teaching and how others view teachers" (Dixon, Excell & Linington, 2014, p. 141) and "people are teachers to

the degree that they comply with official descriptions of what it means to be a teacher” (Brown & McNamara, 2011, p. 18)

The ‘multifaceted’ nature of teacher professional identity is especially important for this study, as it is necessary to highlight that teacher identity is not the same for all teachers in all phases of schooling. It is acknowledged that “the term ‘identity’ is problematic and variously defined” (Grootenboer, 2013, p. 322), however, it continues to prove a useful concept in mathematics education research, particularly studies on teacher professional identity. Identity as a lens is useful in contributing to understanding and supporting educational reform. This is because it allows researchers to go beyond discussions of teachers’ practices to discussing the “organisational structures that affect practice” (Grootenboer, 2013, p. 322). Identity has also been described as an important concept in mathematics education research because it allows for drawing “together a range elements that are integral to our understanding of mathematics contexts and learning spaces” (Grootenboer, Smith & Lowrie, 2006, p. 612).

In terms of teacher professional identity in mathematics teaching and learning contexts, identity also allows researchers to examine “the interplay” (Grootenboer, Smith & Lowrie, 2006, p. 612) between how teachers describe themselves and how others view them. For this study, looking at this ‘interplay’ of Grade R teacher professional identity development is possible due to the sociocultural framing which allows a focus on “the interactions between the individual, culture and society” (Grootenboer, Smith & Lowrie, 2006, p. 613). Identity has also been described as “a pivot between the social and the individual” (Hodgen & Askew, 2007, p. 145).

It is important to note that teacher professional identity has a 'plurality' as described by Schifter (1996) in Hodgen and Askew (2007, p. 473):

These teachers enact multiple identities: as mathematical thinkers, as managers of class- room process, as monitors of their students' learning, as colleagues, and as members of the wider education community. 'Identities' in this sense—more a matter of what one does than who one thinks one is—are constructed in and realised through practices.

It is because of the importance of teacher professional identity in understanding, and possibly improving, practice that it has been noted that if "a teacher is aware of their identity...and how it is linked to their practice, they will have more "control" over changing or adapting a current teaching practice and be able to use their identities as a compass to navigate teaching dilemmas" (Enyedy, Goldberg, & Welsh, 2006, pp. 91-92).

Studies drawing on identity as a construct are varied in perspective and focus, however, they all share the common notion "that within the practice of mathematics teaching and learning, the people within the practice, and the social conditions they experience play a major role" (Grootenboer, Smith & Lowrie, 2006, p. 614). It is for this reason that teacher professional identity is useful in this study, as it seeks to contribute to understanding Grade R teachers within the practice of teaching, as well as in relation to the social condition of policy transition in which they are practicing.

The decision to focus on the teacher, and her identity development, in this study has also been influenced by the acknowledgement that "central to all students' school education is the teacher" (Grootenboer & Ballantyne,

2010, p. 225). Focusing on teacher professional identity beyond the classroom and in the context of teacher professional development, is also useful as it can be seen as “an organising element in teachers’ professional lives” (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009, p. 175) and a “resources that people use to explain, justify and make sense of themselves in relation to others, and to the world at large” (Maclure, 1993 cited in Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009, p. 175). Beyond this, it has also been noted that teacher professional identity “stands at the core of the teaching profession” (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009, p. 178) and “becoming a teacher is a process in which identity is both the product and the instrument of change” (Hodgen & Askew, 2007, p. 38).

Teacher professional identity has proved to be a useful lens through which to understand mathematics teaching and learning. It has been acknowledged as important in teacher development programmes (both at pre- and in-service levels). Many studies have promoted “an awareness of the need to implement teacher identity construction in teacher preparation programs” (Heyd-Metzuyanim, Lutovac & Kaasila, 2016, p. 17). It has also been recommended that “professional developers must start to find ways to help teachers re-establish classroom norms that align with their developing identities on what it means to teach and learn mathematics” (Battey & Franke, 2008, p. 148).

#### **2.4.2. Primary Teacher Professional Identity**

The notion of the professional identity of mathematics teachers (or teachers of mathematics), however, differs from the professional identities of primary teachers. This is because primary teachers are not subject specialists,

but rather 'generalists'. Grade R teachers, who this study focuses on, are part of the Foundation or Primary Phase of schooling. Children at primary level learn from teachers "with a generalist brief" (Brown & McNamara, 2011, p. 11). Because these teachers are 'generalists' and, therefore, teach across a spectrum of 'subjects' (such as Mathematics, Literacy and Life Skills), they often do not identify as 'subject specialists'. This is not the case for teachers from other phases in the schooling system, as they are able to identify as subject-specific teachers, i.e. the 'mathematics teacher' or 'the music teacher'.

Westaway (2017, p. 1), conducting research on primary school teacher identity in South Africa, makes the following distinction:

I distinguish between teachers in secondary schools who view themselves as subject specialists and primary school teachers who view themselves primarily as generalists (Day, Kington, Stobart & Sammons, 2006; Brown & McNamara, 2011). Research with secondary school teachers suggests that the subject one teaches has a strong influence on one's identity as a teacher (Day et al., 2006). Unlike secondary school teachers who are subject specialists, primary school teachers tend to recognise themselves as phase or grade specialists.

Furthermore, it has also been recognised that "primary teachers have had to reconstruct their identities in response to the reconstruction of the education system" (Woods & Jeffrey, 2002, p. 89). This is especially relevant for the teachers in this study (as I explain in section 2.7, and elaborate on in chapter 4), as these teachers are experiencing a significant policy transition and for some, are navigating a new teaching context. The shift in contexts for these teachers is especially important for their professional identity, as the following indicates:

With regard to work on teacher identity in the South African context..., the way teachers feel about themselves professionally, emotionally, and politically (Jansen, 2001) may shift based on the social and cultural conditions under which they work, and other identity positions they take up in their lives. Their teacher identity may also be in tension with official representations in policy documents.

(Dixon, Excell & Linington, 2014, pp. 140-141)

Indeed, 'tension' in relation to official representations in policy documentation and teacher representations emerged strongly in the stories in this study. In their 2014 editorial, Petersen and Gravett refer to the status of FP teachers as "a matter of concern" (p. i) and describe these teachers as "generally seen as the lowliest in the hierarchy of teachers in black schools" (p. i). This has resulted in high achieving school graduates resisting this as a career choice. The authors also state: "We believe that the nation needs to be alerted to the view that teachers of young children have a very big impact in the future learning and achievement of their young charges, and the best minds should be encouraged to become teachers..." (Petersen & Gravett, 2014, p. ii).

In the policy analysis chapter of this study, Chapter 4, I focus on the possible 'tension' between Grade R teacher expressions of their professional identity and 'official representations' in policy documents. This is especially relevant in the South African ECD/Grade R context as, in South Africa, there are "various contradictory policy...on the one hand policy documents suggest a quality practice based on children's play interests but on the other hand guidelines establish relatively fixed learning goals (see e.g. CAPS 2011, NCS, 2015, NELDS, 2009)" (Hartell & Steyn, 2019, p. 2). The existence of 'contradictory policy' for teachers in Grade R during a time of transition is

especially important in terms of their professional identity, because to make changes to teaching and learning in classrooms, these changes:

have to be processed through teachers, who have feelings, values, beliefs, thoughts, cherished ideals; in short, identities. Before they can apply themselves to best effect, they have to work out how to organize a personal identity or identities congruent with the social identity and self-concept—to know who they are.

(Woods & Jeffrey, 2002, p. 105)

It is in the context of policy transition that this study seeks to understand Grade R teachers and ‘who they are’. The analysis in chapters 4 and 5 focus on this in depth. It is also important to note that Grade R teacher expressions of identity are further ‘multifaceted’ as the ‘social conditions’ in which they work as generalists are also often subject to a view that the work they do is not a highly regarded profession. In a study conducted with students participating in ECD training, it was noted that the students felt there were other careers which had a ‘higher prestige’. Deacon notes, “they and their communities considered ECD to be a low status, poorly paid profession ('not the lowest but one of the lowest careers that you could choose'; 'old ladies teach ECD')” (Deacon, 2016, p. 17). This perception of teachers working in the ECD/Grade R field is echoed in the identity stories presented in Chapter 5, as well as the policy-promoted identity spectrum presented in Chapter 4.

## 2.5. Primary Education and ECD in South Africa

In South Africa, the government is increasingly focusing its attention on the importance of the early years of education. This focus on FP learning indicates a shift from the historical practice in South Africa of focusing both

research and interventions on learners in the Further Education and Training (FET) Phase of schooling, in preparation for the National Senior Certificate exams (written in Grade 12 – the last year of schooling and commonly referred to as ‘matric’). It is becoming increasingly noted that Grade 12 is too late, as “the education achievement gap begins in the Foundation Phase and continues unbroken” (Fleisch, 2008, p. 30). Research also supports the argument that the earlier the intervention, the less likely children are to face challenges later on (Wright, Martland & Stafford, 2006).

As noted in Chapter 1, the South African education system is “grossly inefficient, severely underperforming and egregiously unfair” (Spaull, 2013a, p. 3). This statement is corroborated by a wide range of research, including the Department of Basic Education’s own Annual National Assessment reports based on students’ mathematics and literacy performance from Grade 1 to 9 (DBE, 2012b; 2013; 2014). In Chapter 1, I explained the South African education context broadly. Here I focus on teaching and learning in the FP because the focus of this study - Grade R teachers - are now classified as a part of this sector of schooling.

There is increasing recognition that in order to improve education in South Africa, one needs to focus on strengthening learning in the first few years of schooling - by Grade 4 many learners are already performing below the curriculum expectations for their grade (Spaull & Kotze, 2015) and “learning deficits that children acquire in their primary school career grow over time” (Spaull, 2013a, p. 8). The policy shift of the learning of five to six year olds from ECD centres to schools is indicative of this increasing acknowledgement of the importance of the early years of education.

In light of efforts to redress the inequalities of the past, by strengthening the teaching and learning of the poorest children in South Africa, Hoadley (2007) warns of the reproduction of social class inequalities through mathematics pedagogy in South African primary schools. Ursula Hoadley (2012) also highlights how some of the performance problems relate to classroom practices (such as chant-learning) and ‘ways of being’ in the classroom. It is in this context of continued underperformance and exaggerated socio-economic disparities that the majority of young children enter the South African schooling system. In the following section I discuss the early childhood context in South Africa.

### **2.5.1. Early childhood development context**

In March 2018, a provincial (Eastern Cape) newspaper ran the following headline: “E Cape Grade 1 Failure Crisis” (Linden, 2018). The article reported on a performance assessment report which found that one in five Grade 1 children in the province failed their first year of formal schooling. The critical importance of quality teaching and learning in the early years, which has “the potential to drive redress and realise the promise inherent in the South African Constitution” (Excell, 2016, p. 1), coupled with my own personal passion for and experience in ECD, led me to this study. Through this study, I seek to contribute to the understanding of Grade R teacher professional identity, as it fits into the larger body of current research into the professionalisation of Grade R and ECD teachers, and teaching and learning within this sector of schooling.

The importance of children's early cognitive, emotional, language and social development is well-known (Atweh et al., 2014). Furthermore, "there is significant evidence that children who attended pre-school benefit through numeracy skills, thus bridging the gap between less and more affluent groups" (Atweh et al., 2014, p. 16). This is especially true in the early years, when children in their second or third year of formal schooling are already floundering. Many now conclude that the time has come to examine the critical FP (Grade R to Grade 3), in order to address any possible educational shortcomings early on. Increasingly in South Africa, studies are focusing on this phase of schooling (e.g. Atweh et al., 2014).

As mentioned earlier, those most impacted by inequalities in education are from low socio-economic backgrounds. Atweh et al. (2014) stress the significance of attending quality pre-schools, not only for the development of cognitive skills, but also as a significant weapon in the battle to bridge the gap between "less and more affluent groups" (Atweh et al., 2014, p. 8). Considering the potential that quality teaching in the early years holds in terms of alleviating the cycle of poverty and inequality, South African research which shows generally weak qualifications of Grade R teachers (Spaull, van der Berg, Wills, Gustafsson, & Kotze, 2016) and a lack of opportunities for Grade-specific professional development for these teachers, is deeply concerning. As Tlou and Feza (2017, p. 2) have said: "When Grade R educators are not properly trained, it invariably spells disaster for the country as a whole".

### **2.5.2. The key role of early years' educators in the South African education context**

When conducting research in South Africa and, in particular, on South African education, our deeply divided and fraught history must be acknowledged, as “there are few countries in the world where history and politics have more explicitly shaped education than in South Africa” (Webb & Roberts, 2018, p. 243). The pre-1994 ruling National Party implemented ‘Bantu education’, which at its core was focused on ensuring that South African Black children were trained explicitly for low-level, often menial, employment opportunities. “(It) prepared black African children for manual labour in the economy in line with its intention to stratify workers according to race” (Hill, 2016, p. 35).

Inequalities in teaching and learning did not reside solely in schools, but permeated to the higher education landscape, and teacher-training opportunities were often sub-par for the Black community. This is one of the reasons South Africa is currently experiencing a “vicious cycle” in relation to teacher professional standards:

In a vicious cycle, initial teacher education [ITE] programmes are unable to attract a high quality of graduates due to the low status of teaching in the public eye, forcing these programmes to recruit a lower quality of pre-service teacher, which in turn requires a reduction in the rigour of their training. Poorer quality teachers are then deployed to schools, contributing not only to the overall reduction in the quality of school graduates, but also to lowering the perceived status of a teaching career.

(Centre for Development and Enterprise [CDE], 2017, p.11)

This ‘vicious cycle’ resonates with my own experiences of becoming involved in teacher education over the past few years. Bennell and Akyeampong (2007, p. 40) explain that “school leavers with lower academic

grades tend to opt for teaching” and “given the relatively poor status of teachers combined with the rapid expansion of enrolments, recruitment standards remain low”.

This ‘deficit cycle’ is especially concerning with regard to Grade R teachers, as it has been found that these teachers suffer from inadequate training (Excell & Linington, 2011). This is concerning considering that “when Grade R educators are not properly trained, it spells disaster for the country as a whole” (Tlou and Feza, 2017, p. 2). The issue of lower remuneration of ECD practitioners is another contributing factor to the diminishing appeal for the teaching profession, especially in the ECD sector (and Grade R):

The ECD Audit of 2013 shows that the average ECD practitioner earned R1 400 to R2 000<sup>4</sup> per month, only 10% of the DBE salary scale of R21 100<sup>5</sup> per month for an entry level FP teacher (Kotzé, 2015). Linked to the poor pay on offer, ECD practitioners are poorly qualified. Only 10% have a tertiary qualification, just a quarter have some training in ECD and more than 70% of ECD practitioners and assistant practitioners have no qualification whatsoever (Spaull et al., 2016, p. 7).

Although there are no set salary requirements for Grade R or ECD practitioners, the Department of Education recommends that they be paid at least R5000 (USD344) a month, and they are protected by the Basic Conditions of Service Act (DBE, 2011d). As will be discussed later in the analyses chapters, the teachers in this study repeatedly expressed their financial concerns and frustrations, as they are earning less than their FP colleagues (and many are earning less than the recommended amount).

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<sup>4</sup> Approximately \$96 to \$137 (USD) per month

<sup>5</sup> Approximately \$1450 (USD) per month

It has also been acknowledged that mathematics development in particular in the ECD sector in South Africa is “loaded with many inequity factors” (Feza, 2014, p. 888). Acknowledging the significant role that teachers play in the classroom and in learning outcomes, it has been recommended that the ECD sector be professionalised (Feza, 2014) through quality teacher development programmes for both pre- and in-service educators. Grade R teachers have been described as “the centrepiece of educational change” (Clasquin-Johnson, 2016, p. 3). It has also been recognised that “In contributing to the human capital of South Africa, the reception class [Grade R] needs to provide quality mathematics education that is relevant to the learners and developmentally appropriate” (Feza, 2016, p. 484). However, due to the low-status, low remuneration and poor job security experienced by those currently working in this field, few students of teaching choose to pursue Grade R teaching qualifications.

Feza (2014, p. 899) found that “ECD children from low socio-economic backgrounds continue to be excluded in quality mathematics stimulation regardless of the changes in education policy that promises to provide quality education for all”. These inequalities follow a pattern within the broader South African schooling context in terms of teacher professionalisation, according to race: “only 12% of white teachers have fewer than four years of training, against 44% for African teachers” (Gustaffson & Patel, 2008, cited in Shalem & Hoadley, 2009, p. 131). This inequality in qualification is exaggerated in the Grade R sector, where in 2016, “90% of Grade R teachers” were under-qualified (Clasquin-Johnson, 2016, p. 1). Despite numerous acknowledgements that Grade R (and ECD) are fundamental in accessing long-term learning gains, both locally and internationally, it remains that this sector continues to be

neglected as a profession. In the following section (2.6), I discuss the current context of this sector in more detail, focusing on the policy landscape.

## 2.6. POLICY CONTEXT FOR ECD AND GRADE R

In Chapter 1, I noted as part of the rationale for my study the context of policy transformation in relation to the education of five to six year olds and thus to both ECD centres and primary schools. Policy shifts are accompanied by shifts in practice, and in teacher roles and identities. In Chapter 4, I analyse in detail the promoted I-id ('storying') of teachers in key policy documents linked to both ECD and Grade R contexts in South Africa. In this section of this chapter, I provide historical background to the policy context from which the key documents analysed in Chapter 4 emerged.

Various educational policy documents were developed in South Africa after 1994, driven by a post-apartheid national drive to redress educational inequalities. These documents were also released in part in response to the FP education crisis in South Africa (Bloch, 2009; Fleisch, 2008). This period in our country's history saw a "massive national project to take down the scaffolding of Apartheid and replace it with a system that promised well-being, respect, and expression for all South Africans..." (DoE, 2001, n.p.). As a result, educational reform is considered a "central part of the country's reconstruction and development project" (DoE, 2001, n.p.).

Since 1994, the education system in South Africa has undergone huge transformation. Curriculum 2005 (C2005) was introduced in 1998, and four years later, in 2002, the national curriculum was changed again with the

introduction of the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS). This was then replaced by the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) in 2011, which is still in use today. Other transformations included the development of guiding policies such as the National Education Policy Act (NEPA) in 1996, and the Norms and Standards for Educators (DoE, 2000). During this time, various policies specifically related to ECD were also released. Key policies include the Education White Paper No 5 (DoE, 2001), the Action Plan to 2014 (DBE, 2011c), and the Universal Access to Grade R Framework (DBE, 2011d). Since 1994, South Africa has also undergone several curriculum changes as we moved from Curriculum 2005, through the National Curriculum Statements and the RNCS, to 2011 when the current curriculum, CAPS, was rolled out nationally.

All of these documents represent the educational reform process that acknowledged the significance of learning that happens before children enter formal schooling. This process accumulated in the 'rollout' of Grade R across all government primary schools. Previously, Grade R was not compulsory and most primary schools did not provide Grade R services. The impetus for moving Grade R into the official FP educational landscape began with the Education White Paper No. 5 on Early Childhood Development, which states "the policy priority of this White Paper is the implementation of the pre-school Reception Year (grade R) for five year olds" (DoE, 2001). The national context in which the Education White Paper No. 5 on ECD was produced, in terms of children needing to benefit from a focus on 'bridging the gap' (0-9 years old), cites the 1996 National Census, which documents 10 million children in South Africa in this age bracket. Of those, 6 million children were in the 0-6-year age bracket, and just over 1 million of these children were "enrolled in some type

of ECD provision” (DoE, 2001). The paper notes that amongst these 1 million children across 23,482 audited ECD sites<sup>6</sup>, there existed a “picture of inequity of provision and opportunity” (DoE, 2001). This is the result of the continuing effects of the Apartheid legacy which showed widespread discrimination of access and quality along racial lines (2001).

In 2011, the *Action Plan to 2014: Towards the realization of schooling 2025* (DBE) was released and, as a result, thousands of Grade R (sometimes referred to as Grade 0) offerings throughout South Africa were created. These were either moved from independent sites into primary schools or were newly created on primary school sites. The shifting of Grade R into the FP of schooling continues today and, as a result, much progress has been made in providing increased educational access for South African children aged five to six years old. Enrolments in Grade R between 2000 and 2013 grew by 244% (van der Berg et al., 2016). With this rise of access, discussions around increasing quality along with the increased quantity continue. For example, the DBE noted: “the professionalization of pre-school teachers needs to continue” (DBE, 2015, p. 29) as “ECD [including Grade R] practitioners are poorly qualified” (Spaul et al., 2016, p. 7).

It is in this context that I examine the policy promoted institutional identity (Gee, 2000) that Grade R teachers are negotiating, as ‘newcomers’ to the official FP in the formal schooling system. This has resulted in a physical and systemic move of existing Grade R teachers and the expansion of thousands of new Grade R

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<sup>6</sup> ECD sites at the time of publication were spread across school-based sites (17%), Community based sites (49%), and Home based sites (34%) (DoE, 2001).

teachers into the FP (now Grades R and 1-3 rather than only Gr 1-3) of schools, which now includes Grade R and Grade 1-3, rather than only Grade 1-3). This has resulted in this cohort of teachers having to negotiate and reconcile their professional roles, as “becoming a competent teacher entails more than acquiring technical skills”, and includes issues of self, such as identity (McNamara, 1996, p. 18). This renegotiation of identities and roles is especially tangible during a time of policy transition. I argue in later chapters, that this move into the FP involves the ongoing negotiation of professional identities of and by Grade R teachers. As Graven (2002, p. 41) notes, such a ‘context of change’ also has implications for teacher professional development, as they navigate a ‘complex space’, and “ways must be found for teachers to conceptualise and construct their new professional identities”.

The previous foregrounding in ECD policy of the nurturing intensive role of mother and care-giver ran the risk of de-professionalising Grade R teachers, in that such roles do not require specialised training or formal qualifications. Emphasis on this nurturing intensive role for Grade R teachers could impact on these teachers’ sense of belonging and identity as members of the formal school teaching profession. It could equally be used by others to ‘exclude’ Grade R teachers from membership to the FP.

In this chapter, I have discussed the theoretical, conceptual and analytical framing that informs this study. I have also presented teacher

professional identity and the Grade R context in South Africa. The following chapter (Chapter 3) outlines the methodological decisions undertaken for this study.

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## **CHAPTER 3: Methodological Considerations**

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### **3.1. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents the design and methodology which guided this research. Included is a description and discussion around the design of the study, the empirical site of the research, the participants and selection process, the methods and instruments used for the collection of data, analysis process, trustworthiness and credibility of the study, as well as the ethical considerations. I begin the chapter with a brief discussion outlining my position as researcher. This positioning was important in terms of enabling access to the participants and their identity stories. Because the purpose of the research is to answer specific research questions (discussed in Chapter 1), it is important that the processes undertaken in the design and collection of data, and subsequent analysis processes, are relevant to achieving the overarching research goal of the study. I therefore articulate throughout the chapter how the methodological decisions made speak to the research questions.

This chapter focuses only on the methodology of the empirical part of my study. The methodology for the documentary analysis which focuses on my first research question on policy is explained at the start of that data chapter (see Chapter 4).

### **3.2. MY POSITIONING AS RESEARCHER**

As this study is qualitative by design and, therefore, a social endeavour, it is influenced by 'the human factor'. As educational research is "conducted by thinking and feeling human beings" (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995, p. 39), it is important to discuss here who the researcher is, and how this influenced the design of the study.

I began my journey towards a doctorate after teaching Grade R and pre-Grade R for just over eight years. During that time, I studied part-time to complete my Masters in Education. It was through my continued studies that I became interested in teacher education (specifically in the early years, both pre- and in-service teacher education). Through joining the South African Numeracy Chair Project (SANCP) team as a full-time doctoral student, I occupied the dual role of researcher for this study and team member within the SANCP. My positions, therefore, allowed me to assist in the administration and organisation of various SANCP programmes, including the Early Number Fun Professional Development (ENF PD) programme, which forms the empirical site of this study.

While I assisted in the background organisation and set up of the ENF programme, in the teacher development sessions I was a participant observer. The sessions were led by the Chair, Prof Graven; the SANC project manager, Dr. Stott; and various guest speakers. During the sessions, I participated alongside teachers as a fellow participant engaged in my own PD. This provided me the opportunity to develop positive collegial relationships with the ENF teachers. In all of the SANCP-led ENF teacher development sessions, I was in a position to reflect on, journal about, and select key points throughout

the programme to re-examine during the research project. The reflexivity afforded by my positioning was instrumental in the research process.

As I participated alongside the ENF teachers, I became particularly interested in exploring teacher identities as they navigate their landscapes of practice. During ENF, teachers shared many insights into both tensions and successes of the massive recent policy transitions in the field of Grade R teaching in South Africa. My positioning and the positive relationships I built in the ENF enabled me to request participation from the teachers in my research. The focus of the study, and subsequent design thereof, was influenced, therefore, by my dual role of participant-researcher, and by my own experiences and reflections of having been a teacher myself.

### 3.3. RESEARCH DESIGN

Grade R teachers' expressions of institutional identity form the focal point of this study. As such, all methodological decisions were made with the intent of exploring, understanding and, as much as possible, validly representing the four selected participant teachers' identity stories. The study has as guiding theories the sociocultural conceptualisation of identity. In line with this chosen social theory of learning, this study is designed in order to contribute to the questions: "What if we adopted a different perspective...one that placed learning [and identity] in the context of our lived experience of participation in the world?" (Wenger, 1998, p. 3). As explained in Chapter 2, by situating the study in a sociocultural theoretical framing, it is possible to look at how Grade R teachers' experiences of participating in the world are expressed through their identity stories. The unit of analysis in this study

includes the stories of Grade R teachers written in policy (Chapter 4), and Grade R teacher stories (Chapter 5). This is what I draw on as indicators of Grade R teacher institutional identities.

Hitchcock & Hughes (1995) indicate that due to the complex processes of teaching, learning and education itself, the intention to focus solely on the product of the data, or in fact a 'cause and effect' approach to social research, would be remiss. This is because it would provide little value to understanding the myriad of processes therein. They, therefore, suggest the use of a qualitative research approach as the most effective and suitable route in studies of this nature. Choosing a qualitative approach was also done in that this type of 'exploratory' research "seeks to explain 'how' and 'why' a particular phenomenon or programme, operates as it does in a particular context" (The Open University, 2015, p. 10). In this study, the 'phenomenon' being explored is that of Grade R teachers' expressions of institutional identity. The 'context' is one of policy transition, and so a qualitative approach is appropriate. This approach also allows the study to investigate: "i) local knowledge and understanding of a given issue or programme; ii) people's experiences, meaning and relationships; and iii) social processes and contextual factors ...that marginalize a group of people..." (The Open University, 2015, p. 10).

The epistemological approach, discussed in Chapter 2, has informed the methodological approach of this research. The sociocultural lens has informed both the theoretical framing and the analytical framing utilised, and as a result, has also informed the data collection methods and data analysis decisions made. Teacher identity theorised as synonymous with teacher learning (after Wenger, 1998) was initially explored as the analytical framing of the study. In

particular, Wenger's (1998) four component theory and communities of practice (CoP) (discussed in Chapter 2) were seen as an apt analytic lens because, amongst other reasons, the ENF programme was explicitly designed as a CoP. Wenger's (1998) theory of identity and learning within a CoP was initially explored because Grade R teacher identity in relation to learning through participation in the ENF CoP was my interest. Since Wenger's (1998) work has proven to be a robust framework through which to analyse teacher learning and identity both internationally and in South Africa (Adler, 1998; Pausigere & Graven, 2014; Graven, 2004; Varghese, Morgan, Johnston & Johnson, 2005; Kelly, 2006), his theory of learning was particularly attractive for my research. However, through my ongoing participation in ENF, the teacher responses to ENF teacher questionnaires and my interviews (see section 3.6 below), I came to realise that teachers shared less about their learning and much more about the challenges in navigating their institutional identities in relation to the policy changes that began in 2001 and continue to date. Thus, while Wenger's broad theory of learning and identity has broadly informed my study and the nature of the questions I asked in the questionnaires and my interviews, the focus and analytic frame of my data became Gee's (2000) notion of Institutional identity (as discussed in Chapter 2).

Through my ongoing engagement in ENF and with the data, I realised that Wenger's conceptualisation of identity, fell short in providing an analytical framework. Because it is particularly tied to *learning* within a CoP, it was less useful to my emergent focus on teacher institutional identities (operationalised as the stories they tell in the questionnaires and interviews) than Gee's (2000) work on Institutional identity as one of the four views of

identity. Because this design decision was taken later in the study, I discuss here how the initial data collection tools were informed by Wenger's (1998) concept of learning as identity, as well as the broad overarching sociocultural theoretical framing. I mention this here, before proceeding with discussions concerning the design of the research, in order to guide the reader through the different methodological decisions made in the research. This is done to clarify which guiding framework informed various decisions and at which stage of the research. In summary, the design of the questionnaires, the questions asked during the interviews, and the decisions made related to the classroom practice observations and supporting video-stimulated questionnaires were done and implemented during the first stage of the study. The design of these data collection methods was thus broadly informed by Wenger's (1998) conceptualisation of learning as identity.

The process of data analysis took place after all the data was collected. It was during this second phase of the study that Gee's (2000) theory of identity, and in particular the concept of I-id, was selected as the main analytical framework. This influenced the methodological decisions involved in analysing the teacher data, as well as the decision to include document analysis of key educational policy documents with the same analytical frame. This too influenced the presentation of teacher data in such a way that their expressions of institutional identity are foregrounded; and, therefore, which data was included in the study and which was omitted (explained in further detail in Chapter 5). However, all methodological decisions throughout all stages of the broader study remain consistently informed by and guided by the overarching sociocultural theoretical frame and the chosen qualitative interpretive approach.

### 3.4. EMPIRICAL FIELD

The South African Numeracy Chair Project (SANCP), situated at Rhodes University, has worked since its inception in 2011 to improve the quality of teaching and learning in South Africa. Focusing on mathematics teaching and learning in the Eastern Cape, the project established a teacher support network called the Numeracy Inquiry Community of Leader Educators (NICLE). In the second phase of the project, these already established relationships with schools whose teachers participated in the NICLE project were utilised to invite teachers to participate in the Grade R Early Number Fun (ENF) PD programme. The empirical site is described by Graven (the chair's incumbent) as follows:

The South African Numeracy Chair Project (SANCP) began in 2011 at Rhodes University with the incumbent Chair (1st author) mandated to merge research and development to find sustainable ways forward to the challenges of numeracy education in South Africa. SANCP is currently running a Grade R teacher development programme. This was preceded by a Grade 3–4 programme (see Graven 2016) and is to be followed by a Grade 1–2 programme... the Grade R in-service teacher development programme called Early Number Fun (ENF), which began in April 2016 and has 33 Grade R teachers from 17 schools in the broader Makhanda (previously called Grahamstown) area. These teachers partner with researchers and teacher educators in the SANCP to collaboratively find ways to strengthen numeracy learning, particularly for learners in resource constrained contexts. ENF met monthly for afternoon sessions revolving around a series of key themes and key resources (Graven & Coles, 2017). It was in this ENF context that my

research was conducted, and it was the ENF Grade R teacher participants who are featured herein.

### 3.5. SAMPLING: PURPOSEFUL SELECTION OF FOUR TEACHERS

Phase 1 of my study involved gathering questionnaire data from all ENF participating teachers. This was an opportunistic sample as I was already involved in the programme as a part of the SANC Project team. All 29 teachers indicated a willingness to participate in my research and provided me access to the questionnaires that they completed as part of the ENF programme. ENF, as with all preceding SANC Professional Development programmes (from 2011-2016<sup>7</sup>), provide teacher questionnaires at the start, middle and end of the programme to gather information on teacher qualifications, experiences and expectations. Through my involvement in ENF and with permission from the teachers, I was able to include several questions focused on teacher identity. I, thus, had questionnaire data on 29 Grade R teachers. This was then transcribed and summarised, and enabled me to formulate and select case study teachers for in-depth research and further interviews.

A summary story of the data gathered from the whole group of ENF teachers is presented in Chapter 5 (Table 5.1.). In this research, I refer to this phase 1 data of the whole ENF group only in relation to explaining how my selected case study teachers reflect the broader group and for reflecting on how aspects of the four teachers' institutional identities are reflective of the broader group. The four teachers were purposively chosen as they represent a spectrum of contexts and experiences, and to enable rich and thick

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.ru.ac.za/sanc/>

descriptions across contexts (Taylor, 2010). So, for example, the qualifications of the case study teachers are reflected against the number of ENF teachers who had that qualification, and so forth. The findings from this data constituted the basis of developing rich, elaborated evidence (Denscombe, 2007).

Each of the four selected teachers: were participants of the ENF programme; had agreed to participate in my research; had completed the first set of ENF questionnaires; had agreed to be and were interviewed; and had video-recorded at least one of their lessons. Below, I present a brief introduction to each of the four Grade R teachers (as at the time of study) selected for inclusion in this study:

- Maria was a Grade R teacher with 23 years of experience, and was at the time of the study Head of Department (HoD) of the FP of her school. Her school is what was previously referred to as a so-called 'coloured' school. Maria taught in English which is her second language.
- Anita was a full-time, qualified Grade R teacher at a fee-paying, ex-Model C school, with 39 years of experience. She was also the Head of Department at the time of the study. Anita taught in English which is her first language.
- Funeka was working full-time as a Grade R teacher at a no fee-paying, so-called 'coloured' school. She had a certificate level qualification specialising in Early Childhood Development and

four years of teaching experience. Funeka taught in Afrikaans, which is her third language.

- Thandi was working as a full-time Grade R teacher at a no fee-paying township school and was in the process of becoming a qualified teacher by completing a National Professional Diploma in Education. She had 14 years of teaching experience. Thandi taught in her first language, isi-Xhosa.

The teachers are from diverse racial and language backgrounds as well as differing in terms of qualifications, years of experience, and their school community contexts. This diversity was not achieved ‘accidentally’ but rather purposefully, as it is the intention of this study to explore a range of Grade R teachers’ stories. This group was selected because they represent the wide range of permutations of Grade R teachers currently working in South Africa in terms of: unqualified – qualified; no fee-paying to fee-paying schools; race, language and school community contexts. This allowed, not for comparison, but for a more detailed and rich understanding of the diverse South African education context, specifically the Grade R policy transition landscape.

### 3.6. DATA COLLECTION AND PROCEDURES

This study is qualitative by design, and although the research methods selected are important, these do not provide the “defining characteristic of qualitative data. It is the nature of the data that is produced that is the crucial issue” (Denscombe, 2007, p. 286). However, it is important that the data collected takes the form of “words (spoken or written) and visual images

(observed or creatively produced)” (Denscombe, 2007, p. 286). This study therefore draws on multiple sources of ‘words’ (spoken and written), including interview responses, narratives, answers to open ended questions and policy documents. The four main data gathering tools used to access these sources include questionnaires, interviews, video-stimulated recall questionnaires and documents (see documentary analysis in Chapter 4). Using multiple techniques or methods to gather data allows for data collection from a variety of sources. It is important, however, that the methods used gather enough data in order to answer the three research questions. These are as follows:

- Research Question 1: How are Grade R teachers represented in policy documents in terms of the identifying descriptors used across both ECD and Grade R focused policy? (Chapter 4)
- Research Question 2: How do Grade R teachers express their institutional identities through the telling of their stories across time and through landscapes of practice? (Chapter 5)
- Research Question 3: How do Grade R teachers’ experiences of policy and practice come together to illuminate a picture of institutional identity in a time of transition? (Chapter 5 and Chapter 6).

As Denscombe (2007, p. 13) highlights, as a social researcher, it is almost impossible to collect relevant data from everyone in a category, and the alternative is to collect evidence from a “portion of the whole”. The data for this study was collected in four stages, which spanned the entire 18-month (10 sessions) duration of the ENF programme. In line with the qualitative nature of the study, and in response to the above research questions, the following

sections outline the data collection tools utilised for the study across the four stages of data collection. Below (see Table 3.1.) I provide a summary of the empirical data gathering methods<sup>8</sup> in order to guide the reader through the methodological process undertaken.

**Table 3.1. Summary of Empirical Data Gathering Methods**

<b>Data Source</b>	<b>Date collected</b>	<b>No. of teachers who participated</b>	<b>Where data is used</b>
Baseline Teacher Questionnaire	April 2016	29	Chapter 5
Interview	May-July 2016	19	Chapter 5
Midway Programme Teacher Questionnaire	October 2016	28	Chapter 5
End of Programme Teacher Questionnaire	August 2017	25	Chapter 5
Video Stimulated Recall Questionnaire	August 2017	6	Chapter 5
Policy documents	Jan 2016 – Dec 2017	Not Applicable	Chapter 4

### **3.6.1. Questionnaires**

The first stage of data collection involved designing and distributing questionnaires to all of the ENF programme participants (n=29). As noted above, these questionnaires (Appendices 2-4) formed part of the broader work conducted by the SANCP, in that the SANCP teacher development programmes are structured in such a way that research and development occur simultaneously. Questionnaire data was collected at the start, midway and at the end of the ENF programme. As mentioned above, my position as participant-researcher in the SANCP enabled me to work with the ENF facilitator team in designing questionnaire items, in order to incorporate

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<sup>8</sup> The selection of policy documents, and the process of the documentary analysis employed in Chapter 4, is explained briefly in Section 3.6.4 below, and in further detail at the beginning of the policy analysis chapter.

questions relevant to my study. This said, my interest in identity coheres with the perspective on learning of all SANCP programmes. As such, the questions I included were not particularly different from those that would have been included irrespective of my research.

While all ENF participating teachers were invited to complete questionnaires before (Appendix 2), midway through (Appendix 3), and post the ENF programme (Appendix 4), not all teachers completed all the questionnaires, due to absenteeism and late registration. Table 3.2 below summarises the tally of completed questionnaires collected. Permission for teacher responses, and other data, used in this study was requested from all participants before the questionnaires were distributed (see Section 3.9 on Ethics for further details regarding permissions and Appendix 12 for a copy of the permission request form distributed). All questionnaires were transcribed by myself.

Table 3.2: Summary of Completed ENF PD Participating Teacher Questionnaires

Occupation of participant	Questionnaire 1 completed April 2016	Questionnaire 2 Completed October 2016	Questionnaire 3 Completed August 2017	All 3 Questionnaires Completed
Gr R teacher	√	√	√	√
Grade R Assistant	√	X	X	X
Gr R teacher	X	√	√	X
Gr R teacher	√	√	√	√
Gr R teacher	√	X	√	X
Gr R teacher	X	√	√	X
Gr R teacher	√	√	X	X
Gr R teacher	√	√	√	√
Gr R teacher	√	√	X	X
Gr R teacher	X	√	√	X
Gr R teacher	√	√	√	√
Gr R teacher	√	√	√	√
Gr R teacher	√	√	X	X

Education Department Specialist	√	X	X	X
Education Department Specialist	X	X	X	X
Education Department Specialist	X	X	X	X
Gr R teacher	X	√	√	X
Gr R teacher	X	√	√	X
Gr R teacher	√	X	√	X
Gr R teacher	√	X	√	X
GR R teacher	√	√	√	√
Gr R teacher	√	√	√	√
Gr R teacher	√	√	√	√
Gr R teacher	√	√	√	√
Pre-grade R teacher	√	√	√	√
Gr R teacher	√	X	X	X
Gr R teaching assistant	√	X	√	X
Gr R teacher	√	√	X	X
Gr R teacher	√	√	√	√
Gr R teacher	√	√	√	√
Gr R teacher	√	√	√	√
Gr R teacher	√	√	√	√
Gr R teacher	√	√	√	√
Gr R teacher	X	√	√	X
Gr R teacher	√	√	X	X
Pre-grade R teacher	√	√	X	X
Pre-grade R teacher	√	√	X	X
	<b>29</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>15</b>

Questionnaires were used because, according to Denscombe (2007), they provide the most efficient way of gathering information from participants, and provide the simplest way to gather significant amounts of data (Hopkins, 1985). Adding to the appeal of utilising questionnaires is their potential to reveal information about the perceptions as well as the beliefs of the research participants (Johnson & Christensen, 2000). The table above shows that the first questionnaire was completed by 29 participants in April 2016. This questionnaire was developed with the dual purpose of speaking to this research study, as well as the wider research aims of the SANCP. It contained

questions focused on gathering basic information about the participating teachers, such as information regarding qualifications, teaching experience, previous workshop/training participation, and also included teachers' views on Grade R numeracy teaching practice and appropriate Grade R numeracy learning.

This first questionnaire also provided insights into the participants' 'personal histories', as well as their present professional and personal contexts. For example, it included questions about years of experience, qualifications and questions such as 'Why did you become a Grade R teacher?' This approach to gathering 'narratives' from participants is supported by Bjuland, Cestari and Borgersen (2012) in their work on professional mathematics teacher identity. It is also inspired by the work of Sfard and Prusak (2005) in its approach, and provides a useful data gathering tool as "indicators of professional identity may be detected through text and discourse" (Bjuland, Cestari & Borgersen, 2012, p. 406). It also enables essential opportunities to communicate in ways that articulate their identities (Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner & Cain, 1998; Sfard & Prusak, 2005)

The midway and end of programme questionnaires had similar questions, although the final questionnaire included ENF questions about teacher experiences of participating in the ENF CoP. The midway questionnaire was completed by 28 participants in October 2016. The End of programme questionnaire was completed by 25 participants in August 2017.

Data collected from the three ENF questionnaires was used in compiling a broad description of ENF teachers' institutional identities as represented in

the broader group of teachers who completed all three questionnaires (n=15). This description is given at the start of Chapter 5 as it provides a broad overview of the ENF group from which the four case study teacher stories emerge and locates these stories within the broader group. Table 3.3 below provides a summary of initial ENF questionnaire responses on occupation, years of experience, reasons for becoming a Grade R teacher and impetus for joining the ENF programme<sup>9</sup>. Table 3.4 provides an explanation of the teacher qualification abbreviations presented in Table 3.3.

**Table 3.3: Summary of Some Responses from Initial ENF PD Teacher Questionnaire**

Teacher	Occupation	School Quintile	Qualification	Years of Experience in 2016	Question 1.3: Why did you become a Grade R teacher?	Question 1.14: Why have you joined this ENF programme?
1A	Grade R Teacher	3	Level 4 – ECD + NPDE – Fphase	2007 – 9 years	For the love of kids To ensure that I contribute positively towards our future leaders	Numeracy is my passion. The more I can learn, the better equipped I will be to assist the kids
2A	Grade R Teacher	3	NQF Level 4 / Matric	2015 – 1 year	I love to work with smaller children it was always my dream	I would like to learn more
2B	Grade R Teacher	3	Matric + 2 years teacher training	2011 – 5 years	I have a passion for working with children and the little ones interested me	To expand my knowledge of math's and especially numeracy
3A	Grade R Teacher	2	N.PDE	2010 – 6 years	I love children	To have more knowledge in numeracy
3B	Grade R Teacher	2	NPDE, Level 4, Diploma in Education	2003 – 13 years	I like children, I feel good when I with them, it's because I like to make develop the small ones. I have passion for them	Need more information Ideas
4A	Grade R Teacher	3	N.P.D.E foundation phase	2005 – 11 years	It's because I love children very much and I don't like to see them unhappy	I just want to gain more learning skill for my learners

<sup>9</sup> For the teacher data in this table, each school was allocated a number and each teacher a letter symbol. In instances where there is one teacher from the school, her letter allocation is 'A' (i.e. 12A). In instances of more than one teacher from a school, the school number remains the same while the letter symbol progresses (i.e. 13A; 13B; 13C; etc.).

Teacher	Occupation	School Quintile	Qualification	Years of Experience in 2016	Question 1.3: Why did you become a Grade R teacher?	Question 1.14: Why have you joined this ENF programme?
4B	Grade R Teacher	3	N.P.D.E Foundation Phase DLPM	2006 – 10 years	Because I love the small ones	To gain more ideas More information about Numbers
5A	Grade R Teacher	3	NPDE	2002 – 14 years	I like to teach and love children	To develop my self
6A	Grade R Teacher	3	B.Ed. 3rd year	2005 – 11 years	The love of the young once. I love to hear them laugh	My colleagues at school told me about the programme and how fun it was and how they have learned through this programme
7A	Grade R Teacher	3	B.Ed. 3rd year	2010 – 6 years	It is my passion to work with children	I want to learn about Mathematics. How to teach math's in my classroom
7B	Grade R Teacher	3	Early Childhood Learning & Level 4	2012 – 4 years	I love children and want to transfer my knowledge to them and help them to build the nation if they get good basic skills	I am interested. I want to learn and pass my knowledge to others especially the children and those who are keen. I am not full skilled in Maths I want those skills. I want more information I never see Maths as fun when I was growing up. I want to do it more fun as you say and also learn more.
8A	Grade R Teacher	3	Level I II & Level 4	2002 – 14 years	I see that in my community there's a shortage of teacher in crèche. So, I start with a volunteer without money. But in the middle of the year the committee start paying me. And I love the children	I love because I will see with Grade 2 & 4 teachers.
9A	Grade R Teacher	4	B.Ed. Foundation Phase	2015 – 1 year	Because I have a passion to work with little children. Gr. R is the most important year for a child to develop certain skills, that's needed for gr. 1	To get more confident to teach math's in various ways

Teacher	Occupation	School Quintile	Qualification	Years of Experience in 2016	Question 1.3: Why did you become a Grade R teacher?	Question 1.14: Why have you joined this ENF programme?
10A	Grade R Teacher	4	NPDE	2003 – 13 years	I like to be grade r teacher because I like to be with small kids to teach them values and literacy, life skills and numeracy I decided because I like the whole child approach	I would like to more about teaching numeracy in Foundation Phase I also would like to get some ideas and resources
10B	Grade R Teacher	4	Level 5	1999 – 17 years	Love working with kids Would like to make a difference in their lives	Because I just love working with kids Also, to see their development
11A	Grade R Teacher	5	DEIII Pre-Primary (Barkly House) / DSE-M Handicap (UCT)	1985 – 31 years	Love for children Wanting to make a difference	New ideas and research done. Exposed to other Gr. R teachers
12A	Grade R Teacher	5	NPDE Foundation Phase. Currently 3rd year B.Ed. Mathematics FP	2006 – 10 years	I love working with children and strive to ma a difference in their lives	To help me develop professionally so that I am able to use this knowledge to help learners learn Mathematics
13A	Grade R Teacher	2	Level 4, NPDE	2007 – 9 years	I was working at the crèche for 5 years. I love the job, working with kids	[Head of Department] phoned me and tell me about the workshop saying that it will help me a lot, I was very interested, I want to gain more knowledge how to teach numeracy and others.
14A	Grade R Teacher	3	B.Ed. (not finished) Grade R (I ended up starting from NPED am doing third year 2016	2004 – 12 years	I have a passion with small children that is why I become a Grade R teacher	I joined because it was at my school there are teacher who joined NICLE and when they report Its fun and exciting

Teacher	Occupation	School Quintile	Qualification	Years of Experience in 2016	Question 1.3: Why did you become a Grade R teacher?	Question 1.14: Why have you joined this ENF programme?
			specializing in Learners with Barriers)			
14B	Grade R Teacher	3	NDPE (Foundation Phase)	2003 – 13 years	Because I teach the learners from pre-school to be ready for grade 1. Teach them how to handle crayons, scissors, counting make them ready for the next grade	I want to learn more how to teach learners about numeracy. To develop the learners how to do mathematics.
15A	Grade R Teacher	4	(UK) Cache Diploma in Childcare + Education level 5	2005 – 11 years	I enjoy working with children and done so since 1993. I decided in 2003 to work with grade r children and studied and worked in the UK.	Would like to get some fresh ideas
16A	Grade R Teacher	3	D.E. III Pre-Primary; H.D.E. 5 J.P.	1993 – 23 years	Because of my love for children. Wasn't my first choice, but once I was in it, I realised that this was my calling	Lifelong Learner Enjoy learning new things that can help me with my training Looking forward to receiving teaching aids Only heard good things about [previous SANCP programme] from colleagues Attended one workshop with provincial colleague
17A	Grade R Teacher	3	Level 5 + Grade 12	2010 – 6 years	I was not studying not working so I started to study early child development to CSD and am becoming a grade r teacher	To learn more about how to develop children physical, mental and emotional and also even myself
18A	Education Dept. Official	-	MEd FP			Take the programme further – other grade R
18B	Education Dept. Official	-	Did not respond		N/A	Did not respond
1B	Assistant	3	Matric/Grad		(helper) firstly I love	Did not respond

Teacher	Occupation	School Quintile	Qualification	Years of Experience in 2016	Question 1.3: Why did you become a Grade R teacher?	Question 1.14: Why have you joined this ENF programme?
			Grade 12		working with kids Have the passion with working with kids	
19A	Private ECD Centre Practitioner	-	Matric/Grade 12		(grade 0) I have passion about teaching pre-school learners And also want to teach higher grade 1 day	We want to learn more
11B	Assistant	5	Level 4		I was interested to focus in little children	To learn more about numeracy
19B	Private ECD Centre Practitioner	-	Level 4		Pre-school learners and also want to teach	We want to learn more

Table 3.4: Explanation of ENF PD Participant Teacher Qualifications

Qualification and Grade or Phase Level/S Specification	Clarification / Definition / Explanation
Level 4	This is a Trade Certification, and is a Level 4 on the National Qualifications Framework. It is situated in the Further Education and Training Band, and is often offered at a trade school or trade college. It is the equivalent to Grade 12, the highest grade at school level, although the syllabus is very different to compulsory school subjects. It is an entry level qualification, and Level 4 ECD Educators are often referred to as 'practitioners' as opposed to 'teachers'. It is worth 120 credits. This qualification can be likened to the NCVQ (UK) Early Years Care and Education Level 2
Level 5 / Educare	This qualification serves to provide students with the necessary skills and knowledge considered important for a child caregiver.
Level 6 / B.Ed. 3rd year	Currently completing third and final year of a part-time Bachelor of Education Degree, Foundation Phase. This qualification is Level 6. And this particular programme is for in-service teachers (currently working in a school).
Level 7 / B.Ed. Foundation Phase	Four year full-time Bachelor's Degree in Education, Foundation Phase for pre-service teachers
Level 7 / DEIII Pre-Primary and DSE-M Handicap	Diploma of Education 3 in Pre-Primary and Diploma in Special Education – Mental Handicap Equivalent to current Level 7
Level 6 / NPDE	National Professional Diploma: Education This is a level 6 qualification which counts as 360 credits, and usually takes minimum two years to complete post schooling / level 4 trade certification. It "has as its purpose the upgrading of un- or under-qualified school and technical college educators, with a view of improving the quality of teaching and learning in schools

Qualification and Grade or Phase Level/S Specification	Clarification / Definition / Explanation
	and colleges". (SAQA, 2016)

From Table 3.3 above, it can be seen that the highest qualification of the group is held by the official from the Education Department, who holds a Master’s degree. The most common qualification is a National Professional Diploma of Education<sup>10</sup> (NPDE), held by 10 of the teachers. The second most common (7 teachers) qualification is a Level 4 Diploma<sup>11</sup>, which specialises in ECD, not Grade R. Three teachers were in the process of completing their Bachelor’s Degree in Education, and one teacher had recently completed this degree. Two teachers had qualified with Junior Primary Diplomas (and Honours) under the previous system of qualifications. One teacher had an overseas qualification, one held a Level 5 qualification, and the remainder held Matric (Grade 12 school leaving) Certificates.

South African schools “are categorised into 5 groups (**quintiles**) based on the relative wealth of their surrounding communities. **Schools** in the poorest communities are classified as **Quintile 1** and **schools** serving the wealthiest communities are classified as **Quintile 5**” (emphasis in original )(GroundUp, 2016, p. 1,). Most of the teachers were at the time teaching in quintile 3 schools (15 of the 29 teachers); with three teachers representing quintile 5 schools; four teachers working in quintile 4 schools; and three teachers from quintile 2 schools.

<sup>10</sup> This is the minimum qualification to become a Grade R teacher

<sup>11</sup> This is below the minimum requirements to become a Grade R teacher

The average years of teaching experience across the 23 teachers was 10.9 years, with a range of one to 31 years. In response to the question of why they chose to become Grade R teachers, all 23 referenced affective influences, including responses such as “Because of my love for children” (Teacher 16A, April 2016); “I have passion about teaching pre-school learners” (Teacher 19A, April 2016); and “I love the job, working with kids” (Teacher 13A, April 2016). One teacher responded that she became a Grade R teacher because she identified a need in her community: “I see that in my community there’s a shortage of teacher in crèche. So, I start with a volunteer without money” (Teacher 8A, April 2016); and one teacher responded that she became a Grade R teacher because “I was not studying not working so I started to study early child development at [training institute] and am becoming a Grade R teacher” (Teacher 17A, April 2016). Finally, teachers were asked to share the reason they decided to join the SANCP ENF programme. 19 teachers (the majority) indicated that they joined because they wanted to ‘learn more’; expand their knowledge and skills; and to ‘get more ideas’. Four teachers joined as a result of recommendations by their colleagues who had attended previous SANCP teacher development programmes. Two teachers indicated that they joined in order to develop themselves and develop professionally. One teacher said she joined in order to gain more confidence in teaching Numeracy, and one teacher said she joined in order to be exposed to other Grade R teachers. The official from the Education Department indicated that she joined the programme in order to take it to other Grade R teachers.

Table 3.3 and the summary of teacher responses above are included here in order to provide the reader the context of the empirical field in which this study was conducted. This context is provided to give insight to the

analysis of teacher narratives presented in Chapter 5 and how this relates to the broader group of teachers from which they were selected. Presenting this data here is also useful when further analysing the spectrum of identities discussed in Chapter 4.

Data collected from the three ENF questionnaires was also used in compiling the narrative vignettes of the four teachers presented in Chapter 5, in order to supplement the interview data which provided the main source of data for the vignettes. When questionnaire data is referred to in the analysis chapter, the following labelling protocol was used: (Pseudonym of teacher, Teacher Questionnaire number, Question number, Date questionnaire completed). For example, Maria's response from question 3 in the first ENF teacher questionnaire is referenced as:(Maria, TQ 1, Q3, April 2016).

The advantages of using questionnaires as a data collection tool included that they are economical (Denscombe, 2007), allowing access to a large group (all 33 participating teachers of the ENF group) without the costs of materials (such as audio-recording equipment), money (possibly incurred due to travel expenses) and time (as multiple participants can complete questionnaires at the same time). They were easy to arrange (Denscombe, 2007), as they were distributed to all participants during the ENF contact sessions (in April 2016, October 2016 and August 2017), and completed during an allotted time frame dedicated to this activity. This meant that the participants were already gathered together and able to dedicate uninterrupted time to the task.

### **3.6.2. Interviews**

The second stage of data collection involved conducting one-on-one semi-structured interviews with participants. The aim of this study was to gather Grade R teacher narratives of their navigation of the policy transition context, as well as to allow the reader to “relive the experience” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 905) of these teachers. It is, therefore, important that the data methods used allow for access to rich and detailed data. Interviews were used for this purpose as they offer access to: depth of information; insights; informants’ priorities; flexibility; and validity (Denscombe, 2007).

As can be seen from Table 3.2, the ENF participants consisted of Grade R teachers, pre-Grade R teachers, Grade R assistant teachers and Education Department specialists. Because the focus of this study is on Grade R teacher identity, I focused on those working in Grade R only. There were 21 Grade R teachers who completed the first ENF questionnaire in April 2016. These 21 teachers were invited to participate in interviews (conducted from May to July 2016) and 19 of them willingly accepted. I thus interviewed 19 Grade R teachers. These 19 interviews broadly informed the research process. Although I do not include all 19 full interviews here, and include only four interviews for the data analysis in Chapter 5, all 19 of the interviews and multiple readings of all of the transcripts guided the decision to focus on institutional identity as an analytic frame.

As the focus of this study is on the teachers’ identity, it is important to consider the teachers’ perspectives, feelings and values as these are significant to their personal and professional identities. Interviews were conducted in order to obtain in-depth information about a participant’s thoughts, beliefs, knowledge, reasoning, motivations, and feelings (Johnson & Christensen,

2000). To conduct the interviews and have the participants feel able to share these inner thoughts with me, it was vitally important that a positive one-to-one rapport was established. This consisted of trust of the researcher, and appreciation by the researcher of the teacher's thinking and reasoning (Cobb, Confrey, Lehrer & Schauble, 2003).

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 19 Grade R teachers during the course of May to July 2016, and ranged between 20 minutes and an hour in length. As the purpose of conducting interviews is to gather richer and more informative data than that gathered from questionnaires (Koshy, 2005), it was vital that those interviews not be rushed. A semi-structured interview schedule with open-ended questions was utilised so as to allow (as much as is possible) the teachers to 'open-up' and reveal their internal thinking and reflect on their lived realities, as this type of interview allows the person being interviewed to "go beyond the designed scope" (Bernard, 1988, p. 205). A copy of the interview schedule is attached as Appendix 5.

All interviews were conducted by myself, one-on-one with the teachers, recorded, after obtaining appropriate permissions, and detailed notes taken throughout. They were conducted at a time and place deemed suitable by the teachers. The audio from the interviews was transcribed, with the transcriptions being added to the data set. The interview transcriptions are the main source of data used in the narrative vignettes presented in Chapter 5, due to the depth and richness of the insights offered by the teachers during the process. When interview data is referenced in the vignettes, the following labelling protocol is used: (Pseudonym, Interview, Line numbers, Month of

interview). For example, Maria's responses are referenced as: (Maria, Int., L 5-10, Jun 2016).

Participants were provided transcripts of their interviews and encouraged to perform member checks on all transcripts, in order to avoid misrepresentation. Only a few teachers took up this offer and they indicated that the transcripts reflected the interviews appropriately.

### **3.6.3. How I arrived at four teachers for in-depth analysis**

A thematic reading of data involves "the comparison of pieces of data judged to belong to a particular theme, in an effort to recognise the common feature of that theme" (Tuckett, 2005, p. 76). As such, all 19 of the interview transcripts were used in the first stages of analysis. The recurring theme of institutional identity emerged, which led to the invitation to teachers to participate in a video stimulated recall questionnaire (discussed below in Section 3.6.3).

Of the 19 teachers invited to participate in this round of data generation, 6 of those who met the logistical requirements agreed. Of these 6 teachers, one was not a Grade R teacher (she was an assistant and thus not within the defined sample) and two of the teachers worked in the same school, offering very similar responses in their interviews and in the video-stimulated recall questionnaire. It was decided that including both of these teachers' stories would not offer new insights and so only one was selected for this study. Thus, the final selection of four teachers for the study (more on this selection is included in Section 3.4 above). Selecting the four teachers for inclusion in

Chapter 5 was done as a purposeful sampling process. In order to be able to focus on institutional identity and give a broader picture across teachers with varied institutional experiences, these four teachers were selected as representative of different levels of education achieved and from different school contexts.

Table 3.5 below shows a summary of participant teacher qualifications, according to under/un-qualified and qualified (to teach Grade R). All those with a school leaving certificate (Matric) with no further Higher Education training are considered unqualified. Those with a formal qualification lower than a Bachelor’s Degree are classified as under-qualified. All those with a Degree or post-graduate degree are considered qualified.

Table 3.5: Summary of un-/under-/qualified ENF PD Participant Teachers

<b>Un-qualified</b>	<b>Underqualified</b>	<b>Fully Qualified</b>
Matric	NQF Level 4 NQF Level 5 NPDE Matric + 2 years B.Ed. in Progress	Grade R Diploma <sup>12</sup> B.Ed. Complete Diploma in Education 3
<b>2</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>4</b>

From the above table, it can be seen that the majority of the teacher participants (24 of 30) in the ENF PD empirical field are classified as underqualified. This cohort could be said to be more representative of the national cohort of South African teachers working in Grade R: A Human

<sup>12</sup> For a comprehensive explanation of the different South African Qualifications Framework levels, diplomas and degrees, please refer to Appendix 11

Sciences Research Council study found that “only 35% of practitioners responsible for infant and toddler classes had any form of ECD qualification, and only 47% of practitioners responsible for older children had any form of ECD qualification” (Atmore, van Niekerk & Ashley-Cooper, 2012, p. 134). Therefore, 53% of practitioners working with ‘older children’ (i.e. Grade R age children) can be considered to have no specialised ECD qualification, and therefore are un- or underqualified. This is similar to the ENF cohort in that the minority are considered qualified, not the majority.

As my study chose to focus on in-depth stories of four teachers, I have included the full transcripts of these interviews conducted in Appendices 6-9. The other 15 teacher interview transcripts are stored in my data archive.

#### **3.6.4. Classroom observation video recordings and stimulated recall questionnaire**

After reviewing the questionnaire and interview data, a third stage of data collection was undertaken. As mentioned above in Section 3.3, the data collection phase of this study was guided by Wenger’s (1998) learning as identity theory, and focused on learning and identity within the ENF PD Programme and in relation to practice. In this respect, it was considered important to collect data which spoke to the teachers’ practice in the classroom. This led to video recordings of classroom practice of a sample of the participant teachers. I considered that the data to be used for the in-depth analysis of a small number of Grade R teachers should be a “representative cross-section of people or events in the whole population being studied” (Denscombe, 2007, p. 13). Additionally, due to logistical considerations, the

following criteria guided me when inviting teacher participation in the video recording of classroom practice:

- I wanted teachers who were working across a range of schools (from no-fee paying to ex-Model C);
- I anticipated travelling back and forth for multiple interviews and to video record lessons, and so the school sites needed to be in close proximity;
- I wanted to involve teachers with different ranges qualifications, from un-qualified, underqualified, and fully qualified;
- I needed the teachers to have completed the first round of ENF questionnaires, and to have agreed to and already participated in the interview process.

Of the teachers who volunteered to have their lessons filmed, five met the above criteria. Each of these five teachers was then video-recorded in their classrooms conducting a Numeracy-focused lesson of their choice, at a time that was convenient for them during August 2017. Each lesson ranged in duration from 20 minutes to an hour, and all were recorded by myself. These video recordings were then transferred from the video camera, using video-conversion software, to DVD format. These DVDs were then returned to the five teachers, along with a video-stimulated recall questionnaire (Appendix 10) to be completed in their own time. These completed questionnaires were then collected and responses recorded digitally by me. The decision was made not to transcribe and/or analyse the video recordings as the goal of this research

was the teacher's expression of her own interpretation of herself as a Grade R teacher (her storied identity).

These video recordings were sent home with the teachers, in order to be viewed without 'anxiety' (Calderhead, 1981), after which they completed the video-stimulated recall questionnaire. By requesting that the video be reviewed at home, in comfortable surroundings and away from the 'research glare', it was anticipated that the teachers would be able to fully engage both with the video of themselves, and with the questions posed. This was furthermore considered important because the majority of these teachers would be viewing themselves teaching in a language which is not their first language. Furthermore, many would articulate their thinking and reflections using a language which is not their first language. Alleviating participant anxiety is paramount, as I use the teacher's responses and reflections in this study for "developmental (purposes) rather than judgmental" purposes (Williams, 1989, p. 85).

Because who we are "lies in the way we live day to day" (Wenger, 1998, p. 151), and identity is "an ongoing process that involves the interpretation and reinterpretation of experiences as one lives through them" (Kerby, 1991, cited in Beijaard, Verloop & Vermunt, 2000, p. 750), it is in the "interplay of participation and reification that our experience of life becomes one of identity, and indeed of human existence and consciousness" (Wenger, 1998, p. 157). The experience of observing themselves in the day to day practice of teaching, through video-stimulated recall, allows uncovering the interplay discussed above and, in so doing, reveal the identities of these teachers. These specific methodological choices were made because, "Consciously, we teach

what we know; unconsciously, we teach who we are” (Hamachek, 1999, p. 209); and “through self-evaluation, one’s identity is continually informed, formed, and reformed” (Beijaard, Verloop & Vermunt, 2000, p. 750).

It is often the case in research into teaching and learning that the central lens is placed squarely on teachers’ practice, or conversely on the learners’ learning. It is not often that the teacher as a person is considered. In South Africa, mostly as a result of the current ‘crisis’ in education, and as a result of the drive to ‘fix’ schools, too often this research lens is directed at the teachers’ practice with the intent to uncover what is ‘wrong’. This ‘deficit’ approach to understanding teaching and learning is not what I am interested in. As Graven (2014, p. 1048) cautions:

We need to consider the effects of our research and question whether it contributes to finding ways forward. If our research aims to confirm the extent of the crisis and communicates messages of deficit and inevitability of failure for the poor, then we need to begin to question the ethics of our participation in such research.

Also, as is sometimes the case with one-on-one semi-structured interviews, the participant may be influenced by what he or she believes the interviewer wants to hear, which could call into question the validity of the information gathered. This is explained by Graven (2004, p. 114) who notes that a questionnaire provides opportunity for participants to “revise their thoughts and provide access to ‘written discourses’ that can be different to ‘verbal discourses’ because the activity of filling in the questionnaire positions the teachers differently to interviews”.

Due to the above influencing factors, and due to the study's focus explicitly away from practice evaluation, the decision was made to use the video-stimulated recall questionnaire. The data generated from this questionnaire is included, where applicable, in the teacher narrative stories presented in Chapter 5. Where data from these questionnaires is used, it is labelled as: Pseudonym of teacher, Video-stimulated recall questionnaire (Vid-stim rec), Question Number, Month questionnaire completed. For example, in Maria's story, the questionnaire excerpt is referenced as follows: (Maria, Vid-stim rec Q.8., August 2017). A copy of this questionnaire is included as Appendix 10.

### **3.6.5. Policy Documents**

The fourth and final stage of data collection involved the sourcing, collecting, reading and analysing of key Early Childhood Development, Grade R and Foundation Phase (FP) teaching and learning policy documents in South Africa. Documents form the only source of data for this stage of analysis, and are considered a reliable source as they are:

- Authoritative. Since the data have been produced by the state, employing large resources and expert professionals, they tend to have credibility.
- Objective. Since the data have been produced by officials, they might be regarded as impartial.
- Factual. In the case of the statistics, they take the form of numbers that are amenable to computer storage/analysis, and constitute 'hard facts' around which there can be no ambiguity.

(Denscombe, 2007, pp. 227-228)

The following documents were read first:

1. Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement Foundation Phase Grade R Mathematics (DBE, 2011a)
2. Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement Foundation Phase Grades 1-3 Mathematics (DBE, 2011b)
3. Numeracy Handbook for Foundation Phase Teachers: Grades R-3, (DBE, 2012a)
4. Education White Paper 5 on Early Childhood Education (DoE, 2001)
5. Universal Access to Grade R: Policy Framework (DBE, 2011d)
6. The Norms and Standards for Educators (DoE, 2000)
7. Laying Solid Foundations for Learning: Teacher Guide (Grade R) (DBE, 2015)
8. Foundations for Learning: Assessment Framework Grade R (DBE, 2010)
9. Action Plan to 2014: Towards the realization of schooling 2025 (DBE, 2011c)
10. The nationwide audit of ECD provisioning in South Africa (DoE, 2001)

Once these documents were reviewed, it became apparent that although each document was important for understanding the broad educational context in which the Grade R transition occurred, not all offered insights into Grade R teacher policy promoted institutional identity, which was

the purpose of conducting the documentary analysis. I do, however, draw on the above documents in order to elaborate on the policy context, which forms part of my first analysis chapter, Chapter 4. The key documents identified for further analysis, to provide a comprehensive and focused picture of the ECD/Grade R/FP transition context, and policy promoted institutional identity, are the:

1. Education White Paper No. 5 on Early Childhood Education (DoE, May 2001) (hereafter referred to as White Paper No. 5)
2. Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement Foundation Phase Grade R Mathematics (DBE, 2011a) (hereafter referred to as CAPS FP Gr R:M).
3. Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement Foundation Phase Grades 1-3 Mathematics (DBE, 2011b) (hereafter referred to as CAPS FP Gr 1-3:M).
4. Norms and Standards for Educators (DoE, 2000) (hereafter referred to as the N&S)

The analysis of these four documents was conducted in two phases. The first involved looking at the descriptors used in the ECD focused policy (namely the White Paper 5) using a grounded approach. The second involved using the N&S document as an organising framework of the two curriculum documents (namely the CAPS FP Gr R:M and the CAPS FP Gr 1-3:M). This policy analysis was undertaken in order to establish the policy-promoted institutional identity positioning of Grade R teachers. In order to facilitate the flow of this analysis process for the reader, the full methodological process, and the documents selected, is discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

### 3.7. DATA ANALYSIS PROCESS

### 3.7.1. Documentary analysis of policy promoted institutional identities

Hatch (2002) describes as an integral part of qualitative research the researcher's efforts to make sense of the data and interpret it. This is the 'systematic search for meaning' that will "allow researchers to see patterns, identify themes, discover relationships, develop explanations, make interpretations, mount critiques, or generate theories" (Hatch, 2002, p. 148). This includes, in qualitative studies, data analysis that "consists of examining, categorizing, tabulating, testing, or otherwise recombining both quantitative and qualitative evidence to address the initial propositions of a study" (Yin, 2003, p. 109).

For this study, and in response to the first research question: *How are Grade R teachers represented in policy documents in terms of the identifying descriptors used across both ECD and Grade R focused policy?*, I chose a grounded approach to the document analysis phase of the study. The process undertaken in this phase of my study followed the steps recommended by Denscombe (2007, p.99):

- Coding and categorising the raw data (e.g. interview tapes);
- Constantly comparing the emerging codes and categories with the data;
- Checking them against new data specifically collected for the purpose, with a view to:
- Generating concepts and theories that are thoroughly grounded in the data and that:
- Have relevance to the practical world from which they were derived.

Further details of how this process was undertaken appears in Chapter 4. It was through the grounded approach of first ‘open coding’ and then categorising the data that I was able to present a deeper understanding of how Grade R teachers are represented in official policy, and offer insights into their institutional positioning.

### **3.7.2. Analysing teacher identity narratives**

Creswell’s (2012) approach, which focused on case studies, is applicable to qualitative studies as the researcher who is intent on identifying emerging themes from the data, collects open-ended data through questionnaires, interviews and observations of practice. Within the appropriate qualitative study processes of this research, the decision was taken to present teachers’ stories in the form of narrative vignettes and for these stories to be the unit of analysis for my study. These narratives follow Sfard and Prusak’s (2005) notion of identity as stories (discussed in Chapter 2). Sfard and Prusak’s (2005) work became particularly useful for this study once the focus of the research shifted away from understanding teacher learning as identity, to understanding identity, particularly institutional identity, in relation to the stories the teachers told to me in the interviews and questionnaires. Sfard and Prusak’s (2005) work is seminal in the field of identity research. These narrative presentations of teacher identity expression also allowed for the illumination of rich and detailed insights into teacher experiences of their participation in the world.

The research goal of this study focuses on expressions of Grade R teacher institutional identity in policy and through narratives. In alignment

with the socio-cultural theoretical framing of the study, and to present the data in a systematic and engaging way, I selected narrative analysis. My personal orientation and desire to present the teachers' stories also influenced this methodological decision. I felt that narrative analysis involves the "potential of stories to give meaning to individual's lives, and treats data as stories, enabling researchers to take account of the research participants' own evaluations" (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2008, p. 592). The concept of 'data as stories' enabled me to present purposively selected teachers' voices as vignettes, which "ask readers to relive the experience through the writer's or performers eyes" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 905).

In socio-cultural research, and in research on identity, the person in the story is as important as the processes they engage with or that influence them. It is, therefore, fitting that the 'person' (the Grade R teacher) is portrayed in their landscape of practice, engaging in everyday activities, through narrative vignettes (Erikson, 1994). The use of the narrative vignette for presentation of data also has implications for the contribution this study intends to make in the broader educational landscape. It is through this method that this study hopes to "construct a window through which the reader can view" (Humphreys, 2005, p. 842) and gain some understanding into what it means to be a Grade R teacher in South Africa during a time of major policy (and practice) transition.

The teacher vignettes presented in the second analysis chapter of this study are presented as my story of their story (following Sfard & Prusak, 2005). This was enabled through multiple readings of the teacher data collected from questionnaire and interview data. This was then organised in such a way as to

tell a coherent story of the four teachers' narrative expressions of institutional identity. The themes highlighted in their stories are also reflective of themes that emerged in the questionnaires and interviews of the broader group of 19 teachers and are closely linked to the shifting institutional identities of Grade R teachers communicated in the policy landscape (analysed in Chapter 4). The narrative analysis of the multiple sources of teacher data for the four teachers is further explained in Chapter 5.

### 3.8. TRUSTWORTHINESS AND CREDIBILITY

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) advocate the use of 'triangulation' amongst qualitative data collected. It has been found that triangulation is "beneficial in providing confirmation of findings, more comprehensive data, increased validity and enhanced understanding of the studied phenomenon" (Bekhet & Zauszniewski, 2012, p. 2). Triangulation in qualitative studies involves drawing on multiple data sources (such as interviews and questionnaires) in order to 'facilitate the validation' (Denscombe, 2007) of the data. By using the process of triangulation, in which I conducted multiple readings across all of my data sets, I was able to "check the findings from one method against the findings from a different method" (Denscombe, 2007, p. 109). In other words, I was able to verify that the emerging theme of institutional identity arose across the different questionnaires and in the interviews consistently.

As this study is concerned with Grade R teacher expressions of institutional identity in the context of transition, the need for the qualitative data to be used for comparison is unnecessary. Teacher identity expression is

not a process which should be quantified nor compared, as this presents the risk that the complexity and nuanced nature of the process will be lost. It would also potentially invalidate the richness of description afforded by the qualitative research process (Graven, 2004). This said, multiple sources of data were used to provide a rich and complex story of teacher identities as they navigate their roles in the complex and shifting landscapes of practice. In this respect, the narratives emerging from the teacher questionnaires (written stories), interviews (told stories to me the interviewee), video-stimulated recall questionnaires and policy documents all come together to provide a richer and more trustworthy story than would be the case if I had relied on a single data source.

In order to ensure the participants in the study were accurately represented, Maxwell's (1992) process of 'member-checking' was used. This process allowed for participants to review relevant data and provide feedback to the researcher. Collecting rich data and thick descriptions from participants also enabled enhanced validity (Maxwell, 2004). Merriam (1998) holds the view that ensuring credibility in the study of humans, and their myriad of behaviour, is never static. Additionally, Adler (cited in Graven, 2002) argues, it is unreasonable to expect others to discover the same categories and themes in qualitative research. Instead, she argues that it should be established how recognisable these categories are to others, in order to ascertain reliability. Therefore, a 'critical friend' (Goodell, 2006) was consulted to ensure the 'recognisability' to others of the categories and themes that emerged. Maxwell and Miller (2000 cited in Goodell, 2006) also call for a 'continuous review' of the themes and categories, in order to ensure credibility. This process was employed in this study.

### 3.9. ETHICS

My passion for finding sustainable ways forward for providing quality Early Childhood Education for South African children is the driving force behind this study. Along with this passion I have enormous respect for, and affiliation with, Grade R teachers (I discussed my positionality in Section 3.2.). While ethical protocols and ways of working with research participants are stipulated and were guaranteed in relation to my receiving university ethical clearance for this research, my commitment to working ethically with teachers goes far beyond such protocols.

Throughout this research, I maintained respectful relationships with participants. These positive relationships meant that all Grade R ENF teachers willingly agreed to participate in my research and they generously gave of their time. This said, I was continuously mindful of possible power relations in that I was no longer a fellow teacher but a post-graduate researcher. As a researcher and member of the SANCP team, there was the risk that I was viewed by the participants in the programme as a 'more-knowledgeable' other. In this respect, I made it explicit to the teachers from the start that I too was a learner – both in ENF and as a novice researcher learning about Grade R teacher learning and identity. (When discussing my positionality previously, I noted that I was a fellow participant in ENF sessions, working alongside the teachers as a learner). My teaching background, while also with early years' learners, was different from the participants' own histories. While I have nine years of teaching experience, that experience was at only one private school. In this respect, I was a newcomer to the teachers' realm of government schools and

had, at the beginning, little understanding of their professional context. I reiterated this point throughout the study, so as to reassure the participants that I was not there to pass judgement, but rather to learn from them. There were also many opportunities for us to share our struggles and frustrations, as we informally discussed the challenges of teaching young children.

These common experiences transcended the site of the CoP. I was, thus, able to approach the teachers in a non-threatening way, which supported the teachers in telling their stories more freely, without a sense that they needed to tailor their stories to what I, as the interviewer, might want. This said, I agree with Sfard and Prusak (2005) that it is important who people tell their stories to and stories can shift depending on who the stories are told to. To reduce my influence on the teachers' storytelling, I always endeavoured to allow the teachers to guide the way they spoke about and made meaning of their own institutional identity stories. This often meant simply listening to what teachers wished to share, even when it departed substantially from the initial interview guide. It is this freedom that allowed the teachers to focus on their stories of their institutional identities, and their struggles in relation to their positionality in schools and in the education landscape more broadly. This also led to my research shifting to focus on this aspect that teachers chose to share and foreground.

Ethical considerations and procedures throughout the study conformed to those stipulated by my University. Permission to conduct this research was obtained from the University and the Eastern Cape Department of Basic Education. Principals of the various schools, as well as all of the teachers willing to participate were requested to sign consent forms (these are stored

with the other data sets). In doing so, they were assured that the names of the schools, the teacher's names and all other identifying characteristics of the participants remained anonymous and confidential. Principals and teachers were also informed of the full extent of the purpose of the research and the proposed future uses of said research, both in the beginning and at regular data gathering points throughout the study. Confidentiality, anonymity and privacy was, and continues to be, maintained for all involved. All participants were explicitly informed of their right and freedom to withdraw from the study at any point, both at the beginning and throughout the study.

The following chapter is the first of the analysis chapters of this study, and in it I present the processes, results, and discussion arising from the documentary analysis of selected Grade R related education policy documents undertaken for the study.

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## CHAPTER 4: Documentary Analysis of Policy

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### 4.1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I present an examination of the officially promoted “institutional identity” (Gee, 2000) of Grade R teachers presented in select South African education policy documents. This analytical review of policy has been conducted to investigate the institutional identity promoted in policy for Grade R teachers. This analysis was conducted because “of all the forces that influence teachers, the state’s objectives for education are perhaps the more determining ones” (Welmonde, 2002, cited in Dixon, Excell & Linington, 2014, p. 141).

As indicated in Chapter 1, in the past decade there have been major policy changes in the South African education landscape as it relates to children in the year before Grade 1. The documentary review analyses both the descriptors used to refer to Grade R teachers, and the officially promoted roles and responsibilities ascribed to them. The driving research question that this chapter focuses on is research question 1: How are Grade R teachers represented in policy documents in terms of the identifying descriptors used across both ECD and Grade R focused policy? This question aims at understanding the complex policy transition that Grade R teachers are navigating. Grade R teacher identities, and particularly their institutional identities, will evolve in relation to how they experience, embrace or resist aspects of the rapidly changing policy promoted institutional identities.

The chapter begins with a look at the descriptors used in Early Childhood (0-9 years) policy that refer to those teachers working in the Grade R space. The first policy examined is the Education White Paper No. 5 on Early Childhood Development (DoE, 2001). This is a key document because it marks the commencement of Grade R in official policy and allows for an analysis of the broad policy guiding the establishment of Grade R.

The second part of this chapter examines the Norms and Standards for Educators document (N&S) (DOE, 2000) because this document outlines the roles and responsibilities of all educators in South Africa. Thereafter, the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements for Grade R (DBE, 2011a) and Grades 1-3 (DBE, 2011b) documents are analysed, using the Norms and Standards Document (N&S) as an organising framework for the analysis. This framing allows for discussion around what Gee (2000) refers to as “Institutional Identity” or I-id. The rationale for selecting curriculum documents is discussed further in this chapter.

This policy analysis contributes to a variety of research fields – that of Teacher Identity; Foundation Phase Learning and Teaching; and the broader body of knowledge concerned with the continued professional development of educators, curriculum and policy research. The findings from this analysis make an important knowledge contribution which, to my knowledge, is the first close examination of the officially promoted, or ‘institutional’ identity of the Grade R teacher across various policy documents in South Africa. The recent legislative introduction of Grade R to schooling provides a landscape that is still evolving and in constant flux which makes the analysis of this landscape both important and challenging.

This research study and analytic review coincide with the recent increase of interest in and development of identity research in the field of general and mathematics education research (Heyd-Metzuyanim, Lutovac & Kaasila, 2016; Graven & Heyd-Metzuyanim, 2019).

The purpose of this chapter is to contribute to a deeper understanding of the policy landscape in which Grade R teachers are situated, as a review of this kind, which looks at the identity representations of *specifically* Grade R teachers, has not yet been done (according to my own search of scholarly articles). As the process of comprehensively including Grade R teachers into the broader education landscape has not yet reached completion, it provides an opportune space in which to conduct investigations into this on-going process.

Secondly, a review of this kind examining the officially promoted (institutional) identities (Gee, 2000) of Grade R teachers is significant, as it acknowledges the wider social systems in which teachers must function. This is related to the social nature of identity construction, as people are influenced by societal structures, and enact on their own perceptions of self as well the perception of others on themselves. It has been noted that “all identities are social, including those personal identities which are experienced as unique” (Taylor, 2015, p. 1).

Teacher identity has implications for both the teachers' learning as well as for the learners' learning in schools. As Cohen (2008, p. 80) argues, "teachers' identities are central to the beliefs, values, and practices that guide their engagement, commitment, and actions in and out of the classroom".

Finally, a policy review of this type is significant for the analysis chapters to follow in this study. It is in these chapters that I present findings related to the participant teachers' narratives of either embracing or rejecting the officially promoted (institutional) identity. This analysis of Grade R teacher policy-promoted and self-expressions of institutional identity would not be possible without first establishing *how* she is positioned and represented in policy. This review, therefore, enables the contextual framing of analysis chapters further in the study.

## 4.2. STRUCTURE OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter begins with an introduction to and brief summary of the context of educational policy document development in South Africa since the end of Apartheid in 1994. This also includes a brief discussion around the recent shift of Grade R into the Foundation Phase of schooling. I then offer the literature informed frame, namely Gee's (2000) notion of Institutional Identity. Gee's (2000) four views of identity were explained in detail in Chapter 2. This is followed by a discussion on the policy related analytic frame, namely the Norms and Standards for Educators (N&S) (DoE, 2000) document.

Once the context has been discussed and the analytic frame introduced, the further structure of the chapter consists of two parts. Firstly, a broad thematic policy analysis is conducted on the White Paper No. 5. This policy document forms the benchmark for all subsequent ECD policies in South Africa (including Grade R and the FP). It was also from this document that the Universal Access to Grade R policy was developed, and the nationwide shift of Grade R into the FP began. It was, therefore, selected for analysis of broader policy, as it provides the beginning of the policy promoted 'institutional identity' for Grade R teachers.

The second part of the chapter presents a second analysis process, still focused on drawing out of the officially promoted institutional identity for Grade R teachers. This second part of the chapter draws on the Norms and Standards for Educators (N&S) (DoE, 2000) policy document as an analytic frame. The N&S document contains seven roles, as prescribed to all educators in South Africa, and these roles are used here as a frame to analyse the curriculum documents.

In addition, the current Grade R curriculum documents were chosen for analysis, as these are the guiding documents for all FP grades across all schools and represent the overarching roles and responsibilities of all teachers (from Grade R to 3). As will be seen in the analysis of the broader policy (in part 1), Grade R teachers (as they are represented in policy) undergo a shift from being referred to as participants in Early Childhood Development to being referred to as educators and teachers, alongside their school teacher colleagues throughout the rest of the formal education landscape (Grades 1 to 10). As a result, it is made clear through the policy that the roles and responsibilities of

Grade R teachers have expanded to include the guidelines of teaching and learning presented in National Curriculum Documents. The Education White Paper No. 5 on ECD positions Grade R teachers both within existing ECD policy as well as in the formal schooling system. They are positioned mainly as carers in the former versus educators in the latter, with some pendulum swinging between these. These two positions result in mixed messages even within the same document in terms of teacher identities.

Thus, following the trajectory in policy of those who work in Grade R, I analyse the policy promoted institutional identity of those in Grade R in terms of their inclusion as part of the ECD policy landscape (White Paper No. 5 for ages 0-9 years). As the policy document progresses, however, it begins to refer to those in Grade R as 'educators'. As such, my analysis shifts to examining the policy promoted I-identity for Grade R teachers as part of the group of national educators, who are all required to enact the school curriculum (Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements) for teaching and learning. The shift in policy is mirrored in this chapter through the progression from part 1, the analysis of broad ECD policy, to part 2, analysis of Grade R teachers as educators guided by a national curriculum.

The bulk of the chapter consists of an analysis wherein the reader is guided through presentations of findings and discussions regarding the similarities and differences between the policy-promoted I-identity of the Grade R teacher as part of the ECD sector and as a new member 'educator' in the FP. Included in the first part of the analysis is also a discussion around the specific descriptors used to describe Grade R teachers in the policy.

The analysis of curriculum documents is focused around the policy documents for Grades R to Grade 3 teaching and learning. These documents span the three prescribed FP Subjects, namely: Home Language (English); Life Skills; and Mathematics.

Later in the analysis of curriculum documents, a narrowing of the 'lens' occurs as I focus on the Mathematics Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) documents in particular. This narrowing of the 'lens' was motivated by the existence of two separate documents for this Subject – one for Grade R only, and another for Grades 1-3. No such separation exists for the other two Subjects. This separation allows for a comparison between Grade R and Grade 1-3 teaching and learning; and, as a result, the roles and responsibilities (and implied promoted I-id) of the teachers in each.

Analysis across all curriculum documents points to similarities and differences in the foregrounding of roles for Grade R teachers in the ECD sector and in the FP sector. Insights drawn from the two-part analysis are presented throughout the chapter. These are then brought together to form the concluding discussion at the end of this chapter. Before closing the chapter, I highlight, through some illuminating examples from the data gathered in my study, some of the implications of the mixed messages in the policy. Finally, I provide an outline of the chapter to follow, which presents case study analysis of four Grade R teachers' identity narratives. These narratives provide insight into the grounded experiences of Grade R teachers as they navigate their journey through this complex and evolving policy landscape.

The reader will recall from Chapter 2, that Gee (2000, p. 102) proposes four ways to view identity: “four ways to formulate questions about how identity is functioning for a specific person (child or adult) in a given context or across a set of different contexts” (p. 102). He describes Institutional Identity (I-id), one of the four perspectives, as “a position authorized by authorities within institutions” (p. 100). In terms of this paper, this can be seen to be the teachers’ position within the educational landscape, as authorised by the Department of Education and ‘reified’ through policy documents, such as the Education White Paper No. 5 on ECD (DoE, 2001) and curriculum documents. Gee, giving an example from his own professional position of professor at a university, describes how I-id works: “The process through which this power works is authorization; that is, laws, rules, traditions, or principles of various sorts allow the authorities to “author” the position of professor of education and to “author” its occupant in terms of holding the rights and responsibilities that go with that position” (2000, p. 102).

The proposition made by Gee (2000) that this I-id exists on a continuum is especially relevant for the purposes of this analytical review. Professionals (i.e. teachers) can engage with the policy-promoted I-id as either a ‘calling’ or as an ‘imposition’, in terms of how “actively or passively the occupant of a position fills or fulfils his or her roles or duties” (Gee, 2000, p. 103). However, until there is a deeper understanding of what these ‘authorised roles’ may be for Grade R teachers, it will prove difficult to determine whether or not these roles are resisted or embraced by teachers.

The following part of this chapter elaborates on the ECD/Grade R policy transition and begins analysis of Grade R teacher representation within key policy.

### 4.3. PART 1: ANALYSIS BROADER ECD POLICY

In this part of the analysis, I present a thematic analysis of the White Paper No. 5 on ECD (DoE, 2001). In particular, I searched this document for descriptors used in policy to label and describe those working in Grade R. The following discussion around the descriptors includes an analysis of the assumed roles and responsibilities that these 'labels' (referred to here as descriptors) inherently carry with them. Part one of the analysis begins with a description of and discussion around the purpose of the White Paper No. 5 on ECD (DoE, 2001). After this, each of the descriptors found are presented in the order they appear in the policy document. Under each descriptor identified, I provide a brief discussion, which will contribute to the concluding remarks offered at the end of the chapter.

#### **4.3.1. Education White Paper No. 5 on Early Childhood Education**

The Education White Paper No 5 on ECD (DoE, 2001) was developed with a specific focus on Early Childhood Development in response to Sections 28 and 29 of the Constitution of South Africa which deal with Children's Rights and the Right to Education, respectively. It was also developed in response to the Education White Paper No. 1 on Education and Training (DoE, 1995). Although White Paper No. 5 is addressing Early Childhood Development on a broader scale, it is important to note that the focus of the document is on

developing programmes for children in the year before formal schooling<sup>13</sup>:

While its main thrust is to close the gap in our programmes for five-year olds, thus giving effect to our Constitution and Education White Paper 1 on Education and Training, it also addresses itself to the ECD challenge facing us in respect of children younger than four years.

(DoE, 2001, Preface)

This document was selected for analysis for a number of reasons. Firstly, its above mentioned 'main thrust' of the year before formal schooling (Grade 1). Although not directly aimed at Grade R, which is the focus of this study, it does give a comprehensive background to the policies informing the governing of Grade R in South Africa. Early Childhood Development (ECD) is referred to as "a comprehensive approach to policies and programmes for children from birth to nine years of age" (2001). However, the policy priority of the White Paper No 5 is "the implementation of the pre-school Reception Year (Grade R)" (DoE, 2001). A separate five-year plan entitled "Tirisano: 1999-2004" produced around the same time as this White Paper focuses on the ECD years of 6, 7, 8 and 9, and relates to children in the formal schooling sector, in Grades 1, 2, and 3.

Secondly, the Education White Paper No 5 was selected for analysis in my study, because it lists under the 'Policy Focus' a strategic plan which will "prioritise the development of...practitioner career pathing and development" (DoE, 2001). At the time of the White Paper No 5, a recorded 54 503 'practitioners and child minders' were working in ECD sites, with 6 354 of them working in the Eastern Cape (the province in which the empirical data of this

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<sup>13</sup> The school going age for children in South Africa is six turning seven before June of their Grade 1 year. Therefore, programmes aimed at the children who are five turning six, can be considered the Grade R year.

study was gathered).

This Education White Paper No 5 on ECD was developed and released at the beginning of the transition of Grade R (5-6-year-old) children into the FP of schooling. It, therefore, provides a representation of Grade R teachers, in terms of policy, as a part of the ECD educational space. My analysis of this policy indicates five key changes embedded in the proposed policy for Grade R programmes and Grade R ‘teachers’<sup>14</sup> in South Africa, namely:

- Change in location
- Change in governance
- Change in employer, and
- Change in ‘curriculum’
- Change in identification

A clear shifting to and fro of identification of Grade R teachers within the document itself is noted, as the writing in the document moves between reference to ECD and formal schooling contexts. Table 4.1 below shows the key identification descriptors used for Grade R teachers in this document in terms of the context in which they are referred.

Table 1.1: Summary of Descriptors in Education White Paper No. 5 on ECD

<b>ECD CONTEXT</b>	<b>SCHOOLING CONTEXT</b>
Mother Child minder Caregiver	Educator Teacher

<sup>14</sup> Grade R ‘teacher’ is used here as a working definition in this study for all those working with children (ages 5-6) in the year before formal schooling in ECD or formal school contexts. This includes those both qualified and unqualified teachers.

Practitioner	
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Below I elaborate briefly on each of these descriptors, noting relevant utterance(s) from policy and engaging with how these descriptors position and story Grade R teachers.

**a) MOTHER**

The descriptor ‘mother’ is used in the preface of the Education White Paper No. 5 on ECD by the then Minister of Education, Professor Kader Asmal. He uses it to refer not just to parents, but to the women working in the field of ECD:

I also wish to express, on behalf of Government, our sincerest appreciation to the many *thousands of mothers* across the length and breadth of our nation, who, despite being mainly professionally unqualified, are taking care of hundreds of thousands of our children in so many kinds of informal and at times formal ECD centres.

(DoE, 2001, n.p., emphasis added)

Significant here is also the inclusion of the term “professionally unqualified”. His statement, that unqualified mothers had been the majority of workers within this sector, may be a true reflection of the time. However, it is important to note that this view of those working with 5-year-old ‘Grade R’ children were mainly ‘unqualified mothers’ was likely held by many others. The descriptor ‘mother’ has the assumed role of a caregiver, with responsibilities which prioritise the physical health and emotional well-being of the child over the formal education of the child. Although a teacher working with those in the FP is also responsible for the physical, emotional, social and cognitive well-

being of a child, these responsibilities are carried out in an education-focused environment, unlike in the home by a 'mother'. By using the label 'mother', shortly followed by the phrase "mainly professionally unqualified", this policy document introduces the reader to a way of describing those working in the Grade R sector as holding differently prioritised roles and responsibilities to the 'teachers' working in other grades.

## **b) CHILD MINDER**

The second descriptor, 'child minder', is used in a way that distinguishes these ECD workers from other practitioners: "... provides information on the numbers of practitioners and child minders and the learner:educator ratios across all the ECD sites" (DoE, 2001, p.14).

Those working at ECD sites which provide care for children aged from 0 to 6 years old (before they enter Grade 1), are referred to as either practitioners or as child minders. While 'and' indicates a possible difference from 'practitioners', it remains that 'child minders' are included in the practitioner category. This makes it difficult for the reader to discern what portion of the over 50 000 people working in the sector are classified as 'practitioner' and how many are 'child minders'. The same statement also contains the term 'educator', in relation to the ratio of learners to educators. These three terms (practitioners, child minders and educators), are used to differentiate between different groups of teachers working with Grade R children. This is done without clear explanation or clarification of each of the terms, resulting in implicit mixed messages in regard to the primary identification of these teachers.

Although necessary to distinguish within the profession the differently qualified persons, this multi-descriptor referencing system may cause confusion for the teachers negotiating this landscape, as each descriptor has different implied roles and responsibilities. A 'child-minder', much like the 'mother' described above, implies roles and responsibilities which require little to no formal qualifications. It also implies prioritisation of the basic care and physical needs of the child over their educational development. A 'practitioner', although also possibly lacking in formal qualifications, is a descriptor which denotes that the person carrying this label has a level of practical experience and expertise in the field of child care or education. An 'educator', however, implies a formal qualification (involving specialised skills linked to the profession), and holds a professional title. This carries with it standardised roles and responsibilities, to which the educator is held accountable by the authorities. For example, in South Africa, all educators are bound by the Norms and Standards for Educators (DoE, 2000), which includes roles such as 'Interpreter and Designer of Learning Programmes and Materials'; 'Assessor'; and 'Learning Mediator' (DoE, 2000). 'Child minders' and 'practitioners' are not bound by these norms and standards.

The use of multiple descriptors within the policy makes it difficult to identify the officially promoted, or institutional identity. It also offers little distinction between the various roles and responsibilities aligned to each descriptor. There are some similarities here with Graven's research (2005) focused on teacher identity during a time of major curriculum transition for Grades 1-9. She found that the curriculum and official provincial curriculum mediating documents sent mixed messages to teachers. This had implications

for the way in which teachers navigated their identities within the post-apartheid curriculum landscape.

### **c) CAREGIVER**

The statement below appears in the White Paper No. 5 on ECD: “ECD practitioners, [is] a term encompassing different roles and responsibilities, levels of expertise and qualifications, and include[es] *caregivers*, teaching assistants and pre-school teachers” (DoE, 2001, p.24, emphasis added).

This statement, as is the case with the descriptor ‘child minder’ above, groups ‘caregivers’ under the term ECD practitioners, alongside ‘assistant teachers’ and ‘pre-school teachers’. This is noteworthy, as it could be read to imply the descriptors educator (a professional role) and caregiver (a secondary parent) are interchangeable. It is also interesting that, in the above statement, reference is made to the current set of roles and responsibilities for “ECD practitioners” which include both ‘caregivers’ and pre-school teachers. This suggests that they are held to the same standards even while pre-school teachers are usually better paid and more qualified than caregivers who are often underpaid and unqualified.

### **d) EDUCATOR**

The first mention of the descriptor ‘educator’ is used on page 6 of the Education White Paper No. 5 on ECD. It is used in reference to the need for those teaching Grade R to be registered with the South African Council of

Educators:

In order to improve the quality of Reception Year programmes, we will require that all Reception Year programmes be registered with provincial departments of education, that accredited Reception Year educators be registered with the South African Council of Educators (SACE).

(DoE, 2001, p. 6)

Since no definition of educator is given in the Education White Paper No. 5 on ECD, for a full definition of the descriptor 'educator', as it is used in South African education policy, I consulted the N&S (DoE, 2000). This policy document provides a comprehensive description of what is officially considered to fall under the category 'educator'. It is defined therein as follows:

The term educator in this policy statement applies to all those persons who teach or educate other persons or who provide professional educational services at any public school, further education and training institution or departmental office. The term includes educators in the classroom, heads of departments, deputy-principals, principals, education development officers, district and regional managers and systems managers.

(DoE, 2000, p. 9)

Of note here, is that those who work in ECD Centres are not included in the definition of "any public school, further education and training institution or departmental office" (p. 9) and, as such, are not considered educators in this particular policy. This contradicts the places in the Education White Paper No. 5 on ECD, in which those working in Grade R (ages 5-6) in ECD Centres are referred to as educators (2001, p. 15); even while those working with younger

children in ECD Centres are not. Across policies, therefore, the descriptor 'educator' is left ambiguous and not clarified. However, it is likely that registration with the council of educators (SACE) is the distinction between the descriptors: i.e. once registered with SACE, the 'practitioner' becomes the 'educator'.

With this clearer understanding of what is meant by the descriptor 'educator', an analysis of the White Paper No 5 was conducted in order to see how often, and in what context, the descriptor 'educator' is used throughout the policy document. It is interesting that this descriptor is used for the first time in this policy document in direct reference to the registration of those working in Grade R, through the process of registration overseen by SACE. This, despite the guiding definition offered by another policy document, the Norms and Standards for Educators, which details that the descriptor educator is used to refer to: "*to all those persons who teach or educate other persons...*" (DoE, 2000, p. 6).

In attempting to locate a standard definition of 'educator', it is also interesting to note that registration and accreditation with SACE requires the teacher to be qualified<sup>15</sup>. This implies that a Grade R teacher working full-time in an established primary school, is working as an educator. She is expected to: follow the curriculum; abide by the Norms and Standards for Educators (DoE, 2000); and is compelled to implement educator policy and roles. However, the Grade R teacher might be unqualified and, therefore, cannot register with SACE. As such, she remains, according to official definition, not an educator. These teachers could, therefore, be considered as Grade R practitioners

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<sup>15</sup> For further details on the qualification requirements for Grade R educators, please refer to Chapter 3.

working as educators. Indeed, teacher data discussed in Chapter 5 indicates that qualified Grade R teachers and education district officials refer to those working with Grade R children without qualifications as practitioners.

Table 4.2 below presents all other uses of the descriptor ‘educator’ throughout the Education White Paper No. 5 on ECD. These are listed in the order they appear in the document. The table is divided into 4 columns. The first gives the number of uses of the descriptor ‘educator’ on one page. The corresponding page number is given in the second column. In the third column, the statement which includes the descriptor ‘educator’ is given. Finally, in the fourth column, a list of what the descriptor ‘educator’ was used in reference to is presented. This final column was added as it became apparent through analysis that each utterance for the descriptor ‘educator’ was not being used in the same way. For example, it is used in reference to the name of the teacher registration authority SACE, but is also used to refer to learner:educator ratios.

Table 4.2: Summary of Appearances of the Descriptor ‘Educator’ in the Education White Paper No. 5 on ECD

NUMBER OF UTTERANCES	PAGE NUMBER	EXAMPLE STATEMENT	Descriptor used in reference to:
3	6	"In order to improve the quality of Reception Year programmes, we will require that all Reception Year programmes be registered with provincial departments of education, that accredited Reception Year <b>educators</b> be registered with the South African Council of <b>Educators</b> and <b>educators</b> , who do not have a specialised qualification to teach the Reception Year, undergo approved training programmes"	- Grade R Teachers - SACE - All educators
1	14	"...information on the numbers of practitioners and child minders and the learner: <b>educator</b> ratios across all the ECD sites."	- Ratios
5	15	"The absence of a mechanism for the professional registration of ECD practitioners/ <b>educators</b> and of the requirement that they be registered with the South African Council of <b>Educators</b> "  "Inequities in the qualifications of ECD practitioners/ <b>educators</b> ."  "The absence of an accreditation system for trainers of ECD practitioners/ <b>educators</b> ."  "Inadequate support with the implementation of Curriculum 2005 given to Reception Year (Grade R) <b>educators</b> ."	- ECD Teachers - SACE - ECD teachers - ECD teacher-trainers - Grade R teachers
2	26	"Furthermore, should the provincial departments of education become the employers of these ECD practitioners, practitioners should be required to register with the South African Council of <b>Educators</b> and be represented at the Education Labour Relations Council. In order to improve the professional status of ECD practitioners, they should be required to register with the South African Council for <b>Educators</b> "	- SACE - SACE
1	30	"These community-based ECD centres are able to operate at a cost considerably lower than primary school-based provision since the latter uses standard, provincially-employed <b>educators</b> , whereas the ECD practitioners at these community-based ECD centres are not employed by Government."	- Primary teachers
1	33	"The cost of public primary school education in absolute terms is assumed to be 2.800 in 2001 Rand. Projections are made in real 2001 Rand. Note that this assumes that cost drivers such as real <b>educator</b> salaries, learner-educator ratios, etc., in public primary and secondary schooling do not change."	- All teachers
1	34	"Since the demographic transition is in fact taking place and flow efficiency is actually improving, one might wonder why costs are not actually coming down as the graph depicts. The reason is that this "dividend" is being taken up by other factors, such as	- Ratio
		higher labour costs, lowered learner: <b>educator</b> ratios in primary and secondary schooling, etc."	
2	36	"The development of registration criteria for ECD practitioners with the South African Council of <b>Educators</b> . The Council is currently reviewing its registration requirements in order to provide for the registration of <b>educators</b> with a variety of qualifications."	- SACE - All teachers
1	42-43	"...registration criteria for ECD practitioners with the South African Council of <b>Educators</b> ..."	- SACE

From the above table, it can be seen that the descriptor 'educator' appears 17 times on 10 different pages across the Education White Paper No. 5 on ECD document. Five of these appearances are used in relation to name 'South African Council of Educators' and, therefore, relate to the registration of teachers at an official level. Four of the 17 appearances of the term 'educator' are in reference to 'all teachers'. It is not explicit through the readings of the statements in which the descriptor occurs whether this reference is to all educators (from pre-Grade R to tertiary); if it refers to all teachers working in the ECD field (0-9 year olds); or if it refers only to FP (Grade R-3) teachers. An

example of such a statement includes: “Note that this assumes that cost drivers such as real educator salaries, learner-educator ratios, etc., in public primary and secondary schooling do not change” (p. 33).

Two of the 17 total descriptors of ‘educators’ are used in reference to ECD teachers specifically. This can be seen in the following statement: “The absence of a mechanism for the professional registration of ECD practitioners/educators” (p. 15). This statement is interesting as it uses the descriptors ‘practitioner’ and ‘educator’ interchangeably when referring to ECD teachers. This is the same in the other statement in which the descriptor ‘educator’ is used specifically for ECD teachers. This does not occur in those statements which refer to ‘all teachers’, as can be seen from the above table. When the descriptor ‘educator’ is used for all teachers, it is used alone and not interchangeably with ‘practitioner’. This is also the case when the descriptor ‘educator’ is used in reference to teachers working in the primary school sector: “primary school-based provision since the latter uses standard, provincially-employed educators...” (p. 30).

Two of the 17 total descriptors of ‘educator’ are also used specifically in reference to Grade R teachers. Again, this descriptor is used alone (not with ‘practitioner’) in referring to those teachers who form the focus of this study, as can be seen from the following two exemplar statements:

- ...all Reception Year programmes be registered with provincial departments of education, that accredited Reception Year educators be registered with the South African Council of Educators and educators, *who do not have a specialised*

*qualification to teach the Reception Year, undergo approved training programmes” (DoE, 2001, p. 6, emphasis added).*

- “Inadequate support with the implementation of Curriculum 2005 given to Reception Year (Grade R) educators. (DoE, 2001, p. 15, emphasis added)

Particularly noteworthy from the above statement regarding other (i.e. not Grade R) educators “who do not have a specialized qualification to teach the Reception Year” (p. 15) is the ambiguity regarding the descriptor ‘educator’. It was discussed earlier that educators, according to this particular policy, are SACE accredited and qualified. However, this statement appears to imply that educators working outside of Grade R (in a different phase or a different grade) are not appropriately qualified as Grade R educators until they undergo further specialised training. This statement is also noteworthy in that it is the first reference made in this policy document to the “*specialized*” nature of Grade R and highlights the need to develop specialised knowledge and skills.

#### **e) TEACHER**

The following statement seems particularly important in relation to the framing of the Grade R teacher in the White Paper 5. It specifies ‘ECD practitioner’ as the only term for those working in Grade R, whereas up until the first use of the descriptor ‘teacher’ in the White Paper 5, the descriptors ‘ECD practitioner OR educator OR

practitioner/educator' have been the most commonly used phrasing.

The project report provides some evidence that the current set of norms and standards are appropriate for ECD practitioners, a term encompassing different roles and responsibilities, levels of expertise and qualifications, and including caregivers, teaching assistants and pre-school *teachers*.

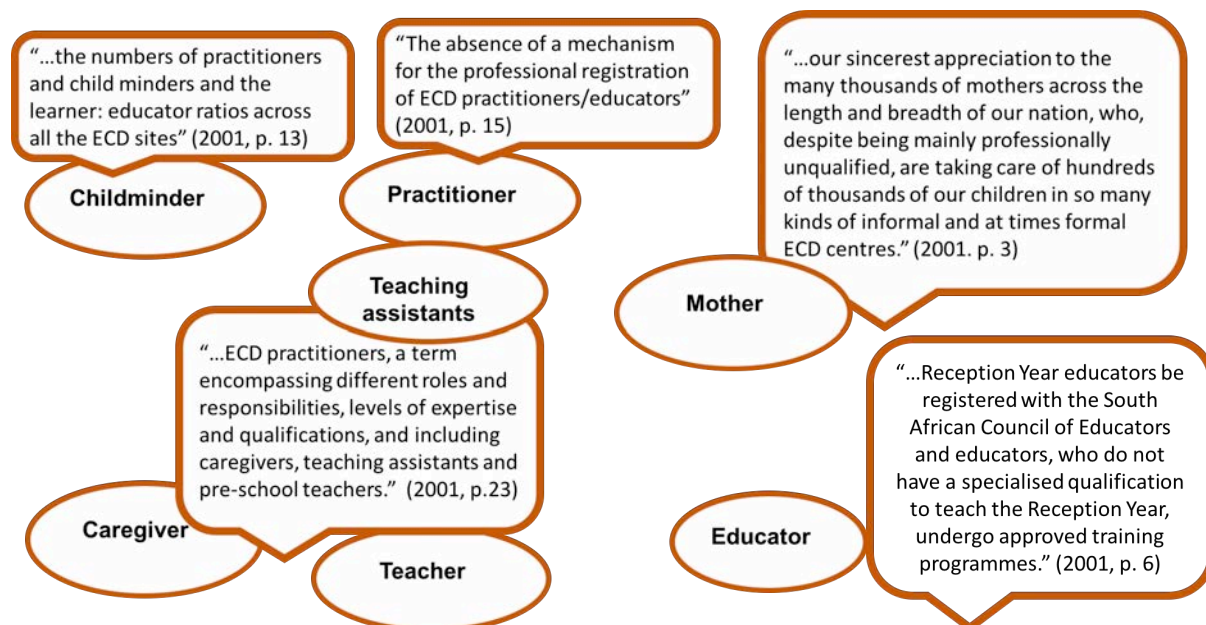
(DoE, 2001, p.24, emphasis added)

This is the first (and only) time in the document that the term 'pre-school teachers' is used, as opposed to the broader descriptor of 'teacher'. This introduces yet another category of 'professional' into the discussion. The label 'pre-school teacher' is also, as a stand-alone descriptor, ambiguous in that although more commonly used to refer to those working in Grade R (as opposed to 'educator'), in practice, a pre-school teacher can be responsible for children aged 0 to 5/6 years. This is because pre-school in South Africa refers to any school type setting a child attends before entering formal schooling.

As Grade R continues to make the physical and policy shift into the formal school setting and no longer sits in the before-school (and physically separate from schooling) domain, this descriptor of pre-school teacher for Grade R teachers could become redundant in policy terms. However, it is likely that it will still be commonly used outside of policy.

#### **4.3.2. Summary of terms from White Paper No. 5 with exemplar policy statements**

Included below (Figure 4.1) is a summary of exemplar policy statements to summarise the descriptor terms and supporting statements used throughout the Education White Paper No. 5 on ECD (DoE, 2001).



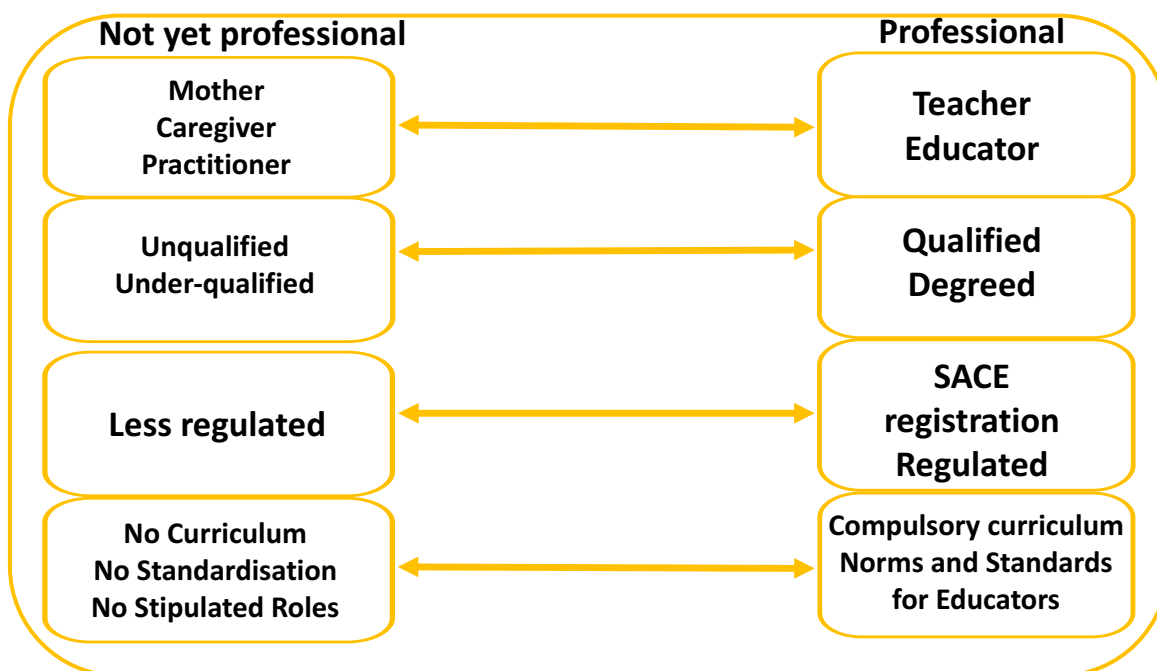
**Figure 4.1: Summary of Descriptor Statements for Grade R Teachers in the Education White Paper No. 5 on ECD**

### 4.3.3. Summary discussion

It can be seen from the above analysis of the Education White Paper No. 5 on ECD and summary figure, that this policy document shifts in language between the nurturing and caring focused labels of ‘mother’ and ‘caregiver’, and the professional and accredited labels of ‘teacher’ and ‘educator’. The shifts between differing labels occur throughout the document when referring to Grade R teachers. These shifts include: specific descriptors used in isolation, such as ‘mother’ and ‘pre-school teacher’; some descriptors repeated often, such as ‘educator’; and, at other times, multiple descriptors used in the same

statement, such as ‘caregiver’, ‘teaching assistants’ and ‘teachers’. The terms caregiver, practitioner and mother are used primarily in relation to speaking of the non-schooling contexts of ECD, while educator and teacher are used more when referring to those qualified to teach (whether Grade R or other) and in the formal schooling sector.

In terms of institutional identity, these shifting labels and the linked mixed messages and positioning are critically important. Each of these descriptors carry with them different roles, responsibilities, qualification and skill levels for those working with Grade R learners. These have implications for the way in which teachers will navigate, take-up or resist the policy-promoted institutional identities. Grade R teachers will negotiate their positioning along this spectrum of descriptors. This spectrum ranges from the largely underqualified and nurture-focused role of mother, increasing in specialised expertise and shifting to an emphasis on education, to where the Grade R teachers are considered ‘educators’. The above described spectrum of identity is summarised and illustrated below.



**Figure 4.2: Illustration of Policy Promoted Institutional Identity Spectrum of Grade R Teachers**

The shift along the spectrum towards professional educator, as seen in the analysis above, happens clearest in this policy when it states those working in ECD are required to undergo registration with SACE and become (in policy terms) ‘educators’.

This analysis of the officially promoted institutional identity of those teachers working with 5-6 year olds (Grade R) and, in particular, the transition of representation of these teachers from the ECD policy context to the formal schooling policy context, is important. This is because these teachers were, in policy terms, moved from being referred to as ‘practitioners’, abiding by relatively informal norms linked to labels as caregivers, mothers and child minders, to now being called ‘educators’ and ‘Grade R teachers’. As they join

(in policy) the cohort of South African educators, they also now become bound by the officially prescribed roles and responsibilities assigned to all teachers from Grade R to Grade 12. Now the N&S (2000) applies to this group of teachers, as “[t]he term educator in this policy statement applies to all those persons who teach or educate other persons or who provide professional educational services at any public school” (DoE, 2000, p. 9). They will also need to implement the National Curriculum (CAPS), particularly the FP Grade R to Grade 3 curricula.

The second part of this analysis chapter uses the perspective and analytic framing offered by the N&S and, in particular, the seven roles of the educator listed and discussed further below. This second part will look specifically at, first, the positioning in policy of the FP teacher institutional identity. Second, an analysis of the positioning of the role of the Grade R teacher is presented in relation to how it differs (or is similar to) that of Grade 1, 2 and 3 teachers across the curriculum.

#### 4.4. PART 2: ANALYSIS OF THE SEVEN ROLES OF THE TEACHER AND THE CURRICULUM DOCUMENTS

In this section of this analysis chapter, I examine the I-id (Gee, 2000) authorised in Grade R specific educational policy. The first part of the analysis focused on the broader historical transition of those working with 5-6 year olds (Grade R) from policy for ECD centres to policy for formal schooling. The second part of the analysis locates the Grade R teacher in the current schooling curriculum policy. The N&S and curriculum policy mandate the nature and the substance of their practice in the Grade R classroom.

Wenger (1998, p. 276), talking of teachers in classrooms, says teachers act as “representatives of the institution and upholders of curricula demands, with an identity defined by an institutional role”. It is with this understanding that the institutional roles ascribed by policy to Grade R teachers are significant in discussing their I-id as defined by Gee (2000). This said, Wenger (1998) notes that you can design roles but cannot design identities, as teachers will decide how they adopt or reject various roles while negotiating their identities.

All South African teachers (including Grade R) are guided by the seven roles for educators, as laid out in the N&S document. I have selected the seven roles of educators as a guiding frame to structure my analysis of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement: Foundation Phase Grade R English Mathematics (CAPS FP Gr R:M) (DBEa, 2011). Thus, in this next section of my policy analysis chapter, I explore the positioning of the Grade R teachers’ institutional identity messages in response to the seven roles for educators.

#### **4.4.1. The Seven Roles in the Norms and Standards for Educators Document**

The Norms and Standards for Educators, produced by the South African Department of Education, is a Government Notice, released on the 4<sup>th</sup> of February 2000, and defined as a National Policy. It was designed in order to “describe the *roles*, their associated set of *applied competence* (norms) and *qualifications* (standards) for the development of educators” and “will be used

by the Department of Education for purposes of recognition and evaluation of qualifications for employment as an educator” (DoE, 2000, p. 9).

The norms and standards are outlined within the document as seven roles, and these roles “and their associated competence...is meant to serve as the *description* of what it means to be a competent educator” (emphasis in original) (DoE, 2000, p. 13). These seven roles, therefore, are included in this analytical review of how Grade R teachers are now represented in official and institutional documents as they form the basis of what is expected nationally of all teachers in the schooling system. Because these roles are directed at all educators (teachers) and are not Grade R specific, I use them in this study as the framing device for the analytical review of Grade R relevant curriculum documents. This allows for comparison between the representation of these teachers in the ECD field outside of formal schooling (of which they were recently members) and the FP field of the formal schooling sector (into which they have been moved).

What follows is an analytical review of the policy-authorized I-id that currently exists for Grade R teachers. It examines how all the seven roles are either foregrounded in Grade R focused policy. The N&S (2000) document, described in more detail above, contains the following seven roles:

1. Learning mediator
2. Interpreter and designer of learning programmes and materials
3. Leader, administrator and manager
4. Community, citizenship and pastoral role
5. Scholar, researcher and lifelong learner
6. Assessor

## 7. Learning area/subject/discipline/phase specialist

The documents selected for review against the seven roles include all Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) that are relevant for Grade R teaching. This includes the documents for the three Subjects in FP, namely: Mathematics; Home Language; and Life Skills. However, the FP Mathematics component of the curriculum is the only one separated into two documents – one for Grade R and one for Grades 1 to 3. The existence of two separate documents allows for the development of deeper insights regarding the positioning of Grade R teacher roles and responsibilities, both as part of the broader FP, and as distinct from but still within the FP. It is for this reason that the Mathematics documents were chosen for a ‘narrowing’ of the analytic lens, which follows in the second part of this chapter.

The Home Language and Life Skills documents include within them a section focused specifically on Grade R. These two documents both include Grade R with Grade 1, 2 and 3 in one document, detailing the curriculum content across all four grades. The Mathematics subject, however, is divided into two documents: one delivering content for Grades 1, 2 and 3; and a separate document delivering content for Grade R specifically. Therefore, although there are three subjects, there are four CAPS documents for analysis.

These four documents have similar structures in that they all include the same Foreword written by the current Minister of Basic Education and the same Time Allocation Guidelines. Each document also provides the identically structured introduction, background, overview and general aims pertinent to each particular subject, and an introduction to each content area. The Life

Skills document for Grade R to Grade 3 is the only document which does not have a Grade R recommended Daily Programme included.

The differences between the documents can be seen upon examination of the sections dedicated to the more detailed curriculum content area outcome sections. Each document, including the Grade R-specific Mathematics document, contains an integrated (Grade R to Grade 3) yearly overview of the subject specific content outcomes. However, in the Grade R document, the content area learning outcomes are further expanded and organised into detailed weekly objectives and activities for the teacher to follow. This notable difference is discussed in detail later in the chapter.

#### **4.4.2. Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement Foundation Phase Mathematics**

This document was produced following a revision of previous South African national curriculum documents, which was conducted in response to “ongoing implementation challenges” (DBE, 2011a, foreword). The CAPS Foundation Phase Mathematics Grade R document gives its purpose as to provide:

teachers with a definition of mathematics, specific aims, specific skills, focus of content areas, weighting of content areas, recommended resources for the Foundation Phase Mathematics lessons, suggested guidelines on supporting learners with barriers to learning Mathematics, mental mathematics and enhancing the teaching of early numeracy skills in Grade R.

(DBE, 2011a, p. 8)

This document was selected for analysis because it provides the nationally used grounding guidelines for teaching and learning in Grade R classrooms. A decision to choose only the Mathematics documents, and not the Languages or Life Skills documents, was made for a number of reasons. Firstly, due to space constraints (it is beyond the scope and length of this study to review each of the curriculum documents). Secondly, the guiding philosophies behind each of the curriculum documents is similar, as indicated in the discussion above. As noted, Mathematics is also the only subject which provides a separate reference document for Grade R. Finally, choosing the Mathematics CAPS document for in depth analysis linked well with the Early Numeracy Fun PD (ENF) which all teachers in the research were participating in at the time of my research (as discussed earlier under the Empirical Field discussion in section 3.4). The CAPS Mathematics Grade R document, therefore, provided congruency with the teacher data, as questions asked during interviews related both to the teaching of Grade R, and the teachers' experiences of teaching Numeracy in relation to their participation in ENF.

The presentation of findings and analytical discussion highlights congruent statements and terminology in order to show the use of common terms and the same official language of description across the N&S and the selected Grade R specific policy documents. I have described the purpose of the various key policy documents. In the next section, I present the findings of my analysis of these documents and, in so doing, respond to research question 1: How are Grade R teachers represented in policy documents in terms of the identifying descriptors used across both ECD and Grade R focused policy?

#### **4.4.3. Presentation of findings across the seven roles and policy documents**

I begin this part of the chapter by presenting an analysis of each of the seven roles within the two mathematics curriculum documents for the FP, namely:

- The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement Grade R Mathematics document (Department of Basic Education, 2011). I will refer to this document as CAPS FP Gr R:M (DBE, 2011a).
- The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement Grade 1-3 Mathematics (Department of Basic Education, 2011). I refer to this document as CAPS FP Gr 1-3:M (DBE, 2011b).

Each role is briefly explained, and then findings from each of the selected policy documents are presented. This is followed by a brief discussion of the findings and insights. Once each role is discussed, an overall discussion is presented which draws together the threads in order to build a clear and coherent picture of the current policy-authorized I-id for Grade R teachers. This illustration of the authorized I-id is then used as the basis for cross referral in the analysis of teacher stories in section 5.6. In Chapter 5, I look at the way in which the case study teacher stories either embrace or reject various aspects of the policy-authorized institutional identity for Grade R teachers.

#### **4.4.3.1. LEARNING MEDIATOR (Role 1): Grade R versus Grade 1-3 similarities and differences**

The following statement comes from the Norms and Standards document outlining the learning mediator role for all school educators of all grades:

The educator will mediate learning in a manner which is sensitive to the diverse needs of learners, including those with barriers to learning; construct learning environments that are appropriately contextualised and inspirational; Communicate effectively showing recognition of and respect for the differences of others. In addition, an educator will demonstrate sound knowledge of subject content and various principles, strategies and resources appropriate to teaching in a South African context.

(DoE, 2000, p.15)

A learning mediator is further described as a teacher who is sensitive to the needs of learners and is able to facilitate learning in appropriate ways. This is expressed in practical terms as a teacher who: uses both the language of instruction and a second language; and a variety of appropriate strategies, in an appropriate and accepting environment to “explain, describe and discuss key concepts” (DoE, 2000, p. 15).

A learning mediator is also expected to “demonstrate sound knowledge of subject content and various principles, strategies and resources” (DoE, 2000, p. 13) by practically being thorough and thoughtful in her teaching preparation, drawing on the “knowledge, skills and process” (p.13) of what she is teaching, how she needs to teach it, and who she is teaching it to.

This role is specifically referred to in the CAPS FP Gr R:M as the Grade R teacher must ‘mediate’ learning by making “the most of incidental learning opportunities that arise spontaneously” (DBE, 2011a, p. 14) and must “identify” and “utilize” teachable moments (p. 16). In the Grade R specific section of the CAPS FP Gr 1-3:M document, there is a focus on ‘incidental learning’ and on taking advantage of learning opportunities which arise ‘spontaneously’. This focus is not present elsewhere in the Grade 1-3 specific CAPS document, outside of the Grade R section. Therefore, here, the focus coheres with the ECD rhetoric of ‘learning through play’ rather than the Grade 1 to Grade 3 ‘teaching as instruction’ rhetoric.

In sum, the role of learning mediator is both visible within FP curriculum policy, and is foregrounded in Grade R specific documentation. The institutional identity of learning mediator, and the responsibilities associated therewith, are thus promoted for Grade R teachers as a stand-alone grade, for Grade R teachers as a part of the FP cohort, and as a continuation from their membership in the ECD field.

#### **4.4.3.2. INTERPRETER AND DESIGNER OF LEARNING PROGRAMMED AND MATERIALS (Role 2): Grade R versus Grade 1-3 similarities and differences**

The following statement comes from the Norms and Standards document outlining the interpreter and designer of learning programmes and materials role for all school educators of all grades:

The educator will understand and interpret provided learning programmed, design original learning programmed, identify the requirements for a specific context of learning and select and prepare suitable textual and visual resources for learning. The educator will also

select, sequence and pace the learning in a manner sensitive to the differing needs of the subject learning area and learners.



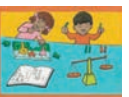







(DoE, 2000, p.15)

The second of the seven roles prescribes that teachers are able to use, understand and interpret learning programmed provided to them (i.e. the CAPS document). It also says that teachers have the practical skills and knowledge to create original learning programmed and materials, by identifying the requirements of the content and the context in which learning is taking place. They are also expected to be able to select, sequence and pace a variety of appropriate resources, which are sensitive to the different needs of learners (DoE, 2000).

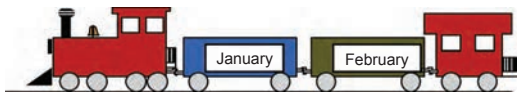
This second role can be seen in the Grade R section of the CAPS document under the Daily Programme, and in reference to 'teacher-guided activities', which should be "designed from CAPS" (DoE, 2000, p. 15). There are only three further mentions of teachers being expected to design resources. These are: "Design a colourful Birthday Chart" (p. 69); "The teacher designs a pattern..." (p. 76); "The teacher designs an A4 paper with the relevant columns..." (p. 149). There is also one mention in relation to formal assessment: "design of these [assessment] tasks should cover the content of the subject in a variety of ways." (p. 265).

From the above statements, it is evident that this document uses the same official 'speak' as that used in the N&S. In this sense, there is congruence between the Grade R role in both the CAPS FP Gr R:M and the N&S.

Under this role as interpreter and designer of materials, teachers are encouraged to interpret learning programmes, such as the CAPS document, as well as design appropriate materials and activities. An interesting finding is that the CAPS FP Gr R:M differs to the CAPS FP Gr 1-3:M in that the tasks in the Grade R version are highly structured and guided. However, the Grade 1 to Grade 3 FP teachers are afforded more autonomy in their interpretation and designing of programmes and materials. Below, I provide examples of tasks from each of the documents. Figure 4.3 is the CAPS FP Gr R:M suggested activity for the content area Time. This activity is suggested for the first week of the first term of Grade R. Figure 4.4 is also from the CAPS FP Gr R:M document, and shows the suggested activity for Time for the second week of the first term.

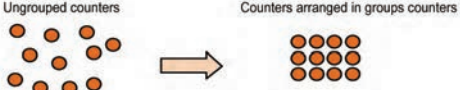
GRADE R TERM 1											
Week 1 Orientation	Suggested Contact Time : One teacher-guided planned class activity (ring) of ± 30 minutes per day (± 5 Mathematics activities per week)										
Topic	Clarification Notes	Recommended Resources	Approximate Duration								
4.1 Time	<p><b>Sequencing recurring events in own daily life</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce the Daily Programme</li> <li>- Develop the sequencing of events within one day.</li> <li>- Pictures are displayed from left to right.</li> <li>- The leader of the day moves a movable arrow from left to right as the activities on the daily programme progress.</li> <li>- Learners experience the sequencing of events during a day.</li> </ul>	Daily programme represented in picture format	Daily								
<b>SUGGESTED DAILY PROGRAMME</b>											
											
Arrival	Register, birthdays, weather, news	Teacher-guided class activity, Visual Art & Free play inside	Tidy -up	Teacher-guided class activity	Toilet routine	Refreshment time	Free play outside and Tidy-up	Toilet routine	Teacher-guided class activity and Story	Rest	Departure

**Figure 4.3: CAPS FP Gr R:M Suggested Activity, Grade R, Week 1, Term 1, for Content Area Time**

Week 2 Orientation		Suggested Contact Time : One teacher-guided planned class activity (ring) of ± 30 minutes per day (± 5 Mathematics activities per week)	
Topic	Clarification Notes	Recommended Resources	Approximate Duration
4.1 Time	<p><b>Sequencing of recurring events in own daily life</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Months of the year</li> <li>- Time</li> </ul> <p><b>Introduce the Birthday Chart</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Design a colourful Birthday Chart, e.g. a train with 12 coaches (for each month) – the months are sequenced from left to right on the coaches. Place the name and symbol/photo of each learner in the applicable birthday month.</li> <li>- Develop an awareness of the time concept e.g. months of the year by singing the names of the months while pointing at the month's names.</li> <li>- Develop an awareness of reading direction e.g. display a label of each month of the year in one row from left to right.</li> <li>- Let learners identify their symbol/photo and memorise in which month their birthday is.</li> <li>- Encourage them to know their age.</li> <li>- Repeat this activity on a continuous basis.</li> </ul> <p>A <b>Birthday Chart</b> with twelve months of the year displayed from left to right.</p> <p>A crown or picture of a birthday cake indicates birthdays past. Birthdays to come have no crown or birthday cake.</p> <p><i>Song: Compose your own tune</i>  <i>"January, February, March.</i>  <i>April, May, June July.</i>  <i>August, September, October November, December.</i></p>  <p>The entire year whenever there's a birthday.</p>		
<p>Note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A learner's birthday is a very special occasion and time must be set aside for a birthday ring where the rest of the class sings Happy Birthday and clap a number of times, demonstrating the birthday boys/girls age.</li> <li>• Each learner in the class can draw a picture and the teacher can collate all the drawings into a birthday book for the learner who is celebrating their birthday.</li> <li>• The teacher can also make a crown for the birthday boy or girl and the learners can decorate it with collage materials.</li> <li>• The activity to be repeated the entire year whenever there is a birthday</li> </ul>			

**Figure 4.4: CAPS FP Gr R:M Suggested Activity, Grade R, Week 2, Term 1, for Content Area Time**

Figure 4.5 below is from the CAPS FP Gr1-3:M document, and shows suggested activities for the content area of Time, across the second term of Grade 1.

GRADE 1 TERM 2				
1. NUMBER, OPERATIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS				
TOPICS	CONCEPTS AND SKILLS REQUIREMENT BY YEAR END	CONCEPTS AND SKILLS FOCUS FOR TERM 1	SOME CLARIFICATION NOTES OR TEACHING GUIDELINES	DURATION (In lessons of 1 hour 24 minutes)
<b>NUMBER CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT:</b> Count with whole numbers				
<b>1.1 Count objects</b>	Count out objects reliably to 50. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Give a reasonable estimate of a number of objects that can be checked by counting.</li> </ul>	Count out objects reliably to 20 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Give a reasonable estimate of a number of objects that can be checked by counting</li> <li>Counting by grouping is encouraged</li> </ul>	<p><b>What is different from Term 1?</b></p> <p>In Term 2, the counting number range is extended. There is still a focus on understanding that the last number named indicates the number of objects in a set. Learners are counting more objects and in Term 2 they should learn how to position the objects when counting so that when they check their count the arrangement helps them to count more easily.</p> <p><b>Example:</b></p>  <p>Ungrouped counters → Counters arranged in groups counters</p> <p>During this term learners continue extending their counting skills and practising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>counting all;</li> <li>counting on;</li> <li>the cardinality principle of numbers; and</li> <li>working with written texts.</li> </ul> <p>During the second term learners begin to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Count objects they cannot touch or hold.</li> </ul> <p><b>Example:</b></p> <p>We ask learners: How many sections are there in the window pane?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Count actions</b></li> </ul>	

**Figure 4.5: CAPS FP Gr 1-3:M Suggested Activity, Grade 1, Term 2, for Content Area Time**

The structure of the CAPS FP Gr R:M suggested activities continues through Term 1 to Term 4, in which the planning of learning is supported through *weekly* guided activities which build on previous learning outcomes. In the CAPS FP Gr 1-3:M, planning of learning is provided only on a term by term basis (versus a weekly basis), under the section titled: “What is different from Term 1?” for each concept.

As can be seen from the above examples, the Grade R task for teaching ‘Time’ provides detailed instruction, with examples of supporting resources, and focuses in detail on a single task. The Grade 1 task on the same topic, however, presents an ‘overview’ and gives broader guidelines such as “Time is dealt with continuously during whole class teaching time”. The Grade 1 teacher, through this instruction, is accorded more autonomy in her decision

making, as she is required to interpret the instructions as she sees fit. In contrast, the Grade R teacher is having her hand held through the process, as each step of the way has already been interpreted for her.

In sum, the role of Interpreter and Designer, while present in both the CAPS FP Gr R and Gr 1-3 Mathematics documents, is less emphasised for Grade R teachers than it is for Grade 1 to 3 teachers. In respect to the weekly suggested activities, the Grade R teacher's role as an interpreter and designer is not taken for granted. It is not 'assumed', and the task of interpreting and designing is mostly done for these teachers. This increased guidance for the Grade R teachers in their interpretation and designing role could be that the policy makers see the need to support the Grade R teachers 'becoming' interpreters and designers of learning programmes and materials. This could be because they are newcomers to the FP, are largely un- or underqualified, and because Grade R is a new grade to be included in the national curriculum.

#### **4.4.3.3. LEADER, ADMINISTRATOR AND MANAGER (Role 3): Grade R versus Grade 1-3 similarities and differences**

The following statement comes from the Norms and Standards document outlining the leader, administrator and manager role for all school educators of all grades:

The educator will make decisions appropriate to the level, manage learning in the classroom, carry out classroom administrative duties efficiently and participate in school decision making structures. These competences will be performed in ways which are democratic, which support learners and colleagues, and which demonstrate responsiveness to changing circumstances and needs.

(DoE, 2000, p. 15)

This, the third of the seven roles for educators, relates to making decisions in class about: levels of learning; how to manage the classroom; do administrative work; support learners and colleagues through instilling/practicing democratic values when participating in school decisions and with the school community; and responding to changing circumstances and needs.

In the CAPS FP Gr R:M, reference is made to managing both inclusivity (DBE, 2011a, p. 5) and managing the classroom (p. 12). From this, it can be seen as the same official 'speak' used in the N&S, specifically the role of 'manager'. A notable absence though is the inclusion of 'leader' as a representation of Grade R of FP teachers, or any mention of how to 'become' a leader. This is, however, not different from the CAPS FP Gr 1-3:M as it also does not refer to 'leader' as a representation of Grade 1 to Grade 3 teachers.

Focus in the CAPS FP Gr R:M document in relation to this role is on leading and managing in the classroom, rather than broader school leadership roles such as Principal, Head of Department, or in leading committees or programmes in the school. There is no mention of Grade R teachers into broader leadership roles, or support for teachers aspiring to these roles. This is unlike the Interpreter and Designer role which is guided by the CAPS FP Gr R:M document (discussed above), and the Assessor role, discussed below, which is supported extensively across multiple documents.

#### **4.4.3.4. COMMUNITY, CITIZENSHIP AND PASTORAL ROLE (Role 4): Grade R versus Grade 1-3 similarities and differences**

The following statement comes from the Norms and Standards document outlining the community, citizenship and pastoral role for all school educators of all grades.

The educator will practise and promote a critical, committed and ethical attitude towards developing a sense of respect and responsibility towards others. The educator will uphold the constitution and promote democratic values and practices in schools and society. Within the school, the educator will demonstrate an ability to develop a supportive and empowering environment for the learner and respond to the educational and other needs of learners and fellow educators. Furthermore, the educator will develop supportive relations with parents and other key persons and organisations based on a critical understanding of community and environmental development issues. One critical dimension of this role is HIV/AIDS education.

(DoE, 2000, p. 16)

Both CAPS documents (CAPS FP Gr R:M and Gr 1-3:M) highlight the importance of the role of Grade R and Grade 1 to 3 FP teachers in the “education for citizenship” (DoE, 2000, p.16) by foregrounding the purpose of quality education for all. It is argued that education can “improve quality of life of all citizens” (foreword) and is a space where children can grow to enjoy “meaningful participation in society as citizens” (p.4). The wording of the foreword, as indicated in discussions above, is standard across all four of the FP CAPS documents across the three Subjects (Mathematics, Home Language, Life Skills). The relationship to the community is referenced in the CAPS FP Gr R:M and the Grade R- specific section of the CAPS FP Gr 1-3:M, encouraging teachers to draw support services within the school community when managing the needs of learners (p. 5). This is congruent with the White Paper No 5, discussed earlier, in that Grade R is still viewed as connected to the

community, in the same way as ECD sites are. The pastoral role is referenced most in relation to the teacher's role in giving the learners 'guidance' (p. 38, 52 and 90).

#### **4.4.3.5. SCHOLAR, RESEARCHER AND LIFELONG LEARNER (Role 5): Grade R versus Grade 1-3 similarities and differences**

The following statement comes from the Norms and Standards document outlining the scholar, researcher and lifelong learner role for all school educators of all grades.

The educator will achieve ongoing personal, academic, occupational and professional growth through pursuing reflective study and research in their learning area, in broader professional and educational matters, and in other related fields.

(DoE, 2000, p. 15)

This role encompasses the personal, academic, occupational and professional ongoing development of the teacher. This is fostered through her participation in reflective study, as she demonstrates interest in her own and other related fields, and manifests in the ability to exhibit numerical and technological literacy in her pursuit of excellence.

In the CAPS FP Gr R:M document, there is no specification of how this role might be incorporated into the teaching and learning processes. However, this is not different from the CAPS FP Gr 1-3:M, where there is also no reference to this role or how to go about achieving this role.

Grade R teachers were, in relation to this role in particular, referred to in the ECD policy as under or unqualified. It was, however, the priority of the ECD

policy to ensure that those working with Grade R learners become fully qualified. This is evident in the recommendation that “educators, who do not have a specialised qualification to teach the Reception Year, undergo approved training programmes” (DoE, 2001, p. 6). It is noteworthy, therefore, that the priority of supporting the ‘lifelong learning’ of under or unqualified Grade R teachers is largely omitted from FP focused policy.

It is possible that the foregrounding of this role in broader ECD policy is done in order to address the fact that the majority of Grade R teachers are either under or unqualified. As such, this foregrounding is not an encouragement of on-going professional learning (post initial teaching qualification), but rather a result of the need to have all FP teachers qualified at the same level. This has implications for the employability of these teachers, rather than their self-enrichment. This shift towards qualification is also echoed in the Education White Paper No. 5 on ECD, through the introduction of the descriptor ‘educator’ in relation to registration with SACE, as discussed above.

#### **4.4.3.6. ASSESSOR (Role 6): Grade R versus Grade 1-3 similarities and differences**

The following statement comes from the Norms and Standards document outlining the assessor role for all school educators of all grades:

The educator will understand that assessment is an essential feature of the teaching and learning process and know how to integrate it into this process. The educator will have an understanding of the purposes, methods and effects of assessment and be able to provide helpful feedback to learners. The educator will design and manage both formative and summative assessment in ways that are appropriate to

the level and purpose of the learning and meet the requirements of accrediting bodies. The educator will keep detailed and diagnostic records of assessment. The educator will understand how to interpret and use assessment results to feed into processes for the improvement of learning programmes.

(DoE, 2000, p. 16)

A teacher assessor here must perform the role of assessing, designing, managing and integrating the purpose and methods of assessment using different and appropriate strategies. She must also keep detailed records which are a diagnostic tool. In addition, she can interpret and use the results of the assessment to ‘provide helpful feedback’ to her learners, as well as inform her own teaching.

The CAPS FP Gr R:M uses the term ‘assess’ frequently. A digital search of the term ‘assess’ and its derivatives (assessing, assessment, assessed) resulted in 104 instances of use across all 278 pages of the document. Additionally, from page 264 to page 271, there is a section dedicated exclusively to Assessment (Section 4). This section of the document provides guidance for teachers in terms of the purpose of conducting assessments; the different forms of assessment (informal and formal); how to record and report on assessment; and gives the programme of formal assessment, including exemplar checklists of formal assessment for all of the Numeracy content areas for Grade R. An important distinction is made in this chapter about the nature of Grade R assessment: “In the Foundation Phase, the main techniques of *formal* and *informal* assessment are observation by the teacher, oral discussions, practical demonstrations and written recording. Grade R assessment should be mainly oral and practical.” (emphasis in original) (DoE,

2000, p. 264).

It is evident from the inclusion of the Assessment section in the CAPS FP Gr R:M document that the role of ‘assessor’ is encouraged here. It is tailored to specific Grade R teachers, their roles, responsibilities and, significantly, provides explicit guidelines on the practical ways of ‘becoming’ an assessor. After a digital search of the same terms, the CAPS FP Gr 1-3:M indicated 122 instances across all 518 pages of the document, and similarly contains a section (pages 485 to 512) dedicated exclusively to Assessment.

From the above it can be concluded that from the date of release of the N&S (2000), till the release of the most recent CAPS FP Gr R and Gr1-3:M documents (2011), that the role of assessor is prioritised for FP Numeracy teachers as well as Grade R Numeracy teachers. This is despite the numerous iterations of the curriculum throughout the years. Teachers are provided with support in terms of the underlying principles of assessment, the purposes thereof, the different forms of assessment, explicit and not-so-explicit strategies for the practical implementation of assessment practices (exemplar assessment tasks, etc.), and have a comprehensive guide across the multiple documents on how to ‘become’ an assessor.

The practice of assessment is more prominent in the CAPS FP Gr R:M document – it is after all the Curriculum and *Assessment* Policy Statement. This emphasis on assessment, or the role of assessor, is not foregrounded in the ECD related policy which precedes the CAPS FP Gr R:M and all other CAPS documents. The focus on assessment comes with a national drive to put in more structured measures of accountability across all schools and all grades.

Of interest, and possibly due to the increased need for accountability, the CAPS document provides support around how to ‘become’ an assessor in both the CAPS FP Gr R:M and CAPS FP Gr 1-3:M documents. This can be seen by the inclusion of an assessment focused multi-page section at the end of each document, which includes assessment task exemplars.

Interesting as well are the statements made in regard to Grade R assessment – indicating that all assessment throughout the FP should include both formal and informal assessment tasks. These also highlight that the methods used for assessment should include “observation by the teacher, oral discussions, practical demonstrations and written recording”, as well as emphasising that “Grade R assessment should be mainly oral and practical” (DBE, 2011a, p. 264). This coheres pedagogically with the Education White Paper No. 5 on ECD and elsewhere in the CAPS FP Gr R:M document which notes that learning in Grade R is largely ‘incidental’ and through ‘play’ (p. 14). This is because children in Grade R are not yet expected to be able to complete written tasks, and active, physical knowledge and learning is paramount in this grade.

This said, the example given in the CAPS documents for formal assessment of both Grade R and Grades 1 to 3 are quite similar, especially in terms of structure (see Figure 4.6 and Figure 4.7, respectively).

The exemplar assessment tasks between the two documents provide an illustration of how the assessment practices across the various grades differ.

#### 4.7 EXEMPLAR CHECKLISTS OF FORMAL ASSESSMENT FOR GRADE R

Exemplar assessment checklists are given for Grades R below. The aim is to assist teachers to plan and implement formal assessment in a continuous way.

GRADE R				
Checklist for Term 1 assessment				
Content Area	Content	Criteria	√ or x	Comments
Numbers, Operations and Relationships	Counting	Estimates and rote counts up to 5 (Number songs & rhymes included to develop number concept)		
	Number Recognition	Recognises numbers in familiar context- e.g. age, register		
		Understands ordinal numbers (e.g. during toilet routine)		
	Number sense	Understands one-to-one correspondence (Helpers' chart during refreshment time)		
	Identify and describe whole numbers	Identifies number pictures and dot cards that involve number one		
		Knows the number symbol 1		
		Recognizes the number name one		
	Solving problems	Uses concrete apparatus Explains own thinking in words and through drawings or concrete objects		

**Figure 4.6: CAPS FP Gr R: M Assessment Exemplar**

**Grade 1 Term 1: Exemplar Assessment Task 1**

Content area	Topic	Criteria
Numbers, operations and relationships	Number Concept	Counts out 10 objects reliably, saying the names in sequence
		Writes and reads number symbols from 1 to 5
		Orders numbers 1 - 5 from smallest to greatest
		Uses language to describe relative size of numbers: before, after, between
	Solve Problems	Solves word problems in context involving addition, subtraction with answers up to 5 using apparatus or drawings and explains own solution to problems
		Solves practical problems involving equal sharing and grouping with whole numbers up to 5 and with answers that may include remainders by using apparatus or drawings Explains solutions
		Calculations
	Calculations	Does addition up to 5 using apparatus or drawings
Does subtraction from any number 5 or fewer using apparatus or drawings		

**Figure 4.7: CAPS FP Gr1-3:M Assessment Exemplar**

One difference between the two similarly structured exemplar assessment tasks above is the inclusion in only the Grade R exemplar layout of a place to insert a  $\checkmark$  or  $\times$ , and space for the teacher to write a comment. Another difference that is notable is that there is increased specification of assessment activities in the Grade R exemplar. This is done through the inclusion example activities for concepts such as ‘Understands ordinal numbers (e.g. during toilet routine)’ and ‘Understands one to one correspondence (Helper’s chart during refreshment time)’. No such activity suggestions occur in the Grade 1 exemplar.

Although this policy encourages oral and practical assessment practices, Grade R teachers situated in the FP are positioned, in their

daily practices, to align with the systems in place for tracking assessment across Grades 1 to 3. For example, Grade R teachers are required to enter percentage marks on the South African School Administration and Management System (SA-SAMS), a national record-keeping system (personal communication with Thandi and Maria, October 2016). Percentage marks for Grade R learners are allocated by ‘marking’ Grade R learners’ written submissions or assessment tasks. This can prove challenging for Grade R teachers as many learners in this age group are pre-literate, which is developmentally appropriate at this age.

Grade R, as well as Grades 1 to 3, are allocated the following National Rating Codes on the SA-SAMS system<sup>16</sup>:

Gr From	Gr To	Level	Description	Description Afrikaans	% From...	% To...
0	3	1	Not Achieved	Ontoereikende Prestasie	0	29.99
0	3	2	Elementary Achievement	Basiese Prestasie	30	39.99
0	3	3	Moderate Achievement	Matige Prestasie	40	49.99
0	3	4	Adequate Achievement	Voldoende Prestasie	50	59.99
0	3	5	Substantial Achievement	Beduidende Prestasie	60	69.99
0	3	6	Meritorious Achievement	Verdienslike Prestasie	70	79.99
0	3	7	Outstanding Achievement	Uitmuntende Prestasie	80	100

**Figure 4.8: SA-SAMS National Rating Codes Grade R to 3**

This process of awarding percentage points for what the CAPS FP Gr R:M document describes as “oral and practical” based assessment tasks (DBE, 2011a, p. 264) is a contradictory message.

<sup>16</sup> (Department of Basic Education, 2019)

The awarding of percentage points, which are normally derived from a numeral mark out of a total score, also contradicts the CAPS FP Gr R:M message that “Assessment practices in Grade R should be informal and children should not be subjected to a ‘test’ situation” (DBE, 2011a, p. 16). It is difficult to imagine how individual percentage points can be allocated to tasks assessed informally through observation. The awarding and recording of these assessments on a national system through the identical mechanisms as the rest of the FP also contradicts the message of Grade R as a ‘unique’ and specialised grade emphasised in the broader ECD policy, and elsewhere in the CAPS FP Gr R:M document (discussed further below).

Grade R teachers are also expected to keep comprehensive portfolios or work schemes for each of their learners, which requires many paper-based tasks. Assessment of these tasks is foregrounded and not aligned with the emphasis on ‘oral and practical’ tasks as outlined in the CAPS FP Gr R:M document. There is little guidance provided which would help Grade R teachers assimilate pedagogical practice with school-wide practice. In terms of the policy authorised institutional identity for an assessor-teacher, the policy focus is on Grade R appropriate practices, while in reality, the teachers must align with Grade 1 to Grade 3 practices, even while these are not always the same thing.

#### **4.4.3.7. LEARNING AREA<sup>17</sup>/SUBJECT/DISCIPLINE/PHASE SPECIALIST (Role 7): Grade R versus Grade 1-3 similarities and differences**

The following statement comes from the Norms and Standards document outlining the learning area/subject/discipline/phase specialist role for all school educators of all grades:

The educator will be well grounded in the knowledge, skills, values, principles, methods, and procedures relevant to the discipline, subject, learning area, phase of study, or professional or occupational practice. The educator will know about different approaches to teaching and learning (and, where appropriate, research and management), and how these may be used in ways which are appropriate to the learners and the context. The educator will have a well-developed understanding of the knowledge appropriate to the specialism.

(DoE, 2000, p. 16)

The final role for educators is that of ‘specialist’. This is the “over-arching role into which all other roles are integrated” (DoE, 2000, p. 12). Specialisation in terms of FP teachers is used in reference to specialisation across the whole phase (Grades R-3) and includes the three Subjects (Numeracy, Literacy and Life Skills), as well as an understanding of “learners and learning in the first years of formal schooling” (DoE, 2000, p. 12).

Reference to specialism of Grade R is inferred in the following from the CAPS FP Gr R:M document:

- It is the [Grade R] teacher’s knowledge and initiative that

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<sup>17</sup> The term ‘learning area’ was later replaced in policy by ‘subject’; therefore, for discussions related to policy written before the term was replaced (N&S, White Paper No 5), I refer to ‘learning area’ and for discussions related to policy written after the change (CAPS), I refer to ‘subjects’.

can maximize learning potential” in a “fun and spontaneous context” (2011, p. 16).

- Grade R “has its own unique characteristics based on how children in this age group make sense of their world... (DoE, 2011, p. 17).

In the first statement included above, although specialisation of the Grade R teacher is not explicitly referred to, it is clear that the ‘learning potential’ inside a Grade R setting is dependent on the teacher’s knowledge of Grade R and of Grade R learner development. This could suggest that a teacher in Grade R needs specialised Grade R knowledge in order to ‘maximise’ learning.

The second statement included above again does not explicitly refer to Grade R or Grade R teachers as ‘specialised’. However, it is important to note that this statement from the CAPS FP Gr R:M document makes clear the ‘unique’ nature of Grade R teaching and learning, which is relevant to the way children at this age ‘make sense of’ and learn. This could confirm Grade R, through its uniqueness, as a specialist grade and stage of learning.

Further absence of this particular role across the remaining documents could be explained by the phrase included above which states that this role is an accumulation of all the other roles. Therefore, it is not explicitly referred to in the documents as it is implied through the inclusion of the other roles. However, although not in the scope of this study, I believe it would be interesting to compare the number of appearances of terms referring to

‘specialist/specialisation’ in the FP/Grade R/ECD related policy versus those focused on the Intermediate Phase and especially the Senior Phase.

Grade R teachers, both historically and currently, are not Learning Area (i.e. Natural Science), Subject (i.e. History) or Discipline (i.e. Humanities) specialists. They are ‘generalists’, who teach all aspects of the curriculum to a special grade of children (i.e. children entering the reception year of schooling). Learning in the Grade R classroom is encouraged to be fully integrated: “The approach to learning [Grade R] Mathematics should be based on the principles of integration...” (DBE, 2011a, p. 14). However, these teachers were recently moved into a specific phase of schooling (FP), in which they can become a specialist. Specialisation is now accessible for these teachers through the introduction of Grade R teaching and learning modules in the Bachelor of Education Phase Degree (both in-service and preservice) offered at universities across the country.

Previously, Grade R teachers would not have been required to be a phase specialist, as they belonged to the cohort of ECD teachers, defined as those working with children aged 0 to 9 years old. In the Education White Paper No 5. On ECD (DoE, 2001), it notes that teachers who are not Grade R trained (including those who are unqualified, underqualified, or qualified to teach a different grade) must receive Grade R specific training (DoE, 2001, p. 6). This

indicates a level of specialism in the training to teach Grade R, which is distinct from the teaching qualifications received for other grades/phases. In the CAPS FP Gr R:M document, the Grade R specialisation is highlighted in the ‘unique characteristics’ (DoE, 2011, p. 17) and in the statement that Grade R must not become “a watered-down Grade 1” (DoE, 2011, p. 16). Thus, making it clear that Grade R is a part of, yet distinct from, the other FP grades. The message from both broader ECD policy and the CAPS FP Gr R:M specific policy is one of a Grade R teacher being a specialist, working in a specialist grade. However, since the national rollout of Grade R which saw these teachers move into the FP, Grade R is now considered a part of a phase, with little reference to these teachers being ‘phase specialists’. They continue to, in policy, remain a grade rather than a whole phase specialist.

#### 4.5. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The following discussion aims to draw together thematic insights gained from conducting both the analysis of broader ECD/Grade R policy and analysis of the curriculum documents for Grade R. A broad overview of the Education White Paper No. 5 for ECD in this study shows how earlier policies (before Grade R became compulsory) directed at pre-Foundation Phase teachers (Grade R and ECD) foregrounded the mothering/nurturing role of this cohort of teachers. With the physical and systemic move into the FP for Grade R, a severing away from ECD Centres and broader ECD general policy took place. As

a result, references in the policy to Grade R teachers as ‘mothers’ and ‘caregivers’ diminished, and ‘educator’ references were introduced. This signifies a shift in official policy promoted institutional identity of Grade R teachers. This shift occurred in relation to the mandate that the Grade R teacher as a policy prescribed member of the FP, now has the roles and responsibilities contained in the Norms and Standards for Educators document, which guide Grade 1 to Grade 3 teachers. This review has elaborated on and discussed details of the movement away from the previously foregrounded mothering role.

It can be seen from the above analysis and summary illustrated in Figure 4.1., that the nurturing and pastoral focused language used in previous policy is largely absent in more recent Grade R focused curriculum documents. Although Grade R is still a part of ECD, as is FP, the ‘mother’ role and identity was foregrounded when these teachers were outside of the formal school system. The majority of Grade R teachers currently working in the sector, and working with current policy, are these same ‘mothers’ from the ECD sector. However, with the move to formal schooling, the emphasis on nurturing is backgrounded, with both the CAPS FP Gr R:M and the CAPS FP Gr 1-3:M documents backgrounding this role. These changes in primary roles have major implications for the identities of teachers in terms of both policy prescribed identities and the ways in which teachers will adopt, adapt or resist these prescribed identity changes. Emphasis on this nurturing intensive role for Grade R teachers could impact on these teachers’ sense of belonging and identity as members of the formal school teaching profession. Equally, it could be used by others to ‘exclude’ Grade R teachers from membership to the FP.

To illuminate the grounded experience of 'exclusion' of many of those teaching Grade R from membership of the broader teaching profession, and the status and financial security membership brings, I share my experience of a funeral I attended (alongside my SANCP colleagues) during the course of the study (October 2016). The funeral was held for one of the ENF participating teachers who had very sadly passed away from a sudden and serious illness. There were several moving speeches about the incredible person she was. One of the speeches given in her honour was by a colleague who was a representative from the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU). In his speech, he shared his frustration, on behalf of Grade R teachers, of not being recognised as teachers in the same way that other grades were recognised. He argued this lack of recognition was witnessed in the form of lesser benefits offered, salaries earned, and opportunities afforded these teachers as compared to their colleagues teaching other grades in their schools. As a representative of the union, this colleague both offered his support of Grade R teachers and vowed that SADTU had prioritised the recognition of and fair treatment of Grade R teachers.

Beyond this one example, this sentiment was acknowledged as needing urgent attention by the current president of South Africa, Mr. Cyril Ramaphosa, in his address to SADTU at the union's annual congress in September 2019. Sobuwa (2019) reports the President indicated that 'paying peanuts' to teachers would result in substandard educators.

In summary, the view of self as caretaker/nurturer/mother may well have been a significant part of the authorised I-id that these teachers were aware of and, to varying degrees, these teachers possibly trained under and

experienced this guiding policy speak. They would also have participated in some form of subsequent professional role development. Current Grade R teachers sit with this tension, as they are expected to be specialists in their grade. This specialisation is mentioned in policy, as well as acknowledged in international literature on the specialist nature of ECD. This specialisation is important as the roles and responsibilities for a teacher of Grade R-aged learners are different to teachers of older children. This is appropriate, as the needs of Grade R learners are developmentally different from those of older FP learners. However, tension exists because the specialist nature of Grade R can be used to de-professionalise these teachers and position them as less powerful in the FP.

Again, to illuminate teachers grounded experiences of this, I conclude with two quotes from two of the study's participating teachers, in regard to their experiences of positioning within the formal school system.

Thandi Interview June 2016:

**Researcher:** Do you see yourself still teaching Grade R in another three years' time?

**Thandi:** That will be a "Yes" and a "No." "Yes" if the government employs us permanently and recognizes us as teachers. And "No" if it doesn't happen. We teach Grade R's but we don't have benefits; we are given stipend which is R5000.00 [350 USD] a month which is very very low. Even the gardeners get more money than us, and we are not being recognized. The [parents] say Grade R is a crèche, and a crèche is where children sleep and eat, and sleep and eat and go home, which is not happening in Grade R (Thandi, Int, L 16-22, June 2016).

Maria Interview June 2016

**Maria:** ...at some schools it seems to me that they don't recognize Grade R's really. The HoD's don't work with them like they are supposed to. They concentrate more on Grade 1 to 3 because my colleagues at the surrounding schools, I can hear from that; they are not really part of the school or part of the phase, or whatever. (Maria, Int, L 46-49, June 2016)

These teachers' stories are further elaborated in the following chapter. The nurturing roles and responsibilities initially promoted by broader ECD policy could be viewed as problematic for the Grade R teachers in terms of their sense of professional legitimacy. As mentioned above, the foregrounding of the role of 'mother' could be placed at one end of a spectrum, where the nurturing role of a caregiver requires little to no formal qualification. For those attempting to establish a professional identity as a teacher, paid in accordance with being a member of the teaching profession with future career prospects and advancement opportunities, a policy-promoted institutional identity which does not align with these ambitions may be problematic and rejected by Grade R teachers.

Assimilating these teachers (with others in the FP sector), who may spend a great deal of their time still performing the pastoral responsibilities of an ECD 'practitioner', 'carer' and 'second mother' to the young children in their care, into the formal FP sector runs another risk. Although the CAPS FP Gr R:M document warns that Grade R should not become "a watered-down Grade 1" (2011, p. 16), this can sometimes be the case. From my own school teaching

experience when Grade R was moved into the FP, there began a trend of the ‘top-down’ approach. This was where the teachers of higher grades dictated what and how learning and teaching should happen in Grade R, despite it being pedagogically distinct from these other grades. This has resulted in what many researchers are calling the “schoolification” of the pre-school grades, and the claim that “The global ‘schoolification epidemic’ has led to an increasing focus on prescribed curricula and presents as a serious threat to the quality of children's early years’ experiences” (Ring & O’Sullivan, 2018).

A severing from the ECD rhetoric for these teachers also holds the potential to cause a renegotiation with their own learning and initial teacher training. This training would have foregrounded the ECD nurturing role and rhetoric, as most trained before the rollout of Grade R.

#### 4.6. ROLE PRIORITISATION IN CURRICULUM

The review above also pointed to interesting similarities and differences in the foregrounding and/or backgrounding of the seven roles of educators in the CAPS FP Gr R:M. Using the N&S (DoE, 2000) as a guiding frame for analysis of the curriculum documents presents a number of significant findings. These include: contradictions in the policy promoted institutional identities of Grade R teachers between ECD specific policy and current curriculum documents; a difference in prioritisation of roles between Grade R and Grades 1 to 3 curriculum documents; and the presence of what can be viewed as a ‘spectrum’ of institutional identities offered across policy for Grade R teachers. These findings are summarised here.

The contradiction first occurs under the final listed role of learning area/subject/discipline/phase specialist, because Grade R teachers are no longer 'Grade Specialists', as referred to in ECD policy in which it is recommended that those who "do not have a specialised qualification to teach the Reception Year, undergo approved training programmes" (DoE, 2001, p. 5). Rather, in the FP of schools, these teachers are expected to be 'Phase Specialists', and Grade R teachers should be able to teach Grade 2, and vice versa.

Other roles may not stand in stark contradiction between broader ECD policy, or between Grade R and Grades 1 to 3. However, there does exist a difference in prioritisation of roles between the Grade R and the Grades 1 to 3 curriculum documents. The first of these roles to have a different prioritisation is that of 'Learning Mediator'. This role is emphasised both in the Grade R stand-alone CAPS Mathematics document, and the Grade R specific sub-sections contained in each of the other FP curriculum documents. It is not, however, mentioned outside of these. In the Grade R-specific Mathematics Curriculum document, there is also a focus on 'incidental learning' and on taking advantage of learning opportunities which arise 'spontaneously', which are characteristics of 'mediating' learning.

The second of the roles to be prioritised differently between Grade R and Grades 1 to 3, is that of 'Interpreter and Designer of Learning Programmes and Materials'. This can be seen in the analysis above, in which it was presented that mathematics activity suggestions for Grade R were highly prescriptive, whereas those suggested for Grades 1 to 3 were less so. It may be assumed that the highly prescriptive nature of the Grade R activities indicates

an assumption by policy writers that Grade R teachers are less able to embody and embrace the roles and responsibilities of an 'interpreter and designer'. This contributes to the development of an institutional identity for these teachers.

From the above analysis across the policy documents, it has also emerged that, along with severing from the role of 'mother', there were also contradictory messages, and differently prioritised roles between documents, resulting in a spectrum of identification. This spectrum can be seen as a having "mainly professionally unqualified" (Education White Paper No. 5 on ECD, 2001, foreword) 'mothers' on one side and 'learning phase specialist' registered 'educator' on the other.

In conclusion, there exist mixed messages in terms of the policy promoted institutional identity of Grade R teachers. The professional development implications of these mixed messages include broadening our understanding of how Grade R teachers actively or passively fulfil the policy roles and promoted institutional identities presented to them. Preliminary interview data analysis (from the broader study) indicates possible significant differences in these roles, and to what extent each teacher embraces or resists these promoted roles. This may have implications for their practice and future career trajectory.

The following chapter explores in more depth the ways in which Grade R teachers who participated in the Mathematics Professional Development programme (described earlier under the empirical field of the study) either

embrace or resist the policy promoted institutional identities, and explores where on the spectrum of identification they position themselves.

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## Chapter 5: Narrative Vignettes of Teacher Institutional Identities

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### 5.1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I present in depth narrative vignettes of this study's four selected teachers in relation to their navigating and reconciling of the institutional identity messages emanating from the policy discussed in Chapter 4. It was found in Chapter 4 that the policy promoted mixed messages for Grade R teachers. These policy messages represent to Grade R teachers a spectrum of identities - from largely unqualified 'mothers' and 'caregivers' on one end, to qualified, registered 'teachers' and 'educators' at the other. Also, discussed in section 4.4, was how the Norms and Standards (N&S) for Educators (the seven roles for all teachers) were represented in the curriculum for Grade R and Grade 1, 2 and 3 teachers.

It is important to clarify that this chapter is *my story* of these four teachers' stories, after Sfard and Prusak (2005, p. 21) argued that "designated identities are products of collective storytelling". In order to represent the telling of their stories in relation to the institutional identity frame chosen for this study, I have organised the telling of each of the teachers' stories according to the emergent categories developed from the reading of multiple data sources. The data sources include interviews and researcher journal notes (based on ongoing observations and informal communications with teachers). The data also includes questionnaires completed by the participants during the SANC ENF Professional Development (PD) programme, as the teachers in my

research sample were participants of this and agreed to their questionnaire responses being used for my research study.

In section 3.5, I explained that I selected four teachers for in depth analysis of their Grade R identity narratives through a combination of purposeful and convenience sampling. Notably, these teachers represent the spectrum of institutional identities (from unqualified practitioner to qualified educator) discussed in section 4.5. and represent the range of teaching contexts of teachers participating in the SANC ENF PD (from poorer to wealthier schools and schools with varying historical backgrounds under Apartheid). In this chapter, I begin with the narrative vignettes of the two teachers who, at the time of participating in the research, were in policy terms under-qualified for Grade R teaching. I then move onto the two teachers who were qualified specialist Grade R teachers.

Details related to the teachers, their selection for inclusion, how the data was gathered, how categories emerged from data, and how these categories were coded was discussed in section 3.6. After multiple full readings of the interview transcripts of the four teachers, themes began to emerge through different interview “data clusters” (Patton & Parker, 2017, p. 354). These were:

- The teachers’ journeys to the teaching profession in general and to Grade R specifically;
- Their qualifications and years of teaching experience;
- Their experiences of teacher training;
- Their future career and/or training aspirations;
- Their experiences of the rollout of Grade R in schools;

- Their current teaching experiences;
- Their Professional Development experiences (including formal pre-service teacher education experiences);
- Their experiences of their communities and how others perceive them;
- Their experience of numeracy teaching and learning.

From these initial emergent themes, further reading of the data took place in order to identify dominant themes in relation to the teachers telling of their institutional identity related utterances and responses. The above themes were then, following further reading, either discarded if not related to the institutional identity focus, or collapsed to create new categories based on congruencies across the themes. The final categories created and used in this chapter as a structuring device for the telling of the teachers' stories are:

1. The teacher's school context;
2. The teacher's journey to becoming a Grade R teacher;
3. The teacher's learning trajectory as a Grade R teacher;
4. The teacher's experiences of Grade R policy transition and departmental positioning;
5. The teacher's experience of Grade R teaching and Foundation Phase membership.

A third reading of the data then included the questionnaire data, along with the interview data. All of the questions asked of the participants were organised and grouped into the above five categories. A copy of this grouping can be found in Appendix 13. Once all of the institutional identity relevant

questions were grouped in this way, each teacher's telling of her story (through interview and questionnaire responses) was organised and grouped in the same way. Details on the data analysis process undertaken for this chapter, as well as discussion around the validity and reliability of this process, were discussed in the Methodology chapter.

The narrative vignettes written for each teacher in this chapter are derived from the data sets discussed above. To honour the narrative style, data was omitted if it was not pertinent or relevant to the teacher's telling of their institutional identity story. For example, where I, as the researcher, asked for clarification of a school name or asked for the teacher to give the meaning of an acronym. Teacher responses to these have been removed so as not to break the flow of their stories.

Throughout my telling of the teachers' stories, I make comments on how their stories relate to the 'spectrum of identification' available through official policy discussed in section 4.3. and 4.4. I investigate through their stories how they align or depart from, and embrace or resist, the policy promoted institutional identity messages. For each of the individual stories, I offer a summary vignette of each teacher's experiences of navigating their own institutional identity, collated from the data analysis. As noted in section 3.6 in regard to the data sources used for the narratives, the shortened reference protocol is used for each. See Table 5.1 below for a summary of the reference protocols with examples. This chapter concludes with an overall summary discussion, which draws together and explores the similarities and differences across all four of the selected teachers' institutional identities.

Table 2.1: Summary of Data Sources Used and Shortened Reference Protocol

Data Source	Date collected	Shortened reference protocol	Example of use within narrative
Baseline Teacher Questionnaire 1	April 2016	Name of teacher, Teacher Questionnaire number, Question number, Date questionnaire completed	Maria, TQ 1, Q.3., April 2016
Interview	May-July 2016	Teacher Name, Interview, Line numbers, Month of interview	Maria, Int, L 5-10, June 2016
Mid-Programme Teacher Questionnaire 2	October 2016	Same as Questionnaire 1 above	
End of Programme Teacher Questionnaire 3	August 2017	Same as Questionnaire 1 above	
Video Stimulated Recall Questionnaire	August	Name of teacher, Video-stimulated recall questionnaire (Vid-stim rec), Question Number, Month questionnaire completed	Maria, Vid-stim rec, Q.8., August 2017

## 5.2. FUNEKA'S NARRATIVE VIGNETTE

### **5.2.1. Funeka's School Context**

Funeka is, in qualification terms, a relatively typical representation of the majority of South African Grade R teachers. In Table 3.5. presented in section 3.6, we see Funeka as one of 24 teachers (from the full SANC ENF PD participation group of 30) who is underqualified for the Grade R teaching position she currently holds. Funeka was, at the time of the study, not yet fully qualified, having obtained an Early Childhood Learning Level 4 Certificate. She had four years of experience in a Grade R classroom. Funeka is an isiXhosa

home language speaker, teaching in an Afrikaans medium school. Her school is classified as a Quintile 3<sup>18</sup> school and is a so-called 'Coloured'<sup>19</sup> school, with 39 Grade R learners recorded in 2015. Funeka's context differs from the three other teachers' contexts in that, at her school, in order to meet the requirements of the Grade R rollout initiative, a new separate building was built to accommodate the Grade R classrooms. In the other three teachers' schools, the Grade R classroom is housed in an existing part of the school buildings. Funeka's classroom was, at the time of the interview, housed in a pre-fab building on the other side of a sports field on the school grounds, away from the rest of the school buildings (Researcher Notes: Funeka, 26 May 2016).

It is useful to note here that Funeka and her Grade R colleague at this school were physically separated from the rest of the school. The Grade R classrooms were housed in a temporary structure on the opposite side of a sports field to the rest of the school, including the administrative and ablution facilities of the school. The Grade R building also had a separate entrance and playground (Researcher field notes: Funeka, May 2016). This physical separation has implications for the extent of one's belonging to the larger community of FP teachers at one's school, as there will be few informal incidental opportunities for sharing experiences and engaging in 'joint enterprise' (Wenger, 1998).

### **5.2.2. Funeka's journey to becoming a Grade R teacher**

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<sup>18</sup> South African schools are classified according to Quintiles, with Quintile 1 being the poorest and Quintile 5 the richest/most resourced schools. More on this classification system can be found in Chapter 4.

<sup>19</sup> During the Apartheid era, schools were differentially resourced and financed depending on the race of the community they served. The labels African, Coloured, Asian and White are still used in official systems and for redress. More on this can be found in Chapter 4.

Funeka responded to the first ENF teacher questionnaire regarding why she became a Grade R teacher by writing: “I love children and want to transfer my knowledge to them and help them to build the nation if they get good basics skills” (Funeka, TQ 1, Q.3., April 2016). During the interview, Funeka shared the following story of her journey to becoming a Grade R teacher:

If I can go back, when I passed my matric in 1994, I wanted to be a teacher. But I had a gap year, so in 1995 I went to college to do teaching, because it is what I like best. But I could not pay that because of financial problems at the time. But then I stayed after all and I was teaching. In 1998, I heard about the programme. I was doing the Foundation Programme which was for pre-school. In 1998, I did the Early Childhood Learning which was what I really wanted the most. But then they said there were no spaces for pre-school at that time, so was told I could start my own thing. But our house was so small to start anything, so could not go further. Then in 2009 something said I must go and start again. So, a lady came to me and said that social services at her work were starting this programme. “So, if you want to join you can let me know, and you can start if you like.” When I was there they said, “You must choose schools,” and I chose [name of school]. I did not even know the name of the school and that it was an Afrikaans school. I came to speak to [Grade R colleagues’ name] who was teaching, and she said I was welcome to start any time. She advised I talk to the Principal which I did, and I was told it was fine to start at any time; that was a Friday. Monday, I started with [Grade R colleagues’ name]. She asked if I knew it was an Afrikaans school, and I said “No.” But she said, “You can start.” [Grade R colleagues’ name] was so in love with her work and she showed me everything I had to do, and it was what kept me going. In 2010, they started with our programme which was Level 4. Then in 2012, the Principal decided I should start the programme and I started teaching. I had another friend, a white lady who did home-schooling, and she was another one who helped me so much before I came here. She supported me a lot with the children and I thought I could go further with my teaching at schools.

(Funeka, Int, L 9-32, May 2016)

Funeka explains her journey into studying towards becoming a pre-school teacher as one with several stops and starts. From the above excerpt of Funeka's story, three insights emerge. First, Funeka tells us that she chose to do teaching at tertiary level (college), because "it is what I like best" (L 11) and also pursued Early Childhood Learning which "was what I really wanted the most" (L 15). It appears from Funeka's telling of her journey to becoming a Grade R teacher that she chose this profession early on in her career. Teaching as a profession was for Funeka a considered choice, even though she was unable to fulfil this due to financial challenges.

The second insight that emerges is Funeka's challenges in her pursuit of this profession. Funeka first tells of "financial problems" (L 11-12) which she experienced during her early tertiary studies. She then tells us that there was a challenge in finding a position, as "there were no spaces for pre-school at that time" and how the prospect of "start[ing] my own thing" (L 16-17) was prohibitive due to her house being "so small". It was after experiencing these setbacks, that Funeka "could not go further" (L 17-18).

Finally, from the above excerpt, Funeka shares her experiences of supportive colleagues both within the school and beyond. Funeka tells of how, after the challenges experienced and mentioned above, she "had another friend, a white lady who did home-schooling, and she was another one who helped me so much before I came here. She supported me a lot with the children and I thought I could go further with my teaching at schools" (L 28-32). Through this encouragement and support, Funeka did return to the

teaching profession on the suggestion of “a lady” who came to her and “said that social services at her work were starting this programme” (L 19).

Once teaching, Funeka expresses how she receives support from her Grade R colleague: “[Grade R colleagues’ name] was so in love with her work and she showed me everything I had to do, and it was what kept me going” (L 24-25). In this respect, Funeka stories herself as someone who was accepted and came into Grade R as an apprentice, not yet qualified but supported by others working in Grade R. With the information of the Level 4 qualification being available, she then pursues gaining a qualification for the work she is doing.

Funeka’s telling of the support network she draws on seems to have supported her confidence in engaging with others about her work. She continues when she is later asked in the interview about who she talks to about Grade R:

So many people. I can talk to the parents also about sending the children to Grade R because it is important for the children for the basics, the foundation and everything... I also talk to [Grade R colleague]. I also have my sister who is teaching. I think she is doing pre-school. I talk to her about anything that frustrates me. And also, the friend that does ‘home schooling.’ I send her a message so she can also help me out with other things if I am frustrated.

(Funeka, Int, L 88-97, May 2016)

### **5.2.3. Funeka’s learning trajectory as a Grade R teacher**

The fourth and final theme emerging from the above extract is one of continued professional development and continued pursuit of qualifications.

She began studying to become a teacher at college in 1995, 21 years prior to this interview taking place. Three years later in 1998 she again began working towards becoming qualified, with a focus this time on Early Childhood. Eleven years later, Funeka began working in her current school as a teacher assistant, and soon after began teaching as a Grade R teacher responsible for her own class. The following year in 2010, Funeka was provided information about opportunities to complete her Level 4 Certification and this led to her once again studying towards a qualification for teaching within the Early Childhood Development (ECD) years.

In further telling's of Funeka's learning trajectory as a Grade R teacher, she continues to share her wish for more skills and qualifications. In the interview, Funeka was asked: 'After the government did that [Grade R rollout], did you get more job security?' The following section of Funeka's story shows how Funeka talks about her future as a Grade R teacher: "I think we do. If the government can also; I was thinking if they can give us more skills and more like to do the other levels then I think it's safe for us to do that" (Funeka, Int, L 40-44, May 2016). In this response, Funeka first speaks of wanting to get more skills and "levels" (L 43). The levels she refers to here could mean the qualification levels<sup>20</sup>. It is important here to make a note about the nature of Funeka's Level 4 qualification. This qualification is focused on Early Childhood Development and, therefore, Funeka is positioned further in the field of ECD compared to the field of the Foundation Phase (FP), in terms of the institutional identity spectrum discussed in section 4.5. It is also in this statement that she postulates the possibility of the government supporting her in her development of skills and in her pursuit of higher qualifications.

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<sup>20</sup> For a full description of the South African Qualifications Levels, please see Appendix 11

Funeka's use of the word 'safe' indicates some sense of vulnerability, although she does not elaborate on this.

When asked how important she thought having a specialised qualification for Grade R is, Funeka replied: "I think that will be a great thing to happen to us; If the government can do that; if we can qualify to be Grade R teachers, because that is what I am comfortable in" (Funeka, Int, L 49-54, May 2016). Funeka shares that although she has a Level 4 (ECD) qualification, she would like support from the government in obtaining a Grade R teaching qualification, as it would be "a great thing to happen to us" (L 52) and "that's what I am comfortable in" (L 54).

When Funeka was asked whether her current Level 4 qualification helped her to teach Numeracy in Grade R, Funeka responded: "Yeah they do help but not that much. I think we do need more skills than other things; there is not much skills in the numeracy, just counting and learning to count" (Funeka, Int, L 71-73, May 2016). With this statement, Funeka again expresses her apparent desire for more skills development, beyond what can be considered the basics of Numeracy, "just counting and learning to count" (L 72-73).

Funeka was then asked if she would like to further her learning, and her response is interesting in that she says she would "like to stay here in Grade R but I would also like to study further, more like the degree in teaching" (Funeka, Int, L 77-78, May 2016). I note here her use of the word 'but' between the two statements of staying in Grade R and studying towards a degree in teaching. The use of 'but', as opposed to 'and', could indicate that Funeka sees

obtaining a degree as a pursuit that is not obviously connected to working in Grade R. Her reference to the “more like the degree in teaching” implies her perception of a Grade R specialised professional qualification being different from a general FP (Grade R to Grade 3) teaching qualification. In policy terms, as discussed in 4.6, both routes are available for Grade R teachers. Funeka’s use of the word ‘but’ could imply that she links her possible further study trajectory to enabling her to teach across the FP from Grades one to three.

In terms of Funeka’s idea of her future learning trajectory, she was asked: “Who do you want to become through participating in the ENF program?” to which she replied: “I want to become a Grade R teacher who has confidence and skills. Who other people can come to for advice and help with what I am doing” (Funeka, Int, L 98-101, May 2016). Once again, Funeka refers to the development of “skills” in particular, as well as wanting to increase her confidence. She adds, however, her wish to become, and be identified as, a leader educator who others consult for advice and help.

After participating in the SANCP ENF PD programme, Funeka responded to the video-stimulated recall question regarding her description of herself as a Grade R teacher, by noting that she is a “confident, committed, dedicated, encouraging, knowledgeable, well prepared, passionate and skilled” Grade R teacher (Funeka, Vid-stim rec, Q.8., August 2017).

#### **5.2.4. Funeka’s experiences of the Grade R policy transition and departmental positioning**

Funeka fully supported the government’s plan of providing access to Grade R for all learners. She had this to say when asked her thoughts on the

Grade R Rollout initiative: “I think it is a good idea, if everyone can take their children to Grade R for that foundation and basics” (Funeka, Int, L 36-39, May 2016). Funeka thus aligns herself with the policy intentions of the rollout of Grade R in schools. She also added that she thinks they [Grade R teachers] have more job security [than ECD practitioners], and emphasised in this respect that her Grade R position at the school is a government funded position (thus providing some job security for the position).

When Funeka was asked later in the interview about the type of support she receives for Grade R, first in terms of resources and secondly in terms of professional development opportunities, she responded:

I get materials, but not so much stuff. But if the materials come they are not enough... I did go [inaudible] a workshop that we go but it was not like maths related ones. With [local NPO (Non-Profit Organisation)] we had so much support there, although they stopped sending us messages where we can go also. But those were the things that keep me going this last year because they were so important to me.

(Funeka, Int, L 80-87, May 2016)

In the above, Funeka says that she does receive ‘materials’ from the government for Grade R, however, there are not a lot of materials provided, and when materials are provided, there are often not enough to meet her needs. This is likely due to an insufficient number of workbooks being given for the number of learners in her class. Several ENF teachers reported that when too few workbooks were supplied by the department, they were unable to use any of the books as it would not be possible to only give some learners books and not others. In terms of professional development opportunities, Funeka reiterates her earlier sentiments regarding her view that professional development is “so important to me”. However, she does not make mention of

any government initiatives focused on PD, but mentions a Non-Profit Organisation (NPO) that works extensively with local teachers in PD.

#### **5.2.5. Funeka's experiences of Grade R teaching and Foundation Phase membership**

In her interview, Funeka did not elaborate on her experiences of the Grade R rollout. However, when asked about her current position in the school and her membership of the FP, she said: "Some of them are helpful; I never had a problem with the teachers" (Funeka, Int, L 55-57, May 2016).

When Funeka was prompted about whether or not she thinks her qualification (Level 4) 'affects the way other teachers see her', she responded:

I think maybe they can affect that; in some recent case when I can say that it was not qualification related, but in the case when something happened with my child. My child is also at school here. I have two children here. So, the other day we were at home; we are moving from this area and it was during the week so I couldn't come. I was thinking the child has to go to school. But I came late; the children had to be here at 07h30 and we came here at 07h40. I came to the teacher to explain but she was shouting and asked why the child was late every day. But it was not like that. So maybe she was looking down, if I can say that.

(Funeka, Int, L 60-68, May 2016)

In this response, Funeka indicates that she does not think her treatment by one of the FP teachers at her school was "qualification related" (L 61), however, her inclusion of this anecdote to the question implies that this may in fact be the case. Although Funeka is both a colleague of this particular teacher, as well as a parent of one of the children in her class, this teacher appeared, in Funeka's words, to be "looking down" (L 67) on Funeka. This interaction may

not be indicative of all of Funeka's experiences with the other teachers in her school. It is, however, significant that Funeka expressed feeling "looked down" on. This implies experience of some mixed institutional identity positioning by others in terms of both the status of her position as Grade R teacher and of her Level 4 certificate qualification. In Funeka's story, she appears to resist the lower status identifications imposed by others in her school community, though her possible alignment of further studies (and to moving up the grades) could imply some buy-in to the differential status of Grade R certificated teachers and qualified FP (Gr R-3) teachers.

#### **5.2.6. A summary of Funeka's Institutional Identity story**

Funeka's story offers some insight into the experiences of an under-qualified Grade R teacher currently navigating the transition into the FP sector of schooling. Although Funeka was at the time of the study carrying out all of the roles of a Grade R teacher, her qualification level was below that required by law for employment into this position. Funeka does not elaborate in her story whether she was employed full-time, or if she received a market-related salary. This different level of qualification makes Funeka distinct from the three other teachers involved in this study, particularly Maria and Anita (discussed in sections 5.4 and 5.5), who are fully qualified in "junior primary" (otherwise known as the Foundation Phase). Although the fourth teacher, Thandi (whose narrative is shared in section 5.3) was not fully qualified at the time of the study, she was near completion of her qualification focused on Grade R and the FP. It is important to note that, although Funeka is not similarly qualified as the other three teachers presented here, her qualification status is more representative of the majority of teachers currently carrying out the roles and

responsibilities of Grade R teachers in South Africa (Feza, 2014). Funeka's telling of her experiences, while more representative of the experiences of the majority, are vastly different from the experiences of fully qualified Grade R teachers, such as Maria and Anita.

### 5.3. THANDI'S NARRATIVE VIGNETTE

#### **5.3.1. Thandi's School Context**

Thandi was at the time of her participation in the study and concurrent SANC ENF Professional Development, a still-studying Grade R teacher at a local township<sup>21</sup> school. This school, like Maria's, is a Section 21 school, classified as Quintile 3 in 2014. From 2011 until 2015, this school was allocated funding provision for between 60 (2011) and 94 (2015) Grade R learners (DBE, April 2014).

#### **5.3.2. Thandi's journey to becoming a Grade R teacher**

Thandi chose the teaching profession because "I love children. I love interacting with them. To them everything is easy; they don't have to worry about anything. That's what I love about them" (Thandi, Int, L 12-13, June 2016). In the first ENF questionnaire, Thandi responded that she became a Grade R teacher because "I have a passion with small children" (Thandi, Q 1, Apr 2016).

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<sup>21</sup> The term 'township' is used to "refer to the apartheid-era urban residential areas designated for 'non-whites'. Significant geographical separation along racial lines persists even today. Townships are generally located on the periphery of towns and cities" (Robertson, 2017, p. 26).

Thandi, while teaching full-time, was also completing her National Professional Diploma in Education (NPDE) through distance learning. Of the 28 SANC ENF PD participants who provided their qualifications in the questionnaires, 11 were either in the process of completing or had already completed this qualification (Q1, April 2016). Thandi has been teaching Grade R since she began her teaching career in 2004, which at the time of the interview, amounted to 12 years of teaching experience.

In her written words, her qualifications were: “B.Ed. (not finished) Grade R (I ended up starting from NPDE am doing third year 2016 specializing in Learners with Barriers)” (Thandi, Q. 1.1, April 2016). In discussing her studies and pending qualification, Thandi spoke specifically of how her ‘Learners with Barriers’ specialisation is important for Grade R teaching:

I think that is very important because in Grade R you are moulding those children, and then you see there are barriers. You start to see them in Grade R. In crèches, they don’t notice those things, but when they come to Grade R you have to open your eyes and ears, and look at the child as a whole so that you can see if there are problems or not. So, having a qualification in special needs will boost the school.

(Thandi, Int, L 71-76, June 2016)

Although she had not yet completed her diploma, she argued that her studies were benefitting her teaching, “because if I was not educated, I would not notice the cases; the barriers in my class. So, because of the knowledge I am getting, I can see what is wrong with the child” (Thandi, Int, L 91-93, June 2016).

From her comments, we see that Thandi is cognizant of the nature of Grade R being a specialised field, which is echoed in parts by the policy

referring to the role of becoming a ‘specialist’ (as indicated in section 4.4). However, Thandi does not speak of being a ‘Subject/Learning Area/Phase Specialist’ (the seventh role in the N&S document), but rather of being a Grade R specialist. This is the message the Education White Paper No. 5 sends: “educators, who do not have a specialised qualification to teach the Reception Year, undergo approved training programmes” (DoE, 2001, pg. 6). Thandi’s further specialisation in ‘learners with barriers to learning’ supports her storying of herself as someone able to respond to learner needs by noticing and supporting those with learning barriers. In this way, she identifies as a Grade R teacher with a special and important skill. Thandi’s noting that “In crèches they don’t notice those things...” (L 19) sees her making a clear distinction between the learning and teaching that takes place at a “crèche” (day-care facility) and that which is required in a Grade R setting. In this, she positions her knowledge and her skill (even while she is still studying) as appropriately belonging to a school-based Grade R setting as distinct from ‘child minders’ who might be working with the same age group of learners in crèches. In policy, as argued in section 4.5, this distinction is not made explicit, as Grade R teachers are referred to as both ‘educators’ and ‘child minders’.

### **5.3.3. Thandi’s learning trajectory as a Grade R teacher**

In our interview, Thandi noted the importance of obtaining a qualification as a Grade R teacher, and shared, unprompted, some of the challenges she faces in achieving this qualified status: “I am getting R5000 (\$350). I still have to pay [name removed] University and I have a baby at home. As a mother, there are things I have to do at the house” (Thandi, Int, L

248-250, June 2016). When asked how much she was paying for the NPDE she replied:

Per year it is R24 000.00. Before you write I am going to show you an 'sms'. Last year I paid R17 000.00, my second year. "Hi, your 'Edu-Loan' for R17 700.00 was approved. Instalment R985.00 for 24 months. EFF rates which will be R23 654.40.

(Thandi, Int, L 248-258, June 2016)

Thandi's low earning figures and study expenses impose on her the position of someone with serious financial challenges. We see the grounded challenges of policy priorities for professional study for ECD practitioners manifest in Thandi's lived reality. She is attempting to pursue the policy priority of improving teacher training across ECD and Grade R (DoE, 2001). However, in real terms, she is struggling to use her R5000 monthly salary to support her family and her university fees of R985 a month – almost a fifth of her total budget, for the three-year duration of the diploma course.

In order to fully understand the financial situation Thandi highlights, it is important to share some information regarding the Grade R salary range in South Africa. Information retrieved from the website [www.indeed.co.za](http://www.indeed.co.za) estimates 'Preschool Teacher Salaries in South Africa' at R7657 (\$508) a month. According to the website "salary estimates are based on 79 salaries submitted anonymously to Indeed by Preschool Teacher employers, users, and collected from past and present job advertisements on Indeed in the last 36 months" (Indeed, 2020). This information was last updated on the 12<sup>th</sup> of February 2020, and retrieved on the 18<sup>th</sup> of February 2020.

An Independent Online<sup>22</sup> news article dated 16<sup>th</sup> of January 2017 titled ‘Grade R teachers get R500 (\$33) salary boost’ details how 6000 Grade R teachers in the KwaZulu-Natal province received “a minimum monthly salary of R6000 (\$398)” (Masuku, 2017) after the ‘boost’. This, however, was still not in line with other provinces, as those teachers working in Grade R in Gauteng, the Free State and the Western Cape were still earning around R7500 (\$497) a month. While this is more in line with the information on the Indeed website, it is, however, not the standard.

The National Professional Teachers Association of South Africa (NAPTOSA) lists the entry level salary range for new teachers at between R10269 (\$681) to R10425 (\$691) a month (NAPTOSA, 2019). This would be the salary paid to all newly qualified teachers entering the profession on a full-time and permanent basis, such as those teachers working with Thandi in the other FP grades (Grades 1-3). (For a full list of salary scales for educators, please see Appendix 14). Furthermore, the Universal Access to Grade R Policy Framework released in 2011 with regard to funding for Grade R ‘practitioners’ states:

The Norms and Standards for funding Grade R allow for the employment of Grade R practitioners by School Governing Bodies as well as posts being created by the Department of Basic Education. There is no set salary although it was recommended that all practitioners should be paid R5, 000 per month without benefits. The only Act that governs the Grade R practitioners is the Basic Conditions of Service Act.

(DBE, 2011c, p. 3)

As can be seen from the above salary information, Thandi’s salary positions her at the minimum earning level of Grade R practitioners and teachers. Salaries for Grade R teachers are also

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<sup>22</sup> <https://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/kwazulu-natal/grade-r-teachers-get-r500-salary-boost-7417742>

determined by the provision of School Governing Body (SGB)<sup>23</sup> posts<sup>24</sup>. This allows wealthier schools to support or supplement teacher salaries.

In 2011, Thandi struggled with funding her further studies. This reflects the major challenges for Grade R teachers like herself wanting to meet the minimum stipulated qualifications and align with the institutionally promoted identity of becoming qualified, specialised professionals. Thandi's frustration with her minimum wage-related salary challenges, and the implication that her contribution is on par with unskilled work, is captured by her comment in her interview: "Even the gardeners get more money than us" (Thandi, Int, L 19-20, June 2016).

#### **5.3.4. Thandi's experiences of Grade R policy transition and departmental positioning**

When asked about her impression and experiences of the Grade R rollout, Thandi once again expressed ambivalence as to the pros and cons:

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<sup>23</sup> School Governing Body – note that in many ex-White government schools (so called ex Model C) additional teachers are funded through the SGB and the availability depends on the funds raised through school fees or fund raising. As a result, SGBs in wealthier areas have considerably more access to funding than those operating in poorer areas.

<sup>24</sup>This is not ideal, as expressed by Thirona Moodley, provincial spokesperson for NAPTOA in the IOL article mentioned above: "If the SGB has a healthy bank balance then the teachers' salaries are topped up to Level1." "But what happens to the teachers working at low fee and no fee schools in the province? They are putting in the same work hours and skills." She is also in the article credited with saying that Grade R teachers "were getting a raw deal. Most of the Grade R teachers were left to the mercy of the school governing body." (Masuku, 2017).

It's a good idea to put us in schools rather than in their own spaces like before, because Grade R used to be in the crèches. And then they take them there and put them in schools. It's a good thing but also a bad thing...

(Thandi, Int, L 26-29, June 2016)

Thandi continued to express her concerns regarding the financial implications of this move saying, "because what I've heard is when Grade R's were standing on their own, they were earning more than now" (Thandi, Int, L 29-30, June 2016). Thandi further noted the workload implications that arose with the move of Grade R to a formal school setting: "The paperwork is too much in our schools. You do paperwork every day and if there is something that is needed in the office, you have to stop teaching and do the paperwork which is not fair" (Thandi, Int, L 30-33, June 2016). This comment indicates a frustration in the shift in roles towards 'administrator' (which makes up part of the third of the 7 roles for educators in the N&S, namely that of Leader, Administrator and Manager). Such administrative paperwork would be far less in the more informal ECD sphere. Some of this increase in paperwork was evident in the CAPS FP Gr R:M recommended assessment practices for Grade R learners that was analysed and discussed in section 4.4.

Although it was a financial struggle to complete her studies, Thandi stressed that her studies were essential for her teaching and the children's learning in Grade R, "because if I was not educated, I would not notice the cases; the barriers in my class. So, because of the knowledge I am getting, I can see what is wrong with the child" (Thandi, Int, L 91-93, June 2016). In this sense, Thandi strongly identifies and aligns with the policy imperative of

becoming a qualified, specialised professional and her role of focusing on children's learning needs versus only their care needs.

### **5.3.5. Thandi's experience of Grade R teaching and Foundation Phase membership**

The struggles Thandi experiences in trying to establish herself as a recognised member of the FP teaching cohort, who performs the same duties as her colleagues, is evident in Thandi's response to the question about whether she saw herself still teaching Grade R in another three years' time: "That will be a "Yes" and a "No." "Yes" if the government employs us permanently and recognises us as teachers. And "No" if it doesn't happen. (Thandi, Int, L 16-22, June 2016). Thandi followed this with the comment discussed above about Grade R's not having benefits, only earning a stipend of R5000 a month and earning less than gardeners (L 16-22). In this statement, we see Thandi's frustration at the government in what she perceives as a lack of recognition of Grade R teachers as 'Teachers', as well as her hope that this might change as indicated by her 'yes if' phrasing.

Thandi makes the point twice that Grade R teachers are not recognised, and again shares the need to distinguish between a 'crèche' where children "sleep and eat" and a Grade R classroom. She also implies that the work she does in her classroom deserves a higher wage than the non-teaching garden staff. Thandi also expresses frustration that the parents also do not see the educational work that Grade R teachers do and, thus, they position the Grade R teachers as unqualified childminders.

In this statement, Thandi reveals her vulnerability in her position as a Grade R teacher. As mentioned above, Thandi expresses tension between her choice to be a teacher because of her love and passion for working with children, and her need for job security and professional status. The latter remain uncertain for her, as does her future as a Grade R teacher. She could see herself continuing her studies, if possible, “Next year when I finish my NPDE I will do my A.C.E. (Advanced Certificate in Education). After my A.C.E. I will do my degree” (Thandi, Int, L 111-112, June 2016).

Here we see Thandi’s identity trajectory as a life-long learner within the field of education and her alignment with the fifth role in the N&S document, namely that of Scholar, Researcher and Lifelong Learner. She emphasises the value in such learning but also how this will move her status in relation to the department (her employer) and her community (particularly parents) as a qualified professional away from the end of the spectrum of unqualified childminder (which comes with vulnerability in relation to job security and salary). It is useful to note here that Thandi did complete her NPDE qualification in 2017, and immediately applied for and was awarded a full-time teaching position in Grade 1 in her school (Personal Communication, eNicle Workshop at Rhodes University, March 2018<sup>25</sup>). The decision to move into the more formalised FP and away from Grade R (where she had spent the entirety of her career up to this point), is likely linked to Thandi’s seeking job security and ‘recognition’.

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<sup>25</sup> In resonance with Thandi’s continued trajectory to becoming a qualified Grade R teacher, and her story of herself as a life-long learner, Thandi participated in the SANC PD Programme for Grades 1 and 2 (namely eNICLE) in 2017 and 2018.

Evident throughout Thandi's interview are moments that echo tension in relation to her love of Grade R and her vulnerability as a Grade R teacher. This tension is captured in her response shared earlier of "Yes and no" as to whether she would remain in Grade R teaching. When questioned if Thandi felt that her post at the school was secure, she again replied "Yes and no" (Thandi, Int, L 40, June 2016). She elaborated:

The reason I am saying "Yes" is they renew our contracts every three years and now it's not secured because in my case, in 2013, I don't know what happened but I did not get my payment for April to July. Then I got payment in August, but when I queried that they said they did not put me in the system or they took me off the system. When I was about to hand them over to my lawyers, someone from the department said "Did you know this is a contract. This is not a permanent job." That is why I am saying "Yes and No." That to me was a threat that I could be kicked out any time because of their negligence. It was not my problem because every year I had to take my qualifications to them, and then they captured it. But in this case, I don't know what happened to my qualifications and my certificate. But I have to give them again so that they capture me. And it took them five months to do so. Tell me, "If someone hires from the department, can they stay five months without being paid?" "No."

(Thandi, Int, L 40-53, June 2016)

Striking in the above response is Thandi's experience of feeling 'threatened' by government officials, because she questioned the contract renewal process, and challenged her five months without payment. For Thandi, working and committing to a career in Grade R entails consistent tension between her passion for the children and financial security. This brings about a vulnerability of not being recognised or treated as an equal to her colleagues, and a feeling of being threatened should she seek to improve (through challenging the authorities) her work conditions.

Further tension and experiences of contradictory messages from authorities were shared in Thandi's response to being asked how her post was funded: "It is funded by the department of education but when they say we are not employed by them, even though they give us the pay-slips, they say we are employed by the SGB of the school. And the SGB says "No we don't have money. We can't pay you R5000.00. So, we are in between SGB and the Department of Education" (Thandi, Int, L 55-59, June 2016).

In terms of Thandi's social positioning within her school community, she said other teachers at the school storied her as "a good teacher" and saw her "as a hard worker" (Thandi, Int, L 82, June 2016). She elaborated on her relationship with the Grade 1 teacher in particular, as her closest colleague:

They (the other teachers in the school) see me as a hard worker. The Grade 1 teacher who I send my class to... always tells me I am a good teacher and that I am doing a great job. She can see by the children I am sending to her, that I know what I am doing. She has never complained about my children. But in each and every class there are cases, and if there are, I go with my kids to her and we discuss one on one, saying "This child is like this" and "This child is like that." And I think that is what should happen to every class so that the next teacher knows what the problems are, and knows about the children she is going to teach for that year.

(Thandi, Int, L 82-90, June 2016)

Thandi here gives us a sense of her pride at being a good professional who meets the educational needs of her learners in preparing them for Grade 1 and whose competence is recognised by the teacher in the next grade. In the video-stimulated recall questionnaire, Thandi describes herself as a Grade R teacher who is: "hard-working, dedicated, popular, approachable, always

learning, eager to help, respected by parents and qualified” (Thandi, Vid-stim rec, Q, Aug 2017). She indicated she was able to speak to a variety of people about her experiences in Grade R, including “the principal, the Head of Department, [her] colleague or other Grade R teachers [from other schools]” (Thandi, Int, L 125-126, June 2016).

When discussing her network of support, Thandi’s professional tensions and sense of vulnerability again come to the fore, as she says: “When we (family and friends) discuss education, I come up with topics that education does not recognise us - although we are doing more jobs than other teachers which is not fair” (Thandi, Int, L 130-132, June 2016). The latter statement indicates Thandi’s frustration with what she sees as misconceptions people have of Grade R work but she notes that this is something she is able to discuss with her family and friends.

It can be argued that the contradictory messages from government and in policy, and the tension that Thandi articulates in her telling of trying to establish a recognised institutional identity as a ‘Teacher’ permeates both her professional and personal experiences. She notes that this is something that is always on her mind.

Thandi is, however, positive about her experiences of teaching Grade R numeracy in particular, and finds that “teaching numeracy is fun” (Thandi, Int, L 182, June 2016). This echoes her earlier experiences of learning mathematics, which Thandi describes as: “You know when I grew up I loved maths...” (Thandi, Int, L 154, June 2016). However, she notes that the positive learning

experiences she had in mathematics did not continue to her final year of schooling:

...but when I was in Grade 11, something changed. And in Grade 12, I ended up getting an 'F' or an 'H' which was very bad. I think my problem was geometry. I hate geometry; those angles and 'Pi' and what! No, take me to algebra. I really used to love maths when I was growing up, but things changed when I was in Grade 11. I don't know what happened. I think it was more about geometry. My cousin and I were at [local high school], and in May I asked my Principal if I could change to art instead of maths. And he said "No you can't change now. You must finish until Grade 12." And then I said, "Oh okay." Then we ended up failing maths because you don't pass it if you have an 'H' or a 'G' or whatever.

(Thandi, Int, L 154-163, June 2016)

Thandi's story here in relation to her own mathematics learning journey is that of a struggling high school learner who failed the subject in her final year of schooling. This is a common story for many FP teachers (Westaway, 2017), and was one of the key motivations for focusing the SANC ENF PD programme on numeracy. A key aim was to support teachers to develop more positive relationships and identifications with mathematics.

### **5.3.6. A summary of Thandi's Institutional Identity story**

In summary, throughout Thandi's sharing of her learning and teaching experiences, there is consistent tension. This tension is visible from her expression of her own mathematics learning experiences which she initially loved but ended up failing; her sharing of a strong dedication and commitment to the specialisation of Grade R and the benefits of working towards a qualification but challenged by financial difficulties and extensive workload requirements; and her telling of a love and passion for working with children

strained by a vulnerability in her positioning and resultant indecision and uncertainty about her future as a Grade R teacher.

## 5.4. MARIA'S NARRATIVE VIGNETTE

### **5.4.1. Maria's School Context**

Maria was at the time of the data collection phase, a Grade R teacher in a previously so-called 'Coloured' local school, in which the parents of the learners pay minimal school fees (it is classified as low-fee paying). Her school is a Section 21 school, classified as Quintile 3 in 2014. Between 2011 and 2014 (the period of Grade R rollout) her school had a consistent recorded intake of 30 Grade R learners every year (DBE, April 2014).

Maria was also at the time the Head of Department (HoD) for the FP of her school. This was, and continues to be, unusual for a Grade R teacher to occupy a position of leadership such as this. Only two of the 30 participant teachers in the SANC ENF programme were FP Heads of Department<sup>26</sup>.

### **5.4.2. Maria's journey to becoming a Grade R teacher**

Maria has been a Grade R teacher since she began her career in 1993. At the time of data collection, her teaching career spanned 23 years. Maria was asked in her interview why she became a Grade R teacher, to which she responded:

It wasn't my first choice. When I was still at school I wanted to go into the medical field. I went to [another town], to school there, because of the subject choices. Here we did not have presently, we could just go to [name of local secondary school]. So, then I went to [name of secondary school in another town] where I did maths and physical science. That's

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<sup>26</sup> For more information on the South African Numeracy Chair Early Number Fun Professional Development sessions, and the participants, see the methodology chapter.

what they called it before. To go into that field. So, I wanted to do physiotherapy or radiography, or something like that. And I was actually accepted. I was lucky I was one of six accepted for radiography at [name of training hospital], that time we went for assessment and things. But then we waited for results, and the results came late and there was some problem, so they didn't take me after all. But I applied to do teaching as well, just for a second choice, so I was accepted at a college in [South African city]. At [name of teacher training college], that specialised in Grade R. It was the only college in the country that does that.... A while after I left there, they amalgamated with [name of other college]. I don't know if you have heard of [name of other college]. So, then they moved there and they were one. But I am enjoying what I am doing, and I am not sorry that I actually chose to go that way.

(Maria, Int, L 10-30, June 2016)

Maria explains her path of becoming a Grade R teacher as a second choice, though indicates that within the choice of teaching she chose Grade R as her specialisation. Fortuitously, however, Maria says that she enjoys what she does as a profession, and claims "I am actually not sorry that I actually chose to go that way" (L 29).

Maria responded to the first ENF questionnaire question asking why she became a Grade R teacher, as follows: "Because of my love for children. Wasn't my first choice, but once I was in it, I realised that this was my calling" (Maria, Q1, April 2016). Thus, reiterating that although it wasn't her first choice, she now says that she realises teaching Grade R is her 'calling' and says that she 'loves' children.

In response to the question, 'How important do you think having a specialised qualification for Grade R is for teaching?' Maria said:

I think it's very important because sometimes you get teachers, but they don't have a clue of what they are actually supposed to do. Like many will think it's more preparation for Grade 1; to prepare the child for Grade 1, but it's not like that. And others are under the impression that children play all day. Although lots of the work must be informal, but there must be some structured way of doing it.

(Maria, Int, L 97-106, June 2016)

#### **5.4.3 Maria's learning trajectory as a Grade R teacher**

In discussing her own studies and qualification, Maria appears to position herself as a qualified Grade R specialised professional in contrast with many of the others working in Grade R. She notes that these others "don't have a clue" (L 97-98). Through Maria's use of the words 'they' and 'others' it could be interpreted that Maria does not position herself in the group of teachers who don't know what to do, but rather in a group of Grade R teachers who do know what they are 'actually supposed to do'. She, therefore, appears in the above telling to express alignment with the qualified, professional end of the policy promoted institutional identity spectrum. She does this by separating herself from others who are not performing her interpretation of a Grade R teachers' roles - drawing on the discourse of policy speak. She does this by describing her further studying as "upgrading" (L 24) herself and through her use of the institutionally authorised positionality offered by the formal affirmation that she obtained her degree "cum laude" (L 94).

Maria's insistence that a Grade R specific qualification is "very important" (Maria, Int, L 99, June 2016) points to a separation of herself from both those teachers without formal qualifications, as well as from those with non-Grade R specific qualifications. This is shown through her statement:

“...many will think it’s more preparation for Grade 1; to prepare the child for Grade 1” (Maria, Int, L 101, June 2016). This statement could be seen as reference to those teachers who are FP trained and would not have specific training on the difference in the nature of working with Grade R learners which involves a greater emphasis on learning through play, movement and operating on concrete objects.

In terms of Maria’s discussions around her qualifications and the qualifications of other Grade R teachers, Maria expresses an alignment to the policy-promoted institutional identity discussed in sections 4.3. and 4.4. in a variety of ways. In particular, it is the roles and responsibilities authorised by awarding of certain qualifications which stand out. Maria exhibits her alignment and embracing of the institutionally authorised roles and responsibilities offered through qualifications. She does this by both aligning herself explicitly with this qualified, specialised, professional educator identity, and by distancing herself from others who are not qualified and on the “nurturing, unqualified, mother” end of the spectrum. In addition, she distances herself from those who are qualified FP teachers who have not specifically specialised in Grade R. In responding to the video-stimulated recall questionnaire, when asked to describe herself as a teacher, she wrote: “I am now a skilled, stimulating, motivated, passionate, sharing, knowledgeable, confident and always learning teacher” (Maria, Vid-stim rec, Q.8., August 2017). Her use of the descriptors ‘skilled’ and ‘knowledgeable’ support her alignment with the qualified, professional end of the policy promoted institutional identity. From the above discussion, it can be seen that Maria aligns strongly with the policy promoted identity that Grade R needs specialised training and not merely FP training.

Looking at Maria's response to why she became a Grade R teacher above (L 97-106) we see her navigate the tension caused by the fact that she did not choose this profession, and yet is embracing it none-the-less: "It wasn't my first choice. When I was still at school I wanted to go into the medical field..." In Maria's response, she describes in detail her ambitions to enter the medical field, noting that teaching was always her 'second choice': "But I applied to do teaching as well, just for a second choice, so I was accepted at a college in [South African city]. At [name of teacher training college], that specialised in Grade R. It was the only college in the country that does that." (L 23-26). Here we see Maria's discourse shift to make the point that her teacher training happened at a 'specialised' college (one of only a few who offered such specialised), and that she now enjoys what she is doing: "But I am enjoying what I am doing, and I am not sorry that I actually chose to go that way."

From the recounting of her journey into the teaching profession, we are given some insight into a possible tension which may exist for Maria as she reconciles her alignment to the policy-promoted institutional identity on the professional end of the spectrum discussed in section 5.4. It is through her telling of being "one of six accepted" (L 19) for the radiography course that we glimpse her pride in being a part of a select group of potential medical practitioners offered a place at the training hospital. This is coupled with a sense of disappointment that "they didn't take me after all" (Maria, Int, L 21, June 2016), resulting in Maria having to pursue her 'second choice' of teaching. Maria entered the teaching profession through what may be thought of as a route of opportunity, rather than a preferred route of 'following a dream'.

This tension is interesting as in Maria's telling, we are shown her early hesitance to entering teaching as a profession, which changes as her story moves to the telling of her current situation in which she embraces her identity as a qualified teacher with 'specialist' training who loves what she does. As discussed earlier in this chapter, we see Maria performing a distancing. This time both as she presents herself as someone with medical practitioner ambitions and capabilities, and in her distancing from others within the teaching profession, as she assures us of her 'specialisation' in Grade R (not 'just' a practitioner).

In response to the question 'How does [your qualification] support the teaching of Numeracy in particular, in what ways/how?' (L 119-120) she responded:

When we went to college, things weren't the same as it is now. So, I can't really relate to it. Even when I started off with teaching, there was no curriculum. There was nothing for Grade R. We had to find our own feet, and do things that we learned at college. But we didn't say we did maths, or this is what you are supposed to do. You learn as you go along. So, I can't really say that that had an impact. We were more in the informal business, like creative arts. What activities to do for creative activities, for movement, for music. But it wasn't like this is for maths, or this is for languages.

(Maria, Int, L 121-128, June 2016)

When pushed to elaborate on what she meant by "things weren't the same as it is now" (L 121), with a particular focus on how her training prepared her to teach mathematics in Grade R, Maria notes she struggles to relate to her training. She points out that back then: "we were more in the informal

business” (Maria, Int, L 103, June 2016) and “there was no curriculum” (Maria, Int, L 122-123, June 2016). It is unclear from her utterances whether she disagrees with the shift in teacher training practices towards a more formalised curriculum, or if she supports the loss of ‘informality’ and the introduction of a curriculum for Grade R. However, her statement that she can no longer relate to her training indicates that the Grade R space in which she currently works no longer resembles the Grade R space for which she was trained. This has implications for her identity as she has navigated this professional transition throughout her career.

#### **5.4.4. Maria’s experiences of Grade R policy transition and departmental positioning**

As a Grade R teacher who was teaching both before and during the government initiative to rollout Grade R nationally, Maria was able to comment on her experiences of the process:

You mean that they are making it compulsory? I think that is great because so many people are opening up crèches and day-care centres, and from there the children move to Grade 1. But if it is at the school, then it is more structured because you have to follow the CAPS. But at some schools it seems to me that they don’t recognise the Grade R’s really. The HoD’s don’t work with them like they are supposed to. They concentrate more on Grade 1 to 3 because my colleagues at the surrounding schools, I can hear from that; they are not really part of the school or part of the phase, or whatever. But I am lucky because I am head of the department as well, of the Foundation Phase.

(Maria, Int, L 41-49, June 2016)

Although the rollout did not directly impact Maria professionally, as she already occupied a stable position in a school, she noted some key challenges

with the rollout despite her clear support of the initiative. She implies in her comment that the “many people [who were] opening crèches and day-care centres [for Grade R learners]” were offering informal and possibly poorer quality ‘teaching’. However, with the rollout into schools she says that “if it [Grade R] is at a school, then it is more structured because you have to follow the CAPS”

Maria’s response to the question: ‘What kind of Grade R support do you receive?’ highlights both a lack of focus on Grade R teachers in the FP PD offerings as well as some interesting separation of Grade R practitioners generally from herself and other qualified FP teachers:

I don’t receive any kind of Grade R support. I attended a few workshops with [colleagues] from the department, so that also there is another type. But I don’t get any support. They will have meetings and workshops but they split the educators up. They will have the practitioners alone, and then it’s us like myself and [other qualified Grade R teachers] and those people. We are seen as a different group than the practitioners. I don’t know how they do it at the department. So, I try to empower myself. I like to read up, follow my [inaudible] documents and whatever I have to gain some knowledge. And I take it from there. And from workshops that I attend, but it mostly covers Grade 1 to 3.

(Maria, Int, L 141-150, June 2016)

Maria also commented further on some of the challenges faced by the Grade R teachers in her neighbouring schools, in that “they (other educators) don’t recognise the Grade R’s really” (L 45). This was not the only challenge Maria identified. Although no longer referring to the Grade R rollout, but rather in reference to her current teaching experiences, Maria stated that she doesn’t receive “any kind of Grade R support”. She added that when she

attends workshops or any governmental meetings, she is “seen as a different group” and the officials split up the Grade R teachers, and put the “practitioners alone”. Furthermore, she mentions that workshops mostly focus on Grades 1-3, excluding Grade R (L 159-150).

Here we find an interesting insight into Maria’s telling and navigation of her identity story. Her identity in terms of how she is identified by departmental officials is as a professional qualified FP teacher, while her practice of teaching Grade R students aligns her identity with the individuals teaching Grade R students who comprise both unqualified ‘practitioner’ colleagues in other schools. While she is ‘included’ in this group of qualified FP teachers, her specialisation (Grade R) is excluded in the substance of workshops. This points to an interesting tension of inclusion and exclusion of Grade R teachers within such FP departmentally organised PD communities.

Maria doesn’t speak of herself as being a practitioner, but about herself as a qualified teacher. Her alignment to the professional end of the identity spectrum, through distancing herself from the many unqualified or under-qualified Grade R practitioners, is reinforced in practice when her and her qualified colleagues (Grade R) are physically separated from others working in Grade R classrooms during departmentally organised FP focused workshops. While Maria distances herself from practitioners, she aligns with their struggles and challenges of not being supported by the department in terms of the specialised needs of the Grade R teacher and learner. In practice, it appears through Maria’s telling, that the District Department of Education aligns the (qualified) Grade R teachers to the FP cohort of teachers, as in the policy. But, as Maria remarks, although she is invited to and attends workshops, the

content of these is more often geared towards “Grades 1 to 3” (Maria, Int, L 47, June 2016). Maria’s experiences of the governmental practice of separating her from others teaching Grade R (the practitioners) and including her in the Grades 1 to 3 focused training, with little acknowledgement of the unique nature of Grade R, could be the reason why we see Maria carving a place of her own. This is clear when she talks of trying to “empower myself” (L 147) by reading up, following up and doing “whatever I have to” (L 148) to gain more knowledge.

Maria’s desire to advance her professional knowledge base is not restricted to her current teaching practices and professional position. Maria was able to express her future career plans, and envisioned herself becoming a teacher educator. She noted that she wants to do the work that “you [the SANC project team] are also doing” (Maria, Int, L 34, June 2016). It is here that she is expressing her desire to support a much wider group of teachers in PD. During the SANC sessions, she often played a lead role in sharing her experiences of using and adapting the PD materials and sometimes shared videos of the way in which she adapted activities in her class with fellow ENF teachers. Subsequent to ENF, she had been invited to and had presented various teacher development workshops and training (for Grade R teachers) at a provincial level on behalf of the local government educational authorities.

In her telling of her future aspirations, we again see some distancing from her Grades R to 3 teacher colleagues as she aligns her career trajectory with being a life-long learner and someone who has knowledge to contribute beyond the Grade R classroom through the field of PD. She makes the observation that although the majority of the teachers she works with are not

interested in furthering their studies, for her: “I would like to move out” (Maria, Int, L 34, June 2016) and “I want to go on” (Maria, Int, L 137, June 2016).

However, she is cognizant of the challenges she may experience if she continues to pursue a career outside of the Grade R classroom. This is seen in her response to the question ‘Do you see yourself teaching Grade R in 3 years’ time?’:

Yeah I enjoy it a lot. But as I told you before, maybe I like to work with adults more. Not more, but I enjoy doing it, like presenting workshops, and the work that you are also doing. I would like to move out. But I have applied so many times to the Department of Education but, unfortunately, we don’t get the posts there. Some discrimination I think, but I do all of their work. I attend provincial workshops for them and I present it, but when the posts are advertised, they take people from outside. Doesn’t even have a clue of the work.

(Maria, Int, L 30-38, June 2016)

It is interesting from her telling of her future aspirations that while she wishes to align with the teacher educators in the Department of Basic Education, she says she has been excluded from this group. The politics of who gets appointed to departmental positions is complex and a discussion of this complexity is beyond the scope of this thesis. Suffice it to say that Maria laments the fact that despite applying for numerous departmental vacancies (for teacher development focused positions), she has been consistently overlooked. She wondered if “discrimination” (Maria, Int, L 36, June 2016) was one of the reasons for this rejection. Maria did not clarify in the interview or subsequent communications what exactly she meant by ‘discrimination’. In terms of South Africa’s Apartheid-era racial categories, Maria is ‘Coloured’.

These racial categories are currently used to inform transformation efforts and affirmative action policies. In some cases, in the continued pursuit of equity (post-1994), Black South African applicants are considered preferable to other racial categories. This is as a result of Black South Africans having historically faced the most discrimination and, therefore, regarded as most in need of redress efforts. (Robertson & Graven, 2020) This said, after participating in the SANC ENF PD with district officials, teachers and researchers as fellow participants, Maria applied for and was accepted for a position in district government in January 2019 (personal communication, SANC eNicle Session, October 2018).

Through Maria's use of language such as 'we' and 'their', we can see a belonging to one group and a separation from other groups of Grade R teachers. However, Maria's use of 'we', in this context of her feeling excluded from being able to gain employment as a teacher educator in the Department of Basic Education is unclear. 'Their', however, seems to refer to those working in the departmental sphere of teacher support Maria intends to move into.

In summary, there is persistent tension and fluctuation between the ends of the identity spectrum, and navigating of various roles (as discussed in section 4.5.) experienced by Maria. Maria experiences the fluidity of positioning in practice through the physical separation of herself (qualified) from the practitioners (unqualified) during departmentally run PD workshops. Her participation in this practice confirms her alignment to the professional end of the identity spectrum. This alignment comes into tension when she experiences the Grades 1 to 3 focused training and development programmes that her professional status gives her access to, but is not seen by her to be

relevant to her Grade R classroom context. This creates tension with being a member of the FP teaching cohort, as the Grades 1 to 3 teaching experiences differ from her own, which are specific to the Reception Year. On the other hand, the day to day experiences of the Grade R practitioners from which she is separated, by virtue of her qualification, likely resonate much more with Maria's classroom experiences. Interesting too is that Maria's imagined career trajectory sees her set her sights on becoming a teacher educator. She is already involved in providing PD on an ad hoc basis, but is finding that her hopes of finding permanent employment (with the Department of Basic Education) within this role is challenging, although it is not clear from her story why this is the case.

#### **5.4.5. Maria's experience of Grade R teaching and Foundation Phase membership**

Despite these tensions Maria shares many positive experiences and expresses confidence about her position within her own school. She views herself as a hard worker, and is "sure they [teachers in her school] can all see it" (Maria, Int, L 111, June 2016). Maria also shared that, although she didn't want to "boast" (Maria, Int, L 108, June 2016), she thinks that others see her as a "role model" (Maria, Int, L 110, June 2016). She attributes this perception of how others view her to both her role and responsibilities as Head of Department, but also due to her willingness to "help where I can" (Maria, Int, L 111, June 2016). She thinks that her immediate colleagues "look up to me and they appreciate what I do for them" (Maria, Int, L 117-118, June 2016).

This positioning as a leader within her school community is strengthened by the regular interactions Maria has with her fellow staff members, through

“phase meetings” (Maria, Int, L 153, June 2016) during which they all have the opportunity to share what they do in their respective classrooms. However, Maria has found it difficult to maintain frequent contact of a similar nature with Grade R teachers from other schools. As “cluster leader”<sup>27</sup> of the area, Maria says she can “help them” (Maria, Int, L 156-157, June 2016) and has suggested establishing a “committee where we get together and discuss some things, and share ideas” (Maria, Int, L 156, June 2016). This has not yet come to fruition, as Maria has said the Grade R teachers in her broader community are “just not very keen” (Maria, Int, L 156, June 2016).

As Maria describes her relationships with other teachers from different grades at her school, and with other teachers from the same grade from different schools, the tension of navigating a socially constructed identity is seen once again. Maria holds the institutionally authorised and allocated positions of both Head of Department and Cluster Leader. It is unusual for a Grade R teacher to hold leadership positions of this nature. Despite this not being the norm, Maria appears to have fully embraced the roles she occupies, as well as the responsibilities associated with these.

Within her own school community, her position of Head of Department would likely have allowed her to have more control over the nature and frequency of meetings with her colleagues. Her institutionally authorised title and position of Head of Department strengthens her professional identity as not only a part of the Foundation Phase team of qualified teachers, but as the leader thereof.

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<sup>27</sup> A Cluster Leader is in charge of 10 to 15 schools and “facilitate and coordinate support from the district by elevating matters to the district through the Circuit Managers’ office. The cluster leaders basically function as messengers and information carriers between schools and the CM.” (Ngwenya, 2018, p. 56)

Outside of her school community though, inside the broader local community of Grade R teachers, the role of Cluster Leader does not appear to have the same authorised power as the role of HoD. Although also institutionally authorised and designated as leader of her 'cluster', Maria has had little success in motivating her fellow Grade R teachers to participate in, and belong to, a Grade R community through regular interactions and sharing of ideas. As Maria notes, not all invited teachers in an area will attend cluster meetings, even while they occur under the 'official' mandate of the district. Maria, as a Grade R teacher in an unusual position of leadership, will not have the same day to day experiences as other Grade R teachers (especially different from Grade R practitioners' experiences).

Maria hints that this could make it difficult for the group of Grade R teachers in the broader district to connect authentically as members of a Grade R community with her:

...at some schools, it seems to me that they don't recognise the Grade R's really. The HoD's don't work with them like they are supposed to. They concentrate more on Grade 1 to 3 because my colleagues at the surrounding schools, I can hear from that; they are not really part of the school or part of the phase, or whatever. But I am lucky because I am head of the department as well, of the Foundation Phase.

(Maria, Int, L 45-50, June 2016)

#### **5.4.6. A summary of Maria's story of her Institutional Identity**

In summary, several themes arise from Maria's telling of her story as a Grade R teacher in South Africa. The first is her continued use of 'policy-speak' as she describes herself as a 'lifelong learner', one of the seven roles of the

educator outlined in policy. This is reinforced through her repeated reference to herself as ‘Head of Department’ and ‘Cluster Leader’, which are institutionally-authorized positions. Secondly, Maria expresses a strong alignment to the professional, qualified part of the institutional identity spectrum discussed in section 4.5. This she does by making a distinction between herself and ‘practitioners’ working in the Grade R field. She further shares her observations of delineation between the unqualified practitioner, the qualified Grade R teacher, and the Grade 1 to 3 teachers which manifest in practice in other schools, amongst her Grade R colleagues, and in government initiated training workshops. Finally, Maria has a continuing learning trajectory, envisioning herself moving into the teacher training sphere despite expressing possible challenges she may face.

## 5.5. ANITA’S NARRATIVE VIGNETTE

### **5.5.1. Anita’s School Context**

Anita, the final teacher included in this chapter, was at the time of data collection, working at a so-called ex-Model C school, which in 2014 was classified as a Section 21, Quintile 5 school. Enrolments for Grade R had held steady at 30 children per year every year from 2011 to 2014 (DBE, April 2014).

### **5.5.2. Anita’s journey to becoming a Grade R teacher**

Anita is a qualified and experienced Grade R teacher. She obtained a “DE3 Pre-primary from [college name]. So, it’s a diploma in Education” (Anita, Int, L 77-78, June 2016). Her diploma was attained when “the teachers training college was still around. And then I did my fourth year Diploma in Specialised

Education for Mentally Handicapped” (Anita, Int, L 81-83, June 2016). This extra year of study was for “what was a special class. Sort of remedial. I did that at [university name]” (Anita, Int, L 86-87, June 2016).

Once Anita had completed her qualification she began teaching Grade R, with a teaching career spanning 31 years at the time of the interview. She responded to the questionnaire regarding her decision to become a Grade R teacher by writing: “Love for children. Wanting to make a difference” (Anita, Teacher questionnaire 1, Q.3., April 2016). She did not always teach Grade R, however: “I have taught Grade 2 as well, but mainly Grade R. I think 25 years I have been with Grade R. And also, then part of those 31 years I have trained farm school teachers” (Anita, Int, L 9-11, June 2016).

Anita joined the teaching profession, in particular, Grade R teaching, by choice: “My mother is [a Grade R teacher] and I grew up with her. And it’s just something I have always wanted to do” (Anita, Int, L 14-15, June 2016). Anita explained that she enjoys teaching this grade even though she has the opportunity to work with children of different ages: “And I actually particularly love this age. I enjoy the bigger kids; I do a lot of sport with them, but as far as teaching goes, I actually enjoy this age” (Anita, Int, L 15-16, June 2016). She also seemed sure, at the time of the interview, that she would remain a Grade R teacher for the foreseeable future: “People asked me “Are you still at [school name]” and I said “Yes, they will carry me out in a box.” And I’m not moving from here. I’ll be in Grade R” (Anita, Int, L 18-19, June 2016).

In the above telling Anita shares not only was it her decision to pursue teaching, but she chose Grade R in particular, and she remains dedicated to this decision.

### **5.5.3. Anita's experiences of Grade R policy transition and departmental positioning**

Anita offered an interesting perspective of the Grade R rollout, and noted that her position at the school pre-dated the rollout: "I got this job before they started rolling out this Grade R programme" (Anita, Int, L 48-49, June 2016). In response to the question regarding her experiences of the Grade R rollout, she said:

You know it's very difficult because I have studied for four years to do this. And I think they are trying, but I don't think they are meeting the mark at putting in practitioners who are not properly trained. And yes, I can understand for Grade 00's and Grade 000's, but for Grade R actually, when I see what I have to do with them to get them ready for Grade 1, I don't feel those poor ladies are actually qualified to do that. I don't think there is enough sport; I don't think there's enough training and I think their salaries are pathetic quite frankly. And then it's very difficult, because I know that if I leave, they won't replace me. They will put in a practitioner. That is their story. So, I actually think they are belittling Grade R. I think they are not putting nearly enough stock on Grade R. It's a very very important year, and I know they think they just play, but it's so important. We do such a mix of everything here and you can see those. Mine go up to Grade 1 and then we get in other Grade 1's as well. And it's not me, but because of my experience and my training that mine are far more ready for Grade 1 than the others that come in. Some have been at pre-schools usually, but they are the ones that struggle more. And that comes from the Grade 1 teachers not from me.

(Anita, Int, L 20-37, June 2016)

Anita's response above begins by saying that the rollout was 'difficult' for her. Although she is not explicit about what exactly is difficult, she continued by making reference to her own four-year qualification in relation to practitioners who are "not properly trained" (Anita, Int, L 24, June 2016). It can be assumed that the 'difficult' she refers to in her opening line refers to the lack of training of the practitioners placed in Grade R classrooms. Perhaps this difficulty links to her perception that the inclusion of unqualified practitioners in the transition to the school Grade R space deprofessionalises the identity of Grade R teachers. In relation to the context of her whole response, it could also be that she finds the Grade R rollout 'difficult' because of her perception that the government is reluctant to acknowledge the importance of Grade R for a child's learning and subsequent schooling. This is evident in her statements regarding the "pathetic" (L 28) salaries practitioners earn; her claim that the government does not put "enough stock" (L 31) in what she says is a very important year; and the perceived "belittling" (L 30) of Grade R. Anita also mentions in the above quote the reports from her Grade 1 colleagues that children from other preschools are not sufficiently prepared for Grade 1: "because of my experience and my training that mine are far more ready for Grade 1 than the others that come in.... And that comes from the Grade 1 teachers not from me" (L 33-37).

Anita's response stories the stark difference in treatment, status and practice of 'practitioners' compared with professionally qualified teachers in the school system working with Grade R learners and in Grade R classrooms. She clearly aligns herself with the highly competent, specialised, and experienced professional who has job security while showing care and sympathy for the plight of Grade R practitioners (such as Thandi). Anita's

inference that the government does not acknowledge the importance of Grade R is interesting as multiple policy documents (Action Plan to 2014; Education White Paper No. 5 on ECD) consistently make the opposite claim. It is due to the increasing recognition, both locally and internationally, that the year before formal schooling is hugely important that the Grade R Rollout project was initiated by government in the first place (DoE, 2001). Yet, Anita seems sure that even in her well-resourced school, should she leave her position, she would be replaced with a 'practitioner'. Thus, Maria is aware that claims in policy rhetoric are not seemingly matched by professional prioritisation in the form of job security and salary parity for many of her fellow Grade R teachers.

In this respect, Anita's experience of mixed messages from government in terms of policy speak (Grade R teacher is important, specialised, qualified educator) versus practice (Grade R teacher treated as vulnerable, under paid, low status practitioner) echoes Thandi and Maria's stories. Thus, while Chapter 4 highlighted mixed policy messages, in these stories we see the grounded frustrations of Grade R teachers in relation to this.

Anita's comments highlight that while policy supports Grade R education for every child, in practice it is not making a significant impact. This is because adequate training is lacking, salaries are not market competitive, and there appears to be a lack of value for and recognition of Grade R teachers. The following quote from Anita echoes both Maria and Thandi's experiences of the Grade R rollout:

I don't think there's enough training and I think their salaries are pathetic quite frankly. And then it's very difficult, because I know that if I leave, they won't replace me. They will put in a practitioner. That is their story. So, I actually think they are belittling Grade R. I think they are not

putting nearly enough stock on Grade R. It's a very very important year, and I know they think they just play, but it's so important.

(Anita, Int, L 26-31, June 2016)

We also see in her earlier response the way in which Anita speaks about herself as belonging to a different set of Grade R teachers compared to colleagues across schools in the area and in the ENF PD programme she participates in. She notes confidence in her job security even while noting that if she left they would not replace her with a Grade R qualified professional such as herself. She notes further when asked whether the Grade R rollout had an impact on her career:

No, because they can't touch me here. I'm permanent, I have been here 16 years in this post, and just recently made HoD last year. So "No" and I am not changing my way of teaching for them. I appreciate what they are trying to do, but I don't need that though. I have already got my own workbooks, my own posters and my own themes. I will follow the CAPS [Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement] programme and assessments but I am not going to let it change the way I have taught because I know it works. And I can just say to them "come and look."

(Anita, Int, L 39-45, June 2016)

In this statement, Anita expresses much confidence in the quality of her work and experience of teaching Grade R, and appears to position herself beyond the influence of the Department of Education's Grade R rollout. In further discussions around her experiences of the Grade R rollout, in particular reference to the support and resources she receives from the Government (Department of Education), Anita again appears to distance herself from departmental support. In her interview, she indicated a critical stance to its value:

From them? Those workbooks. That's it. Which are pathetic. We had the new EDO [Education Development Officer] arrive two days ago. I already had two boxes from last year; they bring me two more; they will not take them back. I said, "I don't need them." I've already given [a SANC team member] one and have received another two this week. I don't need them. It's driving me mad because there must be places that can use them, but because they insist it is for [Anita's school] one and two. The other thing is we had three Grade R's (classes), we went down to two then down to one. They are still providing me with 70 workbooks. We provide the numbers every term; they are not looking at them. And this year the workbooks are mainly sticker books, which I don't think stimulates anybody. And the stickers don't work this year. They are not perforated. You can't take them off. So, they have spent all this money on books that are actually not functional. So, I don't know what people are doing in poorer areas in small schools. And I tried to show this lady; over her head. I am getting off the topic, but our new EDO worked with adult education and wanted the change.

(Anita, Int, L 51-75, June 2016)

In the above telling, Anita shares her frustration at and criticism of working within the Department of Education's rollout system. Within this system, all schools are provided the same resources irrespective of the experience of the teacher or whether a school is implementing Grade R for the first time or not. Anita's story indicates that she sees the quality of support as not appropriate for her level of professionalism as a Grade R teacher. She has years of experience and has developed her own resources. Her indication that she has requested they take their resources back and rather pass them onto other schools where they do not have such resources indicates again her story of two separate groups of Grade R teachers – professional, qualified and experienced (to which she identifies) on one hand, and unqualified practitioners who are newer to the schooling system on the other. The stark

reality of two education systems existing in South Africa, one highly functional and the other highly dysfunctional, was discussed in the introductory chapter and will be discussed further in relation to the four case study teacher experiences in the next chapter. Anita thus claims to not need, want, nor use the resources provided. She is critical of the educational value of the resources supplied, as well as the Government Official (the Education Development Officer, or EDO) sent to oversee the teaching and learning happening in Anita's classroom. In this, Anita is storying herself as someone with agency to reject implementing departmentally provided workbooks and instead guided by her own professional knowledge and experience (which she considers to be of better quality). She relates some of this agency and power to having the security of a permanent post and her position and status as FP HoD.

#### **5.5.4. Anita's experiences of Grade R teaching and Foundation Phase membership**

From the above, it is clear that Anita has not aligned herself with government rollout practices. Anita expresses strong alignment to the policy positioning of Grade R, as needing specialised qualified teachers. Her 31 years of experience working in this unique sector within the broader education system positions her as one of the few who already meet the institutionally promoted identity of specialised, experienced, qualified professional. Anita also shares both her passion for her work and her continued dedication to it, and her further alignment to the individual school where she is based. In the video-stimulated recall questionnaire, Anita also describes herself as a Grade R teacher who is: "skilled, hard-working, qualified, caring, dedicated, passionate, committed and always learning" (Anita, Vid-stim rec, Q.8., August 2017).

Her positioning within her own school can be seen in her responses to questions around who she speaks to about Grade R: “my principal...and [name of teacher]; she is the Grade 1 teacher” (Anita, Int, L 124-125, June 2016). As well as in response to the question regarding how Anita thinks others at her school perceive her: “In this school? As an equal. I think this school realises; they have looked. I mean the children that come through our Grade R; they often go “Oh that child is the one who did not go through Grade R.” So, they see this as a very important part of the school” (Anita, Int, L 91-94, June 2016). Thus, like Thandi’s story, some of Anita’s status as a highly competent Grade R teacher is in relation to recognition and feedback from the Grade 1 teacher about her strength in preparing learners to move from Grade R to Grade 1.

Upon reflecting on her time at the teacher training college, and her qualification, Anita further distances herself from the influence of the government rollout on her current teaching practices: “... when I was training it was the old maths and it was the basics. And then they came and threw the baby out with the bath water, and tried the new maths. I just carried on teaching the way we were taught. They are going back to that of course” (Anita, Int, L 101-104, June 2016).

#### **5.5.5. A summary of Anita’s story of her Institutional Identity**

In summary, it is evident from Anita’s story told in the frame of institutional identity, that she has positioned herself strongly on the professional, qualified end of the spectrum (and indeed her formal qualifications and experience position her there too in the eyes of others). It is interesting that she, like Maria, is also unusually a Grade R teacher holding the position of Head of Department. Her official leadership position, likely enabled

by her qualification and years of experience of teaching at her school, as well as her leadership attributes, contributed to her positioning on that end of the institutional identity spectrum.

However, her self-positioning on the professional end of the spectrum does not, for Anita, equate to an alignment with or acceptance of the policy promoted “rights and responsibilities” (Gee, 2000, p. 109) which may be expected to be upheld by a teacher holding her official leadership position. In Anita’s telling, the overall theme of agency for non-compliance with certain government rollout practices (such as the rejection of departmentally supplied learner workbooks) can be seen throughout. This non-compliance is coupled with overt criticism of poor quality support for Grade R by the Department of Education.

From Anita’s story, we see that she expresses both self-positioning and social positioning at the professional end of the identity spectrum. Not only does she self-identify as qualified, her school community positions her as a qualified and competent teacher, and she is positioned on that end of the spectrum through departmentally mandated position of Head of Department.

Anita’s non-compliance, it could be said is due to her valuing her own experiences and practices above those of the department and others working in the Grade R sector. Indeed, this is a field that is emerging and there are very few working in the field (both as teachers and departmental officials) with a Grade R specialised qualification and with years of Grade R teaching experience like Anita has.

## 5.6. ANALYZING ACROSS THE NARRATIVE VIGNETTES OF TEACHER INSTITUTIONAL IDENTITIES

In the following section of this chapter, I do two things. First, I analyse across the four teachers' stories, making explicit the links between their individual stories as well as linking their collective stories to the theory, to the literature discussed in Chapter 2, and to the policy document analysis presented in Chapter 4. Second, I look across the four teachers' stories specifically in relation to the analytical framework chosen for the study, namely Gee's (2000) conceptualisation of institutional identity (as discussed in section 2.3.). This I do in order to present the reader with a unified story of Grade R teacher institutional identity arising from the four individual teacher narratives.

The main findings arising from looking across the four teachers is that these teachers can be seen to represent each end of the institutional identity spectrum represented by policy, illustrated in section 4.5. The four selected teachers' telling of their experiences in the context of policy transitions is interesting in terms of understanding institutional identity in various ways. As discussed in sections 4.5. and 4.6., the policy-promoted institutional identity presented for Grade R teachers sends mixed messages, offering Grade R teachers a spectrum of identity labels to align with their individual institutional identities. This identity spectrum describes those working in Grade R as, on one side of the spectrum, 'unqualified mothers' and, on the other, 'qualified specialists'.

Thandi and Funeka are positioned by policy on the not yet qualified part of the spectrum as a result of their not having completed the necessary qualification to become registered and qualified teachers. Their narratives note this position and they both align with the importance of becoming qualified and have clear trajectories towards moving to the qualified end of the spectrum. In contrast, Anita and Maria are positioned by their qualifications as both qualified and specialised Grade R teachers. These qualifications, along with their specialisation, provide momentum for their involvement in the professional development of fellow teachers. They are thus positioned by policy, by those involved in teacher PD and by their own narratives, at the professional end of the spectrum (as illustrated in Figure 4.2: Illustration of Policy Promoted Institutional Identity Spectrum of Grade R Teachers).

In relation to the above mentioned spectrum, I have organised my collated story of the four teachers by 'grouping' the teachers according to the opposite ends of the spectrum. That is Funeka and Thandi are paired at the not yet professionally qualified end of the spectrum, while Maria and Anita are paired at the fully qualified end of the spectrum.

However, before discussing Thandi and Funeka apart from Maria and Anita, it is important to note that Thandi also shares similarities with Maria and Anita. Although Thandi is not qualified, and does not experience the same level of job security and financial benefits offered to Maria and Anita, she notably positions herself, through her telling of her story, closer to the professional and qualified end of the institutional identity spectrum. Indeed, because she is studying towards her qualification her status is 'almost' and 'soon to be'

qualified, placing her closer than Funeka to the professional side of the spectrum, but not quite there yet. Thandi further aligns herself with the qualified professional end of the spectrum by describing herself and the work she does as distinct from what happens in a 'crèche' (L 20-22) and also remarks that teachers in the FP of her school consider her 'a good teacher' (L 82-85). This comment about how others view her is a 'reified' narrative of her identity (Sfard & Prusak, 2005) and represents her being "recognised as a certain 'kind of person' in a given context" (Gee, 2000, p. 99). This is interesting for Thandi's story of her institutional identity. Her perception of how others perceive her is as a professional, yet through policy, she is positioned on the under-qualified end of the identity spectrum. Despite this, she distinguishes herself through her narrative from those working in the informal ECD/'crèche' sector, and refers to Grade R (and those who work in Grade R) as different from what happens in the informal ECD space. Where Thandi's story differs from Anita and Maria (besides her lack of formal qualification) is that she expresses a need to be regarded as a professional and 'recognised' (L 20) as such. This indicates that Thandi has an awareness of her positionality from official policy being other than the way she positions herself, and has implications for her institutional identity development. It is through this and other instances throughout Thandi's narrative that reveals her rejection of the 'imposition' (Gee, 2000) of the 'not yet a professional educator' I-id authorised by policy for those who are underqualified yet are working as Grade R teachers.

### **5.6.1. Exploring the Similarities in Thandi and Funeka's Stories**

Thandi and Funeka's stories together offer an interesting perspective on the navigation of institutional identity of Grade R teachers during this time of

major policy transition. Thandi and Funeka share many similarities due to both still being in the process of attaining a formal qualification at the time of the study. This places them alongside the majority of South African teachers in Grade R. Their qualifications and positioning on the policy promoted institutional identity spectrum discussed in Chapter 4 is expanded on in their individual narrative vignettes presented earlier, and their similarities are summarised together below.

Funeka and Thandi both express a desire to improve their qualifications and skills. For Thandi, this desire is expressed in the way she describes her pursuit of a Bachelor Degree (which she was unable to complete) and her subsequent enrolment into the National Professional Diploma in Education. Thandi also shares her frustrations in not being 'recognised' (L 20) as a professional. Although Funeka is not explicit in her story telling about wanting to be recognised as a professional, or regarded as 'other' to those working in the informal ECD sector, she tells of her need for "more skills" (L 43 and 71) and shares her desire to "become a Grade R teacher who has confidence and skills. Who other people can come to for advice and help with what I am doing." (L 100-101). Thandi and Funeka's stories both offer insights in understanding the institutional identity positioning and resultant experiences of under qualified Grade R teachers during policy transition.

Thandi's expressions of tension and vulnerability could be inevitable consequences for a teacher attempting to navigate the mixed messages of institutional identity (and roles and responsibilities) offered by current South African education policy. The extract shared earlier from Gee's (2000) discussion of institutional identity as it relates to his own position as a

professor at a university can offer some insights into understanding Thandi's story. In applying Gee's (2000) reasoning to Thandi's telling of her institutional experiences and positionality, we struggle to find explicit and established 'rights and responsibilities' that go with the practicing but not fully qualified Grade R teacher. Beyond a lack of clarity of what this position entails, there is in Thandi's experiences, a contradiction in the rights and responsibilities of a Grade R teacher. There is an expectation that she fulfils the job requirements (if not more) of a full-time, permanently employed, fully qualified member of the FP teaching cohort, while accepting, without challenge, the minimum wage compensation.

Funeka's story, as an underqualified teacher offers another interesting picture of navigating a landscape of policy transitions. Her underqualified status and experiences of her I-id as a teacher within a township context is representative of the majority of those teaching Grade R in South Africa. While not generalizable, her storying of her I-id resonates with many of the stories and experiences reported in academic literature (as discussed in section 2.5) and shared with our ENF team. While Funeka, in her interview responses, makes little mention of her positioning in terms of policy or in terms of FP membership (she shares only one anecdote about being 'looked down' on by the other teachers at her school), her storying of her trajectory indicates some level of vulnerability through her choice of the word 'safe'. Funeka's responses tended to be briefer than those of the three other teachers. However, she highlighted that her love of children placed her on the trajectory of teaching young children and now Grade R children within the school sector. It is Funeka's acknowledgement that she chose to work towards her qualification that indicates some alignment with the policy promoted I-id that Grade R

teachers should be qualified. This, even while she notes that as a practising Grade R teacher, she fulfils the roles and responsibilities attributed to the position of Grade R teacher and, thus, operates as a professional.

Also evident through Funeka and Thandi's telling of their identity stories are their strong alignment with the following educator roles (as outlined in the N&S document analysed in section 4.4):

- Leader, Administrator and Manager: Thandi's story acknowledges the expected responsibilities encompassed by the 'administrator' part of this role, embodied by the expectation that educators: "carry out classroom administrative duties efficiently" (DoE, 2000, p. 13). In particular, Thandi shares her frustration that this role takes away time that she could be teaching: "The paperwork is too much in our schools. You do paperwork every day and if there is something that is needed in the office, you have to stop teaching and do the paperwork which is not fair" (Thandi, Int, L 30-33, June 2016).
- Scholar, Researcher and Lifelong Learner: Both Funeka and Thandi share their pursuit for achieving this particular role, which encompasses: "The educator will achieve ongoing personal, academic, occupational and professional growth through pursuing reflective study and research in their subject, in broader professional and educational matters, and in other

related fields.” (DoE, 2000, p. 13). Funeka makes repeated mention in her story of her desire to acquire ‘more skills’ and participate in professional learning opportunities. Thandi too looks to continued professional development in her story, particularly through her continued pursuit of qualifications, despite her financial and personal challenges.

- Learning area/subject/discipline/phase specialist: Funeka and Thandi also expressed alignment to this, the final and overarching role of educators. Funeka shares that she wants to become both a qualified teacher and someone “Who other people can come to for advice and help with what I am doing” (L 100-101). Thandi shares that she thinks it is important to hold a specialised qualification, specifically in ‘special needs’: “So, having a qualification in special needs will boost the school” (L 71-76). She also shares how important she believes her specialisation is in terms of her classroom practice: “because if I was not educated, I would not notice the cases; the barriers in my class. So, because of the knowledge I am getting, I can see what is wrong with the child” (L 91-93). For both of these teachers, their stories share a trajectory which aligns with becoming “...grounded in the knowledge, skills, values, principles, methods, and procedures relevant to the discipline, subject, learning area, phase of study, or

professional or occupational practice.” (DoE, 2000, p. 14), as is required by this role.

### **5.6.2. Exploring the Similarities in Maria and Anita’s Stories**

In analysing Maria and Anita’s stories, the first insight offered is that both of these teachers identify, through the way they speak about themselves, with the ‘qualified specialist’ end of the policy promoted institutional identity spectrum. This institutional and self-positioning can be seen in Maria and Anita’s repeated reference to themselves as ‘qualified’. Furthermore, both Maria and Anita story themselves as leaders in this field, supported by their departmentally authorised positions as ‘Heads of Department’. In Maria’s case, also as cluster leader, and for Anita being recognised and invited to participate in NPO workshops for teachers. Holding and enacting these leadership positions is not typical of the majority of those currently working in Grade R. However, for both participating teachers, these institutionally mandated positions and titles support their confident and strong identification as highly experienced, specialised professionals with much to offer other Grade R teachers. Both Maria and Anita express a strong sense of job security in relation to both their specialised qualifications and their leadership positions. And, both note sympathy for the vulnerability of the positions and salaries of their not yet qualified colleagues in other schools.

Maria and Anita not only tell us that they identify strongly with the professional end of the spectrum, they also share that other teachers position them as professionals. Maria believes her colleagues see her “as the role model” (L 109) and “they look up to me” (L 116). Anita similarly shared that

she believes others in her school community hold her in high regard, commenting that others in the school see her as “an equal” (L 89) and she believes that her colleagues view the work she does in Grade R “as a very important part of the school” (L 89). These teachers’ Grade R qualified specialised leader narratives of themselves and positioning by others (and by policy) are reifications endorsed by significant others (Sfard & Prusak, 2005).

Both Maria and Anita’s identification as leaders extend beyond their HoD leadership positions in their own schools. Maria shares her experiences of working outside of her school at a district level, and Anita tells of training farm school (rural) teachers. Again, we see their self-positioning as leaders being ‘reified’ and endorsed by authorities outside of their schools who regard them as individuals capable of being leader educators with the specialised capabilities needed for supporting other Grade R teachers. In Maria’s case, this ‘authorisation’ (Gee, 2000) of ‘being a leader’ beyond her own school comes from the district education office (a branch of the wider Department for Basic Education). For Anita, the authorisation to train teachers comes from the training facility responsible for rural teacher development. For these two teachers, their institutional identity as ‘qualified, professional, specialists’ is both ‘reified’ by others, and ‘authorised’ by an institution, and expressed by their own narratives of their self-positioning.

Also evident through Maria and Anita’s telling of their identity stories are their strong alignment with the following educator roles (as outlined in the N&S document analysed in section 4.4):

- Scholar, researcher and Life-Long Learner: as Maria can be seen to have the practical competence of “Upholding the principles of academic integrity and the pursuit of excellence in the field of education” (DoE, 2001, p. 20). The ‘pursuit of excellence in the field’ is expressed by Maria and Anita through their support in obtaining a recognised qualification to teach Grade R.
- Grade Specialist: Maria and Anita also demonstrates their foundational competence as grade specialists through their “understanding of the assumptions underlying the descriptions of competence in a particular...area” (DoE, 2001, p. 22). Maria demonstrates this through her description of finding a “balance” (L 105) between the play-based nature of learning in Grade R and the more formal structures of the FP. This ‘balance’ and understanding of the unique nature of Grade R is echoed in policy, as it recommends “Grade R should not be a watered-down Grade 1” (DBE, 2011a, p.16). As indications of her fulfilment of ‘grade specialist’, Anita shares her experiences as a teacher-trainer; highlights her impression that others regard her work in Grade R ‘as an important part of the school’; and often mentions how she draws on her years of experience in this grade to design her own learning and teaching resources, which she prefers over those offered to her by the Department of Basic Education.

It is important to mention here that although Maria and Anita share many similarities in their institutional identity expression, in terms of their landscapes of practice (Wenger-Trayner et al., 2015) and, in particular, their history and future learning trajectories, these two teachers also differ in a variety of ways. For example, although they share the same undergraduate level of qualification obtained years before the policy transition, this was under very different circumstances. For Anita, as a White South African pre-1994, choosing what and where to study would not have been difficult. Also, the education system at the time was geared towards affording white students a better quality of education<sup>28</sup>. For Maria, she tells us that teaching wasn't her first choice, but due to administrative complications, she was not able to pursue her desired career in the medical field. Her high school choices, before she embarked on her undergraduate studies, were influenced by which high schools in the area offered the subjects she required and admitted so-called Coloured learners. For Maria and Anita, their racial identity in pre-1994 South Africa has affected their historical learning trajectories and job opportunities.

For these teachers, their teaching contexts also differ. Anita works at a former Model-C school, which benefits from being previously allocated more resources than Maria's school. Maria's school (being a so-called Coloured school under apartheid), instead, would have received far fewer resources and funding.

Maria and Anita further share different future career trajectory ambitions. Maria tells of wanting to become a teacher trainer: "I like to work

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<sup>28</sup> The context of the South African education system is discussed further in Chapter 1 of this study

with adults more. Not more, but I enjoy doing it, like presenting workshops, and the work that you are also doing. I would like to move out” (L 31-33). Anita, on the other hand, says she will stay in teaching Grade R: “they will carry me out in a box. And I’m not moving from here. I’ll be in Grade R” (L 16-17).

While Maria and Anita’s landscapes of professional practice differ in many aspects, their expressions of institutional identity are very similar. For both their I-id as secure, qualified, specialised professionals who are simultaneously leaders in their specialised field and hold broader FP leadership positions as HoD are foregrounded throughout their stories. This is in stark contrast to the vulnerability expressed by both Funeka and Thandi in relation to job security because neither of them have as yet qualified as educators.

### **5.6.3. Weaving Across the Four Narratives**

In the following sections, I reflect on the four teachers’ narratives, focusing on how their own institutional identity stories align with or resist the policy promoted institutional identity positioning. I also present how Wenger et al.’s (2015) notion of landscapes of practice help to reveal these teachers’ journeys through time and between communities. Additionally, I draw on Gee’s (2000) notion of an identity “continuum” (p. 103), which arises as a result of how these teachers actively or passively embrace the roles and responsibilities of their institutional identity positioning. This continuum, for these Grade R teachers, presents a complex identity story in a time of policy transition.

This section, therefore, draws on the similar themes discussed across the teachers presented above to integrate the literature of the study (discussed in Chapter 2) and the policy landscape (discussed in Chapter 4) as a whole. I begin by discussing Anita's institutional identity story as an example of a teacher who has chosen to 'resist' aspects of the policy-promoted institutional identity, and can be said to be engaging in an identity "combination" (Gee, 2000, p. 109). In order to be recognised, this is:

some specific way of combining the following things: (a) speaking or writing) in a certain way; (b) acting and interacting in a certain way; (c) using one's face and body in a certain way; (d) dressing in a certain way; (e) feeling, believing and valuing in a certain way; and (f) using objects, tools, or technologies (i.e. "things") in a certain way.

(Gee, 2000, p. 109)

The 'certain way' Anita presents herself and wants to be recognised is as someone who, although teaching within a Department of Education school, has experiences and skills which are beyond the level of the national rollout practices. She, thus, distances herself from using departmentally provided resources, which she finds not useful and weaker than the resources she has developed over the years.

Anita and Maria's authorised positions as Heads of Department and their Grade R specialist qualifications enable narratives of themselves as 'qualified Grade R specialists'. This, seemingly enables their agency as relatively autonomous professionals able to work within the department but hold a critical stance to departmental guidance. Maria's strong professional positioning occurs despite her saying Grade R teaching, "wasn't my first choice" (L 12). As Wenger (1998) remarks, we cannot design identity, however, we can design the roles and responsibilities which influence the development

and expression of identity. As Anita and Maria hold authorised positions of leadership (HoD), and these positions come with expected leadership roles and responsibilities, their identities as leaders are both externally sanctioned and have been embraced in their narratives of themselves.

Maria and Anita's stories reveal identities as neither static nor linear constructs, but rather as being in flux. This concurs with a socio-cultural and Meadian perspective on identity:

Wenger (1998) sees identity as "not an object, but a constant becoming" (pp. 153-4). Holland et al. (1998) define identity as "self-understandings" but go on to describe "identity-making processes" (p. 3), which treat identity as a verb. Gee (2000) claims that identity is making a bid to be recognised as a certain type of person. These all describe identity as an action. Similarly Boaler (2002) sees identity as involving a *relationship* with knowledge construction, Sfard and Prusak (2005) equate identity with the *telling* of a story, an action. Martin (2012), however, bridges the acquisition-action divide, defining identity as both a set of beliefs (something that can be acquired) and also looks at identity in *using* mathematics to change the conditions of one's life (an action).

(Darragh, 2016, p. 27)

In terms of Gee's (2000) theory of Institutional Identity:

I-Identities can be put on a continuum in terms of how actively or passively the occupant of a position fills or fulfils his or her role or duties. For me, being a professor is a "vocation" or "calling" and I attempt, to the best of my abilities, to fulfil the duties of the position. For prisoners, on the other hand, it may well be the case that they see their position as imposed on them, forcing them into carrying out certain activities that they might not choose to do on their own (though this need not be true of all prisoners, of course). Thus, one can see an I-Identity as either a calling or an imposition.

(Gee, 2000, p. 103)

Both Maria and Anita embrace their roles, responsibilities and duties offered by the position of qualified professional Grade R teachers and HoDs; identities as specialists and leaders. Even while it was not Anita's first choice of profession, she still chose this path and has embraced it; and Maria saw becoming a professional Grade R teacher as 'a calling'. Thus, Maria and Anita, like Gee (2000) writes, to the 'best of their ability' fulfil the 'duties of the position'. However, with mixed messages arising from policy, the authority which provides the power of an institutional identity could prove problematic. Indeed, both Maria and Anita share concerns for the lack of professional identification and treatment of their fellow Grade R teachers (many who are not fully qualified and work in poorer schools for less pay and job insecurity).

In contrast, the authorised positioning of Thandi and Funeka as 'not yet qualified' teachers of Grade R while doing the work of Grade R teachers, are treated differently in terms of status, pay and job security. This treatment exists within the Department of Education system and its guidelines for payment of unqualified Grade R teachers, as well as within the schools they work in and the broader communities of these schools.

Funeka, in her story, makes multiple reference to her desire to gain 'more skills', as she progresses on her trajectory to becoming recognised as a capable and qualified Grade R teacher. Thandi too shares in her story that she is looking to be 'recognised' by the government in her position as a Grade R and, therefore, FP teacher. Because Thandi and Funeka are 'not yet qualified', their experiences of their institutional identity are in contrast to those of Anita and Maria as 'fully qualified' members of the FP community.

For all four teachers, their narrative expressions of institutional identity, although varied, speak to an attempt to navigate their official status within the community. It is this “connection, engagement, status and legitimacy in that community [which is] all part of what makes someone a trustworthy practitioner” (Wenger-Trayner et al., 2015, p. 14). For these four Grade R teachers, the transition from the ECD sphere of schooling and into the FP, and the journey towards ‘educator’ descriptors in policy (discussed in section 4.5), is a part of their navigation towards becoming ‘a trustworthy practitioner’.

This navigation is important as it has implications for the teachers’ continued engagement with and alignment to the Grade R teaching community. This relationship between establishing herself as a trustworthy practitioner and continued engagement in the community is particularly important in Thandi’s story. In her story, she repeatedly expresses her experiences of not being recognised as a full member of the teaching community, and shares that if this did not change, she would not continue to teach in Grade R. She has subsequently moved into a Grade 1 teaching position.

In presenting the analysis of these teachers’ narratives, I have shown how each of them show “the becoming of a person who inhabits the landscape with an identity whose dynamic construction reflects our trajectory through that landscape” (Wenger-Trayner et al., 2015, p. 19). Anita and Funeka, for example, share their different historical trajectories into the teaching profession, and these trajectories “within and across practices [shape] who we are...and it also provides materials for...projected images of ourselves that guide the shaping of our trajectory going forward” (Wenger-Trayner et al.,

2015, p. 19).

For Anita, her journey to teaching saw her obtain a professional degree early on in her career, and soon after begin working as a recognised professional. This history has shaped her current confident navigation of the policy transition. Her institutional identity narrative tells us of her resistance to many policy changes as she is able to draw on her rich experience from the past. However, Funeka experience setbacks in her trajectory into the profession and is a relative newcomer to the Grade R landscape. Despite this, her experiences tell a story of a teacher who is continuing to strive towards achieving the ‘status and legitimacy’ within her schooling community.

Sharing the narratives of these four teachers is important for understanding the expressions of institutional identity of Grade R teachers in South Africa as “participation in a landscape provides the constitutive texture of an experience of identity” (Wenger-Trayner et al., 2015, p. 19) and “our identities come to embody the landscape through our experience of it” (Wenger-Trayner et al., 2015, p. 20). It is these four teachers’ experiences of institutional identity (linked specifically to their qualifications) that creates the biggest difference between the two pairs of teachers. Anita and Maria, as qualified teachers, share a strong agency and ability to hold a critical stance towards the Department of Education. Thandi and Funeka, however, as not yet qualified, express vulnerability in their positioning and, thus, have less agency.

Exploring the narratives of these four teachers in the context of a policy transition is important as although an official mandate may seek to create change, the “mandate does not produce the practice, the practitioners do”

(Wenger-Trayner et al., 2015, p. 16). The four teachers' stories included in this study each share a different trajectory into the Grade R teaching community and through the broader teaching landscape of practice. Each of their trajectories have implications for the shaping of their experiences of the landscape, as well as their expressions of identity within this landscape. In striving towards developing sustainable solutions to improving education in South Africa, these narratives provide rich insights into the implications of mandates and policy changes on teacher practice.

A further interesting insight arising from analysis across the four teachers' stories is that all four shared, sometimes unprompted, reference to the influence of members of other communities on their career trajectories; as well as on current expressions of their institutional positioning and identity. These 'significant others' can, across all the teachers and their different contexts, be thought of as belonging to distinct communities:

- The official education community represented by policy;
- The teachers' (and particularly FP teachers) in their individual schools;
- Teachers at other schools;
- Family and friends.

For Thandi, the influences of the official community come across stronger in her story, particularly the tension which resulted from the mixed messages therein. For Maria, the official community's influence is expressed through her repeated referral to official 'speak'. The influence of their current school community is expressed by Thandi, Anita and Maria, in that they think

their colleagues view them positively and as a full member of the FP. This is further seen through their sharing of how they consult their colleagues around issues they experience in the Grade R classroom. Funeka and Thandi share multiple references to other members of the teaching community who are available to offer assistance and support to them. Finally, Maria, Anita and Funeka share how having family members working in the teaching profession has influenced their decisions to become teachers; and having these family members on hand is a source of support.

In summary, the four selected Grade R teacher narratives provide interesting insights into their expressions of institutional identities across race, age, levels of experience, and landscapes of professional practice through time. Maria and Anita share commonalities and differences, as do Thandi and Funeka. However, the stark differences between these two pairs of teachers' experiences in terms of the I-id status (and the financial remuneration and job security that goes with their positions) as Grade R teachers starkly reflects the bimodal education systems existing in South Africa. The inequality between these two education systems was discussed in the introductory chapters of this thesis. The introduction of Grade R as a compulsory offering by schools is a policy intervention aimed at reducing the performance inequality between these two systems. Yet, the financial and other challenges of teachers such as Thandi and Funeka in becoming fully qualified, specialised Grade R educators could result in the continued reproduction of inequality in Grade R across contexts. The implications for policy and professional development for Grade R teachers is discussed in the concluding chapter.

The four teachers share strong similarities, despite their different expressions of institutional identity. The process of weaving together the stories of the four teachers has highlighted: that these teachers' experiences and expressions are nuanced and complex, even more so because of South Africa's unique history of Apartheid; the 'newcomer' status of Grade R in the FP landscape; a lack of clarity and mixed messages for teachers from policy; and the transitional nature of Grade R 'bridging the gap' between informal ECD learning and the formal schooling landscape.

The stories illuminate the complex nature of Grade R teacher institutional identity expression in South Africa during a time of transition, within a continuing unequal society, following a long-lasting legacy of Apartheid. This is important as it raises questions around the government's well-intentioned plan to provide a national, broad reaching, 'one size fits all' education policy for Grade R in South Africa.

In the following chapter, I discuss the conclusions drawn from the study's findings as a whole; the limitations of this study; implications for policy and PD as related to Grade R; and avenues for further research. Finally, I reflect on how the process of conducting this study has influenced my own learning, and my being a researcher and an educator in Early Childhood Education.

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## Chapter 6: Conclusion

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### 6.1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I bring together the various components of this study and highlight the key findings, contributions and implications of the study.

I begin by first recapping the research goals and questions of the study as a whole, and how these were reached. I then summarise the theoretical framing and methodological processes of the study, and point to novel ways in which various sociocultural theoretical perspectives were combined to form the analytic frame. Thereafter, I summarise the key findings that emerged from the documentary analysis and the empirical research. This allows for a broader ‘zoom (out) of the lens’ that looks across the whole study. I include a discussion on the research findings and implications for Grade R policy, teacher education and professional development, and recommendations for further research. Finally, I reflect on my own identity story in terms of my process of conducting the study. I also reflect on both the strengths and the limitations of the study.

### 6.2. RECAPPING THE RESEARCH GOALS AND QUESTIONS OF THE STUDY

This research aimed to contribute to understanding Grade R teacher expressions of institutional identity in policy and through narrative, in the context of a transitional policy landscape in South Africa. Through this process,

this study brought together Grade R teachers' experiences of policy and practice to illuminate a picture of institutional identity in a time of transition, by asking the following research questions:

Research Question 1: *How are grade R teachers represented in policy documents in terms of the identifying descriptors used across both Early Childhood Development and Grade R focused policy?*

Research question 2: *How do Grade R teachers express their institutional identities through the telling of their stories across time and through landscapes of practice?*

Research question 3: *How do Grade R teachers' experiences of policy and practice come together to illuminate a picture of institutional identity in a time of transition?*

### 6.3. SUMMARISING THE THEORETICAL AND ANALYTIC FRAME

This study brought together coherent sociocultural perspectives that provided an analytic frame which allowed me to search through the documentary and empirical data (Grade R teacher narratives) for indicators of institutional identity. During the course of the study and the data analysis process, it became evident that to be able to tell the complex story of Grade R teacher experiences of policy transition, multiple perspectives were needed to authentically represent the context and the identity journeys of these teachers.

Due to the nuanced nature of identity as a construct, it was important to select an operationalisation of identity which would allow for the authentic representation of Grade R teacher identity. For this reason, the study draws on Sfard and Prusak's (2005) notion that identity is the stories we tell about ourselves as the framing for empirical data. This perspective allowed me to bring to the fore those indicators of identity which reveal how we recognise ourselves and how we want others to recognise us.

These indicators of identity (or stories) were framed against Gee's (2000) construct of different facets of identity, in particular his notion of institutional identity. The decision to focus on institutional identity was influenced by the themes that emerged from both the documentary and the empirical data, and provided a more directed focus for analysis of the teacher identity stories. Acknowledging the context in which these teachers shared their identity stories was also important. As such, the study drew on Wenger-Trayner et al.'s (2015) notion of identity negotiation involving journeying through landscapes of practice, between different communities and through time.

The novel combination of these perspectives allowed for a focused and detailed analysis of Grade R teacher experiences of institutional identity in the wider context of a policy transition and, therefore, contributes to the field of teacher identity research.

#### 6.4. SUMMARISING THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

In order to realise the aim of the study, the empirical data gathered consisted of policy documents and teacher narratives (consisting of interview and questionnaire data). These data sets allowed me to draw a picture of the expressions of institutional identity for Grade R teachers across their landscapes of practice. Below I summarise the research findings for each of the research questions.

My first research question 1 asked:

*How are grade R teachers represented in policy documents in terms of the identifying descriptors used across both Early Childhood Development and Grade R focused policy?*

This research question was the focus of my first analysis chapter (Chapter 4). Here, I conducted a thorough analysis of institutional identity of Grade R teachers, identifying descriptors within select documents in the context of a policy transition, in order to highlight the mixed messages within Grade R related documents. At the onset of this study, it was expected that a review of policy would reveal incongruences, as Grade R undergoes a transition from the Early Childhood sector into the formal Foundation Phase of schooling. The thorough analysis conducted herein was able to bring to the fore a deeper understanding of the complexities of this transition.

The analysis involved reading, coding and categorising the selected ECD, Grade R and FP focused policy documents, in order to generate themes related to the identifying descriptors of Grade R teachers. The documents selected for analysis included:

- Education White Paper 5 on Early Childhood Education (DoE, 2001)
- The Norms and Standards for Educators (DoE, 2000)

- Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement Foundation Phase Grade R Mathematics (DBE, 2011a)
- Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement Foundation Phase Grades 1-3 Mathematics (DBE, 2011b)

The first part of this analysis process looked at the descriptors used in ECD focused policy, namely the Education White Paper 5 on ECD. This document was chosen because it marks the beginning, within the policy landscape, of the shift out of the ECD landscape of Grade R teaching and learning and into the Foundation Phase landscape of schooling. Contextualising this shift in policy was important in answering both the first research question and achieving the overall aim of the study. Findings from the analysis of this document included the development of a spectrum of descriptors used in regard to Grade R teachers, as was shown in Figure 4.2: Illustration of Policy Promoted Institutional Identity Spectrum of Grade R Teachers.

The second part of this analysis drew on the Norms and Standards for Educators document as a guiding frame for analysing the selected Grade R and FP focused documents, namely the CAPS Mathematics for Grade R and Grades 1-3. The decision to include these three documents in the analysis stemmed from the findings in the ECD policy, which indicated a shift towards referring to these teachers as 'educators'. This, therefore, implied that these teachers now follow the Norms and Standards for Educators, as well as the national curriculum for all educators. Findings from this part of the analysis chapter in regard to the prioritisation of the 7 roles of teachers (from the N&S) are discussed below.

- Role 1 - Learning Mediator: This role is a continuation of the ECD policy and pedagogy; it is foregrounded for Grade R teachers in Grade R specific policy; and is present in the Grades 1-3 policy.

- Role 2 - Interpreter and Designer of Learning Programmes and Materials: This role was less emphasised for Grade R than it was for Grades 1-3. The process of interpreting and designing is supported for Grade R teachers, but not for Grades 1-3 teachers. This role is not foregrounded in the ECD policy, however, it could be argued that Grade R teachers working in the ECD sector were expected to fulfil the roles and responsibilities encompassed here. This is because previous to the shift from ECD to FP, Grade R teachers were not given a standardised curriculum to follow. It could then be assumed that they were responsible for interpreting and designing their own learning programmes and materials, before the introduction of the CAPS FP Gr R:M.

- Role 3 - Leader, Administrator and Manager: This role is prioritised similarly across the Grade R and Grades 1-3 policy, in that the administrator and manager aspects of the role are discussed at the level of the classroom. There is no focus on the leadership aspect of the role in either document. There is no evidence of this role in the ECD policy, however, it must be noted that some Grade R teachers currently working in FP could once have been ECD centre

managers and principals, and fulfilled the leadership roles and responsibilities of these positions.

- Role 4 - Community, Citizenship and Pastoral Care: This role is important in the ECD policy as ECD centres were (and largely continue to be) managed by community members. The pastoral roles and responsibilities of ECD workers would also encompass the 'mothering' roles of the descriptor spectrum. The Grade R and Grades 1-3 documents also foreground roles of community and citizenship, and there is little shift between these and the ECD policy.

- Role 5 - Scholar, Researcher, and Lifelong Learner: This role is foregrounded in the ECD focused policy, as one of the priority goals of the White Paper No. 5 was to ensure that Grade R teachers were supported in obtaining qualifications. It is not, however, foregrounded in the Grade R and the Grade 1-3 documents analysed in the study.

- Role 6 - Assessor: This role is largely absent in the ECD policy, but is foregrounded in both the Grade R and Grades 1-3 documents. In the Grade R specific document, this role is highly supportive for teachers, with detailed and structured assessment guidelines provided. In the Grades 1-3 document, this is not the case.

- Role 7 - Learning area/subject/discipline/phase specialist: In the ECD policy, Grade R teachers are acknowledged as phase specialists. In the Grade R document, they are grade specialists. In

the Grades 1-3 document, Grade R is referred to as ‘unique’ to the other FP grades.

The shifts of foregrounding of the seven roles is summarised in Table 6.1 below:

Table 3.1: Foregrounding of Roles Across Policy Documents

<b>ROLE</b>	<b>Foregrounded in White Paper No 5 on ECD</b>	<b>Foregrounded in CAPS FP Gr R:M</b>	<b>Foregrounded in CAPS FP Gr 1-3:M</b>
<b>LEARNING MEDIATOR</b>	√	√	√
<b>INTERPRETER AND DESIGNER OF LEARNING PROGRAMMES AND MATERIALS</b>	X	X	√
<b>LEADER, ADMINISTRATOR AND MANAGER</b>	X	√	√
<b>COMMUNITY, CITIZENSHIP AND PASTORAL ROLE</b>	√	√	√
<b>SCHOLAR, RESEARCHER AND LIFELONG LEARNER</b>	√	X	X
<b>ASSESSOR</b>	X	√	√
<b>LEARNING AREA/ SUBJECT/ DISCIPLINE/ PHASE SPECIALIST</b>	√	√	√

From the above table, it can be seen that the following roles are foregrounded across all three documents analysed: Learning Mediator; Community, Citizenship and Pastoral Role; and Learning area/subject/discipline/phase Specialist. The following are foregrounded only in the CAPS FP Gr R:M and the CAPS FP Gr 1-3:M (not the ECD): Leader, Administrator and Manager; and Assessor.

The role of Scholar, Researcher and Lifelong Learner is only foregrounded in the ECD policy, and the role of Interpreter and Designer of Learning Programmes and Materials is only foregrounded in the CAPS FP Gr 1-3:M document.

The study found that there are more incongruencies across the foregrounding of roles between the ECD policy and the Grade R policy than there are between the Grade R and the Grades 1-3 policy. This is line with the rollout initiative which was aimed at bringing Grade R into the FP sphere. Notably, from the table above, the roles of Interpreter and Designer of Learning Programmes and Learning area/subject/discipline/phase Specialist show shifts in prioritisation from ECD policy to Grade R policy to Grades 1-3 policy. Other roles shift between the ECD policy and Grade R policy. This differentiated foregrounding of roles is important as it potentially adds to the confusion and mixed messages found within the ECD policy. For teachers navigating the Grade R transition, they have to interpret the mixed messages in the ECD policy (as represented by the institutional identity spectrum), as well as mixed messages between the different policies (as represented by the analysis of foregrounding of the seven roles for teachers). This has implications for the teachers navigating their expressions of institutional identity, discussed in the following section.

My second research question asked:

*How do Grade R teachers express their institutional identities through the telling of their stories across time and through landscapes of practice?*

This research question was answered in the second of my analysis chapters (Chapter 5), which drew on Grade R teacher data generated through questionnaires, interviews and video-stimulated recall questionnaires. Again, a grounded analysis approach was used, and the data read, coded and categorised in order to generate themes. Sfard and Prusak's (2005) operationalisation of identity as the stories we tell about ourselves was used, and four teachers' narratives selected for their in-depth and rich descriptions of identity. Specifically, themes of institutional identity (Gee, 2000) across landscapes of practice (Wenger-Trayner et al., 2015) were the focus of this analysis.

In the analysis, the study drew on findings related to policy and the institutional identity spectrum. Through in-depth analysis of rich teacher identity narratives, insights into these teachers' navigation of and reconciliation with their identities as both 'unqualified mother' and 'specialist' were explored. In particular, across the four teacher narratives, insights were gained into: The teacher's journey to becoming a Grade R teacher; her learning trajectory as a Grade R teacher; her experiences of Grade R policy transition

and departmental positioning; and of Grade R teaching and Foundation Phase membership.

The findings are summarised as follows: Across the four teachers' stories, differences in institutional identity were prevalent. Most notably the two pairs of teachers (two not yet qualified and two qualified teachers) presented highly contrasting experiences of navigating their identity as Grade R teachers. For the two fully qualified teachers, their qualification afforded them agency as they dealt with and navigated the policy transition. They were confident in the stability of their positions; able and willing to substantively critique aspects of the policy rollout and support materials provided; and were able to establish leadership positions in their school and in the broader community in the form of supporting professional development initiatives. The other two teachers who were not yet qualified, shared vulnerability in relation to job security and experiences of not being recognised as professionals. This did not afford them the same sense of agency as the qualified teachers. Their lack of job security and low (close to minimum wage) levels of income created tension in relation to meeting the policy mandate that they should become qualified Grade R teachers. While they strongly desired to study further, and during the course of the study were in the process of studying, the financial burden of these studies was extreme.

The findings from this analysis show, through rich identity narratives of Grade R teachers, that there is a diversity of experiences for Grade R teachers, as they navigate the policy landscape, and as they negotiate their roles and responsibilities within their school communities.

Across the four teachers, their trajectories and journeys through the landscape of practice are all different. Maria chose teaching as a second choice; Anita followed her mother into the profession; Thandi chose to teach because of her love of children; and Funeka was encouraged to join the profession by her community. Their current experiences of the profession are nuanced and complex too. Their qualifications, or their journey towards becoming qualified, means that they do not all have the same sense of job security and support opportunities afforded to their Foundation Phase counterparts, although they all fulfil the roles and responsibilities of full-time Grade R teachers.

All four of these teachers shared insights into what it means to be the bridge between ECD and the formal schooling sector. For Thandi in particular, the challenges she describes involve negotiating the increased administrative responsibilities of her position with spending time teaching the children. For Anita, she shares the

challenge of complying with the Department of Education requirements while continuing to integrate the resources and teaching practices she has developed throughout her career. Maria shares her challenges in being recognised, as a Grade R teacher in the Foundation Phase teacher-training sector. Funeka describes the lack of professional opportunities available to her.

My third and final research question asked:

*How do Grade R teachers' experiences of policy and practice come together to illuminate a picture of institutional identity in a time of transition?*

This question looked at the impact of the emergent policy promoted institutional identity message on Grade R teachers navigating the transitioning landscape. In particular, the policy-speak of prioritisation of professionalisation of Grade R teachers appeared in contrast to the lived experiences of these teachers. The study further explored the expectations of implementation of the revised curriculum and teacher norms and standards on Grade R teachers. This was done in a context where a tension still exists in terms of these teachers reaching full membership and recognition as Foundation Phase teachers in the formal sector. Teachers were navigating the ECD/Grade R/Foundation Phase nexus; and this navigation through a landscape of policy change affected, in profound ways, the Grade R teacher narrative expressions of institutional identity as they negotiated membership in the Foundation Phase.

This question was answered through the two analysis chapters which drew on policy analysis and the teacher narratives. The findings showed a mixed message in policy which was experienced by all four teachers in different ways. The narratives showed that there is increased vulnerability for those not yet qualified, however, this vulnerability was observed by the fully qualified teachers as a result of the treatment of their colleagues. Maria shared her observations that other Grade R teachers were 'not really acknowledged' by the Heads of Department of other schools; and Anita expressed her sympathy for the unfair treatment of 'practitioners'. The findings also highlighted the different experiences of the policy promoted institutional identity between two different schooling contexts. For Anita and Maria, their experiences occur in the context of historically advantaged schools, and these two teachers have had overall more positive experiences of the policy transition. These findings highlight the persistence of the presence of two educational systems in South Africa, in support of research which found: "a dual economy of schooling, divided between 'schools for the poor' and 'schools for the rich'" (Shalem & Hoadley, 2009, p. 123). For these teachers, their different experiences of the policy transition go beyond their qualifications, but include whether or not their school is able to afford to supplement their salaries (through the School Governing Body and learner fees).

## 6.5. DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR GRADE R POLICY, TEACHER EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In this section, I look at the findings outlined in the discussion above, and link these findings to implications for Grade R policy and teacher education.

The findings from Research Question 1 speak to the need for clearer policy messages for Grade R, particularly in this time of transition. It has been acknowledged, both in the literature reviewed and in the policy analysed, that the early years (Grade R) are important for children's long-term school successes. South Africa has made important advances in access to early education through the national initiative to rollout Grade R to all public schools. This increased access and accompanying policy shift, however, is complicated. This physical shift and policy transition aims to move Grade R teaching and learning out of the ECD sector and integrate it fully into the formal schooling system. This, while simultaneously maintaining the unique pedagogical philosophies underpinning teaching and learning in Grade R. This aim is evidenced by the acknowledgement in the curriculum documents that although Grade R is a part of the Foundation Phase, Grade R should not be considered a 'watered down' Grade 1 (DBE, 2011a). It is further evident in the findings from the analysis in Chapter 4 that policy documents across the ECD and FP sectors foreground the role of 'specialist' for Grade R teachers.

However, the policy also presents mixed messages of institutional identity for Grade R teachers, as the analysis in Chapter 4 illustrated. It is

because of this that this study recommends the need to re-examine the current Grade R policy. Furthermore, the language used in policy should be clarified and consistently point to the professionalism of the Grade R teacher. Policy has an important role to play in affirming the professional institutional identity of those working in this grade.

The findings from the first research question, therefore, also speak to the need for funded and systemic interventions that support so-considered Grade R practitioners to becoming qualified educators. This has implications for both pre- and in-service teacher professional development initiatives. These programmes should acknowledge the effect of the transition from ECD to formal schooling has had on those working in Grade R. These teachers represent the bridge between the two sectors. Professional development should find ways to assist the teachers' integration into the formal sector and navigation of the roles and responsibilities from both sectors, with minimal tension. The Grade R teacher professional development has the potential to incorporate the ECD foregrounded nurturing roles while supporting the development of professional and qualified teachers who are recognized as specialists. This approach to teacher PD has the potential to support Grade R teachers negotiate and fulfil the 'bridging' purposes of Grade R without threatening their institutional identification as professional specialists.

The findings from the second research question highlighted the poor and insecure wages for the not yet qualified teachers working in Grade R. The stories also brought to the fore the extreme financial challenges of self-funding tertiary qualifications when earning the minimum wage of R5000 a month. The low wages, coupled with a lack of financial support for further studies, has

important implications for the institutional identity and policy positioning of these teachers. It makes it almost impossible for un- or under-qualified Grade R teachers to become qualified, even though improving qualifications of Grade R teachers is a policy priority. A policy that insists on qualifications yet provides no support to achieve this sets teachers up for failure in terms of the policy imperative to become qualified.

In order to address these implications, it is suggested here that provisions of support and funding from government be increased for these teachers. Increased support includes not only financial support for pursuing qualifications in the form of subsidies and bursaries, but also through increased opportunity for tertiary education access and in-service professional development. For Thandi, she had to enrol in a distance learning course through an institution based in a different province to where she lives and works. Although distance learning courses have benefits, including flexible tuition hours for full-time teachers, often access to the necessary technology for distance learning (such as internet access and home computers) is limited for those earning a minimum wage and/or living in rural areas. Supporting un- and under-qualified Grade R teachers in obtaining professional qualifications is vital in assuring all those currently working in Grade R achieve the institutional identity mandated by policy.

The findings from the teacher stories also highlighted the contrasts between the I-identity of the qualified and not yet qualified teachers. These findings have important implications. Although the majority of those working in Grade R are not yet qualified, this does not imply that these teachers are not able to fulfil the roles and responsibilities of qualified teachers. In fact, many of these

teachers already work in this capacity, and research suggests that “higher levels of qualification do not always predict higher levels of quality teaching” (Atmore, van Niekerk, & Ashley-Cooper, 2012, p. 134). Rather, the pervasive lack of qualifications (and support to obtain qualifications) in this sector contributes to the perceived lower status of Grade R teaching, and this career continues to be less sought after for tertiary students. This has the potential to perpetuate the idea that Grade R (and ECD) qualifications are being considered as a “last resort” (Steyn, Harris, & Hartell, 2014, p. 5).

Another implication of the vulnerability in the I-id of not yet qualified teachers is that it affects their agency to be critical of the processes and requirements of their inclusion in the schooling system. In this respect these teachers are at a higher risk of being pressured to conform to the teaching and learning pedagogies of the higher grades, possibly resulting in Grade R becoming the ‘watered down Grade 1’ that policy warns against.

A further implication of the low status of Grade R as a profession is the risk of low retention rates for qualified Grade R teachers. From this study, three of the four teachers transitioned out of Grade R teaching since participating in the study. Maria took up a position at the district level; Anita spent time as the acting principal of her school; and Thandi moved into a Grade 1 teaching position. In pursuing professional status, and market related salaries, Grade R teachers (once qualified and experienced) appear to be more likely to look for teaching positions outside of Grade R. As a result, there is the risk that Grade R remains the domain of underqualified teachers from the ECD sector. As the goal of universal access nears completion, this may be at the expense of quality of teaching and learning.

Suggestions for addressing the implications discussed here include the need for government to provide systematic and sustained support for not yet qualified teachers to pursue tertiary qualifications, as discussed above. Further suggestions include the integration of PD opportunities for Grade R teachers with Grades 1 to 3 teachers, as these opportunities have previously been separated. Maria's experiences tell of the distinction between the practitioners and the Grades 1 to 3 teachers occurring in workshops and other PD settings. Now that Grade R is officially considered a part of the FP, there is potential within the PD sector to provide training on the teaching and learning trajectory for Grade R to Grade 3 to all those working in the FP. This will benefit the Grade R teachers as they become more aware of and involved in the childrens' learning throughout the phase (to know where the learning is leading). It will also be beneficial for those working in Grades 1 to 3 as they deepen their understanding of how learning has developed from the start of schooling (Grade R). Integrating PD opportunities in this way also has the potential to support Grade R teachers in becoming full participants in the FP teaching community.

Overall, the findings from the second research question highlight the vulnerability of not yet qualified Grade R teachers. Key to this vulnerability is their lack of job security, lack of agency to challenge the system, and lack of confidence in their own profession. Strengthened efforts by government, tertiary institutions and PD providers are needed to address this vulnerability.

The findings from the third and final research question have implications for the persistence of two education systems discussed in Chapter 1, which has

the potential to widen the gap between rich and poor in South Africa. It is the recommendation of this study that more effort be directed at improving the professional conditions of Grade R teachers working in poorer schools. This should be coupled with focused policies which prioritise the deployment of fully qualified Grade R teachers to poorly resourced schools. It is suggested that priority be given to the schools that need it most, rather than relying on the wealth of the school to determine the employment prospects of Grade R teachers. It is also suggested that the allocation of funding from government be prioritised for low quintile schools for full-time, qualified Grade R teaching posts. This prioritisation should result in those teachers with stronger agency, more confidence in their professional abilities and less vulnerability to policy transition being placed in schools which are most in need of quality Grade R teaching and learning. This increased focus on providing quality education at the stage where it is needed most has the potential to improve the learning outcomes across the years and grades, throughout a learners schooling. As a result, this will close the performance gap between rich and poor in South Africa.

The overall key contribution of this study is having the Grade R teachers' stories heard, coupled with the opportunity for these stories to be heard in relation to the policy transition context. This is a relatively new policy landscape and, therefore, there is currently very little research available that analyses the policy and listens to the experiences of navigating the policy by Grade R teachers. Research of this kind is important in addressing what many have called the "Cinderella" status of Grade R (Feza, 2015), bringing to the fore the disparities that exist in policy and in practice between Grade R and Grades 1 to 3. This study supports the claim that "there should be a policy amendment

on the status of Grade R in the foundation phase, because the “Cinderella” status will not go away while there is a continuation of exclusion of privileges for Grade R compared with Grade 1” (Feza, 2015, p.15).

## 6.6. REFLECTING ON THE STUDY, LIMITATIONS AND AVENUES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

It is acknowledged that this study had limitations, most notably the small sample size of four case study teachers, as well as the limitations of case study methods. However, case studies and small sample sizes offer numerous benefits to qualitative research which a larger scale study is not able to offer. Important for the purposes of this study were the affordances that the narratives allowed in terms of generating deep and richly described insights into Grade R teacher expressions of Grade R teachers’ institutional identities in a time of transition. Accessing and analysing deep insights into teacher identities seems to require in-depth case study research and, therefore, seem to dominate the methods used in this field (Graven & Heyd-Metzuyanin, 2019).

The initial data gathered from the much larger group of teachers participating in the ENF PD program indicates that these four teacher stories reflect the range of institutional identity positioning and experiences of the broader group. This said, it is a recommendation of this study that future research involving Grade R teacher identity, Grade R teacher education, and Grade R teacher professional development be undertaken across South Africa on a much larger scale. Broadening this research field across the provinces of

South Africa will enable a wider understanding of the experiences and identities of Grade R teachers from a variety of backgrounds, working in different contexts, and navigating diverse landscapes of practice.

### 6.7. REFLECTING ON MY OWN IDENTITY STORY AS I JOURNEYED THROUGH THE STUDY

During the course of this study, it emerged that my own experiences and story of working as a Grade R teacher in South Africa were echoed in several of the findings of the study. Most prominent is the experience of tension that exists in the practice of attempting to straddle the ECD and Foundation Phase gap. As a Grade R teacher, it has always been my practice (and identity) to be both the caregiver and educator. I have also had the personal experience of being regarded as having a lower status than that of my higher grade teacher colleagues. These experiences were echoed through the mixed messages of policy, which through my analysis, offered a picture of the Grade R teacher institutional identity fluctuating between ‘implicit care roles’ and the ‘7 stipulated educator roles’. These roles were differently prioritised in various parts of the policy. As a result, the wider perception (in my experience) of Grade R teacher responsibilities can be perceived differently by outsiders to the profession. These differences in perception of the role of the Grade R teacher were again echoed in the teacher narrative analysis presented, where each of the four teachers expressed tensions in navigating their landscapes of practice.

The process of undertaking this study has provided me with the opportunity to grow as a researcher: I am now able to look more critically and

with more insight into the world of education. I have also gained considerable understanding of the multiple systems at play within my profession. Through this process of research (and my previous masters research in this field), my identity story as a pre-school teacher has evolved into that of a researcher and teacher educator in the field of pre-school education. The process of listening to, writing, and analysing Grade R teacher identity stories has allowed me the opportunity to examine my own institutional identity journey, while giving more attention to the policy landscape and its influence on my professional trajectory. I have furthermore been able to develop my understanding around the influence of my past on my experiences as a professional, especially pertinent in the unique South African historical context. My notions of identity negotiation, and the South African Grade R context, were challenged. This conflict has resulted in both personal and professional growth. As a result, it is with a deeper understanding of the field that I am now able to pursue future directions in the Grade R and ECD teacher development landscape of practice.

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## APPENDICES

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### APPENDIX 1: Excerpt from SANCP ENF PD document: Introductory page

#### **The SANC Project Early Number Fun Programme**

This programme is designed as a community of Grade R teachers from 10-12 local schools who meet on a monthly basis to engage with issues around developing number concepts in pre-school learners. The focus on the development of a well functioning and supportive teacher community is based on the assumption that teacher learning is greatly enhanced through active participation in ‘communities of practice’ and is informed by Wenger’s sociocultural theory of learning in communities of practice (Wenger, 1998). This aligns well with current SA teacher education policy that foregrounds the importance of localised teacher communities for enabling professional development (DBE, 2015).

The programme will be co-ordinated by the SANCP team, namely Prof Mellony Graven, Dr Debbie Stott and Ms Carolyn Stevenson-Milln and will emphasise relationships with teachers as partners in the endeavour to find ways to strengthen Grade R learning. The SANCP team will contribute research informed resources, ideas and access to professional networks while teachers will contribute critical contextual knowledge and experience of working with learners in local and diverse school contexts. Furthermore the programme will draw on expertise from a range of Grade R practitioners with experience in teaching, lecturing and/or researching early pre-school learning to lead and participate in sessions.

At the heart of the programme will be a research informed ‘*early number fun resource kit*’. This kit will be provided to all fully participating teachers for use in class. This kit will contain a wide range of resources such as dominoes, dice, flash cards, bead strings, number-story books, posters and so forth. Multiple sets of the resources will be provided for individual and/or paired learner use in classrooms.

In addition, the programme will pilot a parent/caregiver programme that focuses on use of a simplified resource kit at home. In this respect Grade R parents of a participating school will be invited to teacher-parent/caregiver sessions at which ways to use the resources at home will be shared. It is envisaged that two such sessions will occur in the pilot with the Grade R parents in 2016. The second is likely to be connected to a ‘family math’ event, which have already been piloted and used successfully in Grahamstown schools and after care centres. Depending on the success of the pilot programme this parent component would be extended to other willing participating schools. [In Wenger’s terms (1998) such a kit can serve as a powerful ‘boundary object’ that provides common ground for engagement between researchers/academics and teachers, and teachers and parents/caregivers.]

#### **Early Number Fun Programme: theoretical and conceptual ideas informing the development programme**

A number of theoretical, conceptual and curriculum informed ideas influenced the development of the programme. Each of these is described below.

##### ***Broad theoretical assumptions***

Working with both Vygotskian theory and socio constructivism the programme is based on the following assumptions:

- Language is key to development and learning.
- Learners will learn number sense through actively constructing number knowledge through engaging with activities in social settings.
- Learning takes place in the Zone of proximal development (ZPD) defined as:

The distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers. (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86)

Essentially this means that activities should be targeted to an appropriate level of learner development such that activities are neither too difficult nor too easy for the learners and activities should involve active engagement and encourage dialogue with learners. According to Wright, Martland, Stafford and Stanger (2006) activities should be at the ‘cutting edge’ of learner development. In this way learning leads development.

## APPENDIX 2: SANCP ENF PD Teacher Questionnaire 1 (April 2016)

### Teacher questionnaire

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Qualification and grade or phase level/s specification: \_\_\_\_\_

In what year did you begin teaching? \_\_\_\_\_

In what year did you begin teaching Grade R? \_\_\_\_\_

Number of learners in your class now \_\_\_\_\_

1. How confident are you about teaching the following to grade R learners (please tick relevant column)

	very confident	confident	average	not confident
Literacy skills				
Life skills				
Numeracy skills				

2. Ayabulela is a highly respected and successful pre-school teacher. Describe Ayabulela.

3. Why did you become a Grade R teacher?

4. Describe yourself as a Grade R teacher by **completing these sentences**:

I believe children learn best about number when...

I become frustrated when...

I love it when...

I want to become ...

Teacher questionnaire

5. How do you usually **structure** your grade R day?

6. How many **days a week** do you include **numeracy** activities in your programme? Tick the relevant option

Everyday	4 times a week	3 times a week	Twice a week	Once a week	Other
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7. How much time do you spend on **numeracy** related activities **during your day**?

Less than 30 minutes	Between 30 minutes and 1 hour	Between 1 and 2 hours	More than 2 hours	Other
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8. Please describe some numeracy activities that you do with learners on a regular basis.

9. What resources do you have in your class for supporting numeracy learning? Tick those that you have or write down others not on the list.

Flashcards What type?	height chart	blocks	posters	dice
counters of any kind	crayons for children	scrap paper	sets of dominoes	measuring containers
sand pit	other	other	other	other

Teacher questionnaire

10. What do you think learners should be able to do in terms of numeracy by the end of Grade R?

11. Have you attended any in-service workshops specifically related to pre-school teachers in the past 2 years? If so describe these. Did these sessions include numeracy?

12. Please list all the professional development / training workshops (numeracy related or otherwise) you have attended in the past two years. Describe the focus (grade and topic) of the sessions. What resources , if any, were you given.

Description	Date	Topic	Grade	Resources received

13. Who, if anybody, do you talk to about Grade R teaching? What do you talk about?

Teacher questionnaire

14. Why have you joined this Early Number Fun programme?

15. Is there anything you particularly want support on through this programme?

16. Any other comments?

## APPENDIX 3: SANCP ENF PD Teacher Questionnaire 2 (October 2016)

OCTOBER 2016

EARLY NUMBER FUN - END OF YEAR PARTICIPANT QUESTIONNAIRE

Session	Date	Facilitators	Concepts / Activities	Resources
1	April 2016	Melony Graven Debbie Stott	<p>Overview of Program</p> <p><b>Cognitive Control:</b> Mathematical Mascot says please (Simon Says)</p> <p><b>Growth Mindset Activities:</b> Poster 1</p> <p><b>Game Based Activities:</b> Wolfie Wolfie What's The Time?</p> <p><b>Learner Assessment Activities</b></p> <p><b>Cognitive Control Activities:</b> Space and Shape</p> <p><b>Growth Mindset Activities:</b> Poster 2</p> <p><b>Story Based Activities:</b> 5 Monkeys in a Tree</p> <p><b>Story Based Activities:</b> The Children and The Umbrellas</p> <p><b>Growth Mindset Activities:</b> Poster 3</p> <p><b>Big Ideas in Maths (Robyn)</b></p> <p>Train Game Closest Number To...</p> <p>Make the Biggest Number Hiding Numbers</p> <p><b>Patterning and puzzle activities:</b></p> <p>Number Grid Shape Puzzles</p> <p><b>Cognitive Control Activities:</b></p> <p>Playing card sort Memory</p> <p>Dingaan's Kraal Snap</p> <p><b>Game Based activities:</b> Make 5 Ordering cards</p> <p>More and Less</p> <p><b>Growth Mindset Activities:</b> Poster 4</p> <p>Thinking about numbers relationally Numbers within numbers Seeing numbers in relation to other numbers</p>	<p>Teacher's Handbook</p> <p>Mascot Flashcards</p> <p>Growth Mindset Poster 1: "My brain grows when I think hard"</p> <p>Plastic Clock</p> <p>Mask supplies</p> <p>Assessment Sheets</p> <p>5 frame Flash Cards</p> <p>Numeral Flash Cards</p> <p>Paper Plates</p> <p>Large Dice</p> <p>Shape card templates</p> <p>Growth Mindset Poster 2: "I love working with numbers"</p> <p>5 Monkeys in a Tree Storybook</p> <p>Story worksheets</p> <p>Puppet templates</p> <p>The Children and The Umbrellas Storybook</p> <p>Puppet templates</p> <p>Story worksheets</p> <p>Growth Mindset Poster 3: "My brain grows when I keep trying"</p> <p>Train Game boards</p> <p>1-120 chart</p> <p>Unifix Cubes</p> <p>Jigsaw template</p> <p>Box of dice</p> <p>HTO Chart</p> <p>Deck of cards</p> <p>1 – 31 Grid</p> <p>Deck of cards</p> <p>More and less game board</p> <p>1-10 grid</p> <p>More/less cards</p> <p>Before/after cards</p> <p>Growth Mindset Poster 4: "I can work with numbers in different ways"</p> <p>Bead strings</p> <p>Coloured paper strips</p> <p>Two-sided coloured foam counters</p> <p>1-10 Numeral track</p> <p>1-20 Numeral track</p>
2	May 2016	Melony Graven Debbie Stott Roxanne Long		
3	June 2016	Melony Graven Robyn Jorgenson		
4	July 2016	Melony Graven Debbie Stott		
5	Sept 2016	Mike Askew Hamsa Venkat		

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**School:** \_\_\_\_\_

1. This year, we presented 5 sessions (outlined in summary table). Please indicate which your favourite session was, and why:

2. Which session did you least enjoy? Why?

3. Which materials and/or activities have you used the MOST during the year? Why?

4. Which materials and/or activities have you used the LEAST or not at all? Why?

5. Which materials and/or activities are you still planning to implement into your teaching?

The STORYBOOKS have been developed for and during the ENF Program.

6. What has been your experience of them?

7. What are the POSITIVES to using the storybooks and puppets?

8. What are the POSITIVES to using the worksheets?

9. What have been the NEGATIVES to using any of these resources?

10. Do you plan to continue using the storybooks in the future? Why?

11. Please indicate on the table below how you think the various resources have helped your children to learn the following concepts:

<b>1</b> - Not at all	<b>2</b> - Somewhat	<b>3</b> - A fair amount	<b>4</b> - Mostly	<b>5</b> - Definitely
-----------------------	---------------------	--------------------------	-------------------	-----------------------

Story Books					
Children's understanding of 'bonds' to 5	Children's participation in mathematical discussions	Children's attitude towards learning mathematical concepts	Children's numeral recognition	Children's use of appropriate mathematical language	Your own approach to teaching mathematical concepts?
Any comments?					
Growth Mindset Posters					
Children are developing an understanding that their brains 'grow' with hard work	Children are developing a love for working with numbers	Children are developing an understanding that 'trying hard' will help them to learn	Children are developing an understanding that numbers can be worked with in different ways		
Any comments?					

Cognitive Control Activities		
Working memory skills are improving	Self-control skills are improving	Attention-switching skills are improving
<b>Any comments?</b>		

**12.** Has participation in the ENF program supported your:

- Mathematical understanding? How?
  
- Mathematics teaching? How?

**13.** What ADVANTAGES are there to participating in the program? Explain

**14.** What DISADVANTAGES are there to participating in the program? Explain

**15.** Can you explain any changes in you as a teacher as a result of participating in ENF?

**16.** What are your experiences of being a member of the ENF group?

**17.** What are your experiences of interacting with other members of the ENF group?

(Fellow teachers, the facilitators and the researchers)

**18.** If you were to describe what the ENF group is about to a friend – what would you say?

**19.** Has your participation in the ENF program influenced the way you think about how children learn about number? Please explain

**20.** Has it changed the way you think about how learning number can be integrated across your teaching? Explain

**21.** Have you attended any other Grade R focused further learning/training/development/workshops while participating in the ENF program? Explain

**22.** What is the biggest change – if any – to the way you teach grade R learners as a result of your participation in ENF? Please explain

**23.** Have there been any changes in the time you spend on Numeracy activities during the school day this year compared to last year? Please Explain.

**24.** Have your initial expectations of this program been reached so far? Do you have any that haven't been met? Explain

**25.** Who do you talk to about your participation in ENF? What do you generally discuss?

**26.** Do you have any suggestions for 2017 ENF sessions – is there something you would like us to incorporate into the program?

Thank You

## APPENDIX 4: SANCP ENF PD Teacher Questionnaire 3 (August 2017)

ENF END OF PROGRAMME

Teacher questionnaire

August 2017

**Name:**.....

1. What do you think are some of the **advantages** of continually participating in ENF? Explain

2. What are some of the **disadvantages** of participating in ENF? Explain

3. What changes, if any, have you experienced in your **classroom practice** over the past 18 months?

4. How confident do you feel when teaching numeracy?

Very Confident	
Confident	
Mostly confident	
Not confident at all	

5. Do you feel you have been **learning** through your participation in ENF? If so, explain the nature of that learning?

6. After participating in ENF, how do you think **young children learn Numeracy** most effectively?

7. Did the **assessment tasks** given help you to see learner progress at all? If so explain what you noticed from these pre and post assessments.

8. What is your favorite ENF resource? Why is this your favorite resource?

Explain how you think this resource helps you in teaching learners early number concepts.

9. What is your second favorite ENF resource? Why is this a favorite resource?

Explain how you think this resource helps you in teaching learners early number concepts.

10. Has ENF supported **your understanding** of mathematics/numeracy content knowledge at all so far? If so, explain.

11. Has anything changed in your numeracy/mathematics teaching/**classroom practice** as a result of your participation in ENF? If so, explain.

12. Do you think ENF sessions, and your learning therein, have had an influence on your **learner's mathematical understanding** and mathematical participation? Explain.

13. Who do you draw on for **support** in your numeracy/mathematics teaching? (Who do you talk to about numeracy/mathematics or teaching numeracy/mathematics?)
14. In what way, if any, has your **relationship** to other maths teachers, other teachers, principals etc. changed over the past 18 months? Explain.
15. Has the way you see **yourself** changed over the last 18 months? Explain
16. Describe your **involvement** in mathematics education activities or general school organizational activities over the past year. Has ENF had any effect on these activities? Explain.

17. How is the ENF programme **different** to any other numeracy/Grade R workshops that you have attended?

18. Please write **your story** of your personal journey of mathematics teaching and learning from becoming a teacher of mathematics/numeracy through to participating in ENF and your relationship with mathematics/numeracy teaching and learning now.

## APPENDIX 5: Interview Schedule

NAME:.....

School:.....

### Questions:

1. You have been a teacher for ..... years and a grade R teacher for ..... .years.
2. Why did you become a Grade R teacher? OR Why did you switch to Grade R (if applicable)?
3. Do you see yourself teaching Grade R in 3 years' time?
4. How do you feel about the recent roll-out of Grade R?
5. What, if any, impact has this government initiative had on your career – in terms of: job status; financial security; job security; physically (own/new classroom); resourcing; learner to teacher ratio?
6. Your qualification is  
.....  
How important do you think having a specialised qualification in Grade R is, for teaching?
7. What are your views of your qualification and how it supports you in your: teaching; your job status (how are you positioned by other teachers?) and security?
8. How does it support the teaching of Numeracy in particular, in what ways / how?
9. Do you see yourself furthering your studies? If so, what/how?
10. How do you experience your status as a Grade R teacher in the school in relation to other teachers/ explain?
11. What kind of Grade R support do you receive and from who? Who do you talk to: in the department; in your school; in your family? What about the day to day joys and frustrations?
12. Who do you want to become by participating in this program?
13. What is your personal relationship with Numeracy? In your everyday life? Do you feel it is a strength, or do you usually avoid anything to do with numbers?
14. How do you feel about teaching Numeracy as compared with teaching Literacy and Life Skills? Could you explain why you enjoy / why you don not enjoy it and why?
15. If a learner makes a mistake or struggles to manage a skill in your classroom, how do you deal with it? For instance, in the assessment task you completed for Session 1 of the ENF program, I noticed that

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

How did you help that child? How would you help others like him in the future?

16. In the questionnaire, you mentioned that at the end of Grade R, learners should be able to

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Is there anything else you would like to add to that? Which do of these outcomes do you think are most important and why?

17. How would you describe the way in which you teach about numbers? What do you do? Please tell me about the range of activities you do, and why you do them.

18. How do you use resources in your teaching of number? Which ones do you use regularly?

19.

How have you experienced the use of the ENF resources you have received so far in your class? Please explain. To remind you, you have received:

- Assessment activity tools – giant dice, patterns etc
- Memory Game
- Clock
- Wolfie game and mask ideas
- Shape templates and games
- Inhibition games (Simon Says)

Thank you so very much for your time

## APPENDIX 6: Interview transcript – Funeka

INT 1.2 – 26 May 2016 – FUNEKA

1 1. Researcher : 'Just to let you know that at any point if you say you do not want to answer the questions, or  
2 anything like that you must please say. But thank you very much for letting me come in again to speak to you.  
3 Like I said before, there are no right or wrong answers. I am learning from you. So you are my teacher today. I  
4 see in your questionnaire you started teaching in 2009, but you only started teaching Grade R in 2012 (00:54)  
5 Why did you start teaching in 2009?'

6 2. Funeka : 'If I can go back, when I passed my matric in 1994, I wanted to be a teacher. But I had a gap year  
7 so in 1995 I went to college to do teaching, because it is what I like best. But I could not pay that because of  
8 financial problems at the time. But then I stayed after all and I was teaching. In 1998 I heard about the  
9 program. I was doing the Foundation Program which was for pre-school. In 1998 I did the Early Childhood  
10 Learning which was what I really wanted the most. But then they said there were no spaces for pre-school at  
11 that time, so was told I could start my own thing. But our house was so small to start anything, so could not go  
12 further. Then in 2009 something said I must go and start again. So a lady came to me and said that social  
13 services at her work were starting this program. "So if you want to join you can let me know, and you can start  
14 if you like." When I was there they said "You must choose schools," and I chose '[name of school]'. I did not  
15 even know the name of the school and that it was an Afrikaans school. I came to speak to Patricia who was  
16 teaching, and she said I was welcome to start any time. She advised I talk to the Principal which I did, and I was  
17 told it was fine to start at any time; that was a Friday. Monday I started with[name of colleague]. She asked if I  
18 knew it was an Afrikaans school, and I said "No." But she said "You can start." [Name of colleague] was so in  
19 love with her work and she showed me everything I had to do, and it was what kept me going. In 2010 they  
20 started with our program which was Level 4. Then in 2012 the Principal decided I should start the program and  
21 I started teaching. I had another friend, a white lady who did home-schooling, and she was another one who  
22 helped me so much before I came here. She supported me a lot with the children and I thought I could go  
23 further with my teaching at schools.'

24 3. Researcher : (06:43) 'Do you see yourself teaching in Grade R in another three years time?'

25 4. Funeka : 'Yes.'

26 5. Researcher : (06:52) 'How do you feel about the recent roll-out of Grade R; the government saying "Grade  
27 R for all children?"'

28 6. Funeka : 'I think it is a good idea, if everyone can take their children to Grade R for that foundation and  
29 basics.'

30 7. Researcher : (07:30) 'After the government did that, did you get more job security?'

31 8. Funeka : ' I think we do. If the government can also; I was thinking if they can give us more [inaudible] like  
32 they do [inaudible] then I think it's safe for us to do that.'

33 9. Researcher : (08:02) 'Do you have a permanent position at this school?'

34 10. Funeka : 'Yes I do.'

- 35 11. Researcher : (08:06) 'How is it funded?'
- 36 12. Funeka : 'The government is funding us at this school.'
- 37 13. Researcher : (08:22) 'You said your qualification is your Early Childhood Learning and your Level 4. How  
38 important do you think having a qualification for Grade R is?'
- 39 14. Funeka : 'I think that will be a great thing to happen to us; If the government can do that; if we can qualify  
40 to be Grade R teachers, because [inaudible].'
- 41 15. Researcher : (08:55) 'How do you think the other teachers see you at this school?'
- 42 16. Funeka : 'Some of them are helpful; I never had a problem with the teachers.'
- 43 17. Researcher : (09:20) 'Do you think your qualification affects the way the other teachers see you?'
- 44 18. Funeka : 'I think maybe they can affect that; in some recent case when I can say that it was not  
45 qualification related, but in the case when something happened with my child. My child is also at school here. I  
46 have two children here. So the other day we were at home; we are moving from this area and it was during  
47 the week so I couldn't come. I was thinking the child has to go to school. But I came late; the children had to  
48 be here at 07h30 and we came here at 07h40. I came to the teacher to explain but she was shouting and  
49 asked why the child was late every day. But it was not like that. So maybe she was looking down, if I can say  
50 that.'
- 51 19. Researcher : (11:08) 'Now your Level 4; how does it support you in teaching numeracy. So the things you  
52 learned in Level 4 for numeracy. Does it help?'
- 53 20. Funeka : 'Yeah they do help but not that much. I think we do need more skills than other [inaudible]; there  
54 is not much skills in the numeracy, just counting and learning to count.'
- 55 21. Researcher : (11:52) 'Do you see yourself going further with your learning?'
- 56 22. Funeka : 'Yes I do.'
- 57 23. Researcher : (12:04) 'What would you like to do?'
- 58 24. Funeka : 'I would like to stay here in Grade R but I would also like to study further, more like the degree in  
59 teaching.'
- 60 25. Researcher : (12:30) 'What kind of Grade R support do you get?'
- 61 26. Funeka : 'I get materials, but not so much stuff. But if the materials come they are not enough.'
- 62 27. Researcher : (13:01) 'And workshops and professional development, and those type of things. Do you get  
63 any support?'
- 64 28. Funeka : 'I did go [inaudible] a workshop that we go but it was not like maths related ones. With GADRA  
65 we had so much support there, although they stopped sending us messages where we can go also. But those  
66 were the things that keep me going this last year because they were so important to me.'

- 67 29. Researcher : (13:47) 'Who do you talk to about Grade R?'
- 68 30. Funeka : 'So many people. I can talk to the parents also about sending the children to Grade R because it is  
69 important for the children for the basics, the foundation and everything.'
- 70 31. Researcher : (14:18) 'And just your everyday joys and frustrations about teaching; can you talk to anyone  
71 about that?'
- 72 32. Funeka : 'Yes I also talk to [name of colleague]. I also have my sister who is teaching. I think she is doing  
73 pre-school. I talk to her about anything that frustrates me. And also the friend that does 'home schooling.' I  
74 send her a message so she can also help me out with other things if I am frustrated.'
- 75 33. Researcher : (15:05) 'Who do you want to become through participating in the ENF program?'
- 76 34. Funeka : 'I want to become a Grade R teacher who has confidence and skills. Who other people can come  
77 to for advice and help with what I am doing.'
- 78 35. Researcher : (15:41) 'What is your relationship with numeracy?'
- 79 36. Funeka : 'It was not so good before. At school I was dodging numeracy, but here I gained confidence with  
80 [name of colleague]. That is what made me love it. Now with opportunity for numeracy; with ENF I was so  
81 excited because now I want to learn new things, and become more interested in it.'
- 82 37. Researcher : (16:27) 'How do you feel about teaching numeracy?'
- 83 38. Funeka : 'Now that I started this year I feel confident; I feel that I can do more. I can make a difference.'
- 84 39. Researcher : (16:55) 'In the assessment you did for us that you brought to the last session, one of the  
85 children, [name of child] could count verbally to ten but she had difficulty counting the objects--'
- 86 40. Funeka : 'Sorry about that. I think there was a problem with switching papers, because [name of child] is  
87 in [name of colleague]'s class.'
- 88 41. Researcher : 'Oh okay. (17:34) So let's imagine you have a child who can verbally count but can't count the  
89 objects. How would you help her?'
- 90 42. Funeka : 'I think I can take the objects, the colourful ones, and tell her she must count them out starting  
91 with the smallest numbers to the biggest numbers. To try and make her understand. I can also make extra  
92 time after school, and make it fun. There are lots of things she can count here. She can count bags or anything  
93 to see how she goes.'
- 94 43. Researcher : 'Perfect, thank you. (18:38) What do you think learners should be able to do in terms of  
95 numeracy; That my learners should be able to count, add numbers, minus numbers, have an idea of time, and  
96 more. Would you like to add anything else to that?'
- 97 44. Funeka : 'Counting to 'two' and then get them to count to 'three.' And eventually to 'five.'
- 98 45. Researcher : (19:40) 'What do you think is the one most important thing at the end of Grade R?'

- 99 46. Funeka : 'Maybe I can achieve in their best interests. Maybe I can send them to Grade 1 with much  
100 knowledge.'
- 101 47. Researcher : (20:16) 'How would you describe the way you teach numbers?'
- 102 48. Funeka : 'Farms; the children do what they want to do and that is fun.'
- 103 49. Researcher : (21:14) 'How do you use resources?'
- 104 50. Funeka : 'We have the dice. We also have the teddy bear that we use with the dice, and the children  
105 throw the dice and then use the flash cards which have the dots. Then they count from the dice; 'two' plus  
106 'one' is 'three.' That is amazing.'
- 107 51. Researcher : (22:20) 'The resources that we have given you; how have you found it?'
- 108 52. Funeka : 'They are working well. Yesterday we were sorting with the shapes, they identify the shapes.  
109 They can also count how many shapes they found. So up to five. I have got three shapes so they are working  
110 well.'
- 111 53. Researcher : 'That is all. Thank you very much.'

## APPENDIX 7: Interview transcript – Thandi

INT 1.5 – 1 June 2016 – THANDI

- 1 1. Researcher : ‘Thank you very much for having me. At any point if there is any question you don’t want to  
2 answer, or if you are tired and want to stop, you can just say. I am going to take notes as well in case I need to  
3 be reminded of anything. I will type these up and will send them to you. And you can read them and make  
4 sure everything is fine. (00:36) In the questionnaire you said you have been working as a teacher for 12 years,  
5 and you have also been working as a Grade R teacher for 12 years. So when you started teaching you started  
6 Grade R.’
- 7 2. Thandi : ‘Yes.’
- 8 3. Researcher : (01:10) ‘Why did you become a teacher?’
- 9 4. Thandi : ‘I love children. I love interacting with them. To them everything is easy; they don’t have to worry  
10 about anything. That’s what I love about them.’
- 11 5. Researcher : (02:09) ‘Do you see yourself still teaching Grade R in another three years time?’
- 12 6. Thandi : ‘That will be a “Yes” and a “No.” “Yes” if the government employs us permanently and recognizes  
13 us as teachers. And “No” if it doesn’t happen. We teach Grade R’s but we don’t have benefits; we are given  
14 stipend which is R5000.00 a month which is very very low. Even the gardeners get more money than us, and  
15 we are not being recognized. The [parents] say Grade R is a crèche, and a crèche is where children sleep and  
16 eat, and sleep and eat and go home, which is not happening in Grade R.’
- 17 7. Researcher : (03:09) ‘How do you feel about the recent roll-out of Grade R?’
- 18 8. Thandi : ‘The what?’
- 19 9. Researcher : ‘The government taking Grade R and binding it to the schools.’
- 20 10. Thandi : ‘It’s a good idea to put us in schools rather than in their own spaces like before, because Grade R  
21 used to be in the crèches . And then they take them there and put them in schools. It’s a good thing but also a  
22 bad thing because what I’ve heard is when Grade R’s were standing on their own, they were earning more  
23 than now, and there was no--. The paperwork is too much in our schools. You do paperwork every day and if  
24 there is something that is needed in the office, you have to stop teaching and do the paperwork which is not  
25 fair.’
- 26 11. Researcher : (04:43) ‘Has it had any impact on your career?’
- 27 12. Thandi : ‘Yes it has because I have grown up now. I can see in Grade 1 they are doing this and that, and it  
28 made me feel that I must study more to be a professional teacher. So that in two or three years to come I can  
29 be a foundation phase teacher, Grade 1 or Grade 2 or Grade 3 teacher. And other teachers will also encourage  
30 us to keep on studying so that we can be employed.’
- 31 13. Researcher : (05:44) ‘Do you think your job is secure?’
- 32 14. Thandi : ‘Yes and no.’ The reason I am saying “Yes” is they renew our contracts every three years and now  
33 it’s not secured because in my case, in 2013, I don’t know what happened but I did not get my payment for

34 April to July. Then I got payment in August, but when I queried that they said they did not put me in the  
35 system or they took me off the system. When I was about to hand them over to my lawyers, someone from  
36 the department said "Did you know this is a contract. This is not a permanent job." That is why I am saying  
37 "Yes and No." That to me was a threat that I could be kicked out any time because of their negligence. It was  
38 not my problem because every year I had to take my qualifications to them, and then they captured it. But in  
39 this case I don't know what happened to my qualifications and my certificate. But I have to give them again so  
40 that they capture me. And it took them five months to do so. Tell me, "If someone hires from the department,  
41 can they stay five months without being paid?" "No."

42 15. Researcher : (08:22) 'How is your post funded?'

43 16. Thandi : 'It is funded by the department of education but when they say we are not employed by them,  
44 even though they give us the pay-slips, they say we are employed by the SGB of the school. And the SGB says  
45 "No we don't have money. We can't pay you R5000.00. So we are in between SGB and the Department of  
46 Education.'

47 17. Researcher : (09:14) 'What resources do you receive?'

48 18. Thandi : 'From the department; Sometimes they send us crayons and paint, sometimes puzzles. But it's  
49 been a long time that they have not given us--.'

50 19. Researcher : (10:04) 'How is it different to before they took the Grade R?'

51 20. Thandi : 'Before I was in a primary school. We have to go to the workshops so that we can get resources,  
52 but generally I never received any from them.'

53 21. Researcher : (10:58) 'You said your qualification is you are currently in your third year NPDE specializing in  
54 learners with barriers?'

55 22. Thandi : 'Yes.'

56 23. Researcher : (11:14) 'How important do you think having a specialized qualification for Grade R is for  
57 teaching?'

58 24. Thandi : 'I think that is very important because in Grade R you are moulding those children, and then you  
59 see there are barriers. You start to see them in Grade R. In crèches they don't notice those things, but when  
60 they come to Grade R you have to open your eyes and ears, and look at the child as a whole so that you can  
61 see if there are problems or not. So having a qualification in special needs will boost the school. When I finish  
62 this NPDE I will be a remedial teacher. We need more remedial teachers in our schools because there are so  
63 many cases. Some parents know their children have a problem; some parents ignore the problem. Some say  
64 "No my child is not like that," or they take the child to another school.'

65 25. Researcher : (13:24) 'How do the other teachers in this school see you?'

66 26. Thandi : 'They see me as a hard worker. The Grade 1 teacher who I send my class to, [name of colleague]  
67 always tells me I am a good teacher and that I am doing a great job. She can see by the children I am sending  
68 to her, that I know what I am doing. She has never complained about my children. But in each and every class

69 there are cases, and if there are, I go with my kids to her and we discuss one on one, saying “This child is like  
70 this” and “This child is like that.” And I think that is what should happen to every class so that the next teacher  
71 knows what the problems are, and knows about the children she is going to teach for that year.’

72 27. Researcher : (14:51) ‘Have your qualifications made a difference to how people see you?’

73 28. Thandi : ‘I think so because if I was not educated, I would not notice the cases; the barriers in my class. So  
74 because of the knowledge I am getting, I can see what is wrong with the child. But you must find someone like  
75 a psychologist who will agree with you that “Yes this is what the problem is.” Someone who is trained more  
76 than you.’

77 29. Researcher : (15:48) ‘How does your qualification support the teaching of numeracy?’

78 30. Thandi : ‘Can you elaborate?’

79 31. Researcher : ‘What you are learning through your studies. (16:04) How is it helping your teaching of  
80 numeracy?’

81 32. Thandi : ‘Teaching strategies?’

82 33. Researcher : ‘Anything.’

83 34. Thandi : ‘Like how to teach ‘add-on,’ ‘count-on’ or ‘sequencing?’

84 35. Researcher : ‘Yes. Does it help?’

85 36. Thandi : ‘Yes it does help a lot.’

86 37. Researcher : (17:01) ‘Do you see yourself furthering your learning?’

87 38. Thandi : ‘Yes, obviously.’

88 39. Researcher : (17:12) ‘What would you like to do?’

89 40. Thandi : ‘Next year when I finish my NPDE I will do my ACE. After my ACE I will do my degree.’

90 41. Researcher : ‘Excellent. (17:37) Have the other teachers at the school encouraged you to continue?’

91 42. Thandi : ‘Yes.’

92 43. Researcher : ‘Yes you said it earlier didn’t you? (17:48) What kind of Grade R support do you receive, and  
93 from whom?’

94 44. Thandi : ‘I get support from [inaudible]. I get from [NPO] and even the school Principal supports us. And  
95 there is a [name of programme] from [NPO]. A friend of mine from Finland is also helping me because she is a  
96 remedial teacher there. Our school is linked with them, and sometimes we speak about the children’s  
97 problems, then she comes up with a solution. “Try this,” or “Try that,” or “How did it go?”

98 45. Researcher : ‘That’s fantastic. (19:11) ‘Who do you talk to about Grade R, other than her?’

99 46. Thandi : 'The Principal, the HOD, my colleague or other Grade R teachers.'

100 47. Researcher : 'From other schools?'

101 48. Thandi : 'From other schools.'

102 49. Researcher : 'Family?'

103 50. Thandi : 'Yes my husband and my friends. When we discuss education, I come up with topics that  
104 education does not recognize us; Although we are doing more jobs that other teachers which is not fair.'

105 51. Researcher : (20:17) 'Who do you want to become by participating in this program?'

106 52. Thandi : "Who do I want to become?" 'A trainee, not always a participant.'

107 53. Researcher : (21:14) 'Would you like to work with us on presenting something?'

108 54. Thandi : 'No not now, but in the future, yes.'

109 55. Researcher : 'Because maybe you can come in and do something about identifying barriers?'

110 56. Thandi : 'Yeah when I am qualified.'

111 57. Researcher : 'Then you tie it with the numeracy. So barriers and numeracy learning; you could tie together.  
112 We would love to have you. We are all working together so if there is something you want to share with us--,  
113 we are all learning from each other.'

114 58. Thandi : 'Not now but in the near future.'

115 59. Researcher : 'Do presentation; 2017.'

116 60. Thandi : 'You know I enjoyed the last session very much; The five little monkeys I enjoyed very much.  
117 Sometimes I like to help if there are papers or something that needs to be distributed. That's me.'

118 61. Researcher : 'Okay I am going to start using you.'

119 62. Thandi : 'That's fine.'

120 63. Researcher : 'Lovely thank you. (22:49) What is your personal relationship with numeracy?'

121 64. Thandi : 'You know when I grew up I loved maths, but when I was in Grade 11, something changed. And in  
122 Grade 12, I ended up getting an 'F' or an 'H' which was very bad. I think my problem was geometry. I hate  
123 geometry; those angles and 'Pi' and what ! No take me to algebra. I really used to love maths when I was  
124 growing up, but things changed when I was in Grade 11. I don't know what happened. I think it was more  
125 about geometry. My cousin and I were at [name of school], and in May I asked my Principal if I could change to  
126 art instead of maths. And he said "No you can't change now. You must finish until Grade 12." And then I said  
127 "Oh okay." Then we ended up failing maths because you don't pass it if you have an 'H' or a 'G' or whatever.'

128 65. Researcher : 'Do you know what I got for maths in matric?'

129 66. Thandi : 'No.'

130 67. Researcher : 'E'

131 68. Thandi : 'Yoh Researcher you are brilliant. I know you. You are brilliant 'wena.' And how are your children?'

132 69. Researcher : 'Good, good.'

133 70. Thandi : 'They took their mummy's brain ne?';-)

134 71. Researcher : 'Because remember Jude was Level 5; writing exams with Jude. So I was learning and he was  
135 learning. And Dylan was B.Ed, and then Eli was Masters. My Masters thesis I handed in on the 1<sup>st</sup> December,  
136 and on the 9<sup>th</sup> December Eli was born.'

137 72. Thandi : ' Yoh. And mine was my second year because I was pregnant. And I had to go to PE to do a  
138 computer course. And then I had to go to this school. And the taxi would stop and say "No you must walk." I  
139 had to walk carrying this big belly of mine.'

140 73. Researcher : 'But it's good because while you were learning, that baby was learning also. Everyone calls Eli,  
141 my third one, 'Masters.' He is my little 'Masters.' (26:38) How do you feel about teaching numeracy?'

142 74. Thandi : 'Teaching numeracy is fun. [inaudible] made it fun because they interact numeracy with games  
143 which is fun for the young ones.'

144 75. Researcher : (27:10) 'If a learner makes a mistake or struggles to manage a skill in your classroom, how  
145 might you deal with it?'

146 76. Thandi : 'Making mistakes; then I have to go 'one on one,' or do simple worksheet. Write a note to the  
147 parent asking if he can assist at home with the homework. "Or can I stay with the child for 30 minutes."

148 77. Researcher : 'After school?'

149 78. Thandi : 'Yes.'

150 79. Researcher : (28:27) 'In the assessment task that you did for us from the first session, you wrote that  
151 [name of child] can't count using objects. How would you help them?'

152 80. Thandi : '[Name of child] was with me even last year but he was younger than the average child, so I kept  
153 him this year too. This year I was teaching using objects. The boxes I was using have gone. Vanished. There  
154 were two pink boxes now there is only one. That's what happens in our schools. Anyway I was saying, Leah is  
155 having a problem at home because he is staying with his grandmother, the father and the girlfriend. You can  
156 see by the way he looks, that he is not being cared for at home. He never has lunch. He does not wash  
157 properly, or at all. And he is late every day. And he is always asking others for food during lunch time. At our  
158 school they cook, and when someone is full, he will ask "Can I have?" Sometimes I ask the cook if she can dish  
159 up some food in tubs for him so that he can take it home. I think he has a social problem so it's hard for him to  
160 count with objects. But yesterday, I asked "[name of child] can you get three crayons please." "Miss?" "Bring  
161 me three crayons quickly." And then he brought me three crayons, and I was surprised.' So I think I must not  
162 rush him but go slowly with him.'

163 81. Researcher : 'Lovely, thank you. (33:15) In the questionnaire you mentioned that at the end of Grade R,  
164 learners should be able to do road counting from one to ten, forwards and backwards; Ten to one and one to  
165 ten. And place value. Is there anything else that you would like to say?'

166 82. Thandi : 'They must be able to write their names. They must know that you start writing left to right. They  
167 know top to bottom; the basics actually.'

168 83. Researcher : (33:54) 'Is there any one of those that you think are the most important. Is there any one of  
169 those that you think is most important for Grade R learners to know?'

170 84. Thandi : 'I think they must know the basics when they go to Grade 1.'

171 85. Researcher : 'So it's not one of those things but all of them. (34:18) How would you describe the way in  
172 which you teach about numeracy and about numbers?'

173 86. Thandi : 'I teach one number in two or three days. It depends on how the learners understand. In my  
174 understanding you can't teach two numbers on the same day. You must be able to see that the learners  
175 understand, know and recognize the numbers. And they must write the number even if it is not exact. It is not  
176 easy for them to write a number five.'

177 87. Researcher : (35:34) 'Is there any one activity that you like doing for numbers?'

178 88. Thandi : 'Monkeys; I liked that one!'

179 89. Researcher : (36:02) 'Why do you like it so much?'

180 90. Thandi : 'Because they are more involved in it. Because first I used those monkeys and the next day I said  
181 to them "Who are going to be the monkeys today?" Everybody wants to be a monkey. They are more  
182 involved.'

183 91. Researcher : (36:38) 'What resources do you use for your teaching of numeracy and numbers?'

184 92. Thandi : 'Dice, dots, worksheets. Counting objects. I have got beads, stones. Anything that I can get to  
185 make learning fun.'

186 93. Researcher : (37:33) 'How have you experienced the use of the resources that are coming from our  
187 program. Are they working for you?'

188 94. Thandi : 'They are working. The resources are making it easier. More understandable and more fun.'

189 95. Researcher : 'Thank you very much. I am done. If there is anything you want to talk to me about, or any  
190 questions you have, I am here.'

191 96. Thandi : 'If I heard correctly, a man said something at our first workshop about helping us. Did he mention  
192 that? Maybe helping us to move forward to do something else. How did that go?'

193 97. Researcher : 'We are still negotiating and figuring it out. And one of the questions I asked you was, "Would  
194 you like to study further, and what would you like to do and." And we are going to see how we can support  
195 you on your future trajectory.'

196 98. Thandi : 'The reason I am asking this question is I am getting R5000. I still have to pay North West  
197 University and I have a baby at home. As a mother, there are things I have to do at the house.'

198 99. Researcher : 'Can I ask you how much you are paying for the NPDE per year.'

199 100. Thandi : 'Per year it is R24 000.00. Before you write I am going to show you an 'sms' . Last year I paid R17  
200 000.00, my second year. "Hi, your 'Edu-Loan' for R17 700.00 was approved. Instalment R985.00 for 24 months.  
201 EFF rates which will be R23 654.40."

202 101. Researcher : 'So you have taken a loan for R17 700.00. You have got to pay them back R24 000.00? And  
203 that's for one year?'

204 102. Thandi : 'Yes that's for one year. And I am doing 14 assignments this year. I managed to post 4  
205 assignments before the 15<sup>th</sup> April and I have four now in May that needs to be posted. I am busy with two now  
206 but there are still more. They deliver the books very late. I got my study material at the end of March, and on  
207 15<sup>th</sup> April I received an 'sms,' before having the material saying "Assignments should be in by the 15<sup>th</sup> April."  
208 There are two due dates, April and September, but if you send them on the 14<sup>th</sup> September, then you have to  
209 write all the 14 assignments. So it's better if you do the seven in April and the other seven in September.'

210 103. Researcher : 'So how do you see us helping you?'

211 104. Thandi : 'Maybe if there are questions that I don't understand or what the assignment is about. Like I  
212 have a maths assignment that needed to be done, and as I said to you, I hated geometry.'

213 105. Researcher : 'Have you finished that one? But you think there will be more.'

214 106. Thandi : 'I have to write exams.'

215 107. Researcher : 'When are your exams?'

216 108. Thandi : 'I am starting on the 6<sup>th</sup> June and my last paper is on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of June. But I am writing four. But  
217 on the 20<sup>th</sup> I won't be at the workshop. And I am worried because I won't get the resources.'

218 109. Researcher : 'No you will. I will let them know that you will not be there because of your exams. We will  
219 make a plan to get them to you.'

220 110. Thandi : 'Okay. Or you can give them to my colleague next door.'

221 111. Researcher : 'Or I can bring them to the school next week, or however you want to do it. It's no problem.  
222 So long as you let us know you can't be there or why you can't. It's just a problem when someone comes this  
223 week, and then the next week they don't come. So now I know when I am making all the resources that  
224 [inaudible] is still on the list; she just won't be there. Alright so I am going to take this information back to  
225 Melanie and I will say you are currently studying. Although she saw us helping you once you had finished with  
226 us, and take you further, I don't see her having a problem with us offering some kind of support now.  
227 Especially with assignments and things, but I do need to double check with her as she is the boss. So I will tell  
228 her you need support.'

229 112. Thandi : 'Thank you Researcher.'

## APPENDIX 8: Interview transcript – Maria

INT 1.9 - 9 JUNE 2016 - MARIA

1 Researcher : 'I wish to say thank you very much, again, and to tell you that if at any point you need to go or  
2 you don't want to answer any of the questions, or if you are uncomfortable or anything, you are free to stop,  
3 and to change. What I will do is I will take everything and I will transcribe it, and I will type it up and I will send  
4 it to you before it is used for anything. Just to make sure that you are happy that I am representing you the  
5 way you want to be represented, Okay?'

6 Maria : 'Okay.'

7 Researcher : (01:08) 'In your questionnaire it said that you have been a teacher for twenty three years, Grade  
8 R-- why did you decide to become a Grade R teacher?'

9 Maria : 'It wasn't my first choice. When I was still at school I wanted to go into the medical field. I went to PE,  
10 to school there, because of the subject choices. Here we did not have presently , we could just go to [name of  
11 school]. So then I went to [name of school] where I did maths and physical science. That's what they called it  
12 before. To go into that field. So I wanted to do physiotherapy or radiography, or something like that. And I was  
13 actually accepted. I was lucky I was one of 6 accepted for radiography at [name of training hospital], that time  
14 we went for assessment and things. But then we waited for results, and the results came late and there was  
15 some problem, so they didn't take me after all. But I applied to do teaching as well, just for a second choice, so  
16 I was accepted at a college in [name of city]. At [name of college], that specialized in Grade R. It was the only  
17 college in the country that does that.'

18 Researcher : (02:28) 'What was the college's name again?'

19 Maria : '[Name of college]. A while after I left there, they amalgamated with [name of college]. I don't know if  
20 you have heard of [name of college]. So then they moved there and they were one. But I am enjoying what I  
21 am doing, and I am not sorry that I actually chose to go that way. Did I answer your question?'

22 Researcher : 'Definitely. (03:02) Do you see yourself still teaching Grade R in three years time?'

23 Maria : 'Yeah I enjoy it a lot. But as I told you before maybe, I like to work with adults more. Not more, but I  
24 enjoy doing it, like presenting workshops, and the work that you are also doing. I would like to move out. But I  
25 have applied so many times to the Department of Education but unfortunately we don't get the posts there.  
26 Some discrimination I think, but I do all of their work. I attend provincial workshops for them and I present it,  
27 but when the posts are advertised, they take people from outside. Doesn't even have a clue of the work.'

28 Researcher : 'Okay, thank you. (04:02) How do you feel about the recent roll-out of Grade R ? That they were  
29 binding Grade R's to schools with government initiative?'

30 Maria : 'You mean that they are making it compulsory? I think that is great because so many people are  
31 opening up creches and day-care centres, and from there the children move to Grade 1. But if it is at the  
32 school, then it is more structured because you have to follow the gaps. But at some schools it seems to me  
33 that they don't recognize the Grade R's really. The HoD's don't work with them like they are supposed to. They  
34 concentrate more on Grade 1 to 3 because My colleagues at the surrounding schools, I can hear from that;

35 they are not really part of the school or part of the phase, or whatever. But I am lucky because I am head of  
36 the department as well, of the foundation phase.'

37 Researcher : (05:15) 'Did it have any impact on your career?'

38 Maria : 'How do you mean?'

39 Researcher : (05:20) 'When the government started saying Grade R's are now part of the school, did it change  
40 your career at all?'

41 Maria : 'Not really because I have been at a primary school ever since my second year of teaching. My first  
42 year I could not get a post at home; a government post now. So I was teaching in [inaudible]. I got a post  
43 there. But it was also like a crèche kind of thing. Almost like [name of school]. So I was teaching there but I  
44 was paid by the government because I was fully qualified. And then I got a post closer to home, in [name of  
45 town] at [name of school]. So there I was doing what I was supposed to. And then they opened up the school  
46 here. The class. So then in my third year I got the post at [name of school]. So I have been at [inaudible] School  
47 for all these years.'

48 Researcher : (06:30) 'You have a permanent post at this school?'

49 Maria : 'Yes.'

50 Researcher : (06:35) 'How is it funded?'

51 Maria : 'I am being paid by the government, because as the other teachers are also a diploma education, so I  
52 am not like the practitioners that they are called now. But I have been upgraded. So I am being paid by the  
53 government; state posts.'

54 Researcher : (07:00) 'What resources do you receive?'

55 Maria : 'We have a paper budget. We get a paper budget from the department, but it is like [inaudible]. So  
56 they say the school gets a certain amount and then some money goes for maintenance, some for stationery,  
57 for educational consumables [inaudible]. There is a special adaptation for Grade R. So we can buy our own  
58 things. But they change the things so often. Sometimes they say they are not going to release that part of the  
59 funding. We must say what we want and they will pay for it. But now they use suppliers that give us junk. Like  
60 the 'Pritt' for instance. It's not the quality stuff that I would go and buy at [name of shop] or something like  
61 that. Thin crayons, I want thick ones. But we do get some allocations from the government.'

62 Researcher : (08:10) 'Is that different to before they did the binding of the Grade R's?'

63 Maria : 'Yeah we didn't get anything before that. So only when they started with the amalgamation thing.'

64 Researcher : (08:33) 'You said in the questionnaire that your qualification is a DE3 Pre-Primary, so that is a  
65 three year diploma.'

66 Maria : 'Yeah'

67 Researcher : (08:40) 'And then a HDE4, and that's Junior Primary. So that is Grade 1, 2 and 3 and Grade R.'

68 Maria : 'Yeah. So after a few years of teaching I thought let me upgrade myself, and then a few of us did that  
69 course through the post.'

70 Researcher : 'Okay, great.'

71 Maria : 'And I passed with a Cum Laude.'

72 Researcher : 'So next step, Honours.'

73 Maria : 'Yeah.'

74 Researcher : 'Cum Laude. (09:20) 'How important do you think having a specialized qualification for Grade R is  
75 for teaching?'

76 Maria : 'I think it's very important because sometimes you get teachers, but they don't have a clue of what  
77 they are actually supposed to do. Like many will think it's more preparation for Grade 1; to prepare the child  
78 for Grade 1, but it's not like that. And others are under the impression that children play all day. Although lots  
79 of the work must be informal, but there must be some structured way of doing it.'

80 Researcher : 'The balance?'

81 Maria : 'Yeah'

82 Researcher : (10:07) 'How do other teachers see you at the school?'

83 Maria : 'I don't want to boast.'

84 Researcher : 'Please.'

85 Maria : 'No, but I think they see me as the role model. I work very hard, to tell the truth, and I am sure they  
86 can all see it. And I like to help where I can. I assist them. And being HOD I guess is also part of my work. But  
87 before when I was a normal teacher, I used to help everybody. And as I said, with the workshops that I attend,  
88 I don't get anything; I don't get money for it. But I do it so that I can help others. So that I can also learn more,  
89 and do what I do best, in my class so that it can assist me. Even attending biblical workshops is a learning  
90 process. We never know everything; we learn every day. So I think they look up to me and they appreciate  
91 what I do for them.'

92 Researcher : 'That's great. (11:29) Your qualification! What you studied, the formal studying. How does it help  
93 with the teaching of numeracy in particular?'

94 Maria : 'When we went to college, things weren't the same as it is now. So I can't really relate to it. Even when  
95 I started off with teaching, there was no curriculum. There was nothing for Grade R. We had to find our own  
96 feet, and do things that we learned at college. But we didn't say we did maths, or this is what you are  
97 supposed to do. You learn as you go along. So I can't really say that that had an impact. We were more in the  
98 informal business, like creative arts. What activities to do for creative activities, for movement, for music. But  
99 it wasn't like this is for maths, or this is for languages.'

100 Researcher : (12:40) 'Have the teachers at the school encouraged you to continue your learning?'

101 Maria : 'How do you mean?'

102 Researcher : 'You mentioned in the questionnaire you would like to do your Honours.'

103 Maria : 'Hmmm'

104 Researcher : (12:53) 'Have they encouraged you, and said "Yes, you know you should go and you should study  
105 more?"'

106 Maria : 'No not really. I think most of the teachers [inaudible] I don't want to hear about studying. But for me I  
107 want to go on.'

108 Researcher : 'That's great. (13:10) What kind of Grade R support do you receive?'

109 Maria : 'I don't receive any kind of Grade R support. I attended a few workshops with [name of department  
110 employee] from the department, so that also there is another type. But I don't get any support. They will have  
111 meetings and workshops but they split the educators up. They will have the practitioners alone, and then it's  
112 us like myself and [name of Grade R teacher] to have more from [names of schools] those people. We are  
113 seen as a different group than the practitioners. I don't know how they do it at the department. So I try to  
114 empower myself. I like to read up, follow my [inaudible] documents and whatever I have to gain some  
115 knowledge. And I take it from there. And from workshops that I attend, but it mostly covers Grade 1 to 3.

116 Researcher : (14:32) 'Who do you talk to about Grade R?'

117 Maria : 'I talk to my Grade 1 educators as well. Tell them what we do and we have our phase meetings. I show  
118 them the things I make, this is what I do and so on. And then there are few Grade R teachers around here, like  
119 [name of colleague], and [names of colleagues]. I encourage them to have a committee where we get together  
120 and discuss some things, and share ideas. But they are not very keen. And I can help them because I am also  
121 the cluster leader of the area. So now I help [name of department employee] who comes to the workshops. I  
122 help her with the moderation. Check the files. But they try not to come to those. So I don't know exactly how  
123 their files look. Maybe they are right, I am not sure.'

124 Researcher : (15:58) 'Who do you want to become, by participating in our numeracy program that we are  
125 running?'

126 Maria : 'How do you mean?'

127 Researcher : (16:10) 'Just who would you like to be at the end of the program? Like what are you looking for in  
128 the program?'

129 Maria : 'I would like to be better equipped, to gain more knowledge, ideas and things like that.'

130 Researcher : (16:39) 'What is your personal relationship with numeracy or with mathematics?'

131 Maria : 'I love maths. I find it much easier to teach than playing [inaudible] or life skills or whatever. I enjoy it  
132 more. But there are just some areas where maybe I lack, like with addition and subtraction; that's hard. The  
133 numbers operation. But with others I feel comfortable.'

134 Researcher : (17:22) 'Why do you think it's easier for you, than say the life skills or the literacy?'

135 Maria : 'I did very well in maths at school as well. I did maths up to matric, and if I had to, I would have  
136 continued with it if I went into a different direction. But then I went to study Grade R. So I think that's where it  
137 comes from. My family is also very mathematical. My mother is also teaching. And I even help my children  
138 with it. My husband also specialized in maths at [inaudible]. He did his [inaudible] there a few years after I  
139 went to study. And still now my son is in Grade 9. I am still trying to help him where I can, although lots of  
140 things have changed from when we were at high school. And I help my daughter a lot. Maybe that's why.'

141 Researcher : 'That's great. (18:47) If a learner makes a mistake, or struggles with something in your class, how  
142 do you help them?'

143 Maria : 'I will explain to them. I always tell them if you don't understand something come to me. Like today for  
144 instance, I am busy with assessments now; formal written work. The one child was supposed to make the dots  
145 in the one column, and then write the numbers in the other one. But I try not to get all worked up. So I explain  
146 to them. You saw here they started with the dots. So they were supposed to start with the dots. I asked him  
147 actually what you were supposed to do here, and he said to me the dots, but he made the dots in the other  
148 column. So I said to him "Okay let's just do ... you are just going to write the numbers." And I tried to explain  
149 to him. But then he went and he made dots again on the other side. And I had to go again. So I just tried to  
150 express myself better. And make use of concrete objects. I think that helps them a lot. Before they actually do  
151 written work or something.'

152 Researcher : (20:16) 'In the questionnaire you mentioned that at the end of Grade R, learners should be able  
153 to know: the number concepts, and names, to ten, follow patterns, and create patterns, measurement,  
154 addition and subtraction, data handling, and space and shape. Which of these outcomes do you think is the  
155 most important?'

156 Maria : 'I think numbers operations, because if they don't have that number concept then they will struggle  
157 with the other content areas. So for me it's all about numbers. And with us also we are waiting for the  
158 different content areas, although they don't stress that in Grade R, it's more for Grade 1 to 3. Where we have  
159 different [waitings?] for the different content areas. They concentrate more on the waiting from Grade 1 to 3.  
160 I even work that out for them, so there are mark sheets and things like that. But now with us, there's no  
161 waiting really. But what myself and the principal does, we see how many pockets in that certain content area,  
162 and then we work out our own waiting. But it's funny because I have noticed like with space and shape,  
163 there's actually more to be assessed than numbers operations. I think numbers operations needs the most.'

164 Researcher : (22:05) 'How would you describe the way you teach numeracy and about numbers?'

165 Maria : 'Interesting, exciting. Even with the things that we got from you; the monkeys. They enjoyed that. So  
166 you must make it exciting for them so that they can remember and they use the [inaudible] apparatus.'

167 Researcher : (22:40) 'What resources do you use, like most often?'

168 Maria : 'They like the pegs for the peg boards, for the patterns, and then I have little blocks, counters, that  
169 they use for counting of objects and so on. Even the beads they use for patterns as well as counting. I have  
170 noticed that I have never really used dice before I came to you. So that's a new thing. And then shapes; I have

171 lots of shapes. Flat shapes and some 3D shapes that I also use. And then the abacus for counting. And then I  
172 make my own, like these numbers here where I write the symbols, and I make lots of things myself. And then  
173 the number names and so on. And these [name of programme]. They also like these that I got at a workshop.  
174 The pegs; it's got one peg and the colour is the same. So I use these as well for my numbers. And then a  
175 number line. They work with that one to 10 only and then my other class. But I use it as I go along like when I  
176 do number one, I just put one, and I will go to number two, I just add two and then add a number every time.  
177 And I put everything up at the same time. So now number five; so most of my things will be to five. And then I  
178 also use small numbers, the days like "What is the date today?" The first, second and third. So that's also for  
179 numbers. And all of them are very good in it. Even though we only do up to five, some of the children know  
180 that this is thirty one or twenty eight. Even with my magnetic chart they take the date out themselves. But  
181 that chart also helps with the numbers because they read their names, and say "Okay that is my birthday," so  
182 the twentieth and so on, even though everybody is not at the same level yet. That's it.'

183 Researcher : 'I'm sure there's lots more; it's just what you can think of now. No that's perfect. (25:49) How  
184 have you experienced the use of the resources that we've given you?'

185 Maria : 'That was very interesting and they enjoyed it. The monkeys jumping and they can dramatize it and  
186 they coloured it the one day, and then we made the finger puppets, and we first did it the way you people  
187 taught us how to do the jumps. And then I let them do it with the song.'

188 Researcher : 'I was laughing so much because I thought you are much braver than I am because I hate singing  
189 for the children. So whenever we had someone like students coming, or parents coming in or whatever, it  
190 would always be like "Oh there's no time for music today."

191 Maria : 'My children were laughing because they said "But mummy you can't sing." but I say "But I have to."

192 Researcher : 'No but I thought it was beautiful; it sounded beautiful.'

193 Maria : 'Yeah and it was so strange because like with the monkeys jumping from the one tree to the other,  
194 they went "Hah" like the way we did it. And when I did it with a song, now the monkey fell from the bed. Is it  
195 over?'

196 Researcher : 'No, no just double checking. I am so paranoid.'

197 Maria : 'And then I noticed when the monkey falls, they take it off and the monkey falls--'

198 Researcher : 'I saw that in the video. It had to fall on the floor, and then they had to pick it up.'

199 Maria : 'And it was so strange because I did not tell them to do that you know.'

200 Researcher : 'No, it was very sweet. I also noticed some of them; some worked from left to right, but some  
201 worked from right to left.'

202 Maria : 'Yes okay. The concept.'

203 Researcher : 'But it didn't matter because they could still see that three and two. And there was two more  
204 monkeys. They didn't say there was three more monkeys because they knew in their minds that this has fallen  
205 off, and this was on. '

206 Maria : 'And even with [inaudible] it's working quite well. And it was funny for me that when we did the  
207 assessment, some children didn't know what this is for. And then I realized I have to [inaudible]'

208 Researcher : 'No the assessment was very interesting.'

209 Maria : 'Hmmm.'

210 Researcher : 'Thank you! That is all. And it's just for me to say are there any questions you have for me?'

211 Maria : 'Not now. I don't think so.'

## APPENDIX 9: Interview Transcript – Anita

INT 1.6 - 3 JUNE 2016 - ANITA

- 1 1. Researcher : 'Just to let you know you can stop me at any time. You can say you don't want to answer, or you  
2 need to go. It's all up to you. Okay! Thanks very much. You said in the questionnaire you have been a teacher  
3 for 31 years. Taught Grade 1 from--'
- 4 2. Anita : 'Grade R.'
- 5 3. Researcher : 'Grade R.'
- 6 4. Anita : 'I have taught Grade 2 as well, but mainly Grade R. I think 25 years I have been with Grade R. And  
7 also then part of those 31 years I have trained farm school teachers.'
- 8 5. Researcher : 'You have trained teachers as well. Right! (00:56) Why did you become a Grade R teacher?'
- 9 6. Anita : 'My mother is and I grew up with her. And it's just something I have always wanted to do. And I actually  
10 particularly love this age. I enjoy the bigger kids; I do a lot of sport with them, but as far as teaching goes I  
11 actually enjoy this age.'
- 12 7. Researcher : (1:18) 'Do you see yourself teaching Grade R in three years?'
- 13 8. Anita : 'Yes. People asked me "Are you still at [name of school]" and I said "Yes, they will carry me out in a  
14 box." And I'm not moving from here. I'll be in Grade R.'
- 15 9. Researcher : (1:33) 'How do you feel about the recent roll-out of Grade R; the government initiative?'
- 16 10. Anita : 'You know it's very difficult because I have studied for four years to do this. And I think they are  
17 trying, but I don't think they are meeting the mark at putting in practitioners who are not properly trained.  
18 And yes, I can understand for Grade 00's and Grade 000's, but for Grade R actually, when I see what I have to  
19 do with them to get them ready for Grade 1, I don't feel those poor ladies are actually qualified to do that. I  
20 don't think there is enough sport; I don't think there's enough training and I think their salaries are pathetic  
21 quite frankly. And then it's very difficult, because I know that if I leave, they won't replace me. They will put in  
22 a practitioner. That is their story. So I actually think they are belittling Grade R. I think they are not putting  
23 nearly enough stock on Grade R. It's a very very important year, and I know they think they just play, but it's  
24 so important. We do such a mix of everything here and you can see those. Mine go up to Grade 1 and then we  
25 get in other Grade 1's as well. And it's not me, but because of my experience and my training that mine are far  
26 more ready for Grade 1 than the others that come in. Some have been at pre-schools usually, but they are the  
27 ones that struggle more. And that comes from the Grade 1 teachers not from me.'
- 28 11. Researcher : (03:41) 'Has it had any impact on your career?'
- 29 12. Anita : 'No because they can't touch me here. I'm permanent, I have been here 16 years in this post, and  
30 just recently made HoD last year. So "No" and I am not changing my way of teaching for them. I appreciate  
31 what they are trying to do, but I don't need that though. I have already got my own workbooks, my own  
32 posters and my own themes. I will follow the CAPS program and assessments but I am not going to let it  
33 change the way I have taught because I know it works. And I can just say to them "come and look."
- 34 13. Researcher : 'Exactly. (04:30) So you do have a permanent post at this school? How is it funded?'

- 35 14. Anita : 'Yes I am government. I got this job before they started rolling out this Grade R program.'
- 36 15. Researcher : (04:49) 'What resources do you receive?'
- 37 16. Anita : 'From them? Those workbooks. That's it. Which are pathetic. We had the new EDO arrive two days  
38 ago. I already had two boxes from last year; they bring me two more; they will not take them back. I said "I  
39 don't need them." I've already given [Chair] one and have received another two this week. I don't need them.  
40 It's driving me mad because there must be places that can use them, but because they insist it is for [name of  
41 school] one and two. The other thing is we had three Grade R's, we went down to two then down to one. They  
42 are still providing me with 70 workbooks. We provide the numbers every term; they are not looking at them.  
43 And this year the workbooks are mainly sticker books, which I don't think stimulates anybody. And the stickers  
44 don't work this year. They are not perforated. You can't take them off. So they have spent all this money on  
45 books that are actually not functional. So I don't know what people are doing in poorer areas in small schools.  
46 And I tried to show this lady; over her head. I am getting off the topic, but our new EDO worked with adult  
47 education and wanted the change.'
- 48 17. Researcher : (06:17) 'What does EDO stand for?'
- 49 18. Anita : 'Education Development Officer.' The old inspector basically. We haven't one for a couple of years.  
50 She arrived two days ago. Very proudly was working for AED, which is adult education. She said no, she was  
51 tired of working with grannies so she thought she would come to the little ones. She has never done this  
52 before. But all she wanted was my qualifications; how many children I had; were my children the right age;  
53 what my mix of boys and girls was. That was all that mattered to her. It doesn't matter what we are actually  
54 doing in the classroom. And I must take these packs. In fact I stick them on the shelf. It doesn't worry me. I  
55 shake my head.'
- 56 19. Researcher : (07:11) 'In your questionnaire you said your qualification is DE3--.'
- 57 20. Anita : ' DE3 Pre-primary from Barkly House. So it's a Diploma in Education, yes.'
- 58 21. Researcher : 'Diploma? (07:14) That's the level five, level six? Do you know what--?'
- 59 22. Anita : 'No I don't have a clue. Yes. It was at [name of college] when the Teachers Training College was still  
60 around. And then I did my fourth year Diploma in Specialized Education for Mentally Handicapped.'
- 61 23. Researcher : 'That's right.'
- 62 24. Anita : 'Yes it's a Diploma in Specialized Education; mentally handicapped; for what was a special class.  
63 Sort of remedial. I did that at the [university name].'
- 64 25. Researcher : 'You mentioned earlier about just how important that qualification is for Grade R. So we have  
65 gone through that. (08:15) How do the other teachers see you in this school?'
- 66 26. Anita : 'In this school? As an equal. I think this school realizes; they have looked. I mean the children that  
67 come through our Grade R; they often go "Oh that child is the one who did not go through Grade R." So they  
68 see this as a very important part of the school.'
- 69 27. Researcher : (08:47) 'Your qualification; obviously you did this a few years ago, but--'

70 28. Anita : '--that's understating it. 'Yes.'

71 29. Researcher : (08:56) 'Do you rely on anything from that in terms of your teaching of numeracy. Like is  
72 there anything from your training that you still use for the numeracy teaching in particular?'

73 30. Anita : 'Yes when I was training it was the old maths and it was the basics. And then they came and threw  
74 the baby out with the bath water, and tried the new maths. I just carried on teaching the way we were taught.  
75 They are going back to that of course.'

76 31. Researcher : (09:41) 'Do you see yourself furthering your learning?'

77 32. Anita : 'As in studying? I have been nagged about it but I am not really keen to study again. I've got my four  
78 years. I have been made HoD. I don't want to be a principal because I don't want the buck to stop. I'm not  
79 interested in being in an office, put it that way. I want to be in the classroom. So I don't need another  
80 qualification for that. And I do go to conferences; courses regularly. And I do a lot of reading. I will happily join  
81 your maths. It will be nice just to get around.'

82 33. Researcher : 'It's not about getting a piece of paper.'

83 34. Anita : 'No, that's it. There were [inaudible] courses and they were getting tacky points. For me that's not  
84 what it is about. It's what I feel I can hold. And I have enjoyed it. Because you can still learn new things. It just  
85 enlightens and changes your teaching a little bit, because as you can see, I just started number six today.  
86 Before that we had done number five. So I was doing the monkey; it fitted in perfectly. That was something  
87 new for me and they have loved it.'

88 35. Researcher : (11:14) 'What kind of Grade R specifics support do you receive?'

89 36. Anita : 'From the department?'

90 37. Researcher : 'Anywhere.'

91 38. Anita : 'No, I don't.'

92 39. Researcher : (11:31) 'Who do you talk to about Grade R?'

93 40. Anita : '[Name of principal], my principal, because she has taught Grade R with me, and [name of  
94 colleague]; she is the Grade 1 teacher. She also has taught Grade R. But also my children go up to her. So  
95 those are basically the ones that we discuss, and what am I doing. She comes back to me and says "Please tell  
96 me about this child," or—and we talk about what my children must be; what she is expecting in Grade 1, and  
97 with other things. I chat to [name of principal] about it.'

98 41. Researcher : (12:13) 'And family and friends?'

99 42. Anita : 'They say I talk to them like they are in Grade R. No, I actually do chat with my mom a bit; my mom  
100 taught for 37 years, and she was the principal of pre-school. And she also taught Grade R all her life. And I do  
101 chat to her quite a bit about it. And despite the fact that she has been retired for 13 years, there's still lots  
102 that—'

103 43. Researcher : (12:46) 'The question here is who do you want to become by participating in our ENF  
104 program.'

105 44. Anita : 'Ultimately I want [name of assistant] to feel empowered. Her daughter is in high school and I think  
106 it's time that she actually did more for herself, because we have worked together for 16 years. She has got --'  
107 what is that?'

108 45. Researcher : 'Level Four.'

109 46. Anita : 'I don't know if she is as high as that.'

110 47. Researcher : 'It was in the questionnaire.'

111 48. Anita : 'I would just like to enable her. And that's another thing out of this course with you. I decided I am  
112 to going to give her some assessments. I got her to do some of the assessments that you did, the counting and  
113 the grids. And then I got her to do my [name of programme] assessments, testing each child. Do they know  
114 what sound that is, can they give a word. And with the assessment sheets, I actually want to give her more. I  
115 went her to become empowered. She is a bit younger than I am. She has got another 10 to 12 years. And it's  
116 not necessarily for money. But I don't think she will leave here. But just for her own self-esteem. And that's  
117 when I spoke to [Chair] and [Principal] about taking her with me. She has got her own file now and I told her "I  
118 am going to start using you more now." And now I can leave her to do this. So that's my aim for this. I am  
119 enjoying what I am getting out of it, and I had to laugh because at the last meeting, a girl from [inaudible]  
120 came to speak to me because she had had a problem with her child at Port Shepherd, and what did I think.  
121 They know who I am, but it was more "You're experienced and what must I do as a mother. Because I have  
122 had a problem with the school about my son. And she just cried. I must actually get hold of her and see what  
123 happened.'

124 49. Researcher : 'I did see that and I was a bit worried but I thought--'

125 50. Anita : 'No, but it was quite interesting because she wanted to speak to me. And she didn't want me to  
126 intervene, she just literally wanted to know what was my advice to her; how should she handle it. Did I think  
127 the school had handled it correctly. And I thought if I go there and they can see I don't feel I am above them,  
128 just because I am more qualified-- and I was quite taken aback with that. Because she really cried on my  
129 shoulder. She wanted to know. And it was a personal--. And I felt good that she felt she could come and ask  
130 me. So if they can see that I am there if they want to come and chat to me, I'm very happy. I am very happy to  
131 help other teachers.'

132 51. Researcher : 'You know what [Chair] is like; it can't be an "us" and a "them." We would love to get you  
133 involved in actually doing a session or presenting something. If there is anything that you think "this I need to  
134 share," please let us know so that we can work it into the program. Because that is what we want. It is  
135 supposed to be a community. It's not supposed to be a workshop.'

136 52. Anita : 'That is what I feel. That is where the department is supposed to bring us together. That is not  
137 happening. We have a new EDO now. Maybe she will but I can't see it. I am not holding thumbs. But I am very  
138 willing to share and I have developed my own workbooks for the term. There is just years and years of

139 experience that I know what works. And I have thrown out what doesn't work. And I am not one of those who  
140 keeps those to myself at all. I am very willing because I feel desperate for those kids. We need them to be  
141 prepared because I am so tired of these [inaudible] studying Grades 3, 6 and 9. They don't actually care what  
142 is happening at the bottom. I mean they have got children going into Grade 4 and they can't even write their  
143 names. And what are they doing then. It's scary and it's not rocket science. If you make learning fun and  
144 interesting--, and it's okay to let them play because they learn by doing that as well. That's what they have  
145 also got to understand. It's not all about sitting at a desk all the time. They don't. Mine is very much play, work  
146 time. But they are learning all the time. And also just getting English as they are playing, and that's what those  
147 Grade R practitioners also need to know. It's fine to let them play. Obviously it's fairly structured, but I don't  
148 make them. If you would rather skip, play with a ball, climb on the jungle-gym and you would rather play in  
149 the dolly's corner, or build something, that's fine. But it's still being monitored. It's not wild; just run anywhere  
150 you want to. They've got to know that's also important for their kids. And I know having worked with farm  
151 school teachers, there are a lot of resources you can use that are not expensive. But I am very willing to share.'

152 53. Researcher : (18:42) 'Back to numeracy. What's your personal relationship with numeracy?'

153 54. Anita : 'It was never great. Put it this way I hated maths. I actually always had a mental block against it.  
154 And I still think if somebody even tried to give me Grade 7 maths now I would freak. But I still think I was  
155 taught correct; tables. They just come to me like that. And that's what [name of principal] has always believed  
156 in this school too. Kids will always learn their tables. It's very important. And I will still check the calculator, but  
157 I don't use it very often. But teaching numeracy at this age; I think it should be fun. My daughter is doing  
158 finance at varsity fourth year.'

159 55. Researcher : 'I was talking to someone the other day and they said its very impressive, and they say is that  
160 what you are doing. And I say I am doing my PhD in mathematics education. Meanwhile if you say "What is  
161 120 minus 17?" I'm going--'

162 56. Anita : '--Exactly.'

163 57. Researcher : 'Because I am not sure; it doesn't come automatically. I am always unsure of myself. It's so  
164 funny. It's got this divide.'

165 58. Anita : 'Well [daughter's name] got an 'A' for maths; and I say it comes through your father not your  
166 mother.'

167 59. Researcher : (20:34) 'How do you feel about teaching numeracy compared to literacy and life skills?'

168 60. Anita : 'I enjoy all of them; I think they are all important. Theme days I teach in a big way, and it crosses  
169 over a lot, like I have a story for all the numbers. So that is literacy. They have to sit and listen to a story so  
170 they have got the vocabulary. Like today they learned about a burrow. But we are doing pets, so the rabbit  
171 also goes in. We have done the 'Easter Bunny;' it's a story. So they are getting the vocabulary there too. So  
172 that is part of literacy. With life skills, the one got so panicky; he was running around in a circle. One has to  
173 stop and think. If you look at the CAPS timetables, you think "you can't make me do 47 minutes of numeracy,  
174 then 53 minutes—" It doesn't work that way in Grade R. With their fine motor skills and their colouring in,  
175 even just talking about it. Sitting on the carpet working with numbers. It's the whole curriculum, numbers

176 come into it. I do a lot of music. In matric I did Grade 8 music as a subject. So I am very passionate about it. I  
177 have a lot of songs and use that. So today I said go off in two's; the animals marched in two by two. So they  
178 think of the song and start singing that. That's also the life skills; I have a lot of songs that go with what we are  
179 doing; a lot of counting songs; as I think music is one way the children remember things. Music is a passion. I  
180 had always wanted to do music therapy but it was never offered in this country. And it was too expensive to  
181 go overseas. But I use it here and it works. And they are also learning new words. And we have a funny one  
182 where we learn about the fish in the fishbowl. And it has a chorus that goes ["boo boo dittum ottum cottum  
183 coo'] and they think it's hysterical because it's complete nonsense language. And yes, it okay to sing nonsense  
184 words too.'

185 61. Researcher : (23:19) 'If a learner makes a mistake or struggles to manage something, how would you  
186 usually tackle that?'

187 62. Anita : 'I sit one on one. And that's where I also rely on [name of assistant]. She is very good; her daughter  
188 is a slow learner. And she has incredible patience with children who battle, who don't find it easy. She has  
189 really got a wonderful way with them. She often puts her chair on the side there and helps quietly. But there i  
190 no such thing as "wrong." Let's count again, let's try again. And if you made a mistake cross through it. It does  
191 not matter. Or I will rub it out. Children must not get a negative feel at this level. Because that's what I had.  
192 And everybody said "but music in maths go together." Well they didn't in my day so don't generalize.'

193 63. Researcher : (24:26) 'In the questionnaire you mentioned that the Grade R learners should be able to--  
194 and you gave quite an extensive list. Introduced to numbers one to nine, forming numerals correctly basing  
195 addition and subtraction, using concrete objects, number concepts such as big and small, patterns, shapes,  
196 count to 10, spatial concept of colours, match the numeral symbols and the names of the blocks. Is there any  
197 of those that you think are the most important? The only thing that is the most important at the end, if you  
198 can do one thing?'

199 64. Anita : 'I actually think they have got to be able to touch and count. That's very important because they  
200 tend to count quickly, but the important thing is to touch and count. So touch, that is one, touch, that is two,  
201 so that they can actually see what the numbers look like. It's the same with the dots on the dice and the grid.  
202 They need to be able to identify the number of dots whether they are in a row or in the form of a triangle. It's  
203 also very important to see patterns, because that's what numbers are about. I do a lot of patterns with them  
204 to see. Just colours in the beginning, and shapes. Because numbers are about patterns; counting in two's and  
205 times tables. Patterns are important for them to see.'

206 65. Researcher : 'Its the basics for algebra.'

207 66. Anita : 'Exactly. And the important thing is they must find it fun having had a negative attitude about  
208 counting myself. That's why I do stories with the numbers. It starts with two mummies and four babies. How  
209 many altogether. Then four grasshoppers then add two more. How many altogether. I like to make it fun and  
210 interesting. Give them a picture in the story just to remember about number one, number two, whatever.  
211 That's why on the assessment forms I handed in, I did write I haven't done six because I like to introduce them  
212 slowly so that they really understand what it is. And I will only do up to number six by the end of this term and  
213 then I will do from seven up to ten. Otherwise it goes too fast. We have got slow learners so we need to work

214 slowly. I try to be stimulating and need to be able to reach the slower ones who are going to find life difficult.  
215 The slower ones just want to try so hard but if I can take away the stress for the moment I will.'

216 67. Researcher : (29:57) 'How would you describe the way in which you teach about numbers? You said "very  
217 much fun, very much integrated."

218 68. Anita : 'I integrate it all the time. As I said, each number has a story. I remind them about the story and  
219 how to write the numbers and counting. Yes, it must be fun, they must enjoy it. And I give songs that go with  
220 it.'

221 69. Researcher : (30:39) 'Which resources do you use the most often, would you say?'

222 70. Anita : 'I don't use these Audiblox per se. I don't know if you know the Audiblox but these are very useful  
223 for a lot of number work. Just sorting and classifying, when they put them back they have to put them back in  
224 colours. I use these to do patterns. I use these for addition and subtraction with the mat. Give me two black  
225 blocks, give me three more. How many have you got together. And also I have a piece of paper with two  
226 circles, then we say "You have three sweets. One plate is yours and one is your friends. One for you and one  
227 for your friend. We have one left over. What are you going to do with it?" Then they give their answers; "cut  
228 it in half, give one to mommy, give it to my friend, I am going to eat it." I also use these for position in space. I  
229 say "take five red blocks put them in a row. Take three and put them on top. To the left, to the right, behind,  
230 in front." So these are not used as Audiblox but I do use Audiblox in a pattern, flash and listen to it; auditory  
231 skills. These I could not do without. The others I use are [inaudible] blocks. That I use for biggest to smallest,  
232 tallest, longest. They use them for building and construction. Eventually they make their names with the  
233 blocks. Or they will make a house with a swimming pool. Marion borrows them to show the students.'

234 71. Researcher : 'Great. (33:07) How have you experienced the resources from the 'Early Number Fund  
235 Program' with us?'

236 72. Anita : 'I have enjoyed it. We did the monkey story, but we had to do it again and again so everybody can  
237 get a turn to be a monkey. So I am looking forward to another one now. And the joke is at the end of this term  
238 I am going to be doing reptiles, so it will fit in nicely. But it's quite nice because we have done 'M' 'mmm' so  
239 then we can see the monkey that has got a 'M' on for 'Minkey' which they recognize as well. I introduce my  
240 sounds also to do with my theme. Like 'N' for 'next.' I have enjoyed it.'

241 73. Researcher : 'Thank you very much. Are there any questions for me?'

242 74. Anita : 'No.'

# APPENDIX 10: Video-stimulated recall questionnaire (August 2017)

Video Lesson Questionnaire

ENF Grade R

August 2017

1. Watching myself teach this lesson made me think

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2. Watching the video, I felt

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3. I think I felt this because

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4. Is there anything you might do differently with the learners if you were to teach this lesson again in the future?

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Please turn over

5. How, if at all, has participation in ENF influenced how you taught this lesson?

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6. How, if at all, is what we see now different to what we may have seen 2 years ago?

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7. Do you have any comments about this lesson, your teaching practice, the children, or anything else you noticed?

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Please turn over

8. Choose words from the list below that describe you as a teacher now, that you wouldn't have used to describe yourself 2 years ago:

I am now a \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_,  
 \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ teacher.

Helpful	Skilled	Hard working	Qualified
Caring	Dedicated	Well prepared	Eager to help
Reliable	Respectful	Open minded	Encouraging
Popular	Good example	Sharing	Knowledgeable
Respected by parents	Motivated	Up to date	Professional
Flexible	Passionate	Committed	Confident
Successful	Intelligent	Punctual	Always learning
Stimulating	Approachable	Well-dressed	Honest

Thank you for your time!

## APPENDIX 11: Teacher Qualification Framework

(DHET, 2015, p. 55-56)

STAATSKOERANT, 19 FEBRUARIE 2015

No. 38487 55

### 15 Articulation of Historical Educator Qualifications with the HEQSF-aligned Teacher Education Qualifications described in this Policy

Historical Educators' Qualifications	Articulation path into the HEQSF-aligned teacher education qualification framework
Unqualified practising teachers, holding a Level 4 school leaving qualification or equivalent	Bachelor of Education (480 credits, exit Level 7) (Note: Unqualified teachers, who do not meet access requirements, may gain access by successfully completing a cognate access programme at the Higher Certificate <sup>12</sup> level, designed to enable entry into degree studies.)
Grade R teachers, holding a Level 4 ECD qualification	Diploma in Grade R Teaching (360 credits, exit Level 6) (Note: Grade R practitioners, with a Level 4 qualification, who do not meet entry requirements into the Diploma, could gain access by completing a cognate access programme at Higher Certificate level.)
Grade R teachers, holding a Level 5 ECD Certificate or Diploma	Diploma in Grade R Teaching (360 credits, exit Level 6) Bachelor of Education (Foundation Phase) (480credits, exit Level 7), if entry requirements are met
Under-qualified teachers at Relative Education Qualification Value (REQV) 11 or 12 (holding, for example, the old Primary Teacher's Certificate)	Bachelor of Education (480 credits, exit Level 7) (Note: Under-qualified teachers, who do not meet the access requirements, may gain access by successfully completing a cognate access programme at Higher Certificate level, designed to enable entry into degree studies.)
Professionally unqualified graduate teachers, holding a degree or a 360 credit exit Level 6 Diploma in disciplines/subjects that underpin a teaching subject	Postgraduate Certificate in Education (120 credits at Level 7) (Note: If the underpinning subjects in the prior degree do not provide sufficient subject matter knowledge, additional modules must be taken – either prior to admission or concurrently.)
Professionally qualified teachers, holding a former three-year College of Education Diploma or a National Professional Diploma in Education (NPDE) – 360 credits at exit Level 5	Bachelor of Education (480 credits exit Level 7) (Teachers may apply for assessment of prior learning to gain entry into BEd programmes. A maximum of 180 credits could be recognised.) Advanced Certificate (refer to Section 8.2.1 and to Section 11).
Qualified teachers, holding an Advanced Certificate in Education (120 credits at	Advanced Diploma (120 credits at Level 7) – if in a cognate area or extended role

<sup>12</sup> Such access programmes are not described in this policy as they are not teaching qualifications.

Historical Educators' Qualifications	Articulation path into the HEQSF-aligned teacher education qualification framework
former NQF Level 6), a former undergraduate Higher Diploma in Education or a former Further Diploma in Education	<p>Advanced Certificate (120 credits at Level 6) – if in a new teaching specialisation or role not in the original qualification</p> <p>Bachelor of Education (480 credits, exit Level 7) (Teachers may apply for assessment of prior learning to gain entry into B Ed programmes, cognate with the original specialisation.)</p> <p>In exceptional cases, institutions may use their discretion to admit teachers into a cognate Postgraduate Diploma (120 credits at Level 8), provided that the prior qualification<sup>13</sup> is evaluated as meeting Level 7 exit level outcomes.</p>
Qualified teachers, holding a former four-year professional teaching degree (e.g. BEd, B Prim Ed, BSecEd, BAEd, or a former postgraduate professional teaching qualification – PGCE, HDE (PG) and University Education Diploma (UED)	<p>Advanced Certificate (120 credits at Level 6) – if in a new teaching specialisation or role that is not in the original qualification</p> <p>Advanced Diploma (120 credits at Level 7) – if in an extended role</p> <p>Postgraduate Diploma (120 credits at Level 8) – if further advanced professional learning in an area cognate with the original specialisation</p> <p>Bachelor of Education (Honours) degree (120 credits at Level 8)</p>
Qualified teachers, holding a former Bachelor of Education (Hons) degree (120 credits at the former Level 7), or an equivalent (e.g. a pre-2000 BEd degree)	<p>Master of Education/Professional Master in Education (180 credits at Level 9) (Note: These teachers also have access to all available qualifications below Master's degree level.)</p>
Qualified teachers, holding a Master of Education degree (former Level 8)	<p>Doctoral degree studies/Professional Doctor's degree (360 credits at Level 10) (Note: These teachers also have access to all available qualifications below Master's degree level.)</p>

<sup>13</sup> This may be a former ACE that is evaluated at HEQF Level 7 or, in a case where the teacher has a range of prior qualifications, which together constitute Level 7 competence – for example holders of a four-year Higher Diploma in Education (HDE), as well as a cognate Advanced Certificate in Education.

## APPENDIX 12: Research Consent Letter



**RHODES UNIVERSITY**  
*Where leaders learn*

### **RESEARCH CONSENT LETTER**

South African Numeracy Chair (SANC)  
Rhodes University  
Grahamstown  
South Africa

Dear Grade R Teacher

11<sup>th</sup> May 2016

### **Request Permission For Participation In Research**

As discussed in the first Early Number Fun (ENF) Session, the SANC Project is tasked with searching for sustainable solutions to the challenges faced in primary mathematics education through quality research and monitoring of the effectiveness of programs implemented. It is thus within our funding imperative to research our own practice and teacher and learner experiences of our programs. Thus teacher questionnaires, interviews, classroom observations/videos, and so forth will be part of the program. However each teacher, or learner (parent of the learner), has the right to choose not to participate in each aspect of the research. We thus here ask you to consent to participating in the various aspects of our research as discussed.

Roxanne Long is a doctoral fellow (under Prof Graven's supervision) and SANCP team member. Her research will investigate the nature of teacher learning within the Grade R Early Number Fun (ENF) teacher community of practice. As such she will be drawing on data gathered throughout the ENF program including interviews and lesson videos in order to understand in depth the various enablers and constraints of the ENF program.

We hereby seek your consent to participate in the research process conducted by the SANCP team (in which Roxanne Long is a doctoral fellow) as we research the nature of learning enabled by the ENF program. Anonymity of schools and teachers will be preserved and in no

writing will any identifying names be used. Your principals have already signed their agreement that SANCP teachers may participate in the research.

Could you please sign the attached form indicating your willingness to participate in each of the aspects of the research into the nature of learning in the ENF program.

Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me or Roxanne Long. Our contact details are as follows:

**Professor Mellony Graven** [m.graven@ru.ac.za](mailto:m.graven@ru.ac.za) 046 6037268

**Roxanne Long** [roxxannelong@gmail.com](mailto:roxxannelong@gmail.com) 074 179 7453

Your permission to conduct this study will be greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

**Mellony Graven**



**Prof Mellony Graven**

Chair of the EHDC, Rhodes University



SA Numeracy Chair hosted by Rhodes University, jointly funded by the FirstRand Foundation with the RMB fund, the Anglo American Chairman's Fund & the DST and administered by the NRF

SA Numeracy Chair Project  
Education Department/PO  
Box 94 Grahamstown 6140  
T+27 46 603 7357/F+46 622  
8028 [www.ru.ac.za/sanc](http://www.ru.ac.za/sanc)



## APPENDIX 13: Questions related to emergent institutional identity

<b>1. School Context</b>	
Teacher Questionnaire 1 (April 2016) [TQ1]	
- Name of School	
- Number of Learners in your class now	
<b>2. Journey to becoming a Grade R teacher</b>	
Teacher Questionnaire 1 (April 2016) [TQ1]	
- TQ1.1: Why did you become a Grade R teacher?	
Interview 1 (May-June 2016) [Int1]	
- Int1.2: Why did you become a Grade R teacher? OR Why did you switch to Grade R (if applicable)?	
<b>3. Learning Trajectory</b>	
Teacher Questionnaire 1 (April 2016) [TQ1]	
- TQ1: Qualification and grade or phase level/s specification	
- TQ1: In what year did you begin teaching?	
- TQ1: In what year did you begin teaching Grade R?	
- TQ1.4: Describe yourself as a Grade R teacher by completing the sentence(s)...I want to become....	
- TQ1.14: Why have you joined this Early Number Fun Programme?	
- TQ1.15: Is there anything you particularly want support on through this programme?	
Interview 1 (May-June 2016) [Int1]	
- Int1.3: Do you see yourself teaching Grade R in 3 years' time?	
- Int1.6: How important do you think having a specialized qualification in R is, for teaching?	
- Int1.7: What are your views of your qualification and how it supports you in your: teaching, your job status (how are you positioned by other teachers) and security?	
- Int1.8: How does [your qualification] support the teaching of Numeracy in particular, in what ways/how?	
- Int1.9: Do you see yourself furthering your studies? If so, what/how?	
- Int1.12: Who do you want to become by participating in this [ENF] program?	
Teacher Questionnaire 2 (October 2016) [TQ2]	
- TQ2.13: Has participation in the ENF programme supported your: Mathematical understanding? How?; Mathematics teaching? How?	
- TQ2.14: What advantages are there to participating in the [ENF] programme? Explain	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- TQ2.15: What disadvantages are there to participating in the [ENF] programme? Explain</li> <li>- TQ2.16: Can you explain any changes in you as a teacher as a result of participating in ENF?</li> <li>- TQ2.23: What is the biggest change – if any – to the way you teach Grade R learners as a result of your participation in ENF? Please explain</li> </ul> <p>Teacher Questionnaire 3 (August 2017) [TQ3]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- TQ3.1: What do you think are some of the advantages of continually participating in ENF? Explain</li> <li>- TQ3.2: What are some of the disadvantages of participating in ENF? Explain</li> <li>- TQ3.3: What changes, if any have you experienced in your classroom practice over the past 18 months?</li> <li>- TQ3.5: Do you feel you have been learning through your participation in ENF? If so, explain the nature of that learning?</li> <li>- TQ3.11: Has anything changed in your numeracy/mathematics teaching/classroom practice as a result of your participation in ENF? If so, explain</li> <li>- TQ3.18: Please write your story if your personal journey of mathematics teaching and learning from becoming a teacher of mathematics/numeracy through to participating in ENF and your relationship with mathematics/numeracy teaching and learning now</li> <li>- TQ3.19: Complete the sentence: Through participating in ENF I have become the kind of mathematics/numeracy teacher who...</li> </ul>
<p>4. Experiences of Grade R Policy transition and departmental positioning</p>
<p>Teacher Questionnaire 1 (April 2016) [TQ1]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- TQ1.2: Ayabulela is a highly respected and successful pre-school teacher. Describe Ayabulela</li> <li>- TQ1.11: Have you attended any in-service workshops specifically related to pre-school teachers in the past 2 years? If so describe these. Did these sessions include numeracy?</li> <li>- TQ1.12: Please list all the professional development/training workshops (numeracy related or otherwise) you have attended in the past two years. Describe the focus (grade and topic) of the sessions. What resources, if any, were you given?</li> </ul> <p>Interview 1 (May-June 2016) [Int1]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Int1.4: How do you feel about the recent roll-out of Grade R?</li> <li>- Int1.5: What, if any, impact has this government initiative had on your career – in terms of job status; financial security; job security; physically (own/new classroom); resourcing; learner to teacher ratio?</li> <li>- Int1.11: What kind of Grade R support do you receive and from who? Who do you talk to: in the department; in your school; in your family? What about the day to day joys and frustrations?</li> </ul> <p>Teacher Questionnaire 2 (October 2016) [TQ2]</p>

- TQ2.21: Have you attended any Grade R focused further learning/training/development/workshops while participating in the ENF programme? Explain  
Teacher Questionnaire 3 (August 2017) [TQ3]
- TQ3.14: In what way, if any, has your relationship to other maths teachers, other teachers, principals etc. changed over the past 18 months? Explain

**5. Experiences of Grade R teaching and membership of the Foundation Phase**

Teacher Questionnaire 1 (April 2016) [TQ1]

- TQ1.1: How confident are you about teaching the following to Grade R learners (please tick relevant column)
- |                 | Very confident | Confident | Average | Not confident |
|-----------------|----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|
| Literacy Skills |                |           |         |               |
| Life Skills     |                |           |         |               |
| Numeracy Skills |                |           |         |               |

- TQ1.4: Describe yourself as a Grade R teacher by completing these sentences:...  
I believe children learn best about number when...  
I become frustrated when...  
I love it when...
- TQ1.13: Who, if anybody, do you talk to about Grade R teaching? What do you talk about?  
Interview 1 (May-June 2016) [Int1]
- Int1.10: How do you experience your status as a Grade R teacher in the school in relation to other teachers? Explain
- Int1.11: What kind of Grade R support do you receive and from who? Who do you talk to: in the department; in your family? What about the day to day joys and frustrations?  
Teacher Questionnaire 2 (October 2016) [TQ2]
- TQ2.17: What are your experiences of being a member of the ENF group?
- TQ2.18: What are your experiences of interacting with other members of the ENF group? (fellow teachers, facilitators and the researchers)
- TQ2.26: Who do you talk to about your participation in ENF? What do you generally discuss?  
Teacher Questionnaire 3 (August 2017) [TQ3]
- TQ3.4:

- TQ3.13: Who do you draw on for support in your numeracy/mathematics teaching? (Who do you talk to about numeracy/mathematics or teaching numeracy/mathematics?)
- TQ3.14: In what way, if any, has your relationship to other maths teachers, other teachers, principals, etc. changed over the past 18 months? Explain
- TQ3.15: Has the way you see yourself changed over the last 18 months? Explain
- TQ3.19: Complete the sentence: Through participating in ENF I have become the kind of mathematics/numeracy teacher who...

# APPENDIX 14: Salary Scale for Educators



## NAPTOSA

National Professional Teachers' Organisation of South Africa  
Visit our website at [www.naptosa.org.za](http://www.naptosa.org.za)

### SCALES FOR THE PAY PROGRESSION ADJUSTMENT - INCREASE FOR EDUCATORS (SCHOOL- AND OFFICE-BASED) / LECTURERS W.E.F. 1 JULY 2019 based on Scales published in the Government Gazette

**HOW TO USE THE SCALES: On your current notch, move from the April to the July column and then move three notches down for the 1.50% increase**

Apr '18					Apr '19					Jul '19					INCLUSIVE PACKAGES				
Old	New	Apr '18	Apr '19	Jul '19	Old	New	Apr '18	Apr '19	Jul '19	Old	New	Apr '18	Apr '19	Jul '19	Old	New	Apr '18	Apr '19	Jul '19
Ntch	Ntch	April '18	April '19	July '19	Ntch	Ntch	April '18	April '19	July '19	Ntch	Ntch	April '18	April '19	July '19	Ntch	Ntch	April '18	April '19	July '19
1	1	123,237	1	123,237	34	64	169,617	63	169,275	127	231,549	126	231,549	198	317,718	189	317,106	1	772,941
2	2	124,473			65	170,127	64	170,127	66	128	233,181	127	232,707	199	318,231	190	318,231	2	775,263
3	3	124,848	2	124,848	35	66	171,288	65	170,949	129	233,880	128	233,880	200	319,756	191	318,879	3	777,585
4	4	125,730	3	125,085	67	171,801	66	171,801	67	130	235,542	129	235,023	201	320,271	192	320,271	4	779,907
5	5	126,105	4	126,105	36	68	173,019	67	172,680	131	236,247	130	236,247	202	321,796	193	321,796	5	782,229
6	6	126,963	5	126,720	69	173,538	68	173,538	68	132	237,867	131	237,387	203	323,321	194	323,004	6	784,551
7	7	127,344	6	127,344	37	70	174,744	69	174,378	133	238,581	132	238,581	204	324,846	195	323,661	7	786,873
8	8	128,241	7	127,998	71	175,269	70	175,269	69	134	240,258	133	239,790	205	326,371	196	325,278	8	789,195
9	9	128,625	8	128,625	38	72	176,463	71	176,142	135	240,978	134	240,978	206	327,896	197	326,895	9	791,517
10	10	129,507	9	129,255	73	176,991	72	176,991	70	136	242,652	135	242,160	207	329,421	198	328,515	10	793,839
11	11	129,897	10	129,897	39	74	178,272	73	177,897	137	243,378	136	243,378	208	330,946	199	330,156	11	796,161
12	12	130,815	11	130,554	75	178,809	74	178,809	71	138	245,094	137	244,593	209	332,471	200	331,812	12	798,483
13	13	131,205	12	131,205	40	76	180,024	75	179,646	139	245,829	138	245,829	210	334,000	201	333,444	13	800,805
14	14	132,096	13	131,844	77	180,567	76	180,567	72	140	247,533	139	247,029	211	335,525	202	335,127	14	803,127
15	15	132,489	14	132,489	41	78	181,848	77	181,491	141	248,274	140	248,274	212	337,050	203	336,789	15	805,449
16	16	133,443	15	133,173	79	182,391	78	182,391	73	142	250,020	141	249,516	213	338,575	204	338,472	16	807,771
17	17	133,845	16	133,845	42	80	183,660	79	183,276	143	250,770	142	250,770	214	340,100	205	340,155	17	810,093
18	18	134,775	17	134,475	81	184,212	80	184,212	74	144	252,513	143	251,997	215	341,625	206	341,868	18	812,415
19	19	135,180	18	135,180	43	82	185,493	81	185,127	145	253,272	144	253,272	216	343,150	207	343,548	19	814,737
20	20	136,143	19	135,852	83	186,051	82	186,051	75	146	255,045	145	254,532	217	344,675	208	345,297	20	817,059
21	21	136,551	20	136,551	44	84	187,347	83	186,975	147	255,810	146	255,810	218	346,200	209	346,995	21	819,381
22	22	137,481	21	137,208	85	187,908	84	187,908	76	148	257,586	147	257,070	219	347,725	210	348,747	22	821,703
23	23	137,892	22	137,892	45	86	189,228	85	188,841	149	258,360	148	258,360	220	349,250	211	350,475	23	824,025
24	24	138,852	23	138,600	87	189,795	86	189,795	77	150	260,160	149	259,647	221	350,775	212	352,218	24	826,347
25	25	139,269	24	139,269	46	88	191,112	87	190,728	151	260,940	150	260,940	222	351,300	213	353,979	25	828,669
26	26	140,241	25	139,959	89	191,685	88	191,685	79	152	263,019	151	262,236	223	352,825	214	355,755	26	830,991
27	27	140,661	26	140,661	47	90	193,020	89	192,642	153	263,811	152	263,811	224	353,750	215	357,501	27	833,313
28	28	141,633	27	141,357	91	193,599	90	193,599	80	154	265,638	153	264,855	225	354,675	216	359,292	28	835,635
29	29	142,056	28	142,056	48	92	194,964	91	194,559	155	266,436	154	266,436	226	355,600	217	361,092	29	837,957
30	30	143,049	29	142,770	93	195,549	92	195,549	81	156	268,305	155	267,768	227	356,525	218	362,910	30	840,279
31	31	143,478	30	143,478	49	94	196,929	93	196,503	157	269,112	156	269,112	228	357,450	219	364,800	31	842,601
32	32	144,498	31	144,186	95	197,520	94	197,520	82	158	270,981	157	270,432	229	358,375	220	366,710	32	844,923
33	33	144,930	32	144,930	50	96	198,997	95	198,483	159	271,794	158	271,794	230	359,300	221	368,640	33	847,245
34	34	145,908	33	145,629	97	199,491	96	199,491	83	160	273,699	159	273,150	231	360,225	222	370,590	34	849,567
35	35	146,346	34	146,346	51	98	200,883	97	200,484	161	274,521	160	274,521	232	361,115	223	372,500	35	851,889
36	36	147,417	35	147,105	99	201,486	98	201,486	84	162	276,435	161	275,871	233	362,000	224	374,430	36	854,211
37	37	147,858	36	147,858	52	100	202,872	99	202,482	163	277,266	162	277,266	234	362,890	225	376,370	37	856,533
38	38	148,884	37	148,542	101	203,481	100	203,481	85	164	279,198	163	278,640	235	363,780	226	378,320	38	858,855
39	39	149,331	38	149,331	53	102	204,891	101	204,507	165	280,038	164	280,038	236	364,670	227	380,270	39	861,177
40	40	150,357	39	150,075	103	205,506	102	205,506	86	166	281,976	165	281,424	237	365,560	228	382,220	40	863,500
41	41	150,810	40	150,810	54	104	206,940	103	206,532	167	282,825	166	282,825	238	366,450	229	384,170	41	865,822
42	42	151,854	41	151,572	105	207,561	104	207,561	87	168	284,793	167	284,238	239	367,340	230	386,120	42	868,144
43	43	152,310	42	152,310	55	106	209,022	105	208,590	169	285,648	168	285,648	240	368,230	231	388,070	43	870,466
44	44	153,393	43	153,072	107	209,649	106	209,649	88	169	287,661	169	287,067	241	369,120	232	390,020	44	872,788
45	45	153,852	44	153,852	56	108	211,098	107	210,675	170	288,525	170	288,525	242	370,010	233	391,970	45	875,110
46	46	154,917	45	154,596	109	211,731	108	211,731	89	172	290,529	171	289,932	243	370,900	234	393,920	46	877,432
47	47	155,382	46	155,382	57	110	213,213	109	212,793	173	291,402	172	291,402	244	371,790	235	395,870	47	879,754
48	48	156,468	47	156,159	111	213,855	110	213,855	90	174	293,451	173	292,854	245	372,680	236	397,820	48	882,076
49	49	156,936	48	156,936	58	112	215,367	111	214,908	175	294,330	174	294,330	246	373,570	237	399,770	49	884,398
50	50	158,013	49	157,713	113	216,015	112	216,015	91	176	296,370	175	295,773	247	374,460	238	401,720	50	886,720
51	51	158,487	50	158,487	59	114	217,488	113	217,062	177	297,261	176	297,261	248	375,350	239	403,670	51	889,042
52	52	159,780	51	159,291	115	218,142	114	218,142	92	178	299,343	177	298,746	249	376,240	240	405,620	52	891,364
53	53	160,260	52	160,260	60	116	219,672	115	219,255	179	300,243	178	300,243	250	377,130	241	407,570	53	893,686
54	54	161,370	53	160,863	117	220,332	116	220,332	93	180	302,334	179	301,719	251	378,020	242	409,520	54	896,008
55	55	161,856	54	161,856	61	118	221,871	117	221,415	181	303,243	180	303,243	252	378,910	243	411,470	55	898,330
56	56	162,993	55	162,663	119	222,537	118	222,537	94	182	305,358	181	304,746	253	379,800	244	413,420	56	900,652
57	57	163,479	56	163,479	62	120	224,100	119	223,638	183	306,276	182	306,276	254	380,690	245	415,370	57	902,974
58	58	164,640	57	164,283	121	224,772	120	224,772	95	184	308,412	183	307,791	255	381,580	246	417,320	58	905,296
59	59	165,135	58	165,135	63	122	226,323	121	225,876	185	309,336	184	309,336	256	382,470	247	419,270	59	907,618
60	60	166,275	59	165,930	123	227,004	122	227,00											



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## SCALES FOR THE PAY PROGRESSION ADJUSTMENT - INCREASE FOR EDUCATORS (SCHOOL- AND OFFICE-BASED) / LECTURERS W.E.F. 1 JULY 2019 based on Scales published in the Government Gazette

**HOW TO USE THE SCALES: On your current notch, move from the April to the July column and then move three notches down for the 1.50% increase**

Apr'18	Apr'19	Jul'19	Apr'18	Apr'19	Jul'19	Apr'18	Apr'19	Jul'19	Apr'18	Apr'19	Jul'19	Apr'18	Apr'19	Jul'19	INCLUSIVE PACKAGES							
Old Ntch	New Ntch	April'19	Old Ntch	New Ntch	July'19	Old Ntch	New Ntch	July'19	Old Ntch	New Ntch	July'19	Old Ntch	New Ntch	July'19	Old Ntch	New Ntch	April'19	New Ntch	July'19			
253	432,129	252	432,129	160	310	572,604	309	574,320	188	366	756,570	365	755,061	216	422	999,654	421	997,626	64	1,055,271	63	1,055,271
131	254	435,144	253	434,256	311	574,320	310	576,873	367	758,838	366	758,838	423	1,002,651	422	1,002,651	33	65	1,062,648	64	1,060,548	
255	436,449	254	436,449	161	312	578,334	311	579,078	189	368	764,157	367	762,609	217	424	1,009,656	423	1,007,610	66	1,065,834	65	1,065,834
132	256	439,503	255	438,612	313	580,071	312	580,071	369	766,446	368	766,446	425	1,012,686	424	1,012,686	34	67	1,073,271	66	1,071,162	
257	440,823	256	440,823	162	314	584,139	313	582,936	190	370	771,777	369	770,220	218	426	1,019,727	425	1,017,690	68	1,076,490	67	1,076,490
133	258	443,889	257	442,995	315	585,888	314	585,888	371	774,093	370	774,093	427	1,022,784	426	1,022,784	35	69	1,083,999	68	1,081,872	
259	445,221	258	445,221	163	316	589,941	315	588,771	191	372	779,508	371	777,942	219	428	1,029,942	427	1,027,875	70	1,087,248	69	1,087,248
134	260	448,323	259	447,435	317	591,711	316	591,711	373	781,845	372	781,845	429	1,033,032	428	1,033,032	36	71	1,094,829	70	1,092,684	
261	449,667	260	449,667	164	318	595,863	317	594,675	192	374	787,305	373	785,703	220	430	1,040,241	429	1,038,126	72	1,098,114	71	1,098,114
135	262	452,790	261	451,899	319	597,648	318	597,648	375	789,666	374	789,666	431	1,043,361	430	1,043,361	37	73	1,105,767	72	1,103,604	
263	454,146	262	454,146	165	320	601,821	319	600,588	193	376	795,183	375	793,572	221	432	1,050,657	431	1,048,527	74	1,109,085	73	1,109,085
136	264	457,317	263	456,411	321	603,627	320	603,627	377	797,568	376	797,568	432	1,050,657	432	1,050,657	38	75	1,116,834	74	1,114,629	
265	458,691	264	458,691	166	322	607,848	321	606,612	194	378	803,109	377	801,510	433	1,050,657	433	1,050,657	39	77	1,128,006	76	1,128,185
137	266	461,922	265	460,959	323	609,672	322	609,672	379	805,518	378	805,518	434	1,050,657	434	1,050,657	77	79	1,131,387	77	1,131,387	
267	463,308	266	463,308	167	324	613,908	323	612,681	195	380	811,143	379	809,532	435	1,050,657	435	1,050,657	40	81	1,142,691	79	1,142,691
138	268	466,527	267	465,570	325	615,750	324	615,750	381	813,576	380	813,576	436	1,050,657	436	1,050,657	41	83	1,154,127	81	1,154,127	
269	467,925	268	467,925	168	326	620,046	325	618,816	196	382	819,246	381	817,602	437	1,050,657	437	1,050,657	42	85	1,165,665	82	1,165,665
139	270	471,195	269	470,259	327	621,906	326	621,906	383	821,706	382	821,706	438	1,050,657	438	1,050,657	43	87	1,177,317	85	1,177,317	
271	472,608	270	472,608	169	328	626,262	327	624,987	197	384	827,457	383	825,780	439	1,050,657	439	1,050,657	44	89	1,189,071	87	1,189,071
140	272	475,890	271	474,945	329	628,140	328	628,140	385	829,941	384	829,941	440	1,050,657	440	1,050,657	45	91	1,200,951	89	1,200,951	
273	477,318	272	477,318	170	330	632,532	329	631,236	198	386	835,749	385	834,033	441	1,050,657	441	1,050,657	46	93	1,212,975	91	1,212,975
141	274	480,639	273	479,687	331	634,428	330	634,428	387	838,257	386	838,257	442	1,050,657	442	1,050,657	47	95	1,225,101	93	1,225,101	
275	482,082	274	482,082	171	332	638,847	331	637,563	199	388	844,101	387	842,391	443	1,050,657	443	1,050,657	48	97	1,237,338	95	1,237,338
142	276	485,463	275	484,479	333	640,764	332	640,764	389	846,633	388	846,633	444	1,050,657	444	1,050,657	49	99	1,249,719	97	1,249,719	
277	486,921	276	486,921	172	334	645,231	333	643,944	200	390	852,528	389	850,830	445	1,050,657	445	1,050,657	50	101	1,262,220	99	1,262,220
143	278	490,317	277	489,312	335	647,166	334	647,166	391	855,084	390	855,084	446	1,050,657	446	1,050,657	51	103	1,274,847	101	1,274,847	
279	491,787	278	491,787	173	336	651,681	335	650,376	201	392	861,069	391	859,332	447	1,050,657	447	1,050,657	52	105	1,287,582	103	1,287,582
144	280	495,213	279	494,226	337	653,637	336	653,637	393	863,655	392	863,655	448	1,050,657	448	1,050,657	53	107	1,299,020	105	1,299,020	
281	496,698	280	496,698	174	338	658,209	337	656,874	202	394	869,679	393	867,909	449	1,050,657	449	1,050,657	54	109	1,310,463	107	1,310,463
145	282	500,160	281	499,164	339	660,186	338	660,186	395	872,289	394	872,289	450	1,050,657	450	1,050,657	55	111	1,322,030	109	1,322,030	
283	501,660	282	501,660	175	340	664,776	339	663,441	203	396	878,349	395	876,609	451	1,050,657	451	1,050,657	56	113	1,333,636	111	1,333,636
146	284	505,167	283	504,147	341	666,771	340	666,771	397	880,986	396	880,986	452	1,050,657	452	1,050,657	57	115	1,345,276	113	1,345,276	
285	506,682	284	506,682	176	342	671,433	341	670,089	204	398	887,157	397	885,372	453	1,050,657	453	1,050,657	58	117	1,356,947	115	1,356,947
147	286	510,219	285	509,184	343	673,446	342	673,446	399	889,818	398	889,818	454	1,050,657	454	1,050,657	59	119	1,368,647	117	1,368,647	
287	511,752	286	511,752	177	344	678,162	343	676,773	205	400	896,028	399	894,201	455	1,050,657	455	1,050,657	60	121	1,380,376	119	1,380,376
148	288	515,337	287	514,281	345	680,196	344	680,196	401	898,719	400	898,719	456	1,050,657	456	1,050,657	61	123	1,392,133	121	1,392,133	
289	516,885	288	516,885	178	346	684,924	345	683,547	206	402	904,977	401	903,165	457	1,050,657	457	1,050,657	62	125	1,403,926	123	1,403,926
149	290	520,476	289	519,429	347	686,979	346	686,979	403	907,692	402	907,692	458	1,050,657	458	1,050,657	63	127	1,415,753	125	1,415,753	
291	522,036	290	522,036	179	348	691,782	347	690,399	207	404	914,010	403	912,201	459	1,050,657	459	1,050,657	64	129	1,427,614	127	1,427,614
150	292	525,657	291	524,637	349	693,858	348	693,858	405	916,752	404	916,752	460	1,050,657	460	1,050,657	65	131	1,439,507	129	1,439,507	
293	527,232	292	527,232	180	350	698,688	349	697,284	208	406	923,157	405	921,306	461	1,050,657	461	1,050,657	66	133	1,451,431	131	1,451,431
151	294	530,952	293	529,866	351	700,782	350	700,782	407	925,929	406	925,929	462	1,050,657	462	1,050,657	67	135	1,463,386	133	1,463,386	
295	532,545	294	532,545	181	352	705,672	351	704,265	209	408	932,397	407	930,504	463	1,050,657	463	1,050,657	68	137	1,475,371	135	1,475,371
152	296	536,241	295	535,140	353	707,790	352	707,790	409	935,193	408	935,193	464	1,050,657	464	1,050,657	69	139	1,487,386	137	1,487,386	
297	537,849	296	537,849	182	354	712,755	353	711,294	210	410	941,700	409	939,819	465	1,050,657	465	1,050,657	70	141	1,499,431	139	1,499,431
153	298	541,605	297	540,534	355	714,894	354	714,894	411	944,526	410	944,526	466	1,050,657	466	1,050,657	71	143	1,511,506	141	1,511,506	
299	543,228	298	543,228	183	356	719,865	355	718,407	211	412	951,132	411	949,221	467	1,050,657	467	1,050,657	72	145	1,523,621	143	1,523,621
154	300	547,029	299	545,916	357	722,022	356	722,022	413	953,985	412	953,985	468	1,050,657	468	1,050,657	73	147	1,535,766	145	1,535,766	
301	548,673	300	548,673	184	358	727,077	357	725,616	212	414	960,651	413	958,695	469	1,050,657	469	1,050,657	74	149	1,547,941	147	1,547,941
155	302	555,501	301	551,376	359	729,258	358	729,258	415	963,534	414	963,534	470	1,050,657	470	1,050,657	75	151	1,560,146	149	1,560,146	
303	557,169	302	556,902	185	360	734,340	359	732,852	213	41												



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SALARY LEVELS	Apr-19 INCREASE %	Old Notches Up to Mar 2019		New Notches In April 2019		New Notches In July 2019	
LEVEL 3	6.20%	1	- 17	1	- 33	1	- 32
LEVEL 4	6.20%	18	- 36	34	- 69	33	- 68
LEVEL 5	6.20%	37	- 54	70	- 105	69	- 104
LEVEL 6	6.20%	55	- 76	106	- 148	105	- 147
LEVEL 7	6.20%	77	- 98	149	- 190	148	- 189
LEVEL 8	5.70%	99	- 116	191	- 226	190	- 225
LEVEL 9	5.70%	117	- 138	227	- 269	226	- 268
LEVEL 10	5.70%	139	- 159	270	- 308	269	- 307
LEVEL 11	5.20%	160	- 180	309	- 350	308	- 349
LEVEL 12	5.20%	181	- 221	351	- 432	350	- 432

## Minimum and Maximum Notches 2019

<b>School-based</b>							
<b>General Classroom Teacher (PL1)</b>							
		Old Notches Up to Mar 2019		New Notches In April 2019		New Notches In July 2019	
	REQV	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
	10,11,12	4	55	6	106	5	105
Teacher	13	56	138	108	268	107	267
Teacher	14+	85	168	164	326	163	325
Senior Teacher	13	103	138	200	268	199	267
Master Teacher	13	120	138	232	268	231	267
Senior Teacher	14	103	168	200	326	199	325
Master Teacher	14+	120	168	232	326	231	325
<b>School Managers</b>							
	Post level	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
Departmental Head	2	108	201	210	392	209	391
Deputy Principal	3	126	209	244	408	243	407
Principal 1	4	108	186	210	362	209	361
Principal 2	4	126	201	244	392	243	391
Principal 3	4	144	215	280	420	279	419
Principal 4	4	159	218	308	426	307	425
Principal 5	4	180	221	350	432	349	431
<b>Office-based</b>							
<b>Specialist</b>							
	Post level	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
Ed Specialist	2	108	201	210	392	209	391
Senior Ed Specialist	3	126	209	244	408	243	407
Deputy Chief Ed Specialist	5	147	215	286	420	285	419
Chief Ed Specialist	6	177	221	344	432	343	431