



**STUDENT TEACHERS' TEACHING OF READING AND THEIR COMMITMENT TO THE PUBLIC
GOOD**

by

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the intersection between student teachers' perspectives of the teaching of reading and their public good commitment. It explored the activities and practices which they saw as supporting their teaching of reading and it investigated the student teachers' professional capabilities for public good, which underpin their teaching of reading.

The teacher education facets which shaped the formation of their professional capabilities were investigated. Furthermore, their societal experiences which shaped the formation of their public good commitment and values were explored. This study investigated novice professionals who were about to enter the teaching profession. The teacher, as public-good professional in South African society, who continues to struggle with the legacies of apartheid, was a key concept in this study. Student teachers were selected for this study because these legacies place teacher education at the centre stage of transformation in South Africa, particularly the ways in which student teachers navigate the complexities of inequality in their roles as reading teachers.

The starting point of this study was the view that learning to read is a political issue. Learning to teach reading is a political issue which should be underpinned by public good commitment and values. A central argument of this thesis is that teacher education is well poised to form student teachers' professional capabilities for public good which could underpin their teaching of reading towards shaping a better South African society when they enter the teaching force after their undergraduate studies.

This was a small-scale study which used a mixed methods approach. Data was collected at the beginning and the end of the student teachers' teacher education program. Qualitative data was generated from focus group interviews and from a participatory dialogue. Quantitative data was generated from a questionnaire. Ten student teachers participated in the focus group interviews and 35 student teachers participated in the participatory dialogue and questionnaire.

Amartya Sen's (1999) and Martha Nussbaum's (2000) Human Development Capabilities approach structured this research theoretically. Walker and McLean's (2010) Professional Capabilities Index provided the framework for discussing and reasoning about capabilities.

This study revealed that the student teachers' perspectives of their reading teaching included 13 reading teaching activities and 20 reading teaching practices which were underpinned by eight professional capabilities for public good.

Three main teacher education facets were found to be influential in the formation of the student teachers' professional capabilities for public good: Teaching Practice sessions in diverse schools, Teacher Education coursework and Other Experiences in the teacher education program.

This study found that the student teachers' lived experiences prior to their teacher education influenced their public good commitment and values. These included disconcerting experiences as learners, grim experiences in the community, activist experiences with community engagement, non-teaching career experiences and a personal desire to enable human development.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

B Ed	Bachelor of Education
BEE	Black Economic Empowerment
CAPS	Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement
CLE	Concentrated Language Encounter
CPUT	Cape Peninsula University of Technology
DoE	Department of Education
FP	Foundation Phase
TP	Teaching Practice
TE	Teacher education
RNCS	Revised National Curriculum Statement
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
WCED	Western Cape Education Department

CHAPTER ONE

AN OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In 1996 President Nelson Mandela signed the first democratic South African Constitution in Durban. Constitutional Court Justice Kate O'Regan viewed it as a "bright and shining vision of a different society based on equity, justice and freedom for all" (Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy, 2001:11). O'Regan said that the Constitution recognizes that for its vision to be attained the deep patterns of inequality which scar our society and which are the legacy of apartheid and colonialism need urgently to be addressed. She added that the Constitution is a call to action to all South Africans to build a just and free democratic society in which the potential of each person is freed.

It is the idea of the Constitution as a "call to action" which motivated this study. Higher education has the potential to deliver on this call. Commenting on the role of teaching at universities and its contribution to empowering society, the Council for Higher Education believes that "if it rests on the South African Constitution, the reformulation of academic freedom promises to yield all round and future benefits" (CHE, 2008:20). Furthermore, Walker (2012:76) believes that higher education has a special role to play in its contribution to the public good through its "core activities of advancing knowledge and scholarship and educating students and professionals". A "rich set of goals and aims for university education and a curriculum which imagines ethically inclusive and humanly rich goals for development" which "pays close attention to the practical effects of higher education on the lives of human beings" is proposed (Walker, 2012:78).

This kind of thinking calls for, amongst others, public good commitments and values and it holds numerous implications for all faculties, including teacher education. My study investigated how student teachers' perspectives of their teaching of reading intersected with their public good commitment. As a broad contextual starting point, the student teachers' lived experiences in South African society were explored to find out how this shaped the formation of their public good commitment. The teaching of reading was the focus of this study hence the activities and practices which student teachers saw as supporting their teaching of reading was investigated as well as the professional capabilities

which appeared to underpin these. It is important to note at the outset that *their* teaching of reading refers to their perspectives of what they know and experienced with teaching reading during actual teaching practice sessions in diverse schools for eight weeks per year over their four year Bachelor of Education program. Their teacher education program was a central part of this investigation. The teacher education facets which shaped the formation of their professional capabilities for public good, which they manifest in their perspectives of teaching of reading, were investigated.

1.2 RATIONALE

The National Education Policy Act of 1996 committed the state to “enabling the education system to contribute to the full personal development of each student, and to the moral, social, cultural, political and economic development of the nation at large, including the advancement of democracy, human rights and the peaceful resolution of rights” (Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy, 2001:7). One of the sixteen educational strategies, which aimed to instill values in its citizens, was that every South African should be able to read, write, count and think. Commenting on the rationale for this, Nkomo stated that South Africa was facing a “state of emergency” because of its international ratings in key educational performance indicators (Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy, 2001:30).

Systemic research, for example, conducted by *inter alia* GTZ, the National Department of Education, as well as the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) pointed to the fact that the literacy and numeracy skills of the learners in the Western Cape are far below what is required for them to learn and develop effectively. In addition, in 2002 the WCED assessed the literacy and numeracy results of a representative sample of Grade three learners in all schools. The study found that a mere 36% of learners were achieving the reading and numeracy outcomes expected of a grade three learner and that the vast majority of learners in grade three were performing two to three years below expectation.

Diagnostic testing also showed a high correlation between learner performance and poverty which the Western Cape province addressed by including the Primary School Nutrition Program (PSNP). In 2006 South Africa participated in the Progress in International Reading

Literacy Study (PIRLS) which showed that (i) South Africa fell below the international mean, (ii) the oldest learners who were tested in South Africa ranked lowest, and (iii) internationally and nationally, girls out-performed boys but South Africa's gender difference in average achievement scores was amongst the highest in the world (Howie, Venter, van Staden, Zimmerman, Long, Scherman and Archer, 2007). What this showed is that while the country's National Constitution and its linked policies, manifestos and educational strategies set out to achieve the establishment of a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights still need a great deal of action for full personal development of each student, and for the moral, social, cultural, political and economic development of the nation at large to be attained.

These statistical profiles of literacy teaching and learning place teacher education at the center stage of transformation in South Africa. Learning to read is a political issue. Learning to teach reading is also a political issue. It is a matter of professional concern which involves a variety of ideological positions. In the simplest explanation it involves the public good - "humans and their flourishing" (Leibowitz, 2012:xxii). Walker (2012:85) proposed:

In a world of growing inequalities, it ought not to be beyond the imaginative reach and responsiveness of universities, and ourselves as the people who work in them, to harness wealth, creativity and power of humanity in the 21st century to create a better world than the one we currently have.

For teacher education this might mean taking a closer look at how student teachers are navigating the complexities of inequality in the 21st century as they play a transformative role in their professional lives. As Walker (2012:64) puts it: "Lecturers therefore aim to develop in students an understanding of social justice, as embodied in the South African Constitution, so that it comes to underpin their professional work". The teaching of reading, as a professional endeavor of student teachers, then requires much more than developing a repertoire of activities and practices which support the teaching of reading. The professional task of teaching reading has to be expanded to public good commitment. Using these together with the repertoire of reading teaching activities and practices to the benefit of creating capabilities for their learners departs from conventional, straightforward reading literacy rewards – it could culminate into the shaping of a better South African society.

In post-apartheid teacher education the “most prominent conceptual and pragmatic change to teacher education” has been the “cultivation of teachers who can enact their professions as democratic citizens (Waghid, 2012:101). This means that the teachers’ roles appear to be defined along the lines of democratic virtues whereby teachers “engender in learners a spirit of democratic citizenry that can imbue in them the virtues of dialogical engagement, connecting caringly with the other, and performing their tasks in a responsible manner” (Waghid, 2012:101). For teacher education the ideal would be to form ‘public good’ professional identities in student teachers who are “equipped with the knowledge and values to work for wide and deep social change in South Africa” (Walker, 2012:84) through their provision of quality teaching of reading, for example.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTION AND METHODOLOGY

This study addressed the following research question: *How does the student teachers’ teaching of reading intersect with their public good commitment?* The teaching of reading indicated in this study was restricted to English first language in the Foundation Phase (Grade R-3). There were two reasons for choosing to focus on English. Firstly, South Africa has 11 official languages which are too many to investigate in this small-scale study. Secondly, the language of teaching and learning in the teacher education program, investigated in this study, is English.

Given the challenging political backdrop of literacy, language policies, language teaching and schooling in South Africa, my study was located within a social reconstructionist framework which recognizes that education is a political and value-laden enterprise (Giroux, 1992; Freire, 1998). I considered reading literacy as a social issue that is linked to class, gender, and race oppression. This study linked the teaching of reading to efforts that redress social inequities that arise in and outside of the classroom and it connected the teacher’s practice to social continuity and change. For these reasons it was good for framing the intersection between student teachers’ perspectives of the teaching of reading, and their public good commitment. Walker and McLean’s (2010:847) research on the education of professionals as contributors to the public good resonated strongly with my study because they advocate that “professional education in South African universities is one area which shapes the

relationship between the integrity of professional life and the health of civic cultures, and where an 'other regarding' social consciousness might be fostered through educational arrangements and policy, even in the face of history and social constraints".. As such, my study drew on Sen's (1999) and Nussbaum's (2000) Capabilities Approach which focuses on quality of human life.

I conducted a longitudinal cohort study which attempted to gain a picture of a cohort of student teachers' development over time by collecting data from them at the beginning of their teacher education program and then at the end. My study used a mixed methods approach with a concurrent triangulation design which consisted of two qualitative methods and one quantitative method to obtain data. I did a small-scale study with a holistic perspective of student teachers' public good commitment but with a specific focus on their perspectives of reading teaching.

My study commenced in 2008. Qualitative data was generated from first year student teachers through focus group interviews. These interviews were repeated with the same sample in 2011 when they were in their fourth year. A participatory dialogue and a questionnaire were also conducted in 2011. The questionnaire data was collected concurrently with the participatory dialogue data and my study took an overall inductive direction within the concurrent triangulation design. The qualitative data (focus group and participatory dialogue) was given foremost weighting (Harwell, 2011:152).

The first year sample selection in 2008 consisted of ten student teachers who participated in focus group interviews and nine of the ten participated in 2011 in their fourth year - the tenth student teacher from the group was no longer in the teacher education program due to ill health. Given South Africa's race and language diversity I tried to include first year student teachers in 2008 from all race and language groups as per the demographics at the site: the Faculty of Education at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (Mowbray campus). In addition, age as a sampling factor, was included as a proxy for life and societal experiences. All participants were female since there was a 100% female enrollment in the Bachelor of Education: Foundation Phase degree program.

In addition to the purposive sampling for the focus groups in 2008 and 2011 respectively, self-selection sampling was done for the participatory dialogue and the questionnaire. 26 of the 46 student teachers who were registered in the fourth year program selected themselves. This provided a total of 35 student teachers – nine purposefully selected and 26 self-selected.

My reliability was mainly addressed through triangulation. That is, I provided corroborating evidence for the conclusions drawn in this study from multiple sources: focus groups interviews, participatory dialogue and a questionnaire. Validity and reliability were key concerns in my empirical rigour. Participant feedback was useful for assessing the face validity of my findings as I shared preliminary findings with the sample. The unit of analysis was the ideas of the student teachers hence, coding, classifying and deciding on themes was a key feature of this study. The refinement of my coding reliability was addressed in discussions with my supervisor in the initial stages and in the latter stages I was able to briefly check my understanding of the codes with one of the main theorists referenced in this study.

1.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study was limited to a group of student teachers who were registered for the four year Bachelor of Education (Foundation Phase) degree in the Faculty of Education at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (Mowbray campus). They were the unit of analysis – their perspectives on (i) what activities and practices they see as supporting their teaching of reading, (ii) the professional capabilities that underpin their teaching of reading, (iii) how teacher education shaped the formation of their professional capabilities, and (iv) what societal experiences shaped the formation of their public good commitment.

This study did not look at what student teachers *actually do*. It was based on the activities and practices they *see* as supporting their teaching of reading from their accounts of *what they know* about it and *experienced* during their teacher education. This is elaborated on in chapter three where the context of the teacher education program is described.

Another aspect that could be considered as a limitation was that this study did not *describe the process* of student teachers' formation over time in teacher education – it *identified the facets* in their teacher education, particularly those which were *most influential* in the formation of their professional capabilities for public good. This study looked in detail at the student teachers' professional ways of being public good reading teachers from the account of their perspectives of the activities and practices which they see as supporting the teaching of reading. It provided insight into a teacher education curriculum by identifying the facets of teacher education which carried various levels of influence in these student teachers' formation. As the focus was on values and beliefs, it provided only limited insight into the actual enactment of their pedagogy.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The literature on public good professionals is a relatively new concept in South Africa. A number of case studies have been conducted on professional sectors such as Engineering, Social work, Public health, Law and Theology. To my knowledge, there has been no empirical work done on the professional life of student teachers working for public good. This study contributes to closing that gap by presenting empirical evidence on how student teachers' perspectives of the activities and practices in their teaching of reading intersect with their public good commitment and values.

While there is some literature on the reading teaching activities and practices of Foundation Phase teachers in South Africa, especially those in the Western Cape and the Limpopo provinces, there is no empirical evidence on student teachers' perspectives of the activities and practices prior to their entry into the teaching profession. In addition, there have been no studies which provide insight into how these perspectives develop over time during teacher education. Furthermore, none of the literature on learning to teach reading, both nationally and internationally, has focussed on professional capabilities for public good which underpin the student teachers' perspectives of reading teaching activities and practices. This study explains the teaching of reading as an interconnectedness of activities, practices and professional capabilities.

It is widespread knowledge from the plethora of literature on teacher education that curriculum facets such as practical teaching experiences and theoretical coursework are vital for student teachers' development especially at the point of integrating theory and practice. The literature on learning to teach reading is also very clear on the important role of these two facets. This study confirms much of what the literature says in this regard but it also provides new insight into the teacher education curriculum facets which are most influential in the formation of specific professional capabilities which underpin student teachers' reading teaching activities and practices. Extensive reference is made to the Teaching Practice component throughout the presentation of data. The unit of analysis – the student teachers' perspectives – are with reference to their teaching experiences in diverse schooling contexts. Hence, their perspectives largely draw on their reported reading teaching activities and practices in real classrooms.

This study confirms the idea, in the abundant teacher education literature, that student teachers bring prior experiences into their teacher education. This study shows how specific South African societal experiences that student teachers had prior to their teacher education shaped their public good commitments and values which intersect with their teaching of reading. At the same time, however, it shows that these prior experiences can be further influenced by participation in higher education in general, and teacher education in particular.

1.6 OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTERS

Chapter one has introduced this study by outlining the rationale, research question and methodology, and the limitations and significance of the study. Chapter two explores what has been documented in the teaching of reading, teacher education, and professional capabilities. It also explains the theoretic framework for this study. Social reconstructionism, social justice, critical pedagogy, professional capabilities and the capability approach are substantiated in detail. Chapter three describes the mixed methods approach with the concurrent triangulation design which I used for this study. It looks at how and why particular forms of data were gathered in the investigation of the research question. It describes the research design and explains the process of data collection. The benefits of employing mainly qualitative methodologies with the creative use of a small quantitative aspect are

articulated. Furthermore, an explanation of how data analysis was conducted, and how reliability and validity was ensured, is also provided in this chapter.

Chapters four, five, six and seven present the data:

- Chapter four presents data pertaining to the student teachers' lived experiences in South African society and the connection to their public good commitment and values.
- Chapter five presents data on the student teachers' perspectives of reading teaching activities and practices and it introduces data regarding the professional capabilities which underpin these activities and practices.
- Chapter six presents data on student teachers' professional capabilities.
- Chapter seven presents data pertaining to the ways in which teacher education contributed to formation of student teachers' professional capabilities and reading teaching.
- Chapter eight integrates the main findings with the key concepts from the literature.

The last chapter (nine) outlines the limitations and conclusions of this study and makes recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This literature review explores specific writings on the teaching of reading, teacher education, and professional capabilities. It aims to contribute to an understanding of how student teachers' perspectives of the activities and practices which they see as supporting their teaching of reading intersect with their public good commitment and values. This chapter also explains the theoretical framework for this study.

The first section of this chapter provides a detailed review of literature pertaining to reading teaching and learning, and teacher education in two respective parts. This is done to depict these as two distinct constructs, each with its own complexities. In the first part, approaches to reading teaching are briefly discussed. This is relevant to this study in so far as providing an overview of the complexities of teaching reading. An outline of the activities and practices in the teaching of reading is provided as this is the core of the reading teaching focus of this study.

The second part of section one reviews literature pertaining to teacher education. It draws on specific preparation of reading teacher literature as well as broader teacher education literature, each of which was important to addressing the development of student teachers' repertoire of reading teaching activities and practices during their teacher education.

Section two of this chapter explains the theoretical framework of this study. Social reconstructionism, social justice, critical pedagogy, professional capabilities and the capability approach are discussed in detail. Most of the discussion in this section, however, is on professional capabilities since this study explores the teaching of reading as an interconnectedness of activities, practices and professional capabilities.

2.2 READING TEACHING AND READING TEACHER EDUCATION

In this section two key concepts are elaborated on from the literature, reading teaching and learning, and teacher education.

2.2.1 READING TEACHING AND LEARNING

As reading teaching and learning issue that was particularly relevant to my study was that of activities and practices. Locating reading in a South African context was also key to the argument of this thesis. Different approaches to teaching reading, while not central to the focus of the study, have been included in the literature review in order to highlight how children learn differently and how student teachers might have different perspectives on the teaching of reading.

2.2.1.1 Approaches to teaching reading

The focus of this thesis is not on approaches to teaching reading as such but rather on the activities and practices which support reading teaching and learning. Hence, this section of the literature review does not engage with the numerous theories within the 'approaches' sphere of and more recent research on reading and the brain. It was useful for this study to draw heavily on the work of Condy and Forrester (2000) who offered succinct explanations of aspects of reading teaching which resonated with the empirical data.

According to Moats (1999) teaching reading is a job for an expert. Contrary to the popular theory that learning to read is natural and easy, Moats affirmed that learning to read is a complex linguistic achievement. Pretorius and Machet (2004b) raised the concern about the paucity of reading research in South Africa and O'Sullivan (2003) commented that this seems to be the case in developing countries.

Learning to read is, amongst others, the process of decoding a set of written symbols that have been assigned linguistic meaning, for the purpose of communicating ideas. Its instruction in the classroom is shaped by various approaches. Reyhner (2008) focused on two polarized approaches which have been caught up in a battle known as the 'reading wars'. Anderson (2000:11), commenting on the reading wars, explained that

Reading is both an acquired taste and an acquired skill. Taste is fed by skill, and skill requires discipline in acquisition and discipline in teaching. Discipline is at issue in the reading wars; those who insist on seeing the reading debate as more than merely a

matter of the most effective pedagogy and instead as something as personal as one's values, are not wrong. One pedagogy requires intellectual discipline as a condition for learning, while the other denies that this discipline is necessary and sees it as harmful to young minds.

Reyhner (2008) proposed that various approaches to reading presume that children learn differently. Condy and Forrester (2000), for example, discerned two wide-ranging approaches to teaching children to read at school: word-centered and meaning-centered approaches. These have also been referred to as bottom-up and top-down approaches.

In short, the following form part of the word-centered approaches

- Phonics approach
- Sight-word approach
- Basal reader approach
- Linguistics approach (Condy & Forrester, 2000).

Each of these is briefly discussed. The differences in terms of teaching and learning activities are highlighted.

The phonics approach to teaching reading draws heavily from behaviourist learning theory that is associated with the work of Skinner. Learning to read, using this approach, includes the following features:

- (i) it aims for learners to become independent readers as soon as possible,
- (ii) it endeavours to help learners learn letter/sound correspondences so they can sound out or decode words,
- (iii) it teaches learners not only basic letter/sound correspondences but also rules for sounding out words, and
- (iv) it means learning to read is learning to pronounce the words (Condy & Forrester, 2000).

A number of American studies suggested that most learners, especially in Grade R and Grade 1 benefit from this type of systematic, explicit instruction in phonemic awareness and phonics knowledge (Adams, 1990; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998; National Reading Panel, 2000).

The sight word approach allows the learners to develop a stock of words that they can recognise on sight, uses flashcards to help learners recognise basic words like “I” and “a”, begins with a stock of about one hundred basic sight words, with which the learners would be able to read about half the words in any text and focuses on whole words rather than on parts of words (Condy & Forrester, 2000). With regard to this, Beck, McKeon and Kucan (2002) proposed that words selected for reading should include those which the learner will find useful in many contexts.

The basal reader approach includes texts for children with a variety of reading selections for the first seven years of schooling as well as teacher manuals, workbooks, tests and supplementary materials. Condy and Forrester (2000:3) commented that a basal reader approach reflects a phonics approach to the words in the text by explicitly teaching letter/sound correspondences and phonics rules and they claim that this approach also tends to focus on identifying words rather than on strategies for constructing meaning.

A linguistics approach in learning to read in the early years of schooling requires learners to internalize regular patterns of spelling/sound correspondences and it exposes the learners to regularly spelled words from which the learners can unconsciously infer common spelling/sound patterns (Condy & Forrester, 2000). These authors added that a linguistics approach means once words are identified, meaning will take care of itself.

Whereas the descriptions of word-centred approaches explained above are based on behaviourist theories of learning, the meaning-centred approaches are more closely related to constructivist theories of learning. Constructivist learning theory is, amongst others, based on the idea that children learn by connecting new knowledge to previously learned knowledge. In short, the following form part of the meaning-centered approaches:

- Language experience approach
- Whole language approach, and
- Concentrated Language Encounter (Condy & Forrester, 2000).

Each of these is briefly discussed. The differences in terms of teaching and learning activities are highlighted.

The language experience approach is based on activities and stories developed from personal experiences of the learner. The stories about personal experiences are written down by a teacher and read together until the learner associates the written form of the word with the spoken. Condy and Forrester (2000:4) described this meaning-centered approach as one which encourages the learners to bring their own knowledge and experience in constructing meaning from the printed word whereby the teacher begins with the language and experiences of the learner and then writes the language of the learners on the board. In this approach learners not only learn what good writers do through shared reading experiences, but learn to expect printed books to be well-crafted, thus the reading/writing connection is reinforced (Condy & Forrester 2000:4)

The language experience approach also seems to bode well with Rosenblatt's (1995) ideas on experiences with text from an aesthetic stance in order to provide a free, creative space for what Freire and Macedo (1995) explain as the teacher providing an opportunity for learners to clarify these textual dilemmas and work towards resolving it. According to Rosenblatt (1995:350), the aesthetic stance is mostly a private stance in which the readers "focus on the experiential qualities of what is being evoked during the reading event and give more attention to the private aspect, the personal aura in which the referential is embedded—sensations, images, feelings, emotional, and intellectual associations". Calderwood (2005:7) appealed to teachers to create spaces where learners feel comfortable enough to "risk" aesthetic responses to reading and other learning processes.

With the whole language approach, reading and writing are also built upon the language and experiences of the learner and it is believed that learners learn to read as they learned to talk – gradually, naturally with a minimum of direct instruction, and with encouragement rather than discouragement of constant corrections (Condy & Forrester, 2000:4). Anderson (2000) claimed that advocates of whole language emphasize that whole language makes reading inviting and fun because it begins with real stories and real characters. He argued that it draws beginning readers into the joy of reading, rather than numbing them into inattention and unmotivated boredom with the excruciatingly artificial non-stories of the phonics primers of the past. Anderson (2000:1) critiqued whole language pedagogy by claiming that the theories of written language acquisition on which it is premised appear to

be wrong. This author explained that whole language theories of how children learn to read and write begin with the developmental assumption that just as children are neurologically wired for spoken language, they are similarly hard-wired for reading and writing. Reading, then, is a natural process that ordinary children will painlessly acquire without explicit instruction, without systematic training but instead, for example, by reading aloud and being read to, so-called "guided reading".

The concentrated language encounter (CLE) combines meaning-centered approaches with word-centered approaches in order to achieve functional literacy which "promotes the four pillars of successful education in the new millennium (Delors, 1998)" which is "learning to know, learning to do, learning to be and learning to live together" (Condy & Forrester, 2000:5). A key feature of CLE is that it encourages thinking through listening and reconstructing. For example, learners listen to stories that are read aloud by the teacher, they listen to subsequent discussions about the story and then they reconstruct the story through different activities which includes role play and story writing. Findings from numerous studies have indicated that teaching learners to engage orally about text and to write about it is important in helping them to comprehend (Saunders & Goldenberg, 1999; Van den Branden, 2000). The National Reading Panel (2000) in the USA, however, proposed a balanced approach to reading instruction that involves direct teaching of reading skills and strategies as well as providing students with opportunities to apply skills and strategies to engaging texts through reading, writing, and discussing (Taylor, 2008:2).

Amidst this discussion of approaches to learning to read it was also necessary to consider Scribner and Cole's (1981:236) views for drawing on learners' funds of knowledge in reading teaching. They defined literacy as a set of socially organized practices which have distinguishing purposes and contexts of use. Dantas (2007:78) claimed that "the complex and rich intersection between school and family/community practices requires that teachers become 'cultural brokers' (Gay, 1993) in order to bring the diversity of students' and families' funds of knowledge into the learning/teaching process". This author validated the funds of knowledge approach as it draws on a sociocultural frame to make visible the accumulated bodies of knowledge and social, cultural and linguistic practices of diverse

communities (Moll, Amanti, Neff & González, 1992; Moll, 1994; González, Moll & Amanti, 2005).

What was clear from the literature on approaches to reading teaching was that each approach seemed to propose its own respective teaching and learning gains. More specifically, each approach was also associated with a range of teacher and learner actions. The pedagogy of excellent teaching of reading includes all of the actions a teacher takes to teach the reading content (Taylor, 2008:3). To this end, a review of reading approaches, while relevant to this study, was not sufficiently helpful in understanding what these actions are. A detailed review of the activities and practices in the teaching of reading was required.

2.2.1.2 Reading teaching activities and practices

This thesis investigated the student teachers' perspectives of the activities and practices which support the teaching of reading. The teachers' activities and practices in the teaching of reading are important for learner development. Hill and Rowe (1996:325) found the class teacher to be the "key determinant of progress made by the student". Louden, Rohl, Barratt-Pugh, Brown, Cairney, Elderfield, House, Meiers, Rivalland and Rowe (2005:243) confirmed that "previous research has identified, at a general level, the vital importance of the individual teacher in promoting student growth in literacy achievement". Other researchers like Mazzoli and Gambrell (2003), Taylor, Pearson, Clark and Walple (1999), Wray, Medwell, Fox and Poulson (2000) and Wray, Pearson, Poulson and Fox (2002) pointed towards effective literacy teachers as having a strong literacy knowledge base that they make explicit to their students, in addition to creating and making use of a rich literacy environment.

The large-scale Australian study conducted by Louden, Rohl, Barratt-Pugh, Brown, Cairney, Elderfield, House, Meiers, Rivalland and Rowe (2005:243) provided a detailed account of the relationship between teacher effectiveness and the use of activities and practices in literacy teaching. These researchers discerned the teacher's knowledge base and the literacy environment which the teacher creates, as the carrying out of reading teaching activities and practices respectively. They identified 17 common teaching activities and 33 literacy teaching practices.

The 17 common teaching activities were: Shared book; Reading to children; Guided oral reading; Independent silent reading; Hearing children read; Modelled writing; Shared writing; Interactive writing; Independent writing; Spelling activities; Language experience; Socio-dramatic play; Literacy related computer activities; Use of commercial literacy programs; Phonics; Organisational activities: Independent group work and Task board discussion.

In their investigation of the relationship between teacher effectiveness and the use of activities in literacy teaching, they found a very weak relationship between more effective, effective and less effective teachers (which they sampled for their study) and literacy teaching activities. For example, shared book and modelled writing was used by all teachers. To illustrate this weak relationship, it was found that the more effective teachers made more use of activities of reading to children, they did more interactive and independent writing and they engaged their children in more language experience and the less effective made somewhat more use of guided oral reading, isolated phonics and task board activities.

The 33 literacy teaching practices which Loudon et al. (2005:243) classified into six broad dimensions focussed on teacher actions or on the actions of the learners. The six teaching practice dimensions are:

1. Participation
2. Knowledge
3. Orchestration
4. Support
5. Differentiation
6. Respect

In their investigation of the relationship between teacher effectiveness and the use of practices in reading teaching they found that the frequency of literacy teaching practices “varied greatly according to teacher effectiveness” (Loudon et al., 2005:194). For the purpose of my study, which investigated the activities and practices which student teachers saw as supporting their teaching of reading, a detailed review of this finding from the

Louden et al. (2005) study was necessary as it was pivotal in the analysis of my data. An exposition of each dimension and its respective practices needed careful enquiry as this was the reading teaching focus of my study.

Participation is broadly defined as “the active involvement of children in learning” and Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976) argued that such participation is critical to engagement in learning (Louden et al., 2005:196). The table below summarizes five teaching practices which were identified with the participation dimension:

Table 2.1: Participation dimension and practices

Practices	Teacher/learner actions
Attention	Almost all children are focused on literacy learning
Engagement	Children are deeply absorbed in the literacy lesson/task
Stimulation	The teacher motivated interest in literacy tasks, concepts and learning
Pleasure	The teacher creates an enthusiastic and energetic classroom
Consistency	Strong literacy routines are recognised and understood by the children

Attention involves the teacher energetically inciting the child to partake in classroom learning. This is key in literacy learning success, especially in the early years. Samuels, Schermer and Reinking (1992) maintained that “attention is a critical element in literacy learning” (Louden et al. 2005:196). This was based on claims by Rowe and Rowe (1999), Barkley (1998) and Hinshaw (1994) that there is a strong association between inattentiveness in the classroom and poor academic success (Louden et al., 2005:196).

Engagement entails the teacher paying tribute to the child and the task and communicating interest in the child’s efforts in order to promote a learning journey. This teaching practice has also been found to be strongly related to effective teachers (Hattie, 2003 cited in Louden et al. 2005:196). The essence of literacy teaching requires deep engagement in order to make meaning of reading and writing tasks. Whereas engagement may seem equal to attention, the former aims to ensure the child’s deep involvement in the activity and the latter might involve little more than compliance (Louden et al. 2005:196).

Stimulation, another teaching practice of the participation dimension, requires teachers to more explicitly attempt to inspire children by providing relevant and useful background knowledge, reminding them of the purpose of the specific activity or “pointing to various intrinsic benefits of the task at hand” (Louden et al. 2005:196). These authors clarified what this means within the context of literacy teaching: the ways in which teachers get their learners inspired about “literacy tasks, literacy and language concepts and understandings, meaning making and learning in general”. Snow et al. (1998) deem this fundamental to children’s progress in learning to read.

Reading for pleasure is a term often associated with literacy teaching and it appears in all language curricula internationally. What this means is that the act of reading and learning to read is associated with a constructive, delightful, experience. Scheerens and Bosker (1997:124) referred to the teaching practice of pleasure as “the classroom fun factor”. This practice is an “off-shoot of good classroom relationships and satisfaction, and is closely related to warmth, empathy and rapport with children” (Louden et al., 2005:197).

Another teaching practice which maximizes literacy learning is the teacher’s ability to create an environment which establishes routines consistently. Hill et al. (1998) explained the importance of classroom routines in the early years. In this discussion they specified routines linked to time, space resources and the body. Louden et al. (2005:197) suggested that consistency as part of the participation dimension is when learning is framed and encouraged in routine ways such that children participate in routine ways in class activities.

With regard to the dimension of participation, in their study of a sample of ten teachers who varied in terms of more effective, effective and less effective literacy teaching in Australia, Louden et al. (2005:198) found the following in their observations:

1. almost all teachers observed gained the participation of the children in literacy activities and tasks;

2. the more effective and the effective teachers appeared to make more effort to seek, gain and maintain children's participation in classroom learning in a variety of ways;
3. the less effective teachers were generally characterised by a lack of pleasure, engagement and stimulation;
4. gaining and maintaining children's attention was the most frequently observed practice with the majority of classes demonstrating attention in every lesson;
5. the more effective and effective teachers used many strategies in quick succession to gain and maintain children's attention and carefully targeted them to specific children;
6. and the more effective and effective teachers established consistency in their routines, and they created energetic and exciting classrooms in which pleasure for reading was evident.

Apart from the dimension of participation, knowledge is a key ingredient in the teacher's pursuit of their learners' skillful literacy learning. Teachers' knowledge, as a dimension of classroom practices, refers to a group of teaching practices that are related to their deep understandings and knowledge about the processes of learning literacy and their capacity to mediate children's literacy learning skillfully (Louden et al., 2005:203).

Darling-Hammond (2000) supported this view and regarded the teachers' acquisition of deep knowledge of the important elements of literacy learning and the capacity to use this knowledge to adjust the teaching to the diverse needs of learners, as a demanding task which is of paramount to effective literacy teaching practices. Louden et al. (2005:203) identified six teaching practices which make up the knowledge dimension. These are summarized in table 2.2 as follows:

Table 2.2: Knowledge dimension and practices

Practices	Teacher/learner actions
Environment	Literate physical environment is used as a teaching resource
Purpose	Children’s responses indicate tacit or explicit understanding of the purpose of the literacy task
Substance	The lesson/task leads to substantial literacy engagement not busy-work
Explanations	Explanations of literacy concepts and skills are clear and at an appropriate level
Modelling	Demonstrations of literacy tasks include metacognitive explanations
Metalanguage	Children are provided with language for talking about and exemplifying literacy concepts

Much of the research on effective early years teaching pointed to teachers providing a literate environment that is used as a teaching resource (Snow et al., 1998; Wray et al., 2000; Mazzoli & Gambrell, 2003; Soderman & Farrell, 2008). For example, Soderman and Farrell (2008:20) claimed that “it takes very little time when entering a school or classroom to evaluate the learning climate and to get a ‘feel’ for how valued children are, how much investment there is on behalf of children, and how much actual learning may be going on”. Posters, pictures, everyday environmental print would all be included in the teacher’s selection of text to create a literate environment. However, Loudon et al. (2005:204) cautioned that it is “the usefulness and range of these texts and the manner in which the teacher engages children with the literate environment, which appear to impact upon the effectiveness of early literacy learning”.

While the environment is important for engaging in literacy learning, it is also the establishment of a clear purpose for the learning task which is critical to support deep and effective literacy learning (DfEE, 2000 cited in Loudon et al. (2005:204). Using the idea of a continuum, the practice of setting a clear purpose for a literacy task lies at the one end of the literacy task continuum and at the other, less desirable end is the menacing occurrence of ‘busy-work’. Luke and Freebody (1999:7) referred to what one could consider to be the favourable end of the literacy task continuum, as the “purposeful social nature” of literacy learning. Purpose, in this sense, is thus a crucial teaching practice in the knowledge dimension.

Substance is another teaching practice associated with the knowledge dimension. Researchers like Hattie (2003) and, Luke, Freebody and Land (2000) illuminated the previously mentioned notion of 'busy-work' by suggesting that substance can be regarded as the provision of lessons or tasks that lead to substantial literacy engagement. They argued that effective teachers demonstrate the provisioning of tasks which lead to literacy engagement that have a favourable effect on learning gains.

Louden et al. (2005:204) also identified explanations as a teaching practice of the knowledge dimension. Researchers like Brophy and Good (1986) and Hill, Comber, Loudon, Rivalland and Reid (1998) claimed that this is vital in literacy learning as children must be given clear explanations of literacy concepts and skills. But, according to Loudon et al. (2005:204) "it is the quality of the metacognitive explanations that accompany the modelling of literate practices that is a key factor in supporting effective literacy learning.

With regard to the knowledge dimension, Loudon et al. (2005:198) found that

1. the more effective and effective teachers on the whole displayed more of the knowledge teaching practices more frequently than the less effective teachers;
2. the more effective and the effective teachers in this study showed high levels of knowledge about literacy learning processes and skills and were able to employ these differentially in the classroom;
3. the more effective and the effective teachers in this study had classrooms in which many different resources were available to children through the environmental print in their classrooms;
4. their environmental print tended to include many genres that were used for a range of purposes;
5. the more effective and the effective teachers in this study drew attention to the physical environment in order to provide support for children when they were engaged in problem-solving, learning new vocabulary, spelling new words, using letter-sound relationships or reading unknown texts;

6. they gave clear explanations of the purposes of literacy tasks and their purposes were often of a higher order rather than those of the less effective teachers whose lower level purposes were often implicit;
7. the more effective and the effective teachers in this study gave clear explanations not only at word level, but they also gave extremely clear explanations of the features of the whole text;
8. the more effective and the effective teachers in this study demonstrated how substantial literacy engagement facilitates children’s literacy learning processes and systems;
9. modelling was a well-used teaching practice by all teachers, however, the more effective and the effective teachers included clear metacognitive explanations as part of their modelling practices and that these were significant in making available the most effective knowledge for learners;
10. they used metalanguage more often than the less effective teachers.

In addition to the participation and knowledge dimensions, the orchestration dimension was categorized as a literacy teaching practice. Table 2.3 summarizes the teaching and learning actions associated with orchestration:

Table 2.3: Orchestration dimension and practices

Practices	Teacher/learner actions
Awareness	The teacher has a high level of awareness on literacy activities and participation by children
Structure	The environment is predictable and orderly
Flexibility	The teacher responds to learning opportunities that arise in the flow of the literacy lessons
Pace	The teacher provides strong forward momentum in literacy lessons
Transition	Minimum time is spent in transitions or there is productive use of transitions

Orchestration involves the management and organization as a response to the complexities of the social context of the learning environment (Louden et al., 2005:211). Within the context of a discussion on orchestration Snow, Burns and Griffiths (2001:196) explained that outstanding early years' teachers are 'masterful' in their management of activity, behaviour and resources. Brophy and Good (1986:369) added that

effective instruction involves selecting (from a larger repertoire) and orchestrating those teaching behaviours that are appropriate to the context and to the teacher's goals, rather than mastering and consistently applying a few generic teaching skills.

In terms of orchestration, Louden et al. (2005:211) found that effective teachers have high levels of awareness of classroom activities and children's levels of participation. They cited Kounin (1977:85) who claimed that an effective teacher has 'eyes in the back of her head'. In addition, Louden et al. (2005:211) said that the quality of structure concerns maintenance of an orderly and predictable environment. They explained that effective teachers structure lessons so that children have many opportunities throughout the day to make connections to prior literacy learning and they add that pace is necessary for orchestration in that it concerns the forward momentum in literacy classrooms. Brophy and Good (1986:346) added that briskness, smoothness and timing all underpin effective teaching and Arlin (cited in Doyle, 1986:416) highlighted that effective teachers spend little time on transition between activities and flexibility, the final teaching practice associated with orchestration, concerns teachers' capacity to respond to the learning opportunities that arise within the flow of lessons.

With regard to the orchestration dimension Louden et al. (2005:212) found that

1. the more effective teachers and effective teachers had in common highly developed capacities to manage the uncertain social environment;
2. they were characterized by high levels of awareness;
3. they were able to manage interruptions and lapses of child attention without losing focus on their moment-by-moment instructional goals;
4. they were able to structure children's movement around the classroom, learning tasks and activities in orderly ways;

5. they had the ability to maximize learning opportunities with a sense of urgency;
6. their sessions proceeded at a brisk pace and they managed to retain the attention of all children;
7. they ensured that transitions between and within activities were seamless;
8. they established specific routines within their classrooms and made expectations explicit;
9. they were able to judge when to respond spontaneously to the ‘teachable moment’ and when to resist unnecessary diversions;
10. they were consistently able to manage and adjust complex movements within and around activities and groups of children.

In addition to the participation, knowledge and orchestration dimensions, the support dimension was categorized in the Louden et al. (2005) study as a literacy teaching practice.

Table 2.4 summarizes the teaching and learning actions associated with the support dimension:

Table 2.4: Support dimension and practices

Practices	Teacher/learner actions
Assessment	The teacher uses fine-grained knowledge of children’s literacy performance in planning and teaching
Scaffolding	The teacher extends children’s literacy learning through modelling, modifying, correcting
Feedback	The teacher gives timely, focused and explicit literacy feedback to children
Responsiveness	The teacher shares and builds on children’s literacy contributions
Explicitness	Word level – The teacher directs children’s attention to explicit word and sound strategies Text level – The teacher makes explicit specific attributes of a text
Persistence	The teacher provides many opportunities to practise and master new literacy learning

The dimension that Louden et al. (2005:217) called support refers to the ways in which effective teachers structure children's literacy learning so that they are expertly assisted in their acquisition of skills. These authors associated this dimension most closely with the knowledge dimension as the effectiveness of support depends on the extent of the teachers' knowledge of literacy and literacy learning. Various researchers (Bloom, 1976; Brophy & Good, 1986) argued that effective literacy teachers use detailed assessment information in planning and teaching and are able to expertly scaffold and extend children's literacy learning as they model, modify and correct responses.

Louden et al. (2005:217) argued that effective teachers link explicit feedback to this scaffolding. Feedback has been deemed a most important teaching practice by researchers like Bloom (1976), Brophy and Good (1986) and Strickland (2000). In addition to explicit feedback, a number of researcher conclude that effective early years literacy teachers provide highly explicit instruction in word and text level strategies and knowledge (Mazzoli & Gambrell, 2003; Snow et al., 1998).

A particular type of feedback is responsiveness whereby the teacher shares and builds on children's contributions in such a way that the child contributes to the teaching point Brophy and Good (1986). Brophy and Good (1986) and Hattie (2003) added that these teachers are persistent in their provision of many opportunities to practice and master new literacy learning. At the word level this could involve 'creating multiple opportunities for sustained reading practice in a variety of formats, such as choral reading (Snow et al., 1998:196). According to Duke and Pearson (2002), at the text level persistence may involve the teacher allocating a large amount of time to reading in order to provide experience in using comprehension strategies.

With regard to the support dimension Louden et al. (2005:217) found that

1. the less effective teachers showed the lowest number of episodes characterized by support;
2. the more effective teachers all showed episodes characterized by scaffolding, feedback, responsiveness, explicitness word, explicitness text and persistence.

3. for example, they used every opportunity to reinforce knowledge, concepts and skills that were being learnt.

The differentiation dimension “concerns the ways in which teachers tailor the curriculum and pedagogic practices to the unique cognitive and socio-cultural understandings and practices that each child brings to the classroom, while at the same time maintaining group cohesion” Louden et al. (2005:225). Table 2.5 summarizes the teaching and learning actions associated with the differentiation dimension as follows:

Table 2.5: Differentiation dimension and practices

Practices	Teacher/learner actions
Challenge	The teacher extends and promotes higher order thinking in literacy learning
Individualisation	Differentiated literacy instruction recognises individual differences
Inclusion	The teacher facilitates inclusion of all students in the literacy lessons
Variation	Literacy teaching is structured around groups or individuals
Modelling	Demonstrations of literacy tasks include metacognitive explanations
Connection	Connections are made between class and community literacy-related knowledge

Taylor, Pearson, Clark and Walpole (1999) regarded challenge, in the differentiation dimension, as one of the most demanding of all teaching practices as it involves recognizing possibilities within literacy tasks for extending and promoting higher order thinking. Individualisation in the differentiation dimension is concerned with the ways in which individual needs are addressed within curriculum planning and implementation (Louden et al., 2005:225).

Researchers like Snow et al. (1998) and Wray et al. (2000) claimed that effective teachers not only provide differentiated instruction and tasks, which take account of individual needs, but also manage to facilitate the inclusion of all children within and across tasks.

Louden et al. (2005:225) explained the teaching practice of variation as the ways in which teachers use grouping as a means of responding to children’s learning needs. The last

teaching practice in the differentiation dimension, connection, has been described as the essence of effective teaching and learning, referred to by Bruner (1996:45, cited in Louden et al., 2005:226) as ‘how human beings achieve a meeting of the minds’. With regard to the differentiation dimension Louden et al. (2005:226) found that

1. differentiation was more evident in the classrooms of the effective and more effective teachers;
2. they planned demanding tasks;
3. they were skilled at facilitating inclusion and meeting individual needs;
4. they used dynamic and responsive grouping strategies;
5. they focused on individual needs;
6. they maintained a balance between content-centered and learner-centered instruction;
7. they gave timely and effective feedback;
8. they helped children make connections between family and community literacy and the literacy discourse of school;
9. they recognized the significance of children’s knowledge as a basis for learning;
10. they incorporated their understanding of children’s experiences into their curriculum planning.

The respect dimension refers to a group of teaching practices concerned with the social context of the classroom (Louden et al., 2005:232). The practices identified with the respect dimension are warmth, rapport, credibility, citizenship and independence. Table 2.6 summarizes the actions associated with the respect dimension as follows:

Table 2.6: Respect dimension and practices

Practices	Teacher/learner actions
Warmth	Welcoming, positive and inviting classroom is focused on literacy learning
Rapport	Relationships with the children support tactful literacy interventions
Credibility	Respect for the teacher enables her to overcome any challenges to order and lesson flow
Citizenship	Equality, tolerance, inclusivity and awareness of the needs of others are promoted
Independence	Children take some responsibility for their own literacy learning

With regard to warmth, Louden et al. (2005) suggested that effective teachers use a range of teaching practices to establish and maintain social contexts in the early year's classrooms that are welcoming, positive and inviting, and that focus consistently on literacy learning. Rapport, according to these authors, concerns the "development of relationships between the teacher and children that consistently support tactful literacy interventions" (Louden et al., 2005:233).

These authors described credibility as "the ways in which the teacher earns the respect from children that enables her to maintain the momentum of the lesson and to manage behaviours that could interrupt the orderly conduct of the classroom" (Louden et al., 2005:233). They also referred to citizenship as an effective literacy teaching practice as it involves the promotion of equality, tolerance, inclusivity and awareness of the needs of others. "Independence, the fifth teaching practice associated with the respect dimension, fosters children's motivation to take some responsibility for their own learning" (Louden et al., 2005: 233).

With regard to the respect dimension Louden et al. (2005:226) found that

1. teaching practices of respect of the more effective and effective teachers supported children's literacy learning;
2. the social context of less effective teacher's classrooms was not characterized by an explicitly clear focus on literacy learning as they did not have the strong rapport with children that ensure tactful literacy interventions;
3. the less effective teachers did not command the complete respect of children necessary to overcome challenges to order and lesson flow;
4. the less effective teachers did not appear to place a strong emphasis on a range of values that included awareness of the needs of others and the like;
5. warmth and rapport were two of the more frequently observed practices in the classrooms of the more effective and effective teachers;
6. credibility was observed in almost all classrooms;
7. the least frequently observed practices were independence and citizenship in some classrooms but most rarely observed in less effective teacher's classrooms;

In the main, this Australian study by Loudon et al. (2005) found that the more effective and effective teachers demonstrated a wide variety of literacy teaching practices from all six dimensions and the less effective teachers demonstrated a limited number of literacy teaching practices. Furthermore their study found that the literacy teaching repertoires of the more effective teachers included teaching practices that were most frequently observed, such as attention and engagement, pace and metalanguage, and those such as challenge were rarely observed. By contrast, the literacy teaching repertoires of the less effective teachers tended to be dominated by pace and metalanguage. All the teachers paid some attention to phonics with no quantitative difference between the groups of teachers.

With regard to the use of these findings, Loudon et al. (2005:243) suggested, for example, that “training the use of particular teaching activities, whilst it may help beginning teachers feel confident in their early careers, it is only a small part of the early literacy teaching”. They also proposed that “it would be helpful to provide beginning and in-service teachers with the opportunity to carefully observe and reflect on the complexity of the work done by effective teachers in their classrooms” (Loudon et al., 2005:243). These findings were relevant to my study which explored the student teachers’ activities and practices in their teaching of reading. Furthermore, it carried valuable insight for my study’s investigation of the development of the student teachers’ repertoire of activities and practices during their teacher education program.

2.3 Locating reading teaching and learning in South Africa

The teaching and learning of reading in South Africa was an important component of my study. Five main aspects seemed pertinent to locating the teaching and learning of reading in the South African context. These were as follows:

- Class and race
- Learner performance
- Teaching and learning
- Curriculum context for teaching reading
- Policy context for language education

Each of these was related to the practical experiences which the student teachers in my study had with their teaching of reading in Foundation Phase classrooms in a transforming South Africa.

2.3.1 Class and race

Apart from the importance of reviewing literature pertaining to approaches to reading teaching and, activities and practices, it was also necessary to locate reading teaching against a backdrop of broader socio-political and economic realities in South Africa. This was pertinent to my study of student teachers who engage with these realities during their teacher education program.

A limited number of South African studies reported on the state of literacy in South Africa, several with a statistical slant and restricted contextual description, and others with contextual descriptions but no comprehensive analysis of the teacher's reading teaching activities and practices. However limited in their respective scope, collectively, these studies unveiled the literacy situation in South Africa.

Barbarin and Richter (2001) found that the educational experiences of South African children suggested indications of stress as the literacy rate amongst blacks was 52% as opposed to 75% amongst whites. In addition, Moore and Hart (2007) cited statistics which showed the low levels of literacy nationally:

- 24% of African adults in South Africa over the age of 20 were illiterate (*ERA Initiative, 1999:34*)
- 34% of all adults were functionally illiterate (*ERA Initiative, 1999:34*)
- 17% of teachers were under qualified (Sukhraj, Mkhize & Govender, 2000).

Moore and Hart (2007) described the South African literacy context as having inadequate infrastructure with over 50% of schools lacking school libraries and learning materials such as exercise books, textbooks and appropriate reading materials. These conditions, they said, created a situation which was not conducive to effective literacy development. In addition these authors addressed issues of material impoverishment, which was prevalent in South Africa, by claiming that "in a situation where many learners come from materially

impoverished backgrounds where texts are not part of daily experiences, and reading is not seen as a meaningful activity, the poor resources and inadequate teaching in schools have serious consequences for learners' literacy development and academic success at school" (Moore & Hart, 2007:24). One could associate this claim with the South African Schools Act of 1996 which aimed to facilitate academic success, but Soudien and Alexander (2003:262) questioned the attainment of the aim of this as they asserted that "while the South African Schools Act of 1996 makes education compulsory, it remains an indictment of the new South Africa that large numbers of young people still never make it to school".

Similarly, Moore and Hart (2007) suggested that school systems foster inequality. They proposed "a deeper understanding of the way in which school systems foster inequality". They subscribed to Rose's (2004) explanation of how this impacts on reading performance of learners in the early years of schooling: "stratification of learners' outcomes occurs in the early primary years of schooling because teaching practices implicitly assume and evaluate orientations to meaning that highly literate parents scaffold their children into before school". Drawing on the work of Bergin (2001), Moore and Hart (2007) claimed that children of literate, middle-class South African families acquired approximately 1000 hours of parental interaction with texts before they enter school. By contrast, children from oral and working class backgrounds were likely to get little or none and they were immediately placed at a disadvantage because they did not have the necessary orientation to text that the schooling system assumes.

Moreover, with specific reference to the South African context, Moore and Hart (2007) noted that most school systems only provided explicit teaching of reading in the Foundation Phase (Grade R-3) by the end of which learners were expected to be independent readers. These authors problematised this notion by suggesting that learners "from highly literate backgrounds are likely to reach this stage in the time provided, while learners from oral, working class backgrounds are not" (Moore & Hart, 2007:23). Reeves, Heugh, Prinsloo, Macdonald, Netshitangani, Alidou, Diedricks and Herbst (2008:41) furthermore cautioned that literacy development is "an on-going process, which does not come to an end, but rather continues throughout life, under enabling conditions".

2.3.2 Learner performance

Reviewing literature on learner performance in South Africa was pertinent to my study of student teachers who engage with this during their teacher education program. More specifically, learner performance in relation to race, class, gender and language in the South African schooling context ushers in a more complex spectrum of learner performance issues that student teachers engage with. Although literacy development is a life-long process, learners' performance throughout their schooling must be measured and monitored in order to reflect on their development. A number of measurement initiatives are reviewed here.

One of the most recent standardised testing systems is the National Department of Education's Annual National Assessments (ANA) which involves all learners in Grades 1 to 6 writing standardised tests, which are similar across provinces and schools (DoE, ANA, 2011). It is aimed to develop the quality of learning outcomes in South Africa. In these tests, the results are mainly used to critique the various strategies and interventions of the Department of Basic Education in terms of its impact on critical aspects of teaching and learning, especially learner achievement (DoE, ANA, 2011). The intention of ANA is to examine learner performance each year in literacy and numeracy with the purpose of improving learner performance, aligned with government responses to this issue. Meier (2011) explained that the ANA results scrutinize progress, guide planning and the allocation of resources to facilitate improvement in Literacy/Language and Numeracy/Mathematics knowledge and skills of learners in the grades concerned.

In 2006 South Africa participated in the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) under the auspices of the International Association for the Evaluation for Educational Achievement (IEA). At the time, the Department of Education, under the leadership of Minister Pandor, "recognized reading literacy and language in education as one of the most important priorities in education" (Howie, Venter, van Staden, Zimmerman, Long, Scherman & Archer, 2007:5). The PIRLS report presented the first baseline data in all 11 official South African languages with international comparative data and benchmarks. Howie et al. (2007:11) cited Pretorius and Ribbens (2005:139) who commented that

“neither in the past or in the present have there been national assessment procedures for monitoring reading and determining whether learners are reading at their appropriate motivational levels”. PIRLS 2006 followed on from PIRLS 2001 after the first international comparative reading literacy with 32 participating education systems in 1991. The 2006 study enabled countries which participated “in 1991 and 2001 to identify long term trends and to monitor their system’s developments in reading and education over a period of time” (Howie, Venter, van Staden, Zimmerman, Long, Scherman & Archer, 2007:12).

In PIRLS 2006 the following reading literacy definition of Mullis, Kennedy, Martin and Sainsbury (2006:3) was used:

The ability to understand and use those written language forms required by society and/or valued by the individual. Young readers can construct meaning from a variety of texts. They read to learn, to participate in communities of readers in school and everyday life, and for enjoyment.

The target population tested in these studies was Grade 4 in most countries (learners who had just completed the Foundation Phase schooling). According to Howie, Venter, van Staden, Zimmerman, Long, Scherman and Archer (2007:12) a total of 40 countries and 45 education systems participated in the PIRLS 2006 with most countries from the Northern Hemisphere and none from South America. These authors reported on a few distinctive South African contextual features. They highlighted that South Africa had, amongst others:

- The lowest life expectancy at birth of 46 years,
- The highest mortality rate (53 per 1000 live births),
- The highest learner: teacher ratio, and it was the
- 10th poorest and,
- Average in terms of the percentage of GDP and public expenditure on education.

The results of the international PIRLS study showed, amongst others, that only 10 education systems fell below the international mean, with South Africa at the lowest. The youngest learners were tested in Italy (average age 9.7 years) who despite this, ranked in the top 5 countries in comparison to the oldest learners who were tested in South Africa who despite

this, ranked lowest. The Netherlands and New Zealand, who both engage in Outcomes Based Education (OBE) like South Africa at the time of the research, both performed better than the international average with Netherlands ranked 12th out of the 45 participating countries and New Zealand in 24th place in comparison to South Africa's 45th position for both the Grade 4s and 5s.

Internationally and nationally, girls out-performed boys but South Africa's gender difference in average achievement scores was amongst the highest in the world. In South Africa, a national assessment on reading in English based on the South African curricula was also administered to Grade 4 and 5 learners (Howie, Venter, van Staden, Zimmerman, Long, Scherman & Archer, 2007:5). These authors explained that in PIRLS South Africa, Grade 5 was included "due to concerns about Grade 4 as a transition phase in schooling and out of desire to examine the progress or differences in reading knowledge and skills from Grade 4 to Grade 5" and "the assessment instruments had to be contextualised and translated into all 11 official language" (Howie et al., 2007:22).

In an analysis per language of all the 11 official South African languages, the learners who wrote the assessment in Afrikaans achieved the highest scores. However, the Grade 5 girls who wrote the test in Afrikaans still scored below the international average for Grade 4 girls. Learners writing the test in English achieved the next highest score and the top average performance in any African language was achieved by Grade 5 girls in Setswana which in turn was below the lowest performers (Howie, Venter, van Staden, Zimmerman, Long, Scherman & Archer, 2007:28). PIRLS South Africa showed a consistent pattern pertaining to progression in achievement from Grade 4 to Grade 5 across the languages with the exception of isiXhosa where Grade 4 girls out-performed Grade 5 boys.

2.3.3 Teaching and learning

Large-scale international and national testing such as those described above also indicated the state of teaching and learning. It was important for my study to review writings on teaching and learning since it explored the student teachers' teaching of reading in Foundation Phase classrooms in a transforming South Africa. Since the student teachers

were located in the Western Cape, it was useful to mainly review research projects on reading teaching and learning in this province.

A number of research projects conducted in the Western Cape, for example, suggested that reading and literacy skills were poorly developed in the earlier grades and tests indicated the following:

- Although learners in the Western Cape performed better than learners in other provinces, they read well below the level of learners in the same grade in other African countries.
- The learners performed best on word recognition tasks and significantly worse in sentence completion, reading comprehension and writing tasks.
- Rural schools achieved well below their urban counterparts.
- A mismatch between the home language and the language of learning and teaching has serious effects on reading performance of learners with the result that most cannot read or write independently at an appropriate level by the end of Grade 3 (WCED, 2001:2).

The Western Cape Education Department (WCED) responded to some of these critical indicators with a goal to enable all learners to read and write at the appropriate level in their home language and the language of learning and teaching (WCED, 2001:3). This was known as the Literacy Strategy (2002-2008) of the WCED which was based on three thrusts:

- i. Teachers' skill development
- ii. Provision of resources and learning support materials
- iii. Research and advocacy

These three thrusts aimed to be infused by a program to support the principle of additive multilingualism, in accordance with the National Language in Education Policy (WCED, 2001:3). Specific strategies per schooling phase were introduced for each of the three thrusts.

The Reading Schools campaign was launched, the intention of which included a compulsory daily half-hour of reading. The National Curriculum Statement (NCS) was introduced into the Foundation Phase (FP) in 2004 and all FP teachers were to receive training in the Languages

Learning Area with a focus on teaching reading and writing at the levels specified in the NCS, with a particular emphasis on developing phonemic awareness and vocabulary as well as fluency and understanding. Additional interventions for the teacher development thrust included addressing the needs of teachers in rural and remote schools with multigrade classes, disadvantaged schools and schools with multilingual classes (WCED, 2001:6).

For the resource and learning support material thrust the WCED Literacy Strategy (2002-2008) aimed to ensure that all FP classrooms had Book Kits: 100 or more books of varying titles by 2008. In addition to the books the WCED also selected packaged computer software for literacy development in collaboration with the Multigrade Rural Schools Intervention. The computer software was to be provided to schools participating in the Khanya Literacy Project and the Multigrade Rural Schools Intervention, and to other schools by the end of 2008 (WCED, 2001:6). With regard to the Book Kit Project the WCED aimed to, amongst others, establish which classrooms did not have classroom collections with 100+ books.

The Research and Advocacy thrust entailed reading tests being administered to Grade 3 learners in all WCED schools, the results of which were to be used to inform intensive training and support. The WCED also sought to undertake research into the provisioning of language in primary schools and the current functioning of the Reading Program in the primary school and the NGO reading support interventions in the FP (WCED, 2001:7).

Alongside the three thrusts explained above, the WCED planned a number of projects to support literacy, especially literacy in disadvantaged schools, multigrade and multilingual classes. These projects were, amongst others (WCED, 2001:11):

- The Cape Teaching Institutes which aimed to offer two-week full-time courses to 300 FP teachers in 2003 on the methods of teaching reading, including the methods of teaching reading in multilingual classes.
- The Multilingual Project which aimed to provide training to 100 teachers in each year from 2003 to 2007 in order to train 500 teachers in the management of multilingual classes.

- The 150 School Literacy Intervention Project which aimed to target Grades 2 to 7 in 150 schools with a focus on diagnostic and remedial intervention to empower teachers to develop contextually appropriate strategies.
- READ, which was contracted by the national department to work in 54 project schools, worked collaboratively with the WCED and a further 2 schools in the Rally to Read project.
- The Concentrated Language Encounter Program (CLE), sponsored by Rotary, aimed to spread this methodologically eclectic, systematic reading strategy to 164 Western Cape primary schools over 5 years.

For the purpose of gaining a broader picture of reading teaching and learning complexities beyond the Western Cape schooling context, it was also useful to review literature on the state of reading teaching and learning in another province. Unlike in the Western Cape where three of the 11 official South African languages are spoken amongst learners, in the Limpopo Province at least five languages are spoken among learners and their parents. In addition, “Many parents in Limpopo Province do not have adequate levels of literacy themselves and appropriately qualified teachers are scarce” (Reeves, Heugh, Prinsloo, Macdonald, Netshitangani, Alidou, Diedricks & Herbst, 2008:2). These authors described the Limpopo Province as one of the poorest, most remote, densely populated underdeveloped provinces in the country where the conditions of schooling are in urgent need of improvement in infrastructure, learner performance and, basic reading and writing abilities.

The Limpopo Province responded by initiating several interventions to address low learner achievement. These interventions included a School Transformation Program and a Literacy Strategy. The former “articulates issues such as curriculum development, whole-school evaluation, school-development planning, school governance, and literacy development” (Reeves et al., 2008). The Literacy Strategy which was a collaboration between the province’s Department of Education and the Khanyisa Education Support Program, “provides direct action to and guides the improvement of literacy in respect of classroom-teaching approaches, teacher training and support, resource provision, language-policy inputs, community support, and monitoring and evaluation” (Reeves et al., 2008:xx).

The Limpopo Literacy Strategy was embedded in the NCS (DoE, 2002) and in the Language in Education Policy (DoE, 1997b) but after several national and provincial systemic assessments in Grade 3, 4 and 6 since 1999 it became clear that learners in the Limpopo Province were performing very poorly in literacy (and numeracy). Also, the results of a National Grade 3 literacy study conducted in 2001 and 2002 showed that 46% of Grade 2 and 3 learners at national level did not have sufficient literacy skills for their grade level (Monare, 2003 cited in Reeves et al., 2008:3). The study by Reeves et al. (2008) also confirmed that the average Foundation Phase class size in the Limpopo Province was 42 and that physical conditions in most of the Limpopo primary schools were adequate for literacy and language teaching and learning. These physical conditions include, amongst others:

- the condition of school buildings and grounds: 60% of the schools were deemed satisfactory;
- 85% of the schools had Grade R classes;
- 95% of the schools had daily feeding schemes;
- In 86% of the observations there was enough seating space for the learners;
- In 92% of the observations classrooms had usable chalkboards; and
- There was cupboard/storage space for learner support material/books in 88% of the classrooms observed.

However, in 14% of the 77 classrooms observed, physical conditions were less than adequate:

- In some cases the room was too small to accommodate the class;
- In one class none of the learners had desk space;
- Some learners had to write sitting on the floor;
- Learners who had chairs had no tables and used their laps to write on;
- Some classes appeared untidy and disorganised;
- Some classes had small cupboards which limited storage space; and
- Teachers stored learners' exercise books and teaching material in boxes where storage space was limited.

Reeves et al. (2008:143) identified a number of other factors as supporting or constraining language and literacy teaching in Limpopo schools. In the main, the report stated that “there is insufficient evidence of the teachers directly and explicitly developing learners’ literacy skills”, most teachers did not develop concepts about print or print material and hardly any references were made by the teachers to, for example, punctuation such as the use of inverted commas for reported speech, page numbers or even left-to-right approach to text (Reeves et al., 2008:143). The researchers believed that “this situation was exacerbated by the fact that so few books, actual textbooks and readers or other bounded material were made available to and handled by the learners in most classes” (Reeves et al, 2008:143).

The literature reviewed here on the different provincial teaching and learning contexts highlights the daily reading teaching and learning struggles in South African Foundation Phase classrooms. While these struggles appear to be more cumbersome in some provinces, this literature clearly depicted reading teaching as a multifaceted professional task of navigating approaches, activities, practices, and issues related to rural/urban settings, poverty, resource provision, language-policy inputs, monitoring and evaluation, and the like. This was applicable to my study which explored the student teachers’ teaching of reading in contexts which are indicative of these.

2.3.4 Curriculum context

The South African reading teaching and learning issues portrayed above took place within a specific curriculum as well as a particular policy framework when my study was conducted between 2008 and 2011. As my study focused on student teachers’ reading teaching activities and practices it was necessary to review literature on curriculum as well as the policy context.

Many educationalists hold curriculum change in a new democratic South Africa liable for the difficulties associated with the processes of early literacy in schools. The first democratic election in South Africa ushered in a series of educational transformations. For example, within the first year of democratic governance, 18 departments of education were

streamlined into one National Department of Education, the main purpose of which was educational equity for all learners.

Two major developments characterised the changes in education: a new curriculum process on the one hand and a language in education process on the other hand and by 1997 a new Outcomes-Based (OBE) national curriculum for schools was announced (Curriculum 2005), based on “contemporary liberal and international educational theory, known as ‘constructivist’ or discovery learning” (DoE, 1997a as cited in Reeves et al., 2008:45). In the same year, the Language in Education Policy was announced for the purpose of ensuring compatibility with the ‘constructivist’ approach to the curriculum, the whole language approach to literacy and language education was included in the curriculum, and was implicit in the emphasis given to ‘communicative language teaching’ in both C2005 and in the Language in Education Policy for schools (DoE, 1997b, cited in Reeves et al., 2008:4).

Within the context of a South African provincial study of literacy teaching and learning practices and activities, Reeves et al. (2008:7) cautioned that policies and the curriculum are given to teachers and education officials in “unstructured and inexplicit” documents and “irreparable damage can be done to a system in a relatively short period of time”. The new curriculum presented a young post-apartheid South Africa with a new-fangled set of challenges for teaching and learning. Macdonald (2002), for example, found that in Curriculum 2005, the processes of early literacy were effectively ignored. This author alluded to a specific incident in the Eastern Cape where Foundation Phase teachers were told at a curriculum training workshop that learners “... can learn to read and write by themselves. You don't have to explicitly teach this – they will pick this up incidentally” (Macdonald, 2002: 131, cited in Moore & Hart, 2007). Other reports revealed distinct concerns for literacy teaching and learning. For example, the President's Education Initiative (PEI) research (1999) and Hart (2000) found very little extended writing happening in classrooms they observed and that books were rarely used (cited in Moore and Hart, 2007:16).

The quality of literacy teaching and learning came under the spotlight. Commenting on the quality of literacy teaching and learning within the first decade of democracy and curriculum

change in South Africa, Taylor (2001:6) reported that “children sit in groups and talk about their everyday experiences, often with little or no conceptual content or direct action to this activity” (cited in Moore & Hart, 2007). By 2000 the South African education policies and curriculum were clearly problematic and nearly three years after the launch of C2005 the then Minister of Education, Kader Asmal, launched a review of both the curriculum and the language policies.

After about two years of the review process the Revised National Curriculum statement (RNCS), a response to the multitude of gaps in C2005, was released in May 2002. It replaced C2005 and in terms of Foundation Phase (Grade R-3) teaching and learning for example, the Revised National Curriculum Statement (DoE, 2002) stipulated that in the Foundation Phase (FP) 40% of the formal teaching time was allocated to the teaching of literacy, 35% to numeracy and 25% to life skills (DoE, 2002: 17). This then raised the question about the extent to which the curriculum provided a clear road map for teachers to navigate their teaching practices and learning activities in their classrooms. In response to this question, these authors argued that “none of the current policy, curriculum or curriculum-support documents spell out exactly what it is that teachers need to do in the classroom in order to ensure that learners can read and write”.

The learning outcomes in the Literacy and Languages curriculum were listening, speaking, reading and viewing, writing, critical thinking and reasoning, and language structure and use. My study focused on the reading and viewing outcome which stated: “The learner is able to read and view information and enjoyment, and respond critically to the aesthetic, cultural and emotional value of texts” (DoE, 2002a:20). This outcome defined reading for meaning as the main purpose. It acknowledged in its definition techniques and strategies that help learners do this with increasing accuracy support reading for meaning and that reading (including visual and multimedia texts) was essential for language development, learning to write, enjoyment, personal growth, and learning about the world (DoE, 2002a:11).

Operationalising these outcomes seemed to have been challenging as Pretorius (2002 cited in Moore and Hart, 2007:16) pointed to teaching practices in the first three years of

schooling in South Africa that focused on decoding skills at the expense of comprehension especially in light of Macdonald’s (1990) work which found that pre-1994 many South African children were 'barking at print', and reading with accurate pronunciation but with little understanding of what they read“.

Table 2.7 shows a summary of the assessment standards for the ‘Reading and Viewing’ learning outcome which required the following of the FP learner to:

Table 2.7: Reading and Viewing Assessment standards per Grade progression:

ASSESSMENT STANDARD	GRADE
Reading text	
Use visual cues to make meaning	R, 1, 2, 3
Role-play reading	R, 1
Make meaning of written text	R, 1, 2, 3
Reads for information and enjoyment	1, 2, 3
Reads text alone, and uses a variety of strategies to make meaning	3
Reading words and letters	
Starts to recognise and make meaning of letters and words	R
Recognises and makes meaning of letters and words	1
Recognises and makes meaning of written text	1
Recognises and makes meaning of words in longer texts	2
Phonics	
Begins to develop phonic awareness	R
Develops phonic awareness	1, 2
Consolidates phonic awareness	3

This ‘Reading and Viewing’ outcome is intricate to achieve in the early years. Lyster (2003:38) appeared to support this stance in her definition which stated that “reading is an enormously complex process involving perceptual, cognitive, affective and social factors” and Moats (1999) also affirmed that teaching reading is a job for an expert because learning to read is a complex linguistic achievement.

Whereas in C2005 no specific approach was stipulated for teaching and learning, in the RNCS a 'balanced approach' to literacy development was used because it began with children's emergent literacy, it involved them in reading real books and writing for genuine purposes, and it gave attention to phonics (DoE, 2002:9). It explicitly stated that for reading teaching and learning it meant "moving away from the 'reading readiness approach', which held that children were not ready to start learning to read and write until they were able to perform sub-skills such as auditory discrimination and visual discrimination, and had developed their fine and large motor skills to a certain level" (DoE, 2002:9). What a 'balanced approach' in this sense meant was that perceptual skills did not "have to be in place before a learner can start to read and write; and can and should be developed during the children's early learning experiences" (DoE, 2002:9). In 2006 when the RNCS was renamed the National Curriculum Statement it "retained a restricted interpretation of the language policy along with the 'whole language' approach to literacy and language teaching (Reeves et al., 2008:46). Emphasis was placed on reading whole passages of meaningful and authentic text as opposed to teaching reading and writing as a series of separate skills, decoding text and using graded readers.

2.3.5 Policy context for language education

Literacy teaching and learning in South Africa is not exclusively fashioned by curriculum. Language policies play an important role in shaping the discourse of reading teaching and learning. This is particularly true for the South African context with its 11 official languages: English, Afrikaans, isiNdebele, isiXhosa, isiZulu, Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, Siswati, Tshivenda and Xitsonga. The Languages Learning Area also includes languages approved by the Pan South African Language Board (PANSALB) and the South African Authority (SAFCERT) such as Braille and South African Sign Language (DoE, 2002:4). A review of the literature on the policy context for language education was important for my investigation of student teachers' teaching of English first language in Foundation Phase classrooms where the language demographics of the learners are rarely exclusively English home language and multilingualism is the daily teaching reality for most teachers. Student teachers encounter this during their teacher education program.

The Language in Education Policy (LiEP) in terms of Section 3 (4) (m) of the National Education Policy Act, 1996 (Act 27 of 1996) aimed to promote multilingualism and the development of all eleven official languages specified in the South African Constitution. At the outset, this endeavour, however noble in its intentions, seemed unsure. The Department of Education's language-in-education policy gave school governing bodies the responsibility of selecting school language policies that were appropriate for their circumstances and in line with the policy of additive multilingualism. This additive approach to multilingualism promoted the idea that:

- all learners learn their home language and at least one additional official language;
- learners become competent in their additional language while their home language is maintained and developed;
- All learners learn an African language for a minimum of three years by the end of the General Education and Training Band (DoE, 2002:4).

It should be noted that the home, first additional and second additional languages operated on different assumptions:

- (i) The home language assessment standards assume that learners come to school able to understand and speak the language.
- (ii) The first additional language assumes that learners do not necessarily have any knowledge of the language when they arrive at school.
- (iii) The second additional language is intended for learners who wish to learn three languages, the third language being either an official or a foreign language (DoE, 2002:4).

When these assumptions are not accurately recognised or are explained correctly such errors have perturbing implications for teaching and learning. The terminology used in the South African language policies deviated from the standard internationally used terminology (second language and foreign language). Commenting on South Africa's use of terminology like home language, mother tongue and additional language, Reeves et al. (2008:44) attributed this to OBE terminology and trends in the UK and Australia. These authors commented that the term 'additional language' was "developed outside of South Africa and developed for entirely different linguistic contexts" and in light of this, "its use therefore

may be not appropriate” in the first instance and more importantly an “additional language is not elsewhere regarded as one which can or should be used as the medium of instruction for the majority of the learners in a country”.

A case in point would be a deliberation of the South African provincial context, “especially in specific rural areas in a province like Limpopo”, where it may be more effective to recognise that English in such contexts is to all intents and purposes a third or foreign language and that English as a foreign language methodology may be more effective” (Reeves et al. 2008:44). In this case the proposed second language methodologies and learning materials for teaching English will not be effective in South Africa.

With regard to the language of teaching and learning, the NCS recommended that the learner’s home language should be used for learning and teaching wherever possible. This was particularly important in the Foundation Phase where children learn to read and write (DoE, 2002:5). Where learners have to make a transition from their home language to an additional language of learning and teaching the following is suggested:

- The additional language should be introduced as a subject in Grade 1.
- The home language should continue to be used alongside the additional language for as long as possible.
- When learner enter a school where the language of learning and teaching is an additional language for the learner, the teachers and other educators should make provision for special assistance and supplementary learning of the additional language, until such time as the learner is able to learn effectively in the language of learning and teaching (DoE, 2002:5).

Heugh (2006) cautioned that an early exit from a first additional language to a second medium of instruction was a weak bilingual model and she proposed that an additive approach should involve at least six to eight years of first language education together with good provision of the second language, followed by dual medium education in the latter years. Thomas and Collier’s research (1997) also cautioned about this. They argued that children who entered an early transition to English did not succeed and they suggested that children who did succeed were those children who were in longer mother tongue programs which were strengthened by good teaching of English as a subject or mother tongue for the

first six years of schooling with dual-medium bilingual education from the seventh year of schooling.

The literature reviewed here on language debates and positions with regard to teaching and learning highlights the daily reading teaching and learning realities in South African Foundation Phase classrooms. While these realities appear to be more intricate in some provinces, this literature clearly depicted reading teaching and learning as one which involves differing assumptions and approaches. This was applicable to my study which explored the student teachers' teaching of reading in multilingual contexts which manifest some unresolved policy tensions.

2.4 Teacher education

The knowledge base for teaching reading, both theoretical and practical is hidden, extensive and complex (Moats, 1999). This could account for why some authors like Manzo (2006:14) claimed that "few experts on reading instruction or teacher preparation are likely to dispute the overall conclusion" that suggests most teacher education institutions are not adequately preparing Foundation Phase teachers for what is "arguably their most important task: teaching children to read". Other authors like Risko, Roller, Cummins and Bean (2008:252) who provided a review of 82 empirical investigations conducted in the United States on teacher preparation for reading instruction, found that in recent years reading teacher preparation programs have been relatively successful in changing prospective teachers' knowledge and beliefs. A review of this literature was significant for my study which explored how teacher education influences the formation of the student teachers' perspectives of reading teaching activities and practices.

2.4.1 Developing reading teaching knowledge through coursework

Calderhead (1996:715) distinguished teacher knowledge as "factual propositions and the understandings that inform skills action". Teacher knowledge has also been referred to as subject knowledge (Grossman, 1992; Ormrod & Cole, 1996) and craft or pedagogical knowledge (e.g. Calderhead, 1996). It assumes that a strong content focus in course work

will improve teaching. There is evidence of teacher education coursework, however, which do not address the question of what student teachers need to know to be effective reading teachers (Risko et al., 2008:271). Such programs seem to assess a wide array of topics they viewed as important. Risko et al. (2008:271) reported that in such programs student teachers appeared to have difficulty with:

- (i) defining literary terms and performing comprehension tasks related to short stories and poems (Sadoski, Norton, Rodriguez, Nichols, & Gerla, 1998),
- (ii) defining metalinguistic terminology (Mather, Bos, & Babur, 2001),
- (iii) understanding family-school partnerships for supporting literacy development (Foote & Linder, 2000), and
- (iv) telling stories (Mottley & Telfer, 1997).

Steele (2003:108) highlighted the complexity of teacher education by warning that “producing teachers is more than simply accumulating a compendium of skills and competencies, no matter how impressive the articulation of the theory supporting these competencies may be”. Maynard and Furlong (1995:98) argued that this perception of teaching as a complex undertaking is central to the student teacher’s development. Teacher education programs play a key role in their development over time. Barone, Berliner, Blanchard, Casanova and McGowan (1996) warned, however, that many teacher education programs consist of a collection of separated courses in which theory is presented without much connection to practice.

Working with learners in a classroom is important in learning to teach reading. Learners who struggle to learn to read are a teaching reality for teachers. In some cases teachers are part of the learners’ dilemma through their lack of subject knowledge and a lack of engaging learners in high-quality learning. This alludes to possible teacher incompetence. Raths and Lyman (2003:211) described incompetence in teaching as “acts of commission or omission on the part of the teacher that interfere with the learning process of learners or that fail to advance them”. These authors clarified their notion of commission or omission as including, amongst others, the teacher’s lack of subject knowledge and a lack of engaging learners in high-quality learning (Raths & Lyman, 2003:211).

Szabo, Scott and Yellin (2002) highlighted the need to develop the student teachers' understanding of the relationship between theory and practice. Risko, Roller, Cummins, Bean (2008:252) showed that under certain conditions during teacher education student teachers' pedagogical knowledge influenced their actual teaching practice. Robinson's (1999:197) study on the nature of student teaching during Teaching practice (TP) sessions with student teachers at the University of the Western Cape, found a discrepancy between what students know and believe about teaching and how they actually teach as she stated that the student teachers: "lack the ability to perceive that their teaching is reinforcing a style of learning that they themselves have criticized".

Worthy and Patterson's (2001) findings from their provision of a tutoring lesson plan to their student teachers which included explicit attention to read-aloud, fluency, guided text reading, writing and word study components to use as a guide for planning lessons, found that the student teachers gained pedagogical knowledge and positive shifts in their beliefs and confidence - at least half of their student teachers displayed confidence in their ability to teach struggling readers and they also exhibited a more caring attitude. However, the other half still believed that the home was responsible for reading difficulties (Risko et al., (2008:278).

Sleeter, Torres and Laughlin (2004:84) maintained that the "educator takes responsibility for creating the inductive moment, but then guides students in undertaking the process as soon as possible" and Shor and Freire (1987:1580) agree: "We can't sit back and wait for students to put all the knowing together. We have to take the initiative and set an example for doing it". Shor (1982) also wrote about "the withering away of the teacher," which meant that while the teacher is indispensable as a change agent, he/she should engage students in meaningful learning, with scaffolding, and gradually pull back, turning the necessary power over students to construct knowledge (in Sleeter, Torres & Laughlin, 2004:84).

2.4.2 Practical experiences with the teaching of reading

A plethora of literature indicated that the experiences that student teachers gain during their TP sessions plays a huge role in their development of teaching activities and practices

(Calderhead & Shorrock, 1997; Samuel & Pillay, 2003; Haigh, 2005; Darling-Hammond et al., 2005). Since my study investigated, amongst others, the influence of student teachers' practical teaching experiences on the formation of their reading teaching activities and practices and the professional capabilities which appeared to underpin these, a review of the teacher education literature was useful for my study.

Findings from Reddy (2003:187) showed that student teachers in South Africa considered TP as "the most successful part of their teacher education because it provided them with a hands-on experience". Maynard and Furlong (1993; 1995) affirmed that the TP context is important in the student teachers' development and Risko, Roller, Cummins and Bean (2008:252) showed that better teacher education programs were ones which provided explicit explanations and examples, demonstrations of practices, and opportunities for guided practice of teaching strategies in the Teaching Practice (TP) facet of their program. The TP facet of teacher education appeared to be important for developing student teachers' knowledge of reading teaching. Perry and Power (2004) suggested that fieldwork (TP) is a useful mechanism for student teachers to construct practical knowledge in their process of learning to teach and Szabo, Scott and Yellin (2002) recommended that teacher educators should examine their teaching practices and the process of learning to teach.

Berliner (2001:466) put forward that context affects the teaching practices of student teachers "subtly but powerfully" while Maynard and Furlong (1995) proposed school context as one of four domains in which the student teacher's practical teaching knowledge develops (the other three domains are learners in the class, subject matter knowledge, and knowledge of strategies). However, there are difficulties associated with the TP facet in teacher education. Dowhower (1990) examined perceptions of student teachers and expressed concern about negative models in TP on developing their pedagogical knowledge. However, Lalik and Niles (1990), and Kidd, Sanchez, and Thorp (2000) found that student teachers discussed a variety of activities and engaged in higher order thinking processes which the student teachers viewed as a positive influence on their learning (Risko et al. 2008:272). In addition, there were other TP benefits for student teachers' development in their teaching of reading. Anderson, Caswell, and Hayes (1994) found that student teachers felt more comfortable with and believed they benefited from the peer observation and

these researchers concluded that “peer coaching should be considered as a viable method for providing additional feedback” to student teachers (Risko et al., 2008:272).

Robinson (1999:196), for example, found that while some student teachers have good experiences with their supervising teachers in terms of their friendliness, supportiveness and proficient subject matter knowledge, other student teachers find their supervising teachers unsupportive. In the diverse, inequitable schooling contexts in South Africa, where student teachers are placed to learn to teach reading this is particularly significant. Reddy (2003), for example, raised the question of whether they should be placed in best practice settings or whether they should experience the realities of most South African schools with their multitude of challenges.

In the USA, researchers like Hammerness, Darling-Hammond, Grossman, Rust, and Shulman (2005b) proposed that student teachers be placed where the teacher education’s program is matched by a school context with a similar philosophy, vision and practice of teaching. But Steel (2003:108) challenges this for the South African context by viewing teacher education and student teacher placement as carrying transformation possibilities. This author entrenched the view that teacher education can contribute to education transformation through “instilling principles and values of professionals, by teacher educators who are themselves models of these principles” (Steel, 2003:108).

2.4.3 Student teachers’ belief about reading teaching and learning

Shulman (1997:504) suggested that teaching is “perhaps the most complex, most challenging, and most demanding, subtly, nuanced, and frightening activity that our species invented” and Calderhead and Shorrock (1997:196) cautioned that learning about teaching “can seem quite irrelevant to student teachers unless it is introduced at a time when they can appreciate the link between ideas, the practical problems and their own practice as teacher”.

Lonberger (1992) showed that student teachers at the beginning and end of their language education course defined reading as an interactive process, but initially their responses

about how children learn to read and how they would teach children to read reflected a text-based orientation (Risko et al., 2008:260). Teacher education researchers like Block and Hazelip (1995:27) argued that beliefs are "highly resistant to change" and serve as filters that can inhibit taking on new perspectives when those perspectives are in conflict with those already developed (Pajares, 1992). Other researchers (Fazio, 2000, 2003; Theurer, 2002) showed however that "instructional and situated events can be catalysts for changes in beliefs. These researchers clearly refute the argument that beliefs are intractable" (Risko et al., 2008:263). An example of positive changes in beliefs and knowledge, in this regard, was illustrated by Clark and Medina (2000). They documented three changes in the student teachers:

- seeing literacy as influenced by social situations and interactions,
- adopting more multicultural perspectives,
- and understanding the importance of learners' stories for teaching.

A range of educational researchers have suggested that teachers need to become more aware of cultural differences, appreciating learner diversity as a factor that enriches the classroom setting (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992; Gonzales, Moll, & Amanti, 2005). Robinson and Zinn (2007) showed, in their investigation of South African teacher preparation for diversity that attempts are being made to prepare student teachers for diversity in a variety of ways. Martin and van Gunten (2002:47) refer to their concept of positionality that acknowledges that we are all raced, classed, and gendered and that these identities are relational, complex, and fluid positions rather than essential qualities (Bartlett, 1990; Alcoff, 1988; Haraway, 1988; Maher & Tetreault, 1993). Research has indicated that student teachers are often unable to comprehend the role that their various positionalities and attitudes about those positionalities have played in their abilities to be successful teachers and students (Martin and van Gunten, 2002:51). Bartolome (2004:99) added that "educators who do not identify and interrogate their negative, racist, and classist ideological orientations often work to reproduce the existing social order" and that "even teachers who subscribe to the latest teaching methodologies and learning theories can unknowingly end up perverting and subverting their work because of unacknowledged and unexamined dysconscious racism (King, 1991) and other discriminatory tendencies".

Martin and van Gunten (2002:49) also cautioned that “comprehending the construction of knowledge from multiple positions is essential to understanding how to create equitable and culturally representative pedagogical strategies” and they suggested that some student teachers

become aware of a singular positionality and develop an awareness as women, persons of color, members of low-income groups, gays or lesbians, or as physically challenged individuals” and that there is the risk of them fully embracing “only one position that they fail to acknowledge the complexities of multiple positionalities (Martin & van Gunten, 2002:49).

Meier’s (2005) study showed that there were a variety of negative perceptions amongst Unisa (University of South Africa) student teachers towards race groups that were not their own. This was towards their peers in their teacher education program as well as towards the learners in their TP classrooms. In light of these findings this author strongly proposed that in the South African post-Apartheid context, teacher education needs to respond to this by dealing with issues pertaining to multiculturalism ‘theoretically’ and also in the TP where they should be placed in schooling contexts which engages them with diverse learner and teacher populations.

Clark and Medina (2000) found that the use of narratives (student teachers’ personal writing) with American student teachers was helpful in addressing this question of positionality especially as it pertained to the teaching of reading. They found that student teachers’ narratives enabled them to make connections with individuals whose culture was different from their own, and the narratives helped to "disrupt" previously held stereotypes. Cochran-Smith (1991, 1995b, 1998) suggested that “we need teachers who enter and remain in the profession not expecting to carry on business as usual but prepared to teach differently and to join others in major efforts to change the ways we think about teaching, schooling, and social change”.

Teachers who are critical of their own teaching philosophies and practices seek to find deeper understandings to complex issues as they query their perspectives, biases, purposes, and motivation (Lassonde, 2009). However more progressive literature on teacher

education suggested that student teachers, regardless of their ethnic background, tend to uncritically and often unconsciously hold beliefs and attitudes about the existing social order that reflect dominant ideologies that are harmful to so many students (Bloom, 1991; Haberman, 1991; Sleeter, 1992; Davis, 1994; Macedo, 1994; Gomez, 1994; Gonsalvez, 1996; Freire, 1997,1998a, 1998b). Kincheloe (2004:12) cited Gaines (1999) who was vigilant with regard to this issue:

Children and young adults are under siege in both public and higher education because far too many of them have increasingly become institutional breeding grounds for commercialism, racism, social intolerance, sexism, and homophobia.

Ukpokodu (2007:9) explained that “when teachers understand the socio-political context of schooling, they are more likely to deepen their commitment to students and broaden their role to include advocacy and change agency”. Kincheloe (2004:2) explained agency as a “person’s ability to shape and control their lives, freeing self from the oppression of power. Renzaglia, Hutchins and Lee (1997:361) elaborated that teachers are likely to “cultivate firmly established core beliefs and practices needed to act as change agents in their classrooms” when they act with a social justice perspective. However, theorists like Freire and Horton were adamant about connecting societal and educational dimensions because social change pursued in isolation could recklessly foster anti-intellectualism (Kincheloe, 2004). As Horton and Freire (1990:54) put it, a teacher cannot be a coordinator or facilitator: “if you don’t know anything just get out of the way and let somebody have the space that knows something”.

My study investigated the intersection between the student teachers’ reading teaching activities and practices, and their public good commitment and values. The literature reviewed here on student teachers’ beliefs about reading teaching and learning was valuable for understanding some of the reading teacher education issues related to student teachers’ perspectives, biases, purposes, and motivation in their teaching of reading, especially with regard to advocacy and change agency within the current socio-political South African context in which they live, learn and work, which was a focus in my study.

2.5 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The first section of this chapter provided an explication of reading teaching and teacher education, two key concepts in my study which investigated how student teachers' activities and practices in their teaching of reading intersect with their public good commitments and values. This section explains my process of ascertaining the theoretical framework for my study in light of the latter part of my research question, namely public good commitment and values. As such, the following literature was reviewed:

- I. social reconstructionism
- II. social justice
- III. critical pedagogy
- IV. professional capabilities

2.5.1 Social reconstructionism

Given the challenging political backdrop of literacy, language policies, language teaching and schooling in South Africa, my study was located within a social reconstructionist framework which recognizes that education is a political and value-laden enterprise (Giroux, 1992; Freire, 1998). A theoretical framework helps the researcher to make logical sense of the relationships of the variables and factors that have been selected for the research problem. In addition, it provides definitions of relationships between all the variables in order to provide an understanding of the theorized relationships between them (Allen, 2003:47).

It was evident from the discussions in the first section of this chapter that an investigation into reading teaching activities and practices in South Africa cannot be reduced to a 'reading wars' type of argument. While this type of argument is important, larger recurring issues of class, gender, race oppression, multilingualism and poverty ascended as leading dynamics in literacy teaching and learning both in the teaching profession, and in teacher education. My study was about the social dimension of reading teaching because schooling contexts in which reading teachers work are at best diverse and inequitable in South Africa. Auerbach (1993) proposed that literacy should be considered as a social issue that is linked to class, gender, and race oppression, and Corley (2003) suggested that it must be linked to efforts that redress social inequities.

The social reconstructionist framework emphasizes thinking about issues of equity and social justice that arise in and outside of the classroom and it connects the teacher's practice to social continuity and change. In this way it was good for framing the intersection between student teachers' activities and practices in their teaching of reading and their public good commitment and values. It was also a fitting framework for my study because it views education as a vehicle for social change (Counts, 1932; Gutek, 1997). Reed and Black (2006:5) explained that a contextual understanding of the educational system and a deep inquiry into issues of equity and social justice, lead to a reexamination of the essential task of an educator. For example, classroom teachers are directly linked to the quality and equitable delivery of education and student academic achievement (Kozol, 1991; National Commission on Teaching, 1996; Darling-Hammond, 1997a; Ladson- Billings, 2000; Nieto, 2000; Flores-Gonzalez, 2002). Zeichner and Tabachnick (1982:36) also alerted us to the "discovery of linkages between the action of classrooms and characteristics of schools as institutions, and linkages between classroom behaviour and social forces in the community".

Zeichner and Liston (1991:38) claimed that teachers frequently face situations of conflict where it is not clear what action or option ought to be taken. Kincheloe (2004:17) also alerted us to an awareness of the political complexities of schooling from the view that "every dimension of schooling and every form of educational practice are politically contested spaces" because the classroom, curricular, and school structures teachers enter are not neutral sites waiting to be shaped by educational professionals". Zeichner and Liston (1991:38) named instructional choices, curriculum development, administrative directives, parental concerns, cultural differences, and socioeconomic inequalities as points of numerous conflicts for teachers. They also explained that if teachers are going to be able to approach these conflicts in ways that do not rely blindly on authority or special interests, then they must be able to discern good reasons for their educational actions. Furthermore they claimed that only the social reconstructionist framework gives attention to the giving of reasons, the formation of purposes, and the examination of how the institutional, social, and political context affects the formation of those purposes or the framing of reasons.

It is only the social reconstructionist approach which seriously attempts to situate educational action within a larger social and political context (Liston and Zeichner, 1991:38). The pioneers of the social reconstructionist tradition in teacher education, for example, argued that it was the task of education “to prepare individuals intelligently in the management of conditions under which they live, to bring them to an understanding of the forces which are moving and to equip them with the intellectual and practical tools by which they can themselves enter into the direction of these forces” (Kilpatrick, 1993:71). What this means for teachers is that they need to become social agents of change (Goduka, 1999) and what it means for student teachers is what Liston and Zeichner (1996) proposed: “Future teachers cannot, on their own, solve the many societal issues confronting the schools, but they should certainly know what those issues are, have a sense of their own beliefs about those issues, and understand the many ways in which those issues will come alive within their school's walls”.

Zeichner (1994:217) explained that a social reconstructionist orientation to teaching draws attention to "teachers' own definitions of their experience and facilitates an examination of different aspects of that experience". He said that this type of examination is imperative for new teachers because it adopts a "democratic and emancipatory impulse and teachers' deliberations focus upon substantive issues which will help them examine the social and political consequences of their teaching". Liston and Zeichner (1991:33) described a social reconstructionist tradition in teacher education as one which defines schooling and teacher education as crucial elements in a movements towards a more just society by preparing teachers to have a critical perspective on the relationship between schooling and social inequities and to have a moral commitment to correcting those inequities through their daily classroom and school activities. Kliebard (1986:183) appeared to substantiate their description by explaining that a social reconstructionist tradition in teacher education “derived its central thrust from the undercurrent of discontent about the economic and social system...and saw curriculum as a vehicle by which social injustice would be redressed and the evils of capitalism corrected”.

2.5.2 Critical pedagogy

Critical pedagogy attempts to provide teachers with a better means of understanding the contributions which schools offer with regard to race, class and gender division (Giroux, 1988; McLaren, 1989). Giroux (2004) claimed that “at the very least, critical pedagogy proposes that education is a form of political intervention in the world that is capable of creating the possibilities for social transformation”. Theoretically, this seemed appealing to my study.

Green and Evans (2008:119) claimed that it is important to consider the changing socio-political climate and the impact this has on notions of education and pedagogy. Schools are regarded as sites for the reproduction of broader social imbalances like social inequalities, but are also the main sites for social and curriculum construction (Giroux, 1988; McLaren, 1989). Critical pedagogy attempts to provide teachers with a better means of understanding the contributions which schools offer with regard to race, class and gender division (Giroux, 1988; McLaren, 1989). Giroux (2004) seemed affirmative of this as he stated: “Approaching pedagogy as a critical and political practice suggests that educators refuse all attempts to reduce classroom teaching exclusively to matters of technique and method”. Soo Hoo (2004:192) proposed that learners need critical, reflective teachers who help learners deconstruct relations of power and their role in the production of subjectivity, knowledge, incentive, and strife. She believed that it is in these experiences that learners learn to “articulate a moral position, forge coalitions, and develop the courage to stand up for equity, justice, and democracy”. Freire (1985) proposed that education should help students to achieve a critical understanding of their own reality and to engage in transformative actions and, language and literacy were key mechanisms for social reconstruction.

Whereas teachers were predominantly concerned with planning and implementing developmentally appropriate curriculum they are, however, now faced with bigger concerns relating to children's sociocultural contexts and the many societal influences impinging on their lives and learning in a democratic South Africa. This was apparent in reading teaching and learning where teachers have to examine the complexities of the learners' contexts, explore what they know about the challenges of these diverse South African contexts, and

then put pedagogical actions into place. For example, although all children in a literate society have numerous experiences with language and literacy (Heath, 1983; Harste, Woodward, & Burke, 1984) their engagement with literacy differs and teachers need to respond to these differences. Without such an understanding, cultural and cognitive differences are confused with academic deficiency. A critical complex pedagogy must understand the effects of these contextual factors, in particular the ways they affect school performance. Learning to make this distinction and then developing a curriculum to address the difficulties students experience is a necessary teaching ability in a critical complex pedagogy. In the twenty-first century, classrooms in this society are structured by layers of complexity (Kincheloe, 2004:23).

Kincheloe (2004:28) reminded us that Freire always maintained that pedagogy has much to do with the effort to change the world as with developing rigorous forms of analysis. In other words, a critical pedagogy is not only interested in social change but also in cultivating the intellect of teachers, students, and members of the larger society. Furthermore, this author believed that “there is nothing simplistic about this delicate and synergistic relationship and that we cannot attempt to cultivate the intellect without changing the unjust social context in which such minds operate” and he cautioned that today, “critical pedagogy has been associated with everything from simply the rearrangement of classroom furniture to feel-good” teaching directed at improving students’ self-esteem (Kincheloe, 2004:28). He advised that critical pedagogy is often awarded restrictive interpretations of simply caring about students. But while this caring is necessary it does not constitute critical pedagogy.

Kincheloe (2004:32) problematised critical pedagogy by asserting that critical educators cannot just work without helping to educate a knowledgeable and skilful group of students. He argued that creating a just, progressive, creative, and democratic society demands both dimensions of this pedagogical process. According to him, theorists like Horton and Freire (1990) were adamant about connecting these dimensions because social change pursued in isolation can insidiously promote anti-intellectualism if critical educators are not careful. As Horton and Freire (1990:54) put it, a teacher cannot be a coordinator or facilitator “if you

don't know anything just get out of the way and let somebody have the space that knows something".

Leistyna, Lavandez and Nelson (2004:6) proposed that teacher education programs need to assist student teachers "in developing critical languages to explain the world around and within them - the whys and how of what is happening in society". They suggest that

We must ask ourselves: What are the ideological lenses that we use to read social reality? How can we better make sense of the social, political, economic, and institutional factors that shape our lives? How can we come to recognize and address the relationships and abuses of power that are so significant in schools and the larger society (Leistyna, Lavandez & Nelson, 2004:6)?

These are some of the important questions that these authors think that student teachers should be addressing. They proposed that teachers should offer activities that help learners at all levels of schooling, "make sense of, name, and critique oppressive acts, conceptualize alternatives, and work to realize them".

2.5.3 Social justice

The social justice clauses in the South African Constitution have profound implications for education because they commit the state to ensuring that all South Africans have equal access to schooling (Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy, 2001:14) and the National Education Policy Act of 1996 committed the state to "enabling the education system to contribute to the full personal development of each student, and to the moral, social, cultural, political and economic development of the nation at large, including the advancement of democracy, human rights and the peaceful resolution of rights" (Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy, 2001:7).

Curriculum transformation initiatives since South Africa's transition to democracy in 1994 intended to level the education playing field in order to provide previously marginalised children with an equal chance for success. These initiatives all originate on the premise that there is a need to redress past inequities in order to achieve what Giddens (1991) terms the

re-creation' of the community. The National Curriculum Statement (2002), for example, tried to ensure that all Learning Area Statements reflect the principles and practices of social justice, respect for the environment and human rights as defined in the Constitution (DoE, 2002). Even though The National Curriculum Statement (2002) has tried to ensure that all Learning Area Statements reflect the principles and practices of social justice, respect for the environment and human rights as defined in the Constitution (DoE, 2002), it is the teacher's actions that characterizes the principles and practices of social justice.

Social justice includes issues related to poverty, race, social environment, health, class and the like. Wade (2004:64) cites Adams, Bell, and Griffin (1997) who offer this definition of a socially just society:

A socially just society is one in which all members have their basic needs met and all individuals are physically and psychologically safe and secure, able to develop to their full capabilities and to participate as effective citizens of their communities and nation.

Griffiths (2003:58) warned that "social justice and education are extremely complicated to understand and work with". Educational theorists in the 1950s and 1969s, for example, used to discuss social justice almost exclusively in terms of social class and in the 1970s and 1980s issues of gender and race were included as "areas of discrimination, exclusions and non-recognition" (Griffiths, 2003:41). Furthermore, the term 'equality' was associated with this shift and it emerged as an organizing concept. But in the 1990s the term social justice re-emerged as an organizing concept for a rethinking of the place of social class, race, gender and the like in relation to injustices in education (Griffiths, 2003:41). The choice and use of terms like equality and social justice are "highly political, fluid and slippery" (Griffiths, 2003:41). For example, this author says that some activists prefer to talk specifically about 'racial equality' or 'gay pride'. It is important to note Griffiths' point that "since education is part and parcel of the rest of the social world, social justice in general has a reciprocal relation to social justice in education". My research was about social justice in education but the term does not appear in my research question, analysis or results. I selected to use the term 'public good' as a dynamic component of 'social justice'. I reasoned that

semantically and theoretically it captured the actions of activities, practices and capabilities, which I was framing in social justice, more effectively.

Griffiths (2003:55) emphasized that social justice depends on both 'recognition' and 'redistribution'. In South Africa it is insufficient to merely move away from "a system in which schools were treated differently because of the race of the students they served, to a system in which all schools are treated the same may be a crucial first step" (HSRC, 2010: 247). Progress in equity in education efforts cannot be based on race alone – economic equity is vital. But economic equity in South Africa presented as a problem to progress in equity as "The introduction of GEAR and the slowdown of the economy, however, interfered with that progress" (HSRC, 2010: 245).

In terms of teaching and learning social justice in South African education included, amongst others, access to and redistribution of resources, particularly within the South African context with its history of a recognisable lack of access to educational and other resources for the majority of its people before 1994. But Pendlebury and Enslin (2004) cautioned that a narrow focus on the redistribution aspect may render the value of the resources indistinct while a fixation with equality, may make the real issues at stake in the pursuit of social justice appear imprecise. These authors highlight that educational and political inclusion are interdependent and lie together at the core of social justice.

Soo Hoo (2004:188) claimed that many teacher education programs offer student teachers a strong foundation in social justice but they generally do not provide comprehensive strategies for them to work with neglected and disenfranchised learners which means that while "progressive teacher educators are proficient in raising awareness around issues of equity, justice, and democracy, there is a great deal of work that needs to be done to advance the necessary tactics to enact these principles". But this author problematises this by adding that

[...] even when teacher education programs provide practical strategies for combating oppressive practices in schools, student-teachers frequently report that they are faced with institutional barriers that block their ability to operationalize critical pedagogy in their classrooms (Soo Hoo, 2004:188).

This author clarifies that student teachers often state that “they cannot find ways, nor are they encouraged, to integrate new ideas into old, defunct, institutionalized schemata that continue to shape learning and teaching”. Taylor and Otinsky (2007) described a project in the USA in which they helped student teachers understand both why and how to teach for social justice. They devised an inquiry unit with 25 - 30 student teachers that explored social justice issues “tangibly and safely” (Taylor & Otinsky, 2007:69) because they judged that inquiry promotes social justice because:

[...] it begins with voice, inviting all learners to name their world. It ends in reflexivity and action, inviting all learners to interrogate the very constructs they are using to make sense of their world.

In their social justice inquiry unit Taylor and Otinsky (2007:69) also linked whole language teaching to social justice as they believed that whole language promotes critical, pro-justice, and democratic teaching (Shannon, 1990; Lee, Menkart, & Okazawa-Rey, 1998). Elaborating on the work of Harste, Woodward and Burke (1984), Goodman (1986), and Cambourne (1988) for example, Taylor and Otinsky (2007:72) proposed that whole language teachers encourage students to use language and literacy critically to problematize the social and cultural norms that are produced and reproduced in texts. Their social justice inquiry unit took place each day for three weeks with student teachers taking an intensive teaching and learning course and then proceeding to student teaching. The student teachers were encouraged to move from theory into practice: they wrote lesson plans, planned ways to differentiate instruction, discussed classroom management and assessment strategies, developed a philosophy statement, and attempted to prepare for their student teaching experience (Taylor & Otinsky, 2007:72). They were required to maintain a reflective journal. In addition, the unit coincided with the learners’ classroom theme of civil rights and it incorporated a variety of whole language teaching strategies including brainstorming, poetry writing, reader response to texts, films, and visual images, role-playing, and inquiry projects.

Taylor and Otinsky (2007:76) found that the student teachers entered into the inquiry with great apprehension but that it helped them with thinking about their students differently.

They believed that it equipped them to think critically and discuss difficult and complex issues of social justice and to help them “think about whether or not they are committed to teaching for social justice on a personal level before entering the classroom” (Taylor & Otinsky, 2007:76). Furthermore, their project raised consciousness and encouraged student teachers to consider their roles as whole language teachers and moral change agents in a democracy.

2.5.4 Professional capabilities

While the Taylor and Otinsky (2007) social justice teacher education project in the USA held a few lessons for my study in terms of the connection between language teaching and moral change agency, Walker and McLean’s (2010) research on the education of professionals as contributors to the public good resonated more strongly with my study. The focus of their research was the “many legacies of apartheid (which included current anxieties about unfulfilled promises after 1994), as well as some of the effects of globalisation”. They proposed that

[...] the integrity of professional life is necessary to the health of civic culture, that there are some grounds for believing that a concept of professionalism that is linked to social functions and the public good can be revived to be of service in any democratic society in the contemporary world, and in South Africa in particular (Walker & McLean, 2010:851).

A large body of research exists on literacy and social justice including critical literacy which promotes democracy, social justice and equity in schools. This study, however, drew primarily on work done in the field of professional capabilities for the following reasons:

- (i) people in conditions of poverty are highly dependent on public services staffed by university graduates; they have no private resources suffer most from poor service provision and delivery especially in health, education and welfare provision (Keefer & Khemani, 2005);

- (ii) socially conscious elites – including professionals – can play a significant role in affecting social policy and change in society when they see themselves as having interdependent lives with those living in poverty and obligations towards the poor; and, believe that public action to reduce poverty is possible (De Swaan, Manor, Øyen & Reis, 2000); and
- (iii) professionals equipped by their university education with knowledge, practical skills and public service values can make a positive difference in the everyday lives of the people with whom they come into contact (above references cited by Walker & McLean, 2010:851).

Their research set out to explore which professional capabilities were valued by diverse actors in South African higher education and, to explore an argument for an interpretation of university transformation as enabling students to develop capabilities relevant to their society while at university; that is, to impart the knowledge, skills and competence which constitute the capability to practice as professionals working for social change (Walker & McLean, 2010:851). They claimed that “ across the world there is evidence that ideal-typical professionalism, defined as working for the public good, is in crisis: self-interest and technical rationality are prevailing, and there are histories of collusion with corrupt states” (Walker & McLean, 2010:851).

Walker and McLean’s (2010) study proceeded to investigate five professional education case study departments across three South African universities – Social Work, Public Health, Law, Engineering and Theology. My study was conducted in Teacher Education at one South African university. Teacher education has been prone to technical rationality which reinforces a view of teachers as passive and dependent cogs in an educational machine (Patterson, 2010). Dewey was critical of teacher practice as technical rationality, arguing that this violates teaching and learning by focusing on learning as a product instead of a process (Patterson, 2010). While the teacher is typically and accurately understood as mediator in a teaching and learning process, graduate teachers have to contribute to the economic and social development of South Africa through their professionalism in their teaching at diverse schooling contexts.

Walker and McLean (2010:851) cited Sen (2008:335) who emphasized, “if someone has the power to make a change that he or she can see will reduce injustice in the world, then there is a strong social argument for doing just that”. Walker and McLean’s (2010:850) research project sought to “introduce transformation as human development and, more specifically, transformative professional education as the formation of public-good capabilities”. In terms of university-based professional education Walker and McLean (2010) conceptualised proxies for ‘professional capabilities’ as functionings or achievements as those professional ‘beings and doings’ that are valuable to the graduates who emerge from higher education (Walker & McLean, 2010). Drawing on Sen’s (1999) explanation of capabilities they explained it as “the opportunities for valuable beings and doings (functionings) and the freedoms which enable one to choose between different kinds of good lives. The aim of their study was to “explore how universities might contribute to poverty reduction through expanding the capabilities and functionings of students in professional education, who in turn are able to expand the capabilities of poor and disadvantaged individuals and communities” (Walker & McLean, 2010:851).

Walker and McLean (2010:851) based their identification of professionalism for “professionals bound up with transformation in South Africa” on “ideas about human development that emphasise capability expansion for both professionals and their clients. They claimed that this particular definition of professionalism “carries with it a special emphasis on responsibility, in South Africa’s context, for poverty reduction and they clarified that Sen (2008:335) calls this feature of human development a social justice imperative ‘linking responsibility to effective power’.

In their study they investigated how different universities in South Africa are transforming, under contemporary national and global conditions; they identified the educational mission informing professional education and expectations of teaching and student achievements in different universities and different professional fields and compared and contrasted the experiences, knowledge and skills of students, visions of their future work, and notions of professional responsibility and accountability; and they generated a multi-dimensional Index for evaluating progress in institutional transformation in relation to professional education for human development and poverty reduction (Walker & McLean, 2010:851). They stated

that the most significant outcome from their data and research was “the participatory production of an evidence-based and theoretically informed public-good professional education Index” (Walker & McLean, 2010:855). The eight professional capabilities, which constituted the core of their index, are described below with elaborations taken from their data:

1. *Informed Vision*, for example:

Understanding how the profession is shaped by historical and current socio-economic-political context national and globally; understanding how structures shape individual lives; being able to imagine alternative futures and improved social arrangements.

2. *Affiliation* (solidarity), for example:

Accepting obligations to others; care and respect for diverse people; understanding lives of poor and vulnerable; developing relationships and rapport across social groups and status hierarchies; communicating professional knowledge in an accessible way/courtesy and patience.

3. *Resilience*, for example:

Perseverance in difficult circumstances; recognising the need for professional boundaries); fostering hope; having a sense of career security.

4. *Social and collective struggle*, for example:

Community empowerment approach/promoting human rights; contributing to policy formulation and implementation; identifying spaces for change/Leading and managing social change to reduce injustice; working in professional and inter-professional teams; participating in public reasoning/listening to all voices in the ‘conversation’; building and sustaining strategic relationships and networks with organisations and government.

5. *Emotions*, for example:

Empathy/narrative imagination; compassion; personal growth; self care; integrating rationality and emotions; being emotionally reflexive.

6. *Integrity*, for example:

Acting ethically; being responsible and accountable to communities and colleagues; being honest; striving to provide high-quality service.

7. *Assurance and confidence*, for example:

Expressing and asserting own professional priorities; contributing to policy; having confidence in the worthwhileness of one's professional work; having confidence to act for change.

8. *Knowledge, imagination, practical skills*, for example:

Having a firm, critical grounding in disciplinary, academic knowledge; valuing indigenous and community knowledges; having a multidisciplinary / multi-perspectival, stance; being enquiring, critical, evaluative, imaginative, creative and flexible; integrating theory and practice; being problem-solvers; open minded (Walker & McLean, 2010:855).

Based on these professional capabilities, they extrapolated four non-hierarchical metafunctionings. By virtue of their professional education at university, they suggested that graduates ought to be able to do and to choose to do, in all these multi-dimensional ways, as public good professionals: (i) recognise the full dignity of every human being; (ii) act for social transformation and to reduce injustice; (iii) make sound, knowledgeable, thoughtful, imaginative professional judgements; and (iv) work/act with others to expand the comprehensive capabilities ('fully human lives') of people living in poverty.

They also considered the conditions that supported formation: (i) curriculum, (ii) pedagogies, (iii) encouraging professional ways of being, and (iv) departmental cultures. They also mapped university conditions that would support public good professional education and found four: (i) institutional culture, (ii) advancing criticism, (iii) deliberation and (iv) responsibility, social engagement, and appropriate contributions to building just futures (Walker & McLean, 2010:858). These four educational arrangements dimensions were derived from data and a theoretical perspective of 'praxis pedagogy' as transformative, critical, and attentive both to knowledge and to responsible action in society.

In short, the eight professional capabilities, the four non-hierarchical metafunctionings, the four university conditions that would support public good professional education, and the two extensive apartheid legacy constraints, constituted a situated, interlocking, evidence-based public-good professional capabilities Index. But they cautioned that their Index and case studies “must be understood as frameworks for discussion and reasoning, rather than as a blueprint for educational action” (Walker & McLean, 2010:865).

They showed how their case studies produced the Index. For example, they found the engineering faculty to be one “working hard to shift in a public good direction” (Walker & McLean, 2010:860). They did not see it as a perfectly just program (in Sen’s terms), but an attempt to develop a course which reduced old injustices and adopted a new orientation to the future. They took “the most difficult case of a profession with high status and high financial rewards in South Africa, one which has been historically white and male dominated and socially conservative to test the Index” Walker and McLean (2010:863). My study investigated a profession with lower status and lower financial rewards in South Africa, and historically more female than male.

Walker and McLean (2010:863) clarified that the engineering case study was based at the most historically conservative of their three selected universities, albeit now changing significantly yet even in that hardest case they found possibilities for the education of public-good professionals and evidence of all eight professional capabilities. My study was also conducted at a previously white teacher education institution in Cape Town, which merged with coloured teacher education institutions, which then merged with a former white Technikon and then merged again with a former coloured Technikon to become an Education Faculty, at what is now known as the Cape Peninsula University of Technology.

Walker and McLean (2010:860) suggested that the educational arrangements in their engineering faculty case study showed how it “fostered the capability of affiliation in that students now had to reach imaginatively to understand lives very different from their own and to discover a common humanity”. They cited the idea of Leibowitz, Bozalek, Rohlder, Carollissen and Swartz (2010) that university is then a crucial arena where difference ought to be addressed. In terms of modules taught in the engineering faculty, Walker and McLean

(2010:861) reported that it promoted values and ethics as central to a professional engineer's working practice, as opposed to being guided mainly by financial goals; balancing financial considerations with responsibilities to others' lives and "in terms of pedagogies, the experiential component of the module was significant, but so too were faculty concerns to instil values, and respect and affiliation for others in the students through how they were treated by the lecturers themselves, in other words the professional ways of being modelled by academic staff and the ethos in departments". They also found evidence "of a bold vision on the part of the faculty, and clearly potential for producing engineers more inclined to work on poverty reduction" as well as evidence of engineering faculty that seemed amenable to ideas about how their work can be part of South Africa's transformation (Walker & McLean, 2010:863).

2.5.5 Capability Approach

Walker and McLean's research (2010) used Sen's (1999) and Nussbaum's (2000) Capabilities Approach. It is an innovative theoretic paradigm in the development and policy world also known as the Human Development approach or the Capability Approach, Capabilities Approach or the Human Development and Capabilities Approach (Nussbaum, 2011) which asks the same important questions which have made it appealing for use in my study. It asks: "What are people actually able to do and to be? What real opportunities are available to them?" (Nussbaum, 2011:x). Although these questions seem simple they are laden with complexity because it focuses on quality of human life which "involves multiple elements whose relationship to one another needs close study" (Nussbaum, 2011:x). It provides an approach to "comparative quality-of-life assessment and to theorizing about basic social justice" (Nussbaum, 2011:18).

In short, capability means "opportunity to select" and functionings "are beings and doings that are outgrowths or active realizations of capabilities" (Nussbaum, 2011:25). This author furthermore distinguished the concept of internal capabilities and she asserted that

[...] one job of a society that wants to promote the most important human capabilities is to support the development of internal capabilities – through

education, resources to enhance physical and emotional health, support for family care and love, a system of education, and much more” (Nussbaum, 2011:21).

Walker and McLean (2010:850) commented that the capability approach requires one to “evaluate well-being in terms of what people value being and doing, and to work to increase their freedom to be in those ways or to do those things; social (including educational) arrangements should aim to expand people’s capabilities”. Unterhalter and Walker (2007:248) confirmed that critical pedagogy offers a significant resource in its concern for amongst others, the power dimension of pedagogy and that it has a “stronger conceptualisation of collective as well as individual agency in learning”, it “is better at showing how power works and that education may be oppressive as well as transformative”. But these authors also offer the view that “the concern in the capability approach with *what we can actually do and be* grounds critical pedagogy in processes of learning and equality of learning outcomes and the connection between learning, education, and other processes of social change” (Unterhalter & Walker, 2007:248). For these well-articulated reasons I gravitated towards the capability approach for working with my research question as it was concerned with “social injustice and inequality, especially capability failures that are the result of discrimination or marginalization” (Nussbaum, 2011:19).

The capabilities approach is useful in “showing us a different picture of what our priorities should be” particularly in a society like South Africa with its “urgent human problems and unjustifiable human inequalities” that have persisted in diverse old and new forms long after the inception of democracy in 1994 (Walker & McLean, (2010). Nussbaum (2011:xi) recommended that “improving people’s quality of life requires wise policy choices and dedicated action on the part of many individuals”. What was particularly appealing for my study was that this approach “takes each person as an end, asking not just about the total or average well-being but about opportunities available to each person”. The notion of the student teacher as human being, South African citizen, and novice professional reading teacher was important in this regard. Each of these identities have what Nussbaum refers to as “combined capabilities – a kind of freedom” which is understood as the totality for choice and action in their specific political, social and economic situation (Nussbaum, 2011:21).

Considering the various areas of human life in which people move and act, the capabilities approach to social justice asks: What does a life worthy of human dignity require? (Nussbaum, 2011). Dignity is one element of the capabilities approach “but all of its notions are seen as interconnected, deriving illumination and clarity from one another” and it is important to note that “in a wide range of areas, moreover, a focus on dignity will dictate policy choices that protect and support agency, rather than choices that infantilize people and treat them as passive recipients of benefit (Nussbaum, 2011:30). As Nussbaum (2011:30) puts it:

The claims of human dignity can be denied in many ways, but we may reduce them all to two, corresponding to the notions of internal capability and combined capability. Social, political, familial, and economic conditions may prevent people from choosing to function in accordance with a developed internal capability: this sort of thwarting is comparable to imprisonment.

In terms of using the capability approach for a research study, for example, Nussbaum (2011:20) cautioned that

Users of the Capabilities Approach need to attend carefully to issues of both pedagogy and content, asking how both the substance of studies and the nature of classroom interactions (for example, the role given to critical thinking and to imagining in daily study of material of many types) fulfill the aims inherent in the approach, particularly with regard to citizenship.

My study located student teachers in public discourses and their investment in public commitment through their resourcefulness as teachers of reading. Kincheloe (2004:17) believed that “the question of what educators teach is inseparable from what it means to locate one’s self in public discourses and invest in public commitments. In my study the teaching of reading was regarded as a resource for societal transformation. At the very least, I reasoned that it intersected with the society in which student teachers work, learn and live. Kincheloe (2004:17), for example, provided good clarification for this standpoint:

Educational work at its best represents a response to questions and issues posed by the tensions and contradictions of the broader society; it is an attempt to understand and intervene in specific problems that emanate from those sites that people concretely inhabit and actually live out their lives and everyday existence.

2.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter provided a brief review on approaches to reading teaching in order to show the vast scope which student teachers need to know about and decide on in their own teaching. It became clear from the literature that each approach seemed to propose its own respective teaching and learning and learning gains. Each approach was also associated with a range of teacher and learner actions, more specifically the activities which teachers engage learners in, but the literature did not overtly spell out the teaching practices of any of these respective approaches which would render it effective for learners to progress in their reading.

A detailed review of the literature pertaining to activities and practices was provided in this chapter. The main point in this review was that there was a weak relationship between teacher effectiveness and the use of activities in literacy teaching and that effective teachers demonstrated a wide variety of literacy teaching practices than less effective teachers. This part of the literature review alerted us to the wisdom of providing student teachers with opportunities to observe and reflect on the synergy between activities and practices as supporting effective reading teaching.

This chapter located the teaching of reading in South Africa in terms of class and race. It reviewed national learner performance with regard to reading progress and it reviewed provincial attempts to propel the improvement of literacy teaching and learning. Taken together, these issues showed a mostly bleak account of the state of reading literacy in South Africa. This was contextualised within the curriculum and policy context at the time of this study, 2008-2011. In the main, this discussion showed the tension and contradictions across the policy and curriculum contexts and the tensions within each of these in the teaching of reading.

Teacher education was a focus of this chapter since my study was about student teachers' teaching of reading during their teacher education program. It reviewed literature on the numerous aspects involved in 'preparing' student teachers to teach reading, particularly their theoretic knowledge and their practical teaching experiences. It highlighted the complexity of this apparently straightforward set of options by pointing out challenges of bringing theory and practice together meaningfully. This discussion also entailed an argument for locating student teachers within broader social, political and economic dimensions of their reading teaching through addressing their positionalities and beliefs in relation to their learners and the broader schooling community.

This chapter discussed the challenging political backdrop of literacy, language policies, language teaching and schooling in South Africa and it consequently located this study within a social reconstructionist framework which recognizes that education is a political and value-laden enterprise. It provided a rationale for the selection of a social reconstructionist research framework as emphasizing thinking about issues of equity and social justice that arise in and outside of the classroom, and connecting the student teachers' teaching activities and practices to social continuity and change.

The functional concepts for this study - social justice, critical pedagogy and professional capabilities – were introduced and discussed. Social justice was defined and unpacked as a complex construct in teaching and my definition of the notion of public good as a dynamic component of 'social justice' was clarified. Critical pedagogy's value was confirmed as a significant resource for showing substance with how education could be oppressive as well as transformative.

This chapter explained, with support from the extensive review of literature pertaining to professional capabilities, the grounds for selecting the capability approach and not critical pedagogy per se – "*what we can actually do and be* grounds critical pedagogy in processes of learning and equality of learning outcomes and the connection between learning, education, and other processes of social change" (Unterhalter & Walker, 2007:248). The role of higher education in the development of professional capabilities was extrapolated and a definition and illustrations of professional capabilities were provided.

My intention with this literature review was to provide a clear theoretical framing for my research question: *How does the student teachers' teaching of reading intersect with their public good commitment?* The next chapter outlines the methodological aspects of this research and looks at how and why particular forms of data were gathered in this investigation. In short, it describes the research design and shows the process of data collection as well as the analysis which resulted in a rich set of findings pertaining to what activities and practices the student teachers saw as supporting their teaching of reading, what professional capabilities underpin their teaching of reading, how teacher education shaped the formation of these professional capabilities and what societal experiences shaped the formation of their professional capabilities.

CHAPTER THREE RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This study addressed the following research question: How do the student teachers' perspectives of reading teaching intersect with their public good commitment? It used a mixed methods approach with a concurrent triangulation design. This chapter outlines the methodological aspects of my research and looks at how and why particular forms of data were gathered in the investigation of the research question. It describes the research design and explains the process of data collection. The benefits of employing mainly qualitative methodologies with the creative use of a small quantitative aspect are articulated. Furthermore, an explanation of how data analysis was conducted, and how reliability and validity was ensured, is also provided in this chapter.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

When you conduct research you need to think about both purpose and method as part of the design of the project (Shillingford, 2006:22). Some research gives a snap shot of a single, fixed time in life (cross-sectional research) and permits you to analyse it in detail. Other studies provide a moving picture that lets you follow events, people, or social relations over a period of time (longitudinal research). My study was longitudinal as it attempted to gain a picture of student teachers' development over time by collecting data from them at the beginning of their teacher education program and then at the end.

There are three types of longitudinal studies: trend, cohort and panel studies (Babbie, 1995). Trend studies are those that study changes within a general population over time. Panel studies are similar to trend and cohort studies except that the same set of people, group or organization is studied each time (Babbie, 1995). Cohort studies examine more specific subpopulations (cohorts) as they change over time. I did a cohort study which examined a cohort of student teachers registered for the Bachelor of Education (Foundation Phase) degree.

I chose a mixed methods design for this research. There is not widespread agreement on exactly what constitutes a mixed methods study (Morse, 2010). Some researchers claim that a mixed methods study is any study with both qualitative and quantitative data, whereas other authors say a mixed methods study must have a mixed methods question, both qualitative and quantitative analyses, and integrated inferences (Tashakkori, 2009). There is also disagreement regarding various aspects of mixed methods, such as when mixing should occur (Harwell, 2011:151). My study used a qualitative methods research question with mainly qualitative analyses and integrated inferences. The mixing occurred in the second of two phases of my study.

Kerlinger (1973) alerts us that research design and research methods are not synonymous. Methodology is the tool used to accomplish part of the study, specifically, how to obtain and analyze data (Harwell, 2011:170). My study used two qualitative methods and one quantitative method to obtain data. There are a few benefits to using the mixed methods approach, which I used for my longitudinal cohort study. Johnson and Turner (2003) explain that it allows multiple kinds of data to be collected with different strategies and methods “in ways that reflect complementary strengths and non-overlapping weaknesses, allowing a mixed methods study to provide insights not possible when only qualitative or quantitative data are collected” (Harwell, 2011:151).

I chose a specific research design. Creswell (2003) describes six somewhat overlapping mixed methods research designs, referred to as “strategies of inquiry”, that guide the construction of specific features of a mixed methods study (Harwell, 2011:152). The designs vary in whether qualitative and quantitative data are collected sequentially or concurrently, the weight given to one kind of data or another, when the mixing is done, and the extent to which a theoretical perspective (e.g. post-positivism, constructivism) is present and guides the research design. I chose the concurrent triangulation design which is used when the focal point is on confirming, cross-validating, or corroborating findings from a single study. Furthermore, with the concurrent triangulation design qualitative and quantitative data are collected concurrently, such that weaknesses of one kind of data are ideally offset by strengths of the other kind (Harwell, 2011:155). In addition, with the concurrent

triangulation design one kind of data can be weighted more heavily. In my study the qualitative data was given foremost weighting.

My study consisted of two phases: 2008 and 2011 when a cohort of student teachers were in their first and fourth year respectively. Qualitative data was collected in 2008 and 2011. In addition, quantitative data was collected in 2011. Most of the weight in this study was given to the qualitative data which was generated from focus group interviews (2008 and 2011) and a participatory dialogue (2011). The quantitative data from a questionnaire was collected concurrently with the participatory dialogue data in 2011. My study took an overall inductive direction within the concurrent triangulation design (Harwell, 2011:152). It is important to note that this design evolved iteratively as the research proceeded.

3.2.1 Qualitative aspects of the research design

In the early conceptualisation of my study I started with a qualitative research design. Interesting preliminary findings guided the design towards a mixed methods approach in phase two as it showed potential to enhance and complement the preliminary findings.

As stated above, my study was mainly qualitative. Strauss and Corbin (1990:17) clarified that qualitative research refers to “any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification. Griffin (1986) reported that qualitative methods were best treated as a source of rich anecdotal material. Qualitative research is typically associated with words as units of analysis rather than numbers, and description rather than analysis. In my study the student teachers’ words in the focus group discussions as well as in the participatory dialogue were interpreted for meaning and used descriptively in the data presentation.

Qualitative research is also associated with small-scale rather than large-scale studies, holistic perspective rather than specific focus, researcher involvement not researcher detachment, and emergent research design rather than predetermined research design (Denscombe, 2003:232). I did a small-scale study with a holistic perspective of student teachers’ public good commitment but with a specific reading teaching focus during their teacher education.

Qualitative data analysis is primarily an inductive process of organizing data into categories and identifying patterns among categories. My research studied one issue in depth: the intersection between the student teachers' teaching of reading, and their public good commitment. According to Patton (1990), qualitative research methods afford the researcher the opportunity to study selected issues in depth and greater detail but that methodology decisions must be determined by the purpose of inquiry and the research it is aimed at. The purpose of my inquiry was to investigate their activities and practices in their teaching of reading, the professional capabilities which underpin these, the formation of these professional capabilities during teacher education, and the societal experiences which shaped the formation of their public good commitments and values. This required an analysis of the meanings that they attached to their reading teaching activities and practices through the various professional accounts which they described in the focus group interviews and the participatory dialogue. In this way the qualitative approach resonated well with creating the opportunity for the student teachers to tell their stories. As Maxwell (1996) proposed, this approach allows for the different experiences and nuances of the participants to be recorded with a focus on specific situations and people and emphasizes words rather than numbers.

I had a range of questions which I considered at the outset of this research, as well as throughout the emergent process:

- How will I go about finding out about student teachers' activities and practices in their teaching of reading? Do I want to see what they *actually* do in their teaching of reading? Or do I want to know what activities and practices they *see* as supporting their teaching of reading from their accounts of *what they know* about it and *experienced* during their teacher education?
- How will I go about finding out about this with regard to teaching English first language reading in the Foundation Phase classroom context in a transforming South Africa?
- How will I go about ascertaining the professional capabilities which underpin their reading teaching activities and practices?
- How will I go about determining their public good commitment in their teaching of reading in a transforming South Africa?

- How will I find out about the formation of their professional capabilities for public good during their teacher education? Do I want to *describe the process* of their formation over time or do I want to *trace the facets* in their teacher education, particularly those which were *most influential* in their formation?
- How will I find out about their societal experiences which were also influential in the formation of their public good commitment?

All, except one of these questions, resonated with the advantages of a qualitative research approach which is useful for understanding the meaning of professional teaching actions in particular schooling contexts. Adler (2002:10), for example, claimed that qualitative teacher education studies “enable rich descriptions of learning by a particular teacher in a particular context”. With regard to the issue of context, she added that teacher education research also needs to investigate practices that extend across diverse contexts and conditions” (Adler, 2002:10). My teacher education study provided rich descriptions of student teachers’ views from data pertaining to their experiences in a variety of teaching contexts.

3.2.2 Quantitative aspects of the research design

One of my methodological questions did not resonate with a qualitative research approach. When I reasoned that it would be more beneficial for my study to *trace the facets* in their teacher education which were *most influential* in their formation, I made a methodological decision to do a simple quantification of what the preliminary qualitative (focus group) findings were pointing to. The focus group data identified influential teacher education facets, each of which appeared more influential, for various purposes and reasons, in the student teachers’ formation of professional capabilities for public good. Hence the variable, ‘most influential’ emerged. The focus group data could not accurately determine this level of influence so I rationalised that a fixed response questionnaire which could yield quantifiable data would be a more reliable means of determining this.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) pointed out that both qualitative and quantitative research methods emphasize truth, consistency, applicability, and neutrality while taking different procedural approaches to assure quality. Identifying a study’s research design is important because it communicates information about key features of the study, which can differ for

qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods (Harwell, 2011:148). Quantitative researchers seek explanations and predictions that are generalisable to other persons and places (Shillingford, 2006:27). My use of the questionnaire was to do a simple quantification to explain which of the teacher education facets were most influential in the formation of student teachers' professional capabilities by tallying the number of student teachers who deemed a particular teacher education facet as most influential in their formation of a specific professional capability. This was important for hopefully informing teacher educators who choose to frame their programs within a public good commitment discourse.

Shillingford (2006:27) explained that the intent with quantitative research is to establish, confirm, or validate relationships and because the approach is deductive, emphasis is placed on detailed planning prior to data collection and analysis. Authors like Neuman (2003) and Leedy (1997) stress the importance of mechanical techniques. Detailed planning went into my questionnaire even though the purpose was to do a simple quantification procedure. The sophistication of my questionnaire was mainly in the mechanical technique of conducting it face-to-face with the use of clicker technology, having immediate access to the results in the data collection session and displaying and verifying the results instantly with the participants.

The following figure shows a summary of my mixed methods approach, each of which is explained in detail in this chapter:

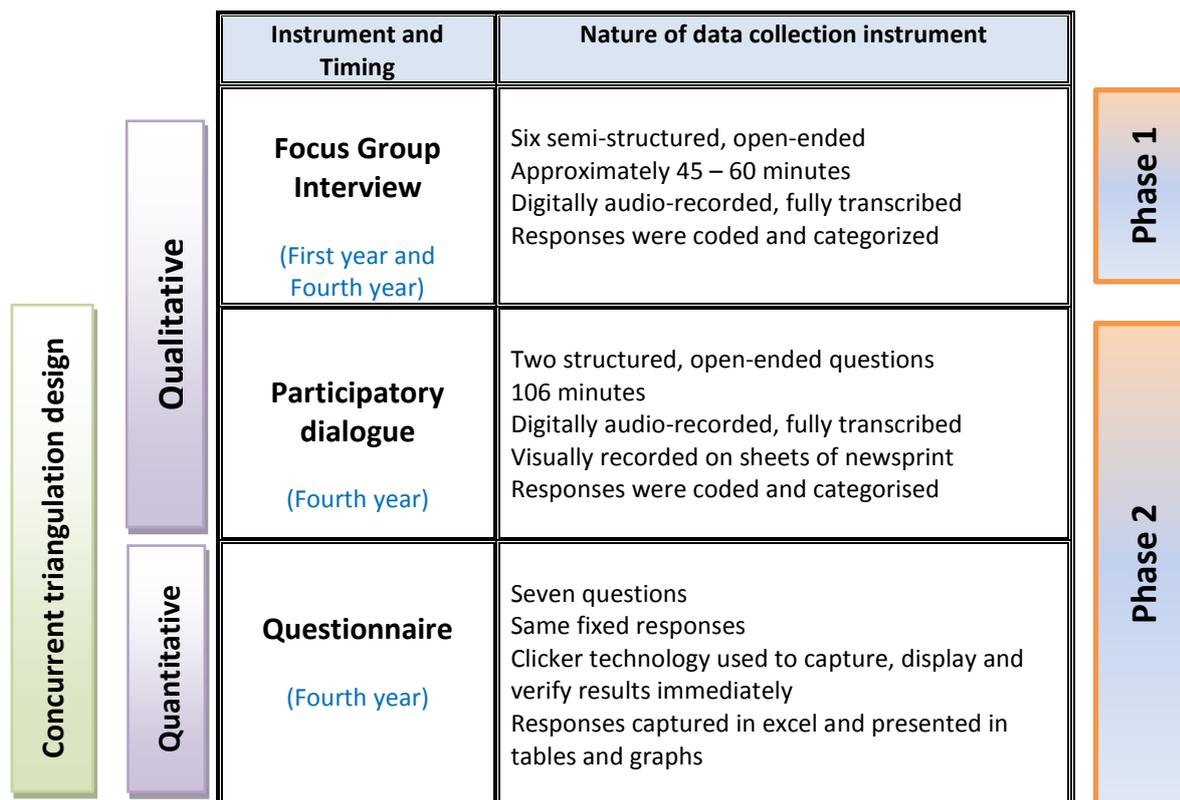


Figure 3.1: Mixed methods research design

3.3 SAMPLE

This study was conducted with 35 student teachers who were registered for the Bachelor of Education (Foundation Phase) degree at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology's Faculty of Education at the Mowbray campus.

This study consisted of two phases. Phase one consisted of student teachers' participation in the focus group interviews. Phase two consisted of student teachers' participation in a participatory dialogue and a questionnaire.

3.3.1 Phase one sample

The sample selection for phase one was purposeful. Ten student teachers participated in phase one of the study which consisted of focus group interviews. Purposeful selection could "maximize the range of specific information" (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:277) which was deemed necessary for this study. The purposeful sampling was based on specific criteria. Ten participants were chosen in 2008 from the cohort of first year B Ed (Foundation Phase)

student teachers. In this faculty in 2008, the first year Foundation Phase student teachers were accommodated in two class groups. Hence, one focus group per class was sampled. Five student teachers were selected from class group A and five from class group B respectively. Given this country's race and language diversity I tried to include student teachers from all race and language groups as per the demographics in this faculty. In addition, age as a sampling factor, was included as a proxy for life and societal experiences. All participants were female since there was a 100% female enrollment in the Foundation Phase degree program.

Two interviews were conducted in 2008 when the student teachers were in the first year of their B Ed (Foundation Phase) degree, one with each class group. The focus group interviews were repeated in 2011 when this sample was in their fourth (final) year of their degree. In 2011 the two class groups were accommodated in one class. Whereas ten student teachers participated in 2008 in their first year, nine of the ten participated in 2011 in their fourth year. The tenth student teacher from class group A was no longer in the teacher education program due to ill health.

The race, language and age variation per focus group for phase one sample per class group is shown in the two tables below:

Table 3.1: Race, language and age profile of focus group A (FG A)

Number of participants per race	Participants' home language	Participants' age in 2008	Participants' age in 2011	Participants' pseudonym
2 White	Afrikaans	19	23	Karla
	English	19	23	Barbara
1 Coloured	English	23	27	Nelly
2 Black	Xhosa	20	24	Hayley
	Xhosa	35	Discontinued	Wendy

Table 3.2: Race, language and age profile of focus group B (FG B)

Number of participants per race	Participants' home language	Participants' age in 2008	Participants' age in 2011	Participants' pseudonym
1 White	English	23	26	Ally
4 Coloured	English	27	30	Katherine
	English	17	21	Fiona
	English	30	34	Betty
	English	24	28	Cindy

3.3.2 Phase two sample

Phase two took place in 2011, three weeks after the completion of the focus group discussions with the student teachers in their fourth year. The sample in phase two included the nine student teachers from phase one. In addition, self-selection sampling was done. All the student teachers from the fourth year cohort of 2011 were invited to participate in the participatory dialogue and the questionnaire. 26 selected themselves. This provided a total of 35 student teachers (9 purposeful sample of phase one + 26 self-selected sample) out of the 46 registered for the fourth year language education subject.

My sampling thus resembled what Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2006) called a nested sampling design “wherein one or more members of the subgroup represent a sub-sample of the full sample”. That is, the focus group sample of phase one represented a sub-sample of the larger cohort who participated in the participatory dialogue and quantifiable questionnaire. Phase two’s sample of 35 student teachers also varied in race, language and age. All were female. The race, language and age variation for phase two is shown in the following table:

Table 3.3: Race, language and age profile of participatory dialogue and questionnaire sample

Number of participants per race	Participants' home language	Participants' age (in years) in 2011									
		21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29-39	40+
13 White	English		1	5	2	1	2				
	Afrikaans			1							
	German					1					
18 Coloured	English	1	2	1	1	1		1	1	4	1
	Afrikaans		1	1	1		1			1	
4 Black	Xhosa			1	1			2			
1 Indian	English				1						

3.4 SITE

The site of this study was the Faculty of Education at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (Mowbray campus). The student teachers in the study were all enrolled for one of the teacher education programs offered at this site, namely the B Ed (Foundation Phase) degree. As much of the data was drawn from student teachers' experiences of Teaching Practice within this degree, it is important to briefly describe the model of Teaching Practice at the time.

The successive Teaching Practice (TP) model structured the teaching practice sessions in this faculty at the time of this study. The student teachers did their Teaching Practice sessions in two four-week sessions each year. They were expected to teach a range of learning areas during this time, including Literacy. The first session was done in April and in July of that year they returned to the same schooling context for the second session. By the end of the four years they would have experienced teaching and learning in all the foundation phase grades (Grades R-3), and in diverse schooling contexts that ranged from well-resourced schools to under-resourced schools, mainstream schools and special needs schools.

The TP was designed for the student teachers in a particular year group to teach in a specific grade, starting with the youngest school grade in their first year of the Bachelor of Education. Table 3.4 illustrates this grade-sequential design of the TP over the four years:

Table 3.4: Grade-sequential TP design

Year Group	Foundation Phase School Grade	Type of school	Contextual features
1 st	Reception	Mainstream	Largely 'comfortable' teaching conditions
2 nd	One	Mainstream	
3 rd	<u>Two</u> or Three	Mainstream	Largely over-crowded and under-resourced
4 th	Two or <u>Three</u>	Mainstream and special needs	Largely comfortable teaching conditions

This grade-sequenced TP over the four year duration of their teacher education is an important consideration for the interpretation of the data in this study. It reflects student teachers' actual teaching practice experiences which they reported on in this study. In addition to TP, the second year and third year student teachers did weekly micro-teaching at schools that were in close proximity to the university. The grade for micro-teaching was aligned with the grade for TP. In micro-teaching the student teachers experienced reading teaching (as well as other subjects) and learning situations, they reflected on them under the guidance of the reading teacher educator (and other subject teacher educators) and they developed their own insights into teaching reading through the interaction between personal reflection and theoretical notions.

3.5 DATA COLLECTION

This study incorporated three methods of data collection: (i) focus group interviews, (ii) participatory dialogue, and (iii) questionnaire. I selected these after I reviewed Maxwell's (2005:92) suggestion that the research carefully considers the relationship between the research questions and the data collection methods:

[...] your methods are the means to answering your research questions, not a logical transformation of the latter. Their selection depends not only on your research questions, but also on the actual research situation and on what will work most effectively in that situation to give you the data you need.

For the purpose of this study, multiple data sources that would best investigate the intersection between the student teachers' teaching of reading, and their public good commitment, were selected. This variety of collection methods generated empirical evidence that could be correlated and triangulated in an attempt to "reduce the risk of ... systematic biases due to a specific method and allow a better assessment of the generality and explanations that are developed" (Maxwell, 1996:93). He proposed that it is important for the researcher to consider how well the different methods of data collection fit together and integrate with other components of the research design. I compiled a data-planning matrix (adapted from Maxwell, 1996 in Alexander, 2008) which was helpful in illustrating the compatibility within the research design. This is summarized as follows:

Table 3.5: Data-Planning Matrix

What do I need to know?	Why do I need to know this?	What kind of data will answer the questions?	Where can I find the data?	Whom do I contact?	Time lines
What activities and practices do student teachers see as supporting their teaching of reading?	To identify their reading teaching actions in the classrooms of a transforming South Africa	Focus group interviews Participatory dialogue	University offering a B Ed: FP degree	Student teachers enrolled in the B Ed: FP degree	Oct 2008 and Oct 2011
What professional capabilities underpin their teaching of reading?	To understand their commitment to teaching reading for public good	Focus group interviews Participatory dialogue	University offering a B Ed: FP degree	Student teachers enrolled in the B Ed: FP degree	Oct 2008 and Oct 2011
How has teacher education shaped the formation of their professional capabilities which underpin their teaching of reading?	To identify the teacher education facets which are most influential in their formation of professional capabilities for public good	Focus group interviews Participatory dialogue Questionnaire	University offering a B Ed: FP degree	Student teachers enrolled in a B Ed: FP degree	Oct 2008 and Oct 2011
What societal experiences shaped the formation of their public good commitment?	To ascertain the influence of their lived experiences in a transforming South Africa on their public good commitment and values	Focus group interviews Participatory dialogue	University offering a B Ed: FP degree	Student teachers enrolled in a B Ed: FP degree	Oct 2008 and Oct 2011

3.5.1 Focus group interviews

The focus group methodology was used to generate rich qualitative data, whereby the participants engaged in a structured discussion about teaching reading within the framework of South African social justice issues. This was used as a conceptual framework for the public good commitment focus of this study.

The term focus group refers to the interviewing of a purposefully sampled group of people (Morgan, 1988). Flores and Alonzo (1995) pointed out that this type of interview enables individuals to stimulate one another in conversation and Brodigan (1992:2) described it as “the exchange of opinions, personal reactions, and experiences among the members of the group”. One of the features of this data collection instrument is that the researcher can enhance the richness of the data by creating a social environment in which rich conversation amongst members of the group can occur. The four focus group interviews in my study provided very rich data.

When participants feel free to articulate any opinion, rich data is yielded. Group composition is therefore important in addition to comfort level with questions. Each of my focus groups was comprised of those who met the purposeful sampling criteria but they were also two groups of friends on campus who had a friendly, open and comfortable relationship with one another. This was advantageous for collecting the rich data. Flores and Alonzo (1995) pointed out that having a variety of individuals is important to obtain a range of opinions about the topics discussed and to encourage participants to express differing ones and Patton (1990) suggested that the validity of participants’ responses is largely dependent upon their level of comfort with the questions.

With regard to their comfort level with questions, Fontana and Frey (1994) proposed that the researcher poses general or easy questions at the start of the interview in order to facilitate the development of comfort level. I was also mindful of the fact that not much scientific information should be put in the discussion because the aim of the focus group was to get insight into their perceptions and the input of scientific knowledge may influence this perception (Fontana & Frey, 1994). I did this, as shown in the table below as follows:

Table 3.6: Focus group questions

Item number	Focus Group Question	Aim of question
1	What are your thoughts about our South African society?	To ascertain their opinions of the context in which they live and their public good commitment
2	How do you see your role as a teacher in South Africa?	To probe their ideas about what it means to be a teacher in diverse contexts and their public good commitment in a transforming South Africa
3	What are your thoughts about the social goals in the South African curriculum?	To determine their ideas of the schooling context through a curriculum lens in a transforming South Africa
4	How do you connect these social goals to your reading teaching?	To understand their reading teaching activities and practices and the intersection with their professional capabilities for public good
5	What has influenced the ways in which you consider social goals in your everyday reading teaching?	To understand the formation of their public good commitment and professional capabilities

It is important to note that these questions were finalized after a pilot study comprising a different set of questions yielded interesting data but did not in fact answer my research question. By being more explicit with the phrasing of my final set of focus group questions as shown in the table above, and by changing the sequence of the pilot questions it was clear that the set of questions, shown in this table, would answer my research question more explicitly than the pilot questions.

The focus group interviews were conducted in the boardroom on the campus. The boardroom is located in the building where the student teachers attend their lectures. This was done for the convenience of the student teachers who had very little time in their busy schedules. In addition, I negotiated an appointment with one of the group members who in turn negotiated a convenient time with the other participants. The focus group interviews were audio recorded. The duration for each of the four interviews was 50 – 60 minutes respectively.

As stated above, the focus group interviews yielded rich data which spoke to each of my sub-questions. I triangulated these findings with a questionnaire and the participatory dialogue.

3.5.2 Participatory dialogue

The focus group may be defined as an interview style designed for small formal groups in which specialised information is obtained. Participatory dialogue is similar to the focus group methodology. It not a new concept and it was created by the development of participatory action research. Most primary data collection in social science research can be described as participatory to varying degrees (Cornwall, 1996; Biggs, 1989) and Moser and McIlwaine (1999) assert that it produces “alternative truths or more efficient ways of understanding complex situations and relationships”.

Shillingford (2006:37) commented that whereas ideally the focus group consists of about 5-12 participants, participatory dialogues accommodate larger numbers of participants. I wanted to capture the collective perspectives of the fourth year student teacher cohort (n=35) in a single session, which made the participatory dialogue a suitable method. In addition, whereas the focus group is primarily audio-based, the participatory dialogue, according to Chamber (1997) involves the use of visual aids so that the information is visible, semi-permanent, and public to the group, and can be checked, verified, amended, added to, and owned, by the participants, which was what I needed for my study. I used visual assistance and audio recording devices in my participatory dialogue which took about 2 hours.

In the participatory dialogue the visuals used to collect data are dependent on the type of data needed (Shillingford, 2006:43). Brainstorming, for example, is the means by which lists are constructed. Brainstorming starts by asking the group to list as many ideas / responses to a particular question. I used the brainstorming technique for visually recording the student teachers' responses on sheets of newsprint. For example, I asked: What do you understand by: providing high quality teaching? The heading on my sheet of newsprint was: high quality teaching. I prepared the newsprint sheets prior to the dialogue. I had two reasons for recording the responses visually: (i) to give the student teachers a visual point of reference for further discussion and (ii) to gain reliable responses for the questionnaire as a result of the visual conceptual reference which happened concurrently in the session.

Shillingford (2006:38) suggested that ideas should be captured without judging them and after ideas have been recorded to generate a high volume of ideas in a non-analytical manner which permits the ideas of one individual to stimulate the ideas of the other individuals in the team. This author proposed that the researcher should never criticize, evaluate, judge or discuss ideas and that he/she should let the discussion flow, asking for clarification of an item if necessary. As the student teachers very rapidly provided their responses to each of my seven questions, I rapidly listed these without criticizing, evaluating, judging or discussing the ideas.

The key to a successful participatory dialogue session with research participants is that the researcher should ask questions clearly, use simple language, help the participants to feel confident and relaxed, practice active listening, listen more than you talk, give full attention to the respondent, be focused, do not rush the interview or the discussion, do not prompt participants responses (do not put words in their mouth), paraphrase, rephrase or reword questions (to ensure that the respondent understand what is asked) and responses Shillingford (2006:40).

Shillingford (2006) did not explain that another important aspect to a successful participatory dialogue which includes questioning, listening, summarizing, visual and audio recording is, as I experienced it, the researcher who needs to be physically prepared for an intense, high energy, fast-flowing session of participant engagement. I had the assistance of

a colleague who was proficient in the use of clicker technology in the data collection session. This facilitated the flow of engaging with the participants and simultaneously displaying questions on power point, recording on newsprint and audio device, and displaying quantifiable results instantly per questionnaire item before proceeding with the next.

The participatory dialogue was conducted three weeks after the focus group interviews were completed towards the end of 2011. As was the case with the focus group interview logistics, I conducted the participatory dialogue on campus in the building in which they attend their lectures. The participatory dialogue took place in a classroom at a time and on a date that was convenient for them. It must be noted that these student teachers had a very full program and it was not easy to reach finality on the appointment.

Two main questions were asked in the participatory dialogue. The first question aimed to ascertain the student teachers' understanding of each specific professional capability:

Table 3.7: Participatory dialogue question 1

<p style="text-align: center;">Question</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>What do you understand by:</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Aim of question</p> <p style="text-align: center;">To ascertain their understanding of the following professional capabilities:</p>
Providing high quality teaching	Integrity
How teaching is shaped by historical and current socio-economic-political contexts	Informed vision
Persevering in difficult teaching circumstances	Resilience
Community empowerment and human rights	Social and Collective struggle
Being open minded about teaching	Knowledge, Imagination and Practical Skills
Expressing and asserting own professional teaching priorities	Assurance and Confidence
Understanding the lives of the poor and vulnerable	Affiliation

In an attempt to make an overt connection between their professional capabilities and their teaching of reading I asked a follow-up question after each of the professional capabilities listed in the table above. The follow-up question asked: *How do you connect your*

understanding of this to your teaching of reading? For each of the professional capabilities probed in question one, the responses were visually and audio recorded and the responses to question two were audio recorded only.

3.5.3 Questionnaire

Bloch (1992) cautioned that focus groups should not be considered as a substitute for quantitative studies. Focus groups are, however, useful for the development of a questionnaire. Commenting on their use of focus groups and questionnaires, Munby, Lock, Hutchinson, Whitehead and Martin (1999:37) commented that the words and comments made during these interviews “were used to develop a more effective exit questionnaire”. Their experience, with the use of focus group interviews alongside other qualitative and quantitative instruments, showed that the advantages in using focus groups “far outweighed the disadvantages” (Munby et al., 1999:37). My focus group data was effective in, amongst others, pointing to specific teacher education facets as influential in the formation of the student teachers’ professional capabilities. This information was used to develop a more effective questionnaire.

Some teacher facets appeared more influential than others in the focus group interview data but it did not provide accurate information on the comparative degree of influence across these facets. In other words, I could not accurately ascertain from the focus group interviews which facet was most influential per professional capability. In short, the focus group data provided the fixed responses (teacher education facets) and the variable for my questionnaire items – ‘most influential’.

I chose to conduct a simplistic quantification in my questionnaire data collection and analysis. Dey (2005:41) suggested that some simple statistical procedures “can enhance the rigour and power of a qualitative analysis - providing always that we keep in mind just what the numbers mean” because “number depends on meaning, but in a sense meaning also depends on number. Measurement at all levels embraces both a qualitative and a quantitative aspect”. One of my concerns with the use of a questionnaire was that the student teachers might not have a common understanding of each questionnaire item since

the items potentially carried multiple meanings. My concurrent use of the participatory dialogue compensated for this concern as it provided the opportunity to unpack a wide range of meanings from the student teachers before they proceeded with selecting fixed responses to the questionnaire. In this way the possible weakness of the questionnaire, in this instance, was offset by strengths of the participatory dialogue.

I asked seven questions, each of which was posed in the same way with the same fixed responses. One difference occurred in each question – the professional capability being investigated. The question was:

Which of the following developed your understanding of [e.g. providing high quality teaching], the most?

The fixed responses were as follows:

- A. Teaching Practice
- B. B Ed coursework
- C. Other teacher education experiences
- D. No teacher education influence

The question was repeated for each of the professional capability examples:

1. Providing high quality teaching
2. How teaching is shaped by historical and current socio-economic-political contexts
3. Persevering in difficult teaching circumstances
4. Community empowerment and human rights
5. Being open minded about teaching
6. Expressing and asserting your own professional teaching priorities
7. Understanding the lives of the poor and vulnerable

The measurement of selected operationalized variables is a central feature of questionnaire use. I wanted to measure which facet was most influential in the formation of each specific professional capability. Graziano and Raulin (2004) claimed that a questionnaire is useful for learning about participants' ideas, knowledge, feeling, opinions and attitudes of a defined population. I was interested in the orientation of student teachers' beliefs with

regard the influence of the teacher education facets in the formation of their professional capabilities. Questionnaires are excellent for measuring attitudes and orientations in a large population (Babbie 1995; Neuman, 2001).

The questionnaire was administered immediately after the participatory dialogue questions were asked and captured in the same two hour session. This was an important concurrent data collection design to enhance the reliability of the student teachers' responses to the questionnaire - they had a visual, conceptual reference from the newsprint sheets to deliberate on before they made their fixed response selections to each of the professional capability formation questions. The fixed responses were also clarified by asking the student teachers for examples of each these before they proceeded with their fixed response selection.

Questionnaires can be administered in a variety of mediums (e.g., paper, oral, electronic) using various delivery methods (e.g., face-to-face, telephone, mail, Internet). I conducted the questionnaire face-to-face in the participatory dialogue session with the use of clicker technology. I asked the question which was displayed on a power point slide. All participants simultaneously made a fixed response selection on their individual clicker. I repeatedly reminded them of the variable 'the most'. In addition, they were given an opportunity to look at the newsprint sheet as they thought about its content (professional capability brainstorming) in relation to the teacher education facets. Immediately after all participants made their clicker selection in each question, the results of that question were displayed in percentages before proceeding with the next question in the same way. In addition, I asked student teachers for their comments regarding the results. Some student teachers voluntarily reasoned about their responses for the purpose of checking their understanding of the question as well as the fixed responses.

3.6 DATA ORGANIZATION AND ANALYSIS

The unit of analysis was the ideas of the student teachers. Bearing in mind that my research question was: *how does the student teachers' teaching of reading intersect with their public good commitment*, my research question was qualitative and this carried data analysis

implications. The sub-questions were also qualitative except for one which aimed to quantify teacher education's influence in their formation.

Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2006:482) clarified that whereas descriptive quantitative research questions seek to quantify responses on one or more variables qualitative research questions typically describe, rather than relate variables or compare groups, avoiding the use of words such as 'influence'. More specifically, qualitative research questions tend to address "what" and "how" questions while quantitative research questions often begin with the words 'what is' (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2006:482). Onwuegbuzie and Teddlie (2003) advised that when analyzing quantitative and qualitative data within a mixed methods framework, researchers undergo at least some of the following seven stages: (a) data reduction, (b) data display, (c) data transformation, (d) data correlation, (e) data consolidation, (f) data comparison, and (g) data integration (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2006:491).

Onwuegbuzie and Teddlie (2003) explained data reduction as reducing the dimensionality of the qualitative data (e.g. thematic analysis) and quantitative data (e.g. descriptive statistics). The data reduction in my study proceeded inductively. I sought meanings from the themes that emerged from the focus group and participatory data which was fully transcribed from the audio and visual recordings. Listening to the audio transcripts prior to analysis was a central action that I did prior to transcribing, as suggested by Maxwell (1996). My small set of quantifiable data from my clicker response questionnaire was easy to work with. The clicker software did a very simple statistical procedure of displaying the number of student teacher selections on the fixed responses as percentages.

Data display is an important step in organising and analyzing data. Onwuegbuzie and Teddlie (2003) clarified data display as describing pictorially the qualitative data (e.g. diagrams) and quantitative data (e.g., tables, graphs). The themes which emerged from my focus group and participatory dialogue data were displayed in the transcriptions in the form of colour coded phrases. This was done manually, in Microsoft Word. The themes in the qualitative data emerged based on Maykut and Morehouse's (1994) and Miles and Huberman's (1998) procedure of coding and collating chunks of meaning and the identification of threads,

patterns, categories and themes. The quantitative data was displayed in tables and graphs from the clicker software.

I then transformed my quantitative data into a narrative form which Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) refer to as 'qualitized' data. This was in lieu of mixing my three sets of data which created a consolidated data set to manage the next stage - data comparison which involved comparing (i) my focus group data with my participatory data, (ii) my focus group data with my questionnaire data, and (iii) my participatory data with the questionnaire data. Pope, Ziebland and Mays (2005) recommended this process of constant comparison which entails checking and comparing analytic categories with the rest of the data and the literature. Two sets of literature were helpful in refining and reducing my emergent categories: Louden et al.'s (2008) reading teaching activities and practices; and Walker and McLean's (2010) professional capabilities.

After comparing categories and themes in the data sources and the literature, I was able to proceed with data integration in the final stage, during which all the data were integrated into a coherent whole. In this latter stage my research 'came together' to form a picture of how the student teachers' activities and practices in their reading teaching intersect with their public good commitment. This occurred as I mixed activities and practices data (focus group data and participatory dialogue data); professional capabilities data (focus group data and participatory dialogue data); teacher education data (focus group, participatory dialogue and questionnaire), and societal experiences which shaped their public good commitment (focus group). A few tensions and contradictions within these findings also emerged during this process. These are mentioned in the conclusions and recommendations.

3.6.1 Validity and reliability

Research quality is mostly shaped by triangulation. Bazely (2004:144) commented that the purpose of triangulation is to provide corroborating evidence for the conclusions drawn in a study. Curry, Nembhard and Bradley (2009:1442) explained that it can also minimize

common method bias which can occur if the same source provides information on all variables of interest.

Authors like Fielding and Fielding (1986) and Flick (1992) argued that triangulation does not assist validation as each source must be understood on its own terms. For example, with regard to ensuring validity in a questionnaire, Scherpenzeel and Saris (1997:341) alerted that the wording of questions, the response scale, the question context, and the technique of data collection could compromise the quality of the research. The design of my questionnaire emerged from the preliminary focus group findings which provided the wording of questions, the response scale, the question context, and the technique of data collection, all of which reduced possible errors in this regard. But the overriding principle of validity in a questionnaire comes from the way the instrument is employed while reliability is a characteristic of the instrument itself. My questionnaire and participatory dialogue were employed to corroborate and enhance evidence from preliminary findings from focus group data.

Important weaknesses of the concurrent triangulation design include the additional complexity associated with collecting qualitative and quantitative data at the same time and the expertise needed to usefully apply both methods (Harwell, 2011:155). I took cognizance of this by carefully selecting the best qualitative data collection method (participatory dialogue) for my study which could smoothly accommodate the quantitative data collection (questionnaire) concurrently. Another aspect that needed consideration was data analysis. I analyzed the qualitative and quantitative data separately and mixed these at the point of interpretation (Harwell, 2011:155).

Validity and reliability are key concerns when researchers strive for empirical rigour. Durrheim and Wassenaar (1999) explained validity as the degree to which the findings are sound while reliability refers to the degree to which the findings are reliable. Although participant feedback can be useful for assessing the face validity of findings, fidelity to the participants' perception is only one marker of validity (Curry, Nembhard & Bradley, 2009:1442). Some experts suggest it is helpful to view participant validation as one step in a process of error reduction. Practical considerations for participant confirmation include the point at which feedback is solicited, the scope and depth of findings to be shared, the

systematic process to be used for gathering feedback, whether to request input from some or all participants, and plans for addressing disconfirming or discordant views.

I shared preliminary findings with the participants, from each of the data collection tools. Participant validation strategies involve presenting findings to the study participants for confirmation as to whether the findings represent a reasonable account of their experience (Curry, Nembhard & Bradley, 2009:1442). In the focus group, for example, I spontaneously recapped the thread of the discussion and checked that I had a clear holistic understanding of it. In the participatory dialogue I could check with student teachers by asking them if I had recorded the main points accurately on the newsprint. With the questionnaire data I could probe their responses spontaneously by displaying their clicker selection trends.

Coder reliability refers to the degree to which coders agree in their assignment of codes to text. While I was the primary coder, the refinement of the coding reliability check in this study took two forms. Discussions with my supervisor in the initial stages facilitated the subsequent refinement of codes in the transcriptions. In addition, I was able to check my more refined understanding of the codes which I assigned from the Walker and McLean (2010) literature by having a face-to-face 45 minute discussion with Professor Melanie Walker. While she did not see the data, my discussion with her was helpful, especially her advice that their 'coding' was not a blueprint for all professional capabilities studies but a framework for other studies to use and add to.

3.7 ETHICS

Ethical considerations are important in the development of a research protocol. Ramos (1989) described three types of problems that may affect qualitative studies: (i) the researcher/participant relationship, (ii) the researcher's subjective interpretations of data, and (iii) the design itself. In line with designing research to be useful, it should also be designed to be ethical (Harwell, 2011:174).

Ethical issues are present in any kind of research and in short, these pertain to "doing good and avoiding harm through the application of appropriate ethical principles" (Orb,

Eisenhauer & Wynaden, 2000:93). They suggested that the protection of participants in any research study is imperative and that “embedded in qualitative research are the concepts of relationships and power between researchers and participants” (Orb, Eisenhauer & Wynaden, 2000:93). Gaining the trust of the group and their willingness to support the researcher’s role is a step in the right direction, but it is the recognition of the relevance of ethical principles that must guide any research study (Orb, Eisenhauer & Wynaden, 2000:94). For example, all the names of the student teachers who participated in my study were changed in the focus group and participatory dialogue transcriptions. This ensured their privacy. In addition, the clickers were not identity coded. The clickers were randomly issued to student teachers and the data was captured and reduced confidentially.

I purposefully selected student teachers in their first year to participate in my study in 2008. At that time I was their language education lecturer. As a researcher I explained my role to them. They were willing to participate. The desire to participate in a research study depends upon a participant’s willingness to share his or her experience. Ethical dilemmas that may rise from interviews and discussion, for example, are difficult to predict but the researcher needs to be aware of sensitive issues and potential conflicts of interest and it “opens new risks to both researchers and participants” (Orb, Eisenhauer & Wynaden, 2000:94).

Confidentiality, informed consent, and privacy are the cornerstones of managing participation ethically (Orb, Eisenhauer & Wynaden, 2000:94). In 2009 I left the faculty as teacher educator and returned two and a half years later to resume data collection with the sample who were then in their fourth year. I had no contact with the participants between 2009 and 2011 so I approached them to participate again and explained the purpose of my research again. I also reminded them of the confidentiality involved. In retrospect, my distance from the sample and the site between 2009 and 2011 allowed me greater objective distance as I became an outsider looking into the student teachers in their teacher education program. This also minimized any possible conflicts of interest which may previously, but not likely, have been associated with my study.

3.8 CONCLUSION

In this chapter a detailed discussion of the mixed methods approach, which framed my study methodologically, was presented. The overall inductive direction within a concurrent triangulation research design was explained. The purpose of my inquiry and my thinking around issues of sampling and data collection were made explicit.

The three data sources were described in terms of my rationale for selecting these, and how and where the data collection took place. The items in each of the data sources were illustrated and the ways in which I organised and analysed these sources of data (focus group interviews, participatory dialogue and questionnaire) were explained. Furthermore, the ways in which I managed the ethical considerations in my study were explained.

The data is presented in the next four chapters, the first of which presents data pertaining to the lived experiences which appeared to shape the student teachers' public good commitment. Thereafter, data regarding the student teachers' reading teaching for public good are presented. The next chapter presents data of the student teachers' professional capabilities which appeared to underpin their teaching of reading. The fourth data presentation chapter is on the influence of teacher education in the formation of the student teachers' professional capabilities for public good.

CHAPTER FOUR
PRESENTATION OF DATA: STUDENT TEACHERS' LIVED EXPERIENCES IN SOUTH AFRICA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The research question in this study was: *How does the student teachers' teaching of reading intersect with their public good commitment?* The sub-questions in this study are shown in figure 3.2 below. The numbers shown in the figure indicate the sequence in which the findings are presented.

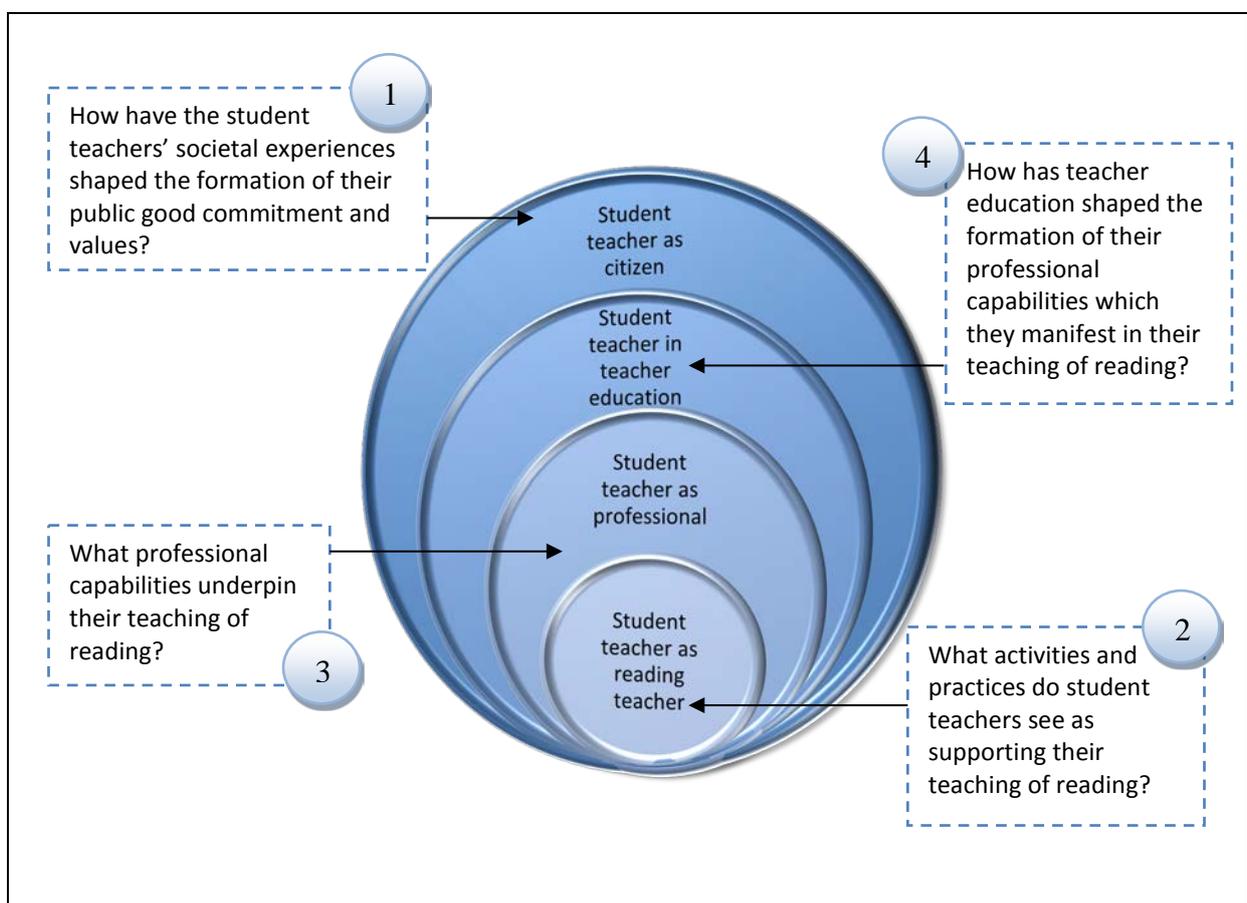


Figure 3.2: Contextual summary of sub-questions

This chapter presents data with regard to the societal experiences which shaped the formation of the student teachers' public good commitment. The data presented in this chapter provides a brief illustration of the national context in which South African student teachers live. This was helpful for interpreting the data in the subsequent chapters – it contextually located:

- (i) the student teachers' perspectives of the teaching of reading,
- (ii) their professional capabilities which appeared to underpin their teaching of reading, and
- (iii) the influence of teacher education in the formation of their professional capabilities.

4.2 SOCIETAL EXPERIENCES AS SHAPERS OF STUDENT TEACHERS' PUBLIC GOOD COMMITMENT

The data presented here provides a brief account of a few societal experiences which shaped the formation of student teachers' public good commitment. This data was gained from the four focus group discussions, two of which were conducted with the student teachers in the first year of their teacher education program and the other two focus group discussions were conducted at the end of their teacher education program (fourth year).

The focus group question which yielded the data regarding a few societal experiences which shaped the formation of student teachers' public good commitment was: *What are your thoughts about our South African society?* The aim of this question was to ascertain their opinions of the context in which they live and the subsequent public good commitment which might have emerged as a result of these thoughts, opinions and views.

The data showed that the student teachers' thoughts, opinions and views were an upshot from particular critical experiences which they had, and observations which they made, as South African citizens. These experiences and observations were categorized from the focus group data as follows:

- (i) Racial segregation
- (ii) False transformation
- (iii) Downbeat development
- (iv) Upbeat development
- (v) Generational compromise of human capabilities

These categories are explained and illustrated with excerpts from the focus group data. A focus group excerpt which best exemplified their collective views, is shown in italics. A round bracket, containing capitalized letters and numbers, is provided at the end of each excerpt - these capitalized letters indicate the acronym for the source of the quote: FG - Focus Group. Furthermore, the letters A and B indicate each of the two focus group samples. The numbers one and four indicate the year group (1=first year and 4=fourth year). For example, FG 4A means that the data was generated from the focus group (FG) discussion in the fourth year (4) from sample A. References to the race and age of the student teachers are included for the purpose of illustrating diverse South African perspectives.

4.2.1 Racial segregation

Student teachers appeared to experience racial segregation in SA society. This seemed to be the case from their first year through to their fourth year as it was mentioned in the first and fourth year focus group data. They seemed pessimistic about SA society with regard to race, as articulated by Fiona, a 17 year old coloured student teacher in her first year of teacher education:

[...] they still live in the past, it's like they don't wanna get out of the past, even with this whole politician things and with sports even, everything is still in the past, whether they say it or not, they still racist, they just deny it, but it's messed up. (FG 1B)

The last phrase 'but it's messed up' best captured the first year student teachers' pessimistic outlook on SA society. They appeared to suggest that the present South African society was still reminiscent of the past racial, political dispensation. Other student teachers in the first year iterated this view - Karla, a white 19 year old first year student teacher provided her thoughts on South African society: *"I would say to some extent how people are still racist"* (FG 1A).

In their fourth year, the student teachers also recognized racial segregation in SA society. These experiences were linked to linguistic, cultural, race and class complexities. With

regard to linguistic segregation, for example, they seemed concerned about the preferred clustering of children into their respective language groups which were also race related. Karla explained in her fourth year:

I still see separation with the kids in the classroom – even with languages and cultures there is still separation even though we are united now... they stick in their own groups. Even the Afrikaans kids and English kids – they don't want to mix with each other. (FG 4A)

The student teachers in their fourth year furthermore suggested that although they experienced diverse cultures in SA they felt that they were inadvertently associated with specific race groups. Ally, a 26 year old white student teacher explained that she thought that South Africa was:

Multicultural but still very separate. Like you belong here and boxed into that group. It is compartmentalizing people far more even though we are more diverse. (FG 4B)

What was interesting in this data was that the outlook on SA was apparently about the insufficiency of authentic diversity. This was best illustrated in the last sentence of the excerpt above, particularly the phrase 'far more'. The opinion about the insufficient authentic diversity was also iterated by other student teachers in a similar way. For example, Katherine (30 year old, coloured student teacher) expressed a similar view:

And you see it at schools and you see it even at university – all the different cliques and groups and it's always been like that. And I don't know if it's done sub-consciously, I don't know. (FG 4B)

What was interesting in her outlook was her perplexity with the intent of the segregation as stated in the last sentence of this excerpt above.

Other student teachers in their fourth year seemed to have made similar observations about the overt political dimension of South African society. They appeared to think about SA society in terms of their perceived discord between official political policies and current

social realities, in particular their puzzlement with race and class representation in their own communities. They implied that they were still living in mono-racial communities. In addition, they observed poverty which, according to a number of them, remained a concern in the country, as 21 year old Fiona described her experiences with and observations of living in her coloured community:

I think that the past still has an effect on us, whether it's directly or indirectly... So, yes we are moving away from apartheid on documents there's this whole beautiful thing but realistically looking at things from your community, it's actually still apartheid. We still have that segregation of things. And the rich is getting richer and the poor is getting poorer. But now also the poor is getting richer – a little bit. But those who are in the middle are still in the middle. (FG 4B)

What was interesting in this outlook on SA society was the recognition that past inequalities continued to shape the lived experiences of South African citizens, as stated in the first sentence of this excerpt above.

4.2.2 False transformation

The student teachers appeared to experience and observe what I categorized as false transformation in SA society. They located this perceived falseness in the overt shift in the racial demographics of the past and present political leadership as well as the national policies (e.g. Black Economic Empowerment - BEE) that came with this shift. To illustrate this finding, the explanation of 23 year old Nelly, a coloured student teacher in her first year, was useful:

[...] we are moving towards change. And even though there is that er, hope, as a young person I think it's the diversity. The diversity is there but it's been flipped around. The tables has been turned ... So as a midline person it's completely difficult ... you are not falling into the BEE ... it worries me, because is our society really being transformed? (FG 1A)

What was interesting in this outlook of false transformation was this coloured student teacher's reference to the self in terms of race – 'a midline person' (neither black nor white) and the subsequent concern for authentic transformation for all race groups, especially within the employment (e.g. BEE) sector in South Africa.

This kind of observation and concern appeared to carry through to their fourth year where they showed analogous concerns about false transformation by suggesting their mistrust in the current political leadership. 27 year old Cindy, a coloured student teacher in her fourth year expressed:

I think they [political leaders] are just fooling us better now. Like by saying that they are doing it, not for our benefit, but they are trying to make things right but they are actually doing the same thing that's been going on before. So I think that they are just better at pulling the wool over our eyes. I think. (FG 4B)

What was interesting in this outlook of false transformation was the proposition that the current democratic government of transformation was merely more sophisticated in their oppressive practices than the previous oppressive government – this sentiment seemed well illustrated in the last sentence of this excerpt above – 'they are just better at pulling the wool over our eyes'.

4.2.3 Downbeat development

The student teachers also appeared to make affirmative observations of South African society. Student teachers in their first year, for example, appeared to think about SA society in terms of the constructive growth as well as the hindrances to this growth in SA society. For example, 17 year old Fiona who mentioned her concern about racial segregation in the focus group discussion, commented on the small transformation strides she observed in the country as well as the numerous hindrances to the sustainability of these strides:

There is a good as well. It's just there's so much bad that you don't see the good because the bad is overpowering the good. (FG 1B)

In the main, the student teachers' outlook was leaning towards what I refer to as 'downbeat development' in SA society as was illustrated in the last phrase of the excerpt above.

In their fourth year they also appeared to think about SA society in terms of the constructive growth in relation to the downbeat development of the country. They specified the transformative gains made in the education sector. But in terms of general quality of life, student teachers in their fourth year appeared to be of the opinion that SA society had regressed, for example in terms of the high crime rate, which they thought presented SA children with a less favourable living context. This was clearly articulated by 27 year old Nelly (coloured student teacher) in her fourth year:

[...] in terms of education specifically I think it's improved ... in terms of society I would say the kids are worse off than they used to be back then. If we look at crime and the school context I really think it is sky-high and I don't think, I hope, it's going to get better. (FG 4A)

It was important to note, in this data, that there was hopefulness for the improvement of life in SA as was stated in the latter phrase in the last sentence of the excerpt above. But a number of other student teachers concurred with the point about SA children living in unfavourable conditions. For example, 34 year old Betty, a coloured student teacher in her fourth year explained: *"I think society, well our generation, well the younger generation, are kind of aimless, lost let me put it that way, demotivated"*(FG 4B) and 27 year old Cindy, clarified what they meant by their reference to the younger generation's aimlessness and demotivation:

The things that are important to them are not important. Like your life revolves around what happens in this [TV] series or this singer. Things like that, are not really of benefit to them. What should be important is what they do in the future, what they are going to make of themselves. They don't really care because everything looks so easy on TV – so easy to be rich and famous, so school is not important to them. (FG 4B)

This clarification was important to note because it drew attention to what student teachers deemed important: life opportunities that contribute to shaping learners' life-long success. It also showed that the student teachers in their fourth year associated these opportunities with hard work and schooling, as stated in the phrase '*everything looks so easy ... school is not important to them*'. Another student added further clarification to the downbeat development of South Africa's apparently aimless and demotivated youth by suggesting that young people are not growing up with the kinds of morals, values and boundaries as the previous generation, as expressed in Fiona's public good commitment and values in her statement:

I think of how we grew up – morals, values and definite boundaries but now we are living through someone else's life, like soapies – it's an escape. It's someone else's life because yours is so boring. (FG 4B)

4.2.4 Upbeat development

The focus group data indicated that as South African citizens, the student teachers, despite their critical observations of and experiences with negative aspects of South African society, also carried a positive vision for and affiliation towards South African society. Student teachers in their first year appeared to think about SA society in terms of constructive growth. The data pointed to most of them having unresolved tensions with life in South African society. For example, Fiona who in her first year, raised many concerns about life in South Africa, claimed that South African society:

It's not so bad. I mean, even though you do hear so and so got stabbed or hijacked, it's almost like your point of view on society and how more people are getting to work with everybody. I mean I would never have been able to study like this before. And more people work with people with different cultures, different beliefs. (FG 1B)

This excerpt showed that Fiona appeared to hold in the highest regard, the opportunities to interact with diverse people. Another student teacher, for example, appeared to replicate this view which had apparently shaped her hopefulness in SA society in terms of authentic transformation - Karla, a white 19 year old first year student teacher described:

South African society is now largely diverse but there is still stereotypes but erm they're trying to move on from that ... they are moving forward. I'm seeing hope that erm South Africa is moving towards change. (FG 1B)

Interestingly, in their fourth year the student teachers did not allude to SA society in terms of the constructive growth. They seemed to foreground their observations of the ways in which they observed the opportunities for young people being compromised as explained below.

4.2.5 Generational compromise of human capabilities

Student teachers in their fourth year appeared to be concerned about their generation's weak sense of meaningful existence. They suggested that this generation of young South African citizens did not carry adequate morals and values. 34 year old Betty (coloured student teacher) explained:

If you speak to people, or to that generation getting married now at 20/21, they are going to have children. And how are they going to raise them? What's important to them now is the big wedding dress and the wedding, not the marriage or the life with raising children with good morals and values. It's not about society – it's about me, what can everybody give me – it's not what can I give back. (FG 4B)

Of utmost importance in this data was that the student teachers appeared to suggest their own priority, namely to give to society – their public good commitment and values. As such it seemed that they were concerned about the public good, specifically that the development of people and their capabilities could be compromised by virtue of the lack of this generation's disregard for society and excessive regard for the self. Another student teacher clarified the outcome of this perceived disregard for society. Fiona suggested: *"I think that's why we also have such a high divorce rate – our children are so lost"* (FG 4B). It was apparent that the student teachers in their fourth year had a dismal view of this generation for compromising the creation of opportunities for children. But they also seemed to offer a solution of public good commitment and values: contributing to the development and constructive growth of South African society.

4.3 DEVELOPMENT OVER TIME

The student teachers' views on the South African society in which they live seemed to develop over time. After comparing the issues raised by the student teachers in the first and their fourth year respectively on their views on South African society, an interesting finding emerged.

In their fourth year the student teachers appeared to move away from purely thinking about broad societal concerns as they did in their first year (e.g. racial segregation, crime, political corruption, employment). Their ways of thinking about South African society seemed more refined in terms of public good commitment and values which seemed predominantly concerned with the quality of life of young people as well as the possibilities of these young people compromising the quality of life of future generations through their 'value-less' ways of being.

In their fourth year the student teachers appeared to be in agreement about the 'aimlessness' of children and the underprivileged dispensation which South Africa was offering its child citizens. There also seemed to be a call from them for a collective consciousness of public good commitment and values as opposed to the self-centered stances which they had observed as harmful to life in South African society. These findings pointed towards their public good commitment and values.

4.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented data on sub-question four of this study – the student teachers' thoughts about SA society. It illustrated what their views were. This chapter illustrated a connection between the student teachers' views of South African society and their public good commitment and values. These findings are discussed in chapter eight.

This chapter showed that, over time, the student teachers appeared to diverge from purely thinking about broad societal concerns to a refined public good commitment in their fourth

year which predominantly embodied concerns for the quality of life of young people and the underprivileged dispensation which South Africa was offering its child citizens.

The data presented in this chapter provided a brief illustration of the national context in which South African student teachers live, through their experiences and observations. This was helpful for interpreting the data in the subsequent chapters – the data in this chapter contextually located:

- The student teachers' teaching of reading for public good,
- their professional capabilities which appeared to underpin their teaching of reading, and
- the influence of their teacher education in the formation of their professional capabilities.

The next chapter presents data on the student teachers' perspectives on the teaching of reading in a South African context.

CHAPTER FIVE
PRESENTATION OF DATA: STUDENT TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES ON
THE TEACHING OF READING

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents data regarding the student teachers' perspectives on the teaching of reading for public good. Gaining insight into the teaching activities and practices which student teachers saw as supporting their teaching of reading was at the heart of this study. Furthermore, this study identified how their professional capabilities for public good underpinned their perspectives of their reading teaching.

Three sets of data pertaining to the student teachers' perspectives on the teaching of reading are presented in this chapter:

- Student teachers' perspectives on reading teaching activities
- Student teachers' perspectives on reading teaching practices
- Connection between activities and practices, and professional capabilities for public good

Where necessary, a brief recap of pertinent arguments from the literature precedes the presentation of the data. The findings are discussed in chapter eight.

The first two sets of data were mainly gathered in the focus group discussions and also in the participatory dialogue. In the focus group discussions the student teachers were asked: *How do you connect the social goals in the curriculum to your reading teaching?* This focus group data provided insight into their perspectives of reading teaching activities and practices. In the participatory dialogue the student teachers were asked: *How do you connect your understanding of these professional capabilities to your reading teaching?*

5.2 STUDENT TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES OF READING TEACHING ACTIVITIES

This section presents data which addresses the sub-question of this study: *What activities do student teachers see as supporting their teaching of reading?* My study regarded effective reading teaching in the Foundation Phase of schooling as an "appreciation of

classroom teaching and learning as social-phenomena-in-motion rather than static blocks of ‘good’ or ‘bad’ practice” (Freebody, 2005:176). This principle was contrary to much research on the teacher effectiveness ideas which, according to Freebody (2005:176), resembled a ‘factory-machine’ notion of “looking for the right construct or package to install”. My study also subscribed to Freebody’s (2005:176) ideas of effective literacy teachers who

[...] appreciate that it is the movement back and forth between and among activities and practices that adds texture and portability to learning, the import and export of new ideas about reading and writing back and forth, and the recontextualising and reconfiguring that these movements offer students.

The student teachers’ perspectives on reading teaching practices and activities were a focus in my study. The Louden et al. (2005) study was useful for elucidating literacy teaching activities and practices which they represented as two respective teaching dimensions. The practices consisted of six main dimensions (which collectively included 33 practices) and the activities dimension consisted of 17 teaching activities. These dimensions are summarized in figure 5.1 below:

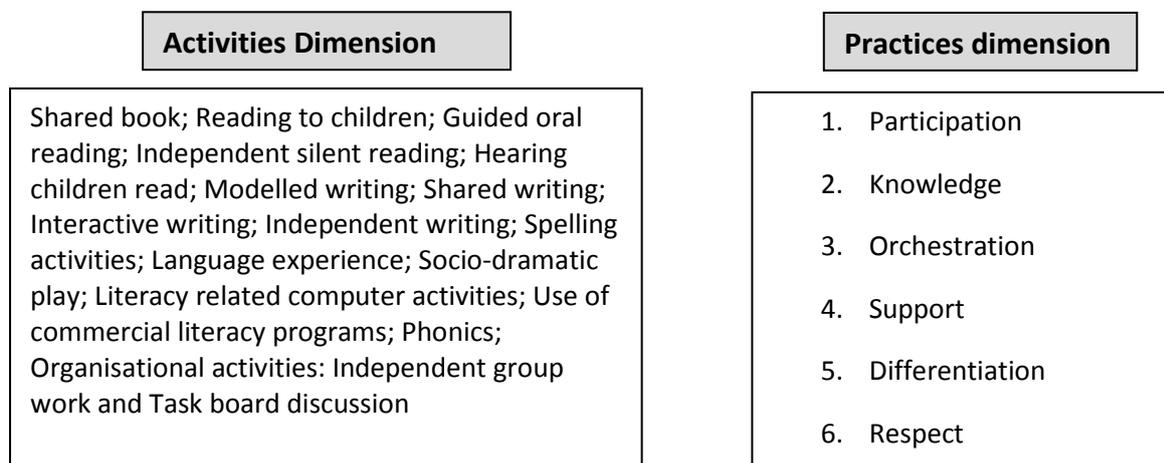


Figure 5.1: Summary of literacy teaching activities and practices dimensions

The data showed that the student teachers mentioned thirteen reading teaching activities in the focus group and participatory dialogue data respectively:

- 1) Paired reading
- 2) Shared reading
- 3) Story-telling
- 4) Spelling activities
- 5) Reading to children
- 6) Reading games
- 7) Socio-Dramatic play
- 8) Hearing children read
- 9) Silent reading
- 10) Sentence wall
- 11) Shared writing
- 12) Independent writing
- 13) Rhythm walk

Some of these activities were mentioned in the first year and/or the fourth year. There were numerous additions to the activities mentioned in the first year which indicates that their perspectives of reading teaching activities and practices developed over time during the four year teacher education program. This indicated development in the breadth of their perspectives of reading teaching as regards their teaching activities. Hence, three developmental breadth descriptions were interpreted and summarized:

Table 5.1: Breadth development in student teacher' activities repertoire

Breadth development	Descriptor: Reading teaching activity is mentioned in ...
Continuous	1 st and 4 th year
Inventive	4 th year only
Static	1 st year only

The data pertaining to their perspectives on the reading teaching activities was interpreted for depth development over time which I deliberated as a depth continuum. This is depicted in the linear illustration in figure 5.2 as follows:

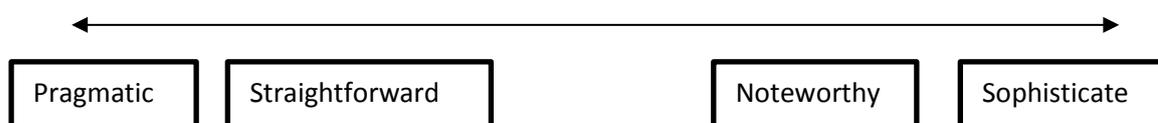


Figure 5.2: Depth spectrum of reading teaching activities

Two 'ends' are shown in figure 5.2. On the 'lower end' of the depth spectrum was an apparent lack of depth - a pragmatic, one dimensional understanding and application of the activities which was apparently accessed only as a simple solution. The straightforward perspective appeared close to pragmatic as shown in the spacing in the figure. This was considered as the student teachers' basic understanding and application of some of the activities *but without reference to an activity as a simple solution*. At the 'upper end' of the depth spectrum was a sophisticated understanding and application of some of the activities whereby student teachers' perspectives included connections with a host of supporting reading teaching activities and/or other comprehensively articulated wide-ranging teaching and learning concerns. The noteworthy description close to the sophisticated perspectives was derived from examples of student teachers providing a clear understanding of the learning value of the activity *or its connection to other activities or to wide-ranging teaching and learning concerns*. This depth continuum becomes clear in the presentation of the data below.

5.2.1 Development over time

The data showed that during the four year teacher education program the student teachers' perspectives on reading teaching activities and practices developed over time. They referred to activities with varying breadth in their first and fourth years respectively. In sum, five reading teaching activities were mentioned in the first year.

In their first year they mentioned two activities which were not referred to in in their fourth year:

1. Spelling activities
2. Reading to children

The student teachers mentioned three activities in the first year and the fourth year:

1. Paired reading
2. Shared reading
3. Story-telling

The data showed that after the first year they appeared to add eight more activities to their perspectives on reading teaching:

1. Reading games
2. Socio-Dramatic play
3. Hearing children read
4. Silent reading
5. Sentence wall
6. Shared writing
7. Independent writing
8. Rhythm walk

This increase in the breadth of their number of reading teaching activities exhibited their development over time. But this development was not only manifested in the breadth. It was also manifested in the depth of their views on the activities in the teaching and learning of reading. This is illustrated below for each of the reading teaching activities. A focus group/participatory dialogue excerpt which best exemplified the depth, is shown in italics. A round bracket, containing capitalized letters and numbers, is provided at the end of each excerpt - these capitalized letters indicate the acronym for the source of the quote: FG - Focus Group and PD – Participatory Dialogue. Furthermore, the letters A and B indicate each of the two focus group samples. The numbers one and four indicate the year group (1=first year and 4=fourth year). For example, FG 4A means that the data was generated from the focus group (FG) discussion in the fourth year (4) from sample A. The participatory dialogue indicator does not show numbers because this data collection was conducted in one 2 hour session with the fourth year only. Student teachers' pseudonyms are not mentioned in the participatory dialogue excerpts as this was a data capturing session with 35 participants.

5.2.1.1 Paired reading

Student teacher perspectives of paired reading showed varying depth from first through to the fourth year. In the first year it was pragmatic - the perspective did not seem to recognize paired reading in terms of learning value but moreover as a means of circumventing the lack of material provisioning for reading teaching and learning in the

classroom. For example, Wendy explained: *“there isn’t enough resources for children to read then I would ask children ... to read in pairs ...”* (FG 1A).

The fourth year perspective of paired reading was shaped by the value of connecting paired reading to writing. Fiona explained: *“I let them read it to each other because they were writing about each other... Let them see the value of it”* (FG 4B). What was apparently noteworthy in their reported application of this activity during their teaching practice sessions was that their rationale for using paired reading was noteworthy of the recognizable teaching and learning value.

5.2.1.2 Shared reading

Their perspectives on shared reading appeared to continue to develop from the first year through to the fourth year. As with paired reading, shared reading was also mentioned by the same student teacher for its pragmatic value as a means of circumventing the lack of material provisioning. Wendy explained: *“there isn’t enough resources for children to read then I would ask children to look for newspaper ... if there’s no books and to ... share the reading”* (FG 1A).

In the fourth year their perspectives on shared reading appeared to shift towards more sophisticated literacy teaching and learning rationales. For example, Katherine described her teaching rationale for shared reading: *“that’s what I like about our Tuesday teaching. She [class teacher] makes the story their [learners] own story. So with the shared reading she also writes a story with them. Then she reads the story that they have written about themselves...”*(FG 4B). Of note, in this excerpt, was the asserted reported enthusiasm for shared reading and the significant teaching observations offered. Another student teacher in the fourth year also asserted her enthusiasm for shared reading and confirmed her preference for connecting it to shared writing during her teaching practice sessions. Fiona explained: *“for our Tuesday teaching ... she [learner] re-wrote her story. And I let them read it to each other ... That’s how your group teaching, shared reading and shared writing comes into play”* (FG 4B). Her opinion and the subsequent justification thereof were also deemed sophisticated.

5.2.1.3 Story-telling

The student teachers' perspectives on story-telling appeared to continue to develop from the first year through to the fourth year. In the first year, however, it was for a particular purpose – contextualizing printed stories. It was suggested as a creative alternative to reading stories which children might not entirely relate to in terms of race, age, culture or general community values as illustrated by Karla's explanation: *"books from different races or cultures and then you tell them the story and then they can see how the children in the books are because the children will see like a child in the book and they'll see he's the same age as me and he can relate ..."* (FG1A). The use of the story-telling activity in the first year was noteworthy.

In the fourth year their reported application of the story-telling activity appeared straightforward as she (Karla) explained how she reflected on her personal teaching priorities which were based on her teaching practice sessions: *"You get those things across through your reading teaching like through the type of story you tell"* (PD). What was important to note in this excerpt was the student teacher's calculated choice of story.

5.2.1.4 Reading to children

Reading to children was part of the student teachers' perspectives of reading teaching activities. In the first year they seemed to understand this activity as a tool for modeling good reading skill as well as for modeling multilingualism and subsequently addressing issues related to racial diversity. For example, Hayley, a black 20 year old first year student teacher explicitly connected the use of reading aloud to addressing stereotypic, race-language associations: *"I can also read Afrikaans books to them to see I'm black I can read Afrikaans, you can also read Afrikaans"* (FG 1A). This showed a noteworthy reflection of the use of the reading to children.

5.2.1.5 Spelling Activities

Spelling activities emerged in the first year student teachers' perspectives of reading teaching activities. As was the case with reading to children, spelling activities appeared to be static. For example, Nelly commented: *"... with spelling, with pronunciations, with word*

meanings, sitting with a dictionary, maybe in a group or something" (FG 1A). In terms of the depth in her reference to the spelling activity, it appeared straightforward.

5.2.1.6 Reading games

Reading games emerged in the student teachers' perspectives of reading teaching activities. It showed an inventive developmental trend - it was mentioned in the fourth year (within an additional language context). Commenting on a second language lesson taught at a Jewish school during the teaching practice session, one student teacher alluded to reading games which she reportedly used when she taught a Hebrew lesson there. Barbara explained: *"... I decided I am going to be brave and teach a Hebrew lesson ... The kids were excited because there were reading games and there was this and there was that"* (FG 4A). In terms of the depth in her reference to the reading games activity, it appeared straightforward.

5.2.1.7 Socio-Dramatic play

Socio-Dramatic play emerged as another inventive trend – it was only mentioned in the fourth year. For example, a student teacher in her fourth year commented on socio-dramatic play when another student mentioned the importance of selecting text which depicted racially and culturally diverse characters. Hayley suggested:

You can even do it with drama – even if there are just white people you can choose black learners to play that role even if it's a girl – take a boy to play the role of that girl and see that equity also comes in there. (FG 4A)

In terms of the depth in Hayley's reference to the socio-dramatic play activity, it appeared that there was sufficient substantiation in her reported perspective as she made noteworthy links with broader teaching and learning issues related to race, culture, gender and equity.

5.2.1.8 Hearing children read

The student teacher's perspectives on hearing children read appeared as an inventive activity. Their perspectives showed an apparent noteworthy understanding of hearing

children read - in the fourth year they pointed out some of the dynamics that arise when a teacher is hearing a child read – a student teacher raised the aspect of pronunciation which can be appraised when one hears children reading aloud. For example, commenting on the learners’ pronunciation of some words when children read aloud, Nelly recalled:

I remember this one incident with one of the children – the pronunciation of the word was just [funny] – and I stood there – I can’t laugh but we had a laughing moment and we continued and again. When the child got it the second time he laughed. (FG 4A)

It is noteworthy that this student teacher extended the worth of this activity to issues pertaining to sensitivities related to pronunciation (“I can’t laugh”). Furthermore, her acknowledgement of humor in this activity was noteworthy. It was not deemed sophisticated as there was not extensive reference to other activities or literacy teaching and learning.

5.2.1.9 Silent reading

Silent reading showed an inventive trend - student teachers in the fourth year mentioned it in their perspectives of reading teaching activities. For example, a student teacher in the fourth year was critical of the unconstructive potential of silent reading:

One of the lecturers told us to try silent reading. I tried it with one or two of the kids in my class ... and the teacher was like ‘don’t worry about them they read on their own’. But they weren’t reading. They were just like talking. (PD)

In terms of the depth, it appeared noteworthy as the student teacher appeared dubious about the learning potential of this activity in her limited reference to the absence of observable learner participation.

5.2.1.10 Rhythm walk

Student teachers in their fourth year mentioned the rhythm walk in their perspectives of reading teaching activities. For example, Nelly clarified the rhythm walk as a current, alternative reading activity, not widely known to in-service teachers:

we were taught recently the rhythm walk where you use the sentences – the kids love it and the teacher was like – ‘you must teach this to me’. And the teacher that I was originally with, she came and took all the things and like okay I’m going to apply this in my class even though they were not aware of the rhythm walk ... (FG 4A)

In terms of the depth in her reference to the rhythm walk activity, it appeared engaged in a straightforward way.

5.2.1.11 Sentence wall

The sentence wall was one of the activities in the inventive developmental domain. Student teachers in their fourth year mentioned this activity apparently for its affective worth (reference to self-esteem). Nelly clarified this in her explanation:

Even with using pictures, the children with low self-esteem, you take her sentence even it does not make sense and you write it and you let her see the sentence being written on the wall, on the board and they get uplifted. (FG 4A)

The ways in which the fourth year student teachers reported their application of this activity, during their teaching practice sessions, appeared sophisticated as it:

- clearly considered the affective together with the cognitive;
- linked picture support to sentence construction;
- associated the activity with shared writing;
- was attentive to textual meaning (‘make sense’).

5.2.1.12 Independent writing

Independent writing also emerged in their perspectives of reading teaching activities. A student teacher in the fourth year (Fiona) seemed to have understood independent writing in terms of the close connection between reading and writing in her reported teaching practice schema of

- theme,
- text selection,

- textual context and,
- reading and writing outcomes:

For our Tuesday teaching they [learners] choose the theme and then I ask them to bring me a book. They have to write a story. But we start from the context of a book, then they brainstorm and write their own stories. (FG 4B)

The depth in this activity appeared sophisticated as it was connected to a host of reading complexities as bulleted above.

5.2.1.13 Shared writing

Student teachers in their fourth year mentioned shared writing in their perspectives of reading teaching activities. For example, a student teacher asserted her enthusiasm for interactive writing in her teaching practice session and she made an explicit connection between reading and writing. Katherine explained:

that's what I like about our Tuesday teaching ... she also writes a story with them. Then she reads the story that they have written about themselves. Take their news and develop it into a story for the class and then she'll scribe it for them. Then afterwards they will read it and it's more meaningful for them. They enjoy it. (FG 4B)

This excerpt alluded to other reading teaching activities:

- Shared writing
- Reading aloud
- Independent writing

Another fourth year student (Nelly) also commented on her reported use of shared writing:

You take her sentence even if it does not make sense and you write it... you can write their story and they see you accept it. They write their story and make sense of it. (FG 4A)

In this excerpt, Nelly drew attention to

- the value of the class teacher’s approval of the learners’ writing ideas,
- making meaning of what is written and,
- independent writing.

In each of the excerpts from the respective focus group discussion it was apparent that the student teachers in the fourth year viewed this activity in a sophisticated manner.

5.2.1.14 Summary of breadth and depth of reading teaching activities

As described above, by the end of their fourth year, the breadth of the student teachers’ perspectives of reading teaching exhibited 13 activities which were with varying depth during their teacher education. These breadth and depth trends are summarized in table 5.2 as follows:

Table 5.2: Development over time of reading teaching activities

Perspectives on reading teaching activities			
Timing	Breadth	Depth	
	Activities	First Year	Fourth year
Continuous (First and fourth Year)	Paired reading	Pragmatic	Sophisticated
	Shared reading	Pragmatic	Sophisticated
	Story-telling	Sophisticated	Noteworthy
Static (First Year only)	Spelling	Straightforward	
	Reading to children	Noteworthy	
Inventive (After first Year)	Reading games		Straightforward
	Socio-Dramatic play		Noteworthy
	Silent reading		Noteworthy
	Sentence wall		Sophisticated
	Shared writing		Sophisticated
	Independent writing		Noteworthy
	Hearing children read		Noteworthy
Rhythm walk		Straightforward	

This table noticeably shows that the breadth and depth of the student teachers' perspectives of reading teaching activities varied between entry into and exit from teacher education:

- First year student teachers' perspectives with regard to reading teaching activities were interpreted as pragmatic and sophisticated, mostly towards the pragmatic end of the depth continuum; and
- Fourth year student teachers' perspectives with regard to reading teaching activities were interpreted as straightforward and sophisticated, mostly towards the sophisticated end of the depth continuum.

The next section shows the data pertaining to reading teaching practices.

5.3 STUDENT TEACHERS' READING TEACHING PRACTICES

My study investigated the student teachers' perspectives of reading teaching practices. This section presents data pertaining to the sub-question: *What practices do student teachers see as supporting their teaching of reading?* The overarching findings are discussed in chapter eight.

The Louden et al. (2005:191) study identified 33 literacy teaching practices within six broad literacy teaching dimensions - Participation, Knowledge, Orchestration, Support, Differentiation, Respect. The participation dimension includes the following teaching practices: attention, engagement, stimulation, pleasure and consistency. The knowledge dimension includes the following teaching practices: environment, purpose, explanations, modeling and metalanguage. The orchestration dimension includes the following teaching practices: awareness, structure, flexibility, pace and transition. The support dimension includes the following teaching practices: assessment, scaffolding, feedback, responsiveness, explicitness and persistence. The differentiation dimension includes the following teaching practices: challenge, individualization, inclusion, variation, modeling and connection. The sixth practices dimension, respect, includes the following teaching practices: warmth, rapport, credibility, citizenship and independence.

The data showed that the student teachers reportedly engaged with all of the teaching practice dimensions (six) over time in their teaching education but not with all the practices within each dimension. There were numerous additions to their perspectives on reading teaching practices between the first and fourth year.

5.3.1. Development over time

The student teachers mentioned 20 reading teaching practices by the end of their four year teacher education program. There was an evident expansion in the breadth of the student teachers' perspectives of reading teaching practices.

One practice, namely explanations (from the knowledge dimension), was mentioned in their first year and not in the fourth year (static). Eight additional reading teaching practices from five dimensions were mentioned in the first and fourth year (continuous):

1. Participation dimension – stimulation and pleasure practices
2. Knowledge dimension – environment practice
3. Orchestration dimension – structure practice
4. Differentiation dimension – variation practice
5. Respect dimension – credibility, citizenship and independence practices

11 more practices from five dimensions were mentioned in the fourth year only:

1. Knowledge dimension – modeling and substance practices
2. Orchestration dimension – awareness and pace practices
3. Support dimension – feedback, assessment and persistence practices
4. Differentiation dimension – challenge and individualization practices
5. Respect dimension – warmth and rapport practices

This 'development over time' was not only manifested in the breadth of their perspectives on reading teaching practices but also in the depth with which they understood and reportedly applied in the teaching and learning of reading during their teaching practice sessions. This is illustrated for each of the reading teaching practices as was done in the activities section.

5.3.1.1 Participation

Louden et al. (2005:195) explained the participation dimension as the “teacher’s ability to motivate a child’s desire to participate actively in learning” and they identified five teaching practices within this dimension:

Table 5.3: Participation dimension of literacy teaching practices

Practice	Teaching and Learning actions
Attention	Almost all children are focused on literacy learning
Engagement	Children are deeply absorbed in the literacy lesson/task
Stimulation	The teacher motivated interest in literacy tasks, concepts and learning
Pleasure	The teacher creates an enthusiastic and energetic classroom
Consistency	Strong literacy routines are recognized and understood by the children

The student teachers saw participation as a key dimension in their perspectives on reading teaching practices. However, it appeared limited to two practices which they mentioned in their first and fourth year:

- (i) Stimulation and
- (ii) Pleasure.

Stimulating interest in reading was a part of their reading teaching perspectives in their first year. For example, Karla explained her view of the stimulation practice: “... *especially from a young age you learn languages much faster so encourage them to read a lot of variety of books ...*”(FG 1A). Another student teacher in her first year also briefly indicated this. Barbara suggested: “*So I want also to encourage the learners to read ...*” These excerpts showed that in their first year the student teachers’ perspectives did not, however, mention how they would stimulate the learners. This suggested that developmentally, the depth of their engagement was straightforward.

In the fourth year they also spoke about stimulation: “... *you can also ask them what will they like to read. Something might interest them and it might make them more eager to read*” (PD). This was confirmed by another student teacher in the participatory dialogue who clarified: “... *when you gave them something that really, really are interested in they*

tried their best to read". Another student teacher who added that "... when you get to a kid who's going 'I'm not reading, I'm not reading, you've got to find a way – okay you are a boy and you like sports so let's find you a book about that" (PD). These excerpts showed their noteworthy outlook for motivating interest in reading tasks in the fourth year.

With regard to the pleasure practice in the participation dimension, student teachers in their first year showed that their view of this practice was nearly more than straightforward since they were learning towards an explanation of how to enable pleasure in contrast to merely stating what to make pleasurable. Katherine suggested: *"Also if you make reading exciting ..."* (FG 1B) and Hayley similarly stated: *"... make reading fun ..."* (FG 1A).

In their fourth year the development in their perspectives of pleasure practices was noteworthy. For example, Ally said: *"Have fun stuff like Charlie and the chocolate factory"* (FG 4B). Another student teacher reiterated this standpoint. For example, Barbara described her experience with this practice as follows: *"... do let's participate. The kids were excited because there were reading games and there was this and there was that"* (FG 4A). These fourth year excerpts were more than just an indication of what they intended to do - it also showed, although quite minimally, how they might achieve these ideas – they provided examples of how they might create an enthusiastic and energetic classroom by pointing out specific text and games which they experienced during their teaching practice sessions.

The practices of attention, engagement and consistency did not seem to feature in the student teachers' perspectives of reading teaching practices with regard to the participation dimension.

5.3.1.2 Knowledge

Another teaching practice dimension in the student teachers' perspectives on reading teaching practices was their knowledge. Teacher's knowledge refers to a group of teaching practices used by teachers that are related to their deep understandings and knowledge about the processes of learning literacy and their capacity to mediate children's literacy learning skillfully (Louden et al., 2005:203):

Table 5.4: Knowledge dimension of literacy teaching practices

Practice	Teaching and Learning actions
Environment	Literate physical environment is used as a teaching resource
Purpose	Children’s responses indicate tacit or explicit understanding of the purpose of the literacy task
Substance	The lesson/task leads to substantial literacy engagement not busy-work
Explanations	Explanations of literacy concepts and skills are clear and at an appropriate level
Modelling	Demonstrations of literacy tasks include metacognitive explanations
Metalanguage	Children are provided with language for talking about and exemplifying literacy concepts

The student teachers referred to the following practices in the knowledge dimension in their perspectives of reading teaching practices:

- a) Environment
- b) Purpose
- c) Substance
- d) Explanations
- e) Modelling

They mentioned the literate environment in their first year and fourth year. For example, Hayley explained in her reported application of this practice in her first year teaching practice as follows: *“there isn’t enough resources for children to read then I would ask children to look for newspaper, read through everyday, if there’s no books and to read”* (FG 1A). This showed a pragmatic angle of how student teachers in their first year might use this practice by accessing and using alternative sources of hard copy text, such as the newspaper, in their teaching. Another student teacher made a similar suggestion for responding to the absence of resources in a literate environment. Nelly made a similar suggestion: *“I’ll expose them in that way like doing labelling there while you’re in the classroom”*(FG 1A). This was an example of their engagement with the practice of using the

literate physical environment as a teaching resource - a apparently straightforward description of this practice.

In the fourth year, however, the ways in which they thought about using the literate environment as a teaching resource, was with more sophisticated outlook. For example, Nelly explained her reported application of this practice in her fourth year as follows:

In terms of the reading materials in your class, I don't believe in having a certain language in books. There must be a variety – whether the child can read or not they can read by pictures so if that child is going to see a word that he does not understand, they are going to form meaning of it (FG 4A).

This was an archetypal example of the ways in which student teachers in their fourth year apparently took action in the literate environment in their fourth year teaching practice session. They seemed to have a multifarious vision for the literate environment: advancing multilingualism, confidence in emergent reading skills and comprehension appeared to be decisive factors in their perspective on the literate environment. Nelly also added, and the other student teachers concurred: *“Also just a healthy text environment. You get into some of these classrooms and you see some books from nineteen-who-knows-what year” (FG 4A).* In their fourth year the current state of teaching and learning resources thus also appeared to be an additional factor in their noteworthy perspective on the literate environment as a teaching resource.

An additional factor, which delineated the fourth year student teachers' perspective on the literate environment, was their commitment to the value of the literate environment as a multi-purpose teaching and learning tool. This was clear when they agreed with one of the student teachers who suggested:

Like the books that you use in your class and the text that you choose - you need to account for all the different groups and the communities that the children come from (PD).

It was apparent that they viewed the literate environment as an all-encompassing tool for priorities that transcended plain reading teaching and learning parameters.

Explanations, in the knowledge dimension of literacy teaching practices, refers to the literacy concepts and skills which are made clear and at an appropriate level (Louden et al. 2005). The data illustrated that in their first year student teachers' perspectives of reading teaching practices were mindful of explanations. For example, Karla recommended: "... *bring it to a simplified way to them ... cartoon characters*" (FG 1A). The gestures of the other student teachers in this focus group discussion indicated their agreement with this explanation which was noteworthy in terms of their awareness of making literacy concepts and skills clear, as well as at an appropriate level. In addition, in their first year they also suggested how they might put this practice into action – the use of cartoon characters.

Modelling refers to demonstrations of literacy tasks which include metacognitive explanations (Louden et al. 2005). The student teachers' perspectives of reading teaching practices indicated their engagement with this only in the fourth year as explained by Fiona in her fourth year of teacher education:

One girlie wrote a story ... I asked her if it really happened and she said no, so I asked her what's wrong with your story? But what you are telling me sounds like a brilliant story [your story]. So she said that it is not a story and I said what about it does not make it a story? (FG 4B)

This excerpt did not illustrate the student teacher's reported modeling of the writing process per se but it alluded to metacognitive explanations - it illustrated the validation of the learner's praiseworthy attempts and achievement as alluded to in her reference to a teaching practice scenario. Furthermore, this student teacher posed a metacognitive question by asking the learner to think about [the learner's] thinking with regard to why she [the learner] did not regard her writing attempt to be a story. One could regard this perspective as a sophisticated illustration of modelling and metacognitive explanations by a student teacher in the fourth year.

Substance was another teaching practice associated with the knowledge dimension. Researchers like Hattie (2003) and, Luke, Freebody and Land (2000) illuminate the notion of 'busy-work' by suggesting that substance can be regarded as the provision of lessons or tasks that lead to substantial literacy engagement. My study found that, in their fourth year,

student teachers' perspectives on reading teaching practices indicated this practice sophisticatedly. Nelly recounted a literacy lesson which she taught in her fourth year:

They have to write a story. But we start from the context of a book, then they brainstorm and write their own stories. I let them read to each other because they were writing about each other" (FG 4B).

This excerpt showed that the scope of the lesson was aimed at substantial literacy engagement - the reading-writing task involved substantial learner engagement from the context of a book to the brainstorming stage of writing which was then extended to producing their [learners'] own written text which, in turn, provided the context for shared reading. All of this suggested the student teachers' reported sophisticated practice of substance.

In the main, all, except one of the practices in the knowledge dimension, was included in the student teachers' perspectives on reading teaching practices. Metalanguage, which refers to children being provided with language for talking about and exemplifying literacy concepts, did not appear in their practices.

5.3.1.3 Orchestration

A third teaching practice dimension is the teacher's orchestration. Orchestration involves the management and organization as a response to the complexities of the social context of the learning environment (Louden et al., 2005:211). Within the context of a discussion on orchestration Snow, Burns and Griffiths (2001:196) explained that "outstanding early years' teachers are 'masterful' in their management of activity, behavior and resources". The practices of orchestration are awareness, structure, flexibility, pace and transition:

Table 5.5: Orchestration dimension of literacy teaching practices

Practice	Teaching and Learning actions
Awareness	The teacher has a high level of awareness on literacy activities and participation by children
Structure	The environment is predictable and orderly
Flexibility	The teacher responds to learning opportunities that arise in the flow of the literacy lessons
Pace	The teacher provides strong forward momentum in literacy lessons
Transition	Minimum time is spent in transitions or there is productive use of transitions

The student teachers' perspectives on reading teaching practices indicated their angle on the following practices in the orchestration dimension:

- a) Awareness
- b) Structure
- c) Flexibility
- d) Pace

The data showed evidence of student teachers' perspective of the practice of awareness, after the first year. Nelly, a student teacher in her fourth year explained:

One of the lecturers told us to try silent reading. I tried it with one or two of the kids in my class and the teacher was like don't worry about them they read on their own. But they weren't reading. They were just like talking. (PD)

This excerpt showed the student teachers' attentiveness to what the silent reading activity entailed and their possible lack of approved learner participation in this type of activity. In terms of the breadth of their engagement with awareness in the teaching of reading, student teachers in their fourth year showed a straightforward engagement.

Structure is another orchestration teaching practice. Louden et al. (2005:211) put forward that the quality of structure concerns maintenance of an orderly and predictable environment. The student teachers in my study appeared steadfast in their perspectives of this practice. This was evident in the first and fourth year. A student teacher in her first

year, for example, explained how she maintained an orderly and environment. Fiona explained in her first year what she says to the learners: *“When you speak I keep quiet so when I speak you keep quiet, the same applies with your peers ...”*(FG 1B). This excerpt was important since it revealed how student teachers in the first year thought about setting up the learning environment to be an orderly place which was predictable for learner as well as teacher conduct.

An excerpt from a fourth year focus group discussion revealed a similar trend with regard to the structure practice. Ally explained how she focuses on:

... social etiquette while reading. Like don't shout. Listen to the one who is reading. Sit, excuse me. Make them aware that when someone else is speaking they should listen and show respect. (FG 4B)

Another student teacher showed a similar sophisticated level of structure. Fiona explained:

It's your classroom ethos actually. What did you establish at the beginning of the year for that process? So, you establish that at the beginning of the year so when you are planning you know what to do with your reading, they know what is expected of them [the learners]. (FG 4B)

Fiona seemed to surpass the association between structure and recognizable conduct in her perspective of this reading teaching practice – she apparently regarded structure beyond the conduct associated with children's movement around the classroom. In effect, this student teacher incorporated the provisioning of learning tasks and activities in the organized behaviors.

Louden et al. (2005:211) proposed that pace is necessary for orchestration in that it concerns the forward momentum in literacy classrooms. The student teachers in my study showed notable evidence of this practice, but only after the first year. A student teacher in her fourth year explained what strongly resembled a strong forward momentum in her reported reflection on a reading lesson. Barbara described what occurred in one of her reading lessons:

we are reading a story and I get them to interact with me, then read, then practice words and everything and teach them the new letters” (FG 4A).

This student teacher appeared to be offering the learners a noteworthy host of learning opportunities with noticeable intention. The Louden et al. (2005:211) study showed that effective teachers had the ability to maximize learning opportunities with a sense of urgency.

Flexibility concerns the teacher’s capacity to respond to the learning opportunities that arise within the flow of lessons. The student teachers in their fourth year showed flexibility as was clear in this excerpt of Nelly’s comments:

... on prac. [during teaching practice] I did not know this one word in Xhosa [which arose during the lesson] ... I asked another teacher at the end of the corridor and I went back and rehearsed it all the way there. The children were very spontaneous then and it made the social environment so much easier – my teacher is trying so why can I not do this?” (FG 4B)

In this excerpt the student teacher’s perspective illustrated her flexibility in her spontaneous responses to the ‘teachable moment’. Brophy and Good (1986:346) add that briskness, smoothness and timing all underpin effective teaching and Arlin (cited in Doyle, 1986:416) highlights that effective teachers spend little time on transition between activities. Transition is another practice associated with the orchestration dimension. In my study there was no evidence of this practice.

5.3.1.4 Support

The dimension that Louden et al. (2005:217) called support refers to the ways in which effective teachers structure children’s literacy learning so that they are expertly assisted in their acquisition of skills. These authors associate this dimension most closely with the knowledge dimension as the effectiveness of support depends on the extent of the teachers’ knowledge of literacy and literacy learning.

Table 5.6: Support dimension of literacy teaching practices

Practice	Teaching and Learning actions
Assessment	The teacher uses fine-grained knowledge of children’s literacy performance in planning and teaching
Scaffolding	The teacher extends children’s literacy learning through modelling, modifying, correcting
Feedback	The teacher gives timely, focused and explicit literacy feedback to children
Responsiveness	The teacher shares and builds on children’s literacy contributions
Explicitness	Word level – The teacher directs children’s attention to explicit word and sound strategies Text level – The teacher makes explicit specific attributes of a text
Persistence	The teacher provides many opportunities to practise and master new literacy learning

The data indicated the student teachers’ perspectives on the following practices in the support dimension:

- a) Assessment
- b) Scaffolding
- c) Feedback
- d) Responsiveness
- e) Explicitness
- f) Persistence

In my study the student teachers’ perspectives on reading teaching practices indicated sophisticated engagement with the assessment practice in the support dimension in their fourth year. For example, two student teachers concurred about their assessment and monitoring of the learners’ writing as shown in the two consecutive comments in a focus group discussion. Nelly said: *“the problem is that they can’t make it [the story] their own and think for themselves”* and Ally named a specific issue in this regard: *“They struggle to make up their own character with 5 arms and 2 heads”*.

It was important to understand that both comments were responses to the explanation on the planning and teaching of a particular lesson during their practical teaching sessions, as explained by Nelly:

They have to write a story. But we start from the context of a book, then they brainstorm and write their own stories. I let them read to each other because they were writing about each other. (FG 4B)

This excerpt showed the planning for the lesson for a particular group of learners. A salient feature of this was that this particular excerpt was used to interpret the data regarding the substance practice (of the knowledge dimension above). Louden et al. (2005:216) advocate that the support dimension is closely related to the knowledge dimension as the effectiveness of support depends to a great extent upon teachers' knowledge of literacy and literacy learning.

Louden et al. (2005:217) described the scaffolding practice within the support dimension as the ways in which the teacher extends children's literacy learning through modelling, modifying, correcting. My data illustrated that the student teachers' perspectives on reading teaching practices in their fourth year indicated descriptions of scaffolding at the individual level with an appraisal for the learners' increased self-esteem through a successful experience with print. For example, Nelly a described her scaffolding practices in her reading teaching:

[...] reading to me is a lot of scaffolding ... one day that child that you think does not pay attention or read well, will. It happens all the time ... Also, through that I have seen how kids' self-esteem develop because 'wow, I got it right'. (FG 4A)

Further reference to this practice in the participatory dialogue data indicated the student teachers' perspectives on scaffolding - but with no refined clarification about it. For example, one student teacher explained her straightforward engagement: "we now know about different strategies for teaching reading, the ways to scaffold learners and things like that" (PD). The other student teachers concurred.

Feedback as a support practice is giving timely, focused and explicit literacy feedback to children (Louden et al., 2005:218). In their fourth year the student teachers' perspectives on reading teaching practices indicated the importance of feedback. This was, however, in the form of a particular type of feedback called responsiveness whereby the teacher shares and builds on children's contributions in such a way that the child contributes to the teaching point (Brophy and Good, 1986). In my study, their perspectives of the practice of feedback only seemed evident after the first year. For example, Nelly explained:

One girlie wrote a story that I could see was just in her head so I asked her if it really happened and she said no, so I asked her what's wrong with your story? But what you are telling me sounds like a brilliant story [your story]. So she said that it is not a story and I said what about it does not make it a story? And then she re-wrote her story" (FG 4B).

This excerpt was a good example of the particular type of feedback, responsiveness, as it showed that the student teacher frankly set out to build on the girl's attempt at writing a story in such a way that the learner contributed to the teaching and learning by re-writing her story in 'view of her [the learner] new vision of wants counts as a story'. This particular excerpt was used to also interpret the modeling practice data of the knowledge dimension as shown above because Loudon et al. (2005:216) advocate that the support dimension is closely related to the knowledge dimension as the effectiveness of support depends to a great extent upon teachers' knowledge of literacy and literacy learning.

Brophy and Good (1986) and Hattie (2003) add that teachers who share and build on children's contributions in such a way that the child contributes to the teaching point, are persistent in their provision of many opportunities to practice and master new literacy learning. In my study the student teachers alluded to this in their perspectives on reading teaching practices in the fourth year – they recognized that they needed to persist, over time, in their provision of repeating the same reading activity: *"You walk alongside the child and then one day you see wow this child is reading the reading piece and stuff like that"* (PD).

At the word level, persistence could involve ‘creating multiple opportunities for sustained reading practice in a variety of formats, such as choral reading (Snow et al., 1998:196). According to Duke and Pearson (2002), at the text level persistence may involve the teacher allocating a large amount of time to reading in order to provide experience in using comprehension strategies. In either case, it means that the opportunity will explicitly be at the word level or the text level. In my study the student teacher’s’ persistence at the explicit word level in their fourth year was their creation of multiple opportunities for sustained reading practice. Nelly explained how she does reading teaching at the word level: “... *do you know what this word is? I need you to explain to me ... So that literacy, to me, is probably the key point where you have the variety of text in your class ...*” Barbara also commented on word level explicitness in her reading teaching as she explained: “*read, then practice words and everything and teach them the new letters.*” (FG 4A)

This study found that the student teachers perspectives on reading teaching practices indicated noteworthy persistence at the explicit text level – their perspectives validated the practice of creating multiple opportunities for sustained reading practice by what appeared to be the allocation of a large amount of time to reading through connected writing activities. Katherine explained in her fourth year: “*Take their news and develop it into a story for the class and then she’ll scribe it for them. Then afterwards they will read it and it’s more meaningful for them. They enjoy it.*” (FG 4B)

5.3.1.5 Differentiation

The dimension called differentiation “concerns the ways in which teachers tailor the curriculum and pedagogic practices to the unique cognitive and socio-cultural understandings and practices that each child brings to the classroom, while at the same time maintaining group cohesion” (Louden et al., 2005:225). These authors confirm that the differentiation dimension is characterized by six teaching practices: Challenge, Individualisation, Inclusion, Variation, Modelling and Connection:

Table 5.7: Differentiation dimension of literacy teaching practices

Practice	Teaching and Learning actions
Challenge	The teacher extends and promotes higher order thinking in literacy learning
Individualisation	Differentiated literacy instruction recognises individual differences
Inclusion	The teacher facilitates inclusion of all students in the literacy lessons
Variation	Literacy teaching is structured around groups or individuals
Modelling	Demonstrations of literacy tasks include metacognitive explanations
Connection	Connections are made between class and community literacy-related knowledge

The student teachers's perspectives indicated their engagement with the following practices in the differentiation dimension:

- a) Challenge
- b) Individualisation
- c) Inclusion
- d) Variation
- e) Modelling
- f) Connection

In my study the student teachers' perspectives on reading teaching practices revealed engagement with the challenge practice in the fourth year. For example, Cindy said:

[...] Those higher order questions so that they can also think about what you read to them. Otherwise it's 'oh, it's just a story'. So that they know what the message that you are trying to bring across is. That's why the questioning is important.

This sophisticated engagement appeared intent on moving the learners beyond the basic encounters with text, towards a more insightful grasp through higher order questions as a means to achieving this.

Individualisation, in the differentiation dimension, is concerned with the ways in which individual needs are addressed within curriculum planning and implementation (Louden et al., 2005:225). This practice was steadfast in the fourth year student teachers' perspectives on practices in the differentiation dimension:

Knowing that every child ... their needs will be different ... understanding that every child is meant to have the same level of education will impact the way you teach on a classroom level because each child has to get access to their best. That's within their rights and so the way in which I teach reading has to change in order to get the best out of every child in that classroom (PD).

This excerpt largely showed that the student teachers' sophisticated perspectives on engagement recognized the:

- individuality of the child,
- needs of the child,
- include the learner in the tasks, and
- the child's rights to access his/her best potential.

Louden et al. (2005:225) explain the teaching practice of variation, in the differentiation dimension, as the ways in which teachers use grouping as a means of responding to children's learning needs. In my study there was evidence of this practice in the first year and the fourth year. There appeared to be straightforward first year viewpoints of variation practice in the differentiation teaching dimension as there was reference to grouping - but it appeared devoid of justification. For example, Wendy, a student teacher in her first year alluded to this, with agreement from the other participants in the focus group discussion: *"If you are reading in groups and stuff..."* (FG 4.1). Another student teacher, Karla, responded to this excerpt by adding: *"Ja ... maybe in a group or something"*.

The student teachers in their fourth year, conversely, showed justification in their variation practice:

You put more effort into it [reading teaching] with those children because they are not getting what they need at home. You give them more leeway – if it takes them

that much longer to get to reading – I gave my learners more time because they are not getting it at home. They are only getting it from me (PD).

What was clear from this excerpt was that the student teacher reportedly used grouping as a means of responding to children’s learning needs which was apparently understood as a necessity to supplement the absent literacy support at home. Another example of the fourth year student teachers’ sophisticated perspectives on the variation practice was their explanation of how grouping might be used as a means of responding to children’s learning needs:

do the reading aspect ... how that [extra group reading] empowered that group of kids...after school that kids [who were struggling with reading] would still get what I have taught in the class, the technique or strategy in the class and they would get a double portion (PD).

Whereas the findings stated above showed that the student teachers’ perspectives indicated that they provided differentiated instruction and tasks which took account of individual needs, the following excerpt showed how student teachers in the fourth year facilitated “the inclusion of all children within and across tasks”(Snow et al.,1998; Wray et al., 2000). For example, a student teacher in my study alluded to including diverse learners in a mainstream lesson by using different strategies within that task:

Keep at it. It’s vital ... it’s not as smooth-sailing as you think it is or you hear that it is. It’s not just a recipe ABC.You have to keep at it. You have to keep trying new things - different children, different reading strategies. Different barriers. You got to keep adapting and changing (PD).

This showed the student teachers’ reported noteworthy skill at “facilitating inclusion and meeting individual needs by modifying and adjusting instruction and scaffolding to support individual levels of understanding”, within “whole class literacy tasks”(Louden et al., 2005:226).

The last teaching practice in the differentiation dimension, connection, has been described as the essence of effective teaching and learning, referred to by Bruner (1996:45) as ‘how

human beings achieve a meeting of the minds'(Louden et al., 2005:226). Student teachers' perspectives on reading teaching practices indicated the practice of connection in the first and the fourth year. For example, Wendy, a black student teacher in her first year, made reference to the literacy practices in the community and how it seemed at odds with the reading culture in the classroom:

In my community schools there, literacy levels are so low because erm there isn't culture of reading in my culture because there were no books, there isn't enough resources for children to read then[as a teacher] I would ask children to look for newspaper, read through everyday ... (FG 1A)

This excerpt showed that the student teachers' perspectives in the first year were attentive to responding to the mismatch between school and family/community literacy practices – this showed noteworthy engagement with this teaching practice.

In the fourth year student teachers intended to build on the speaking and reading conventions of particular learners as a means of giving those learners access to new forms of reading. For example, a student teacher in the fourth year illustrated this sophisticatedly as follows:

[...] people who don't speak English – English first language –pronounce words differently in their language... be open to their way of reading and teach them the right way using their way of reading as well. (PD)

5.3.1.6 Respect

The dimension 'respect' refers to a group of teaching practices concerned with the social context of the classroom (Louden et al., 2005:232). The practices identified with the respect dimension are warmth, rapport, credibility, citizenship and independence (Louden et al., 2005:225).

Table 5.8: Respect dimension of literacy teaching practices

Practice	Teaching and Learning actions
Warmth	Welcoming, positive and inviting classroom is focused on literacy learning
Rapport	Relationships with the children support tactful literacy interventions
Credibility	Respect for the teacher enables her to overcome any challenges to order and lesson flow
Citizenship	Equality, tolerance, inclusivity and awareness of the needs of others are promoted
Independence	Children take some responsibility for their own literacy learning

The student teachers' perspectives on reading teaching practices indicated their engagement with the following practices in the respect dimension:

- a) Warmth
- b) Rapport
- c) Credibility
- d) Citizenship
- e) Independence

With regard to warmth, Loudon et al. (2005) say that effective teachers use a range of teaching practices to establish and maintain social contexts in the early years classrooms that are welcoming, positive and inviting, and that focus consistently on literacy learning. Warmth and rapport were two of the more frequently observed practices in the classrooms of effective teachers. My study found that the student teachers' perspectives on reading teaching practices indicated this practice after their first year. Some of them appeared to create an inviting ambiance for literacy learning by becoming aware of the matters that interest the learners, so as to appeal to their enthusiasm to learn to read, as Fiona described:

It's your classroom ethos actually. What did you establish at the beginning of the year for that process? So, you establish that at the beginning of the year so when you are planning you know what to do with your reading, they know what is expected of

them [the learners] and you can also ask them what will they like to read. Something might interest them and it might make them more eager to read. (FG 4B)

This excerpt showed that by the fourth year the student teachers had sophisticated viewpoints of warmth as they connected the learning environment to their own planning, together with the structure (learner expectation) and stimulation. Other student teachers showed a noteworthy outlook of warmth. They invited learners to interact with them as a central part of the reading activities, as Barbara described:

[...] and I get them to interact with me, then read, then practice words and everything and teach them the new letters. (FG 4A)

This excerpt showed that by the fourth year, some student teachers' reading teaching perspectives entailed a synergy between practices and a range of activities.

Rapport, according to Loudon et al. (2005), concerns the "development of relationships between the teacher and children that consistently support tactful literacy interventions" (Louden et al., 2005:233). The social context of less effective teachers' classrooms was not characterized by an explicitly clear focus on literacy learning as they did not have the strong rapport with children that ensure tactful literacy interventions. In my study the student teachers' perspectives on reading teaching practices presented their engagement with this practice, after the first year. They appeared to develop and sustain a light-hearted mood with the learners which prompted learners to respond confidently to potentially thorny teaching and learning moments. This light-hearted mood appeared to support the student teachers' intervention with sensitive issues like pronunciation, as explained by Nelly:

I changed the sentences to Afrikaans and I remember this one incident with one of the children – the pronunciation of the word was just – and I stood there – I can't laugh but we had a laughing moment and we continued and again, when the child got it the second time, he laughed. (FG 4A)

This excerpt showed that by the fourth year the student teachers' perspectives on reading teaching practices illustrated their sophisticated practice of warmth in the respect dimension – respect for the learner's error with the mispronunciation of the word was maintained and the light-hearted mood quashed possible apprehension of being laughed at. On the contrary, the warmth in the classroom invited security amongst learners to be amused by themselves and others in their learning context.

Louden et al. (2005) describe credibility as “the ways in which the teacher earns the respect from children that enables her to maintain the momentum of the lesson, and to manage behaviours that could interrupt the orderly conduct of the classroom” (Louden et al., 2005: 233). Student teachers engaged with this practice from the first year through to the fourth year. In the first year there seemed a straightforward engagement with this practice whereby the student teachers explained to the learners that respect works two ways. What was important was that in the first year student teachers appeared to be aware of possible challenges when reading to learners in the front of the classroom. For example, Karla said:

You should encourage respect amongst the learners, even when you are reading in front, you tell them: you know I respect you. When you speak I keep quiet. So when I speak you keep quiet. (FG 1A)

Whereas the straightforward standpoint with the practice of credibility in the respect dimension was in the form of verbal explanation to learners in their first year, in the fourth year their perspectives on reading teaching practices displayed their credibility to learners in a way that enhanced the order and flow of the reading lesson. Barbara, a student teacher in the fourth year explained her teaching experience with show-casing her proficiency in Hebrew at a Jewish school community during her teaching practice session:

[...] Next thing I start talking Hebrew and they say: wow miss we didn't know you can speak Hebrew so nicely – your Hebrew is amazing ... once I started speaking Hebrew I could feel that I felt more comfortable but there was also respect – “we didn't know that you could speak Hebrew but now that we do let's participate. The kids were excited ... (FG 4A)

This excerpt showed that by the fourth year some student teachers' perspectives showed their awareness of the value of their credibility in the teaching and learning environment and they seem committed to extending their professional expertise in this regard.

Louden et al. (2005) refer to citizenship as an effective literacy teaching practice as it involves the promotion of equality, tolerance, inclusivity and awareness of the needs of others. My study found that this practice was referred to several times in the data, more so than any of the other practices. Student teachers engaged with this practice from the first through to the fourth year. In the first year some student teachers appeared committed to racial and cultural tolerance, as illustrated by Karla, a white first year student teacher:

So definitely find books about different cultures and stuff. Like I when I was on teaching prac I got a book called, 'All the colours of the rainbow', and it speaks about how we are all just like the colours of the rainbow. We all have different cultures and different food and the music that we listen. But we are still all unique and beautiful and we should all like accept each other because without that there would never be something beautiful like the rainbow, if we didn't all come together ... and the children all enjoyed it ... (FG 1A)

This first year student teacher also appeared committed to linguistic inclusivity. For example, she suggested:

[...] so encourage them to read a lot of variety of books from different languages and stuff and that way you'll pick up the language and then you can communicate to people like when you're older. You can have a conversation with them which is really good because we have so many languages in our country it's important to at least know a few of them. (FG 1A)

Both first year excerpts showed the student teachers' sense of citizenship and their subsequent professional responses of tolerance and inclusivity through the straightforward use of text in the classroom.

In the fourth year some student teachers' perspectives on reading teaching practices presented their engagement with citizenship in a straightforward way, much like in their first year. They were committed to inclusivity of different types of families and the ways in which text represents these, as Karla suggested the content of books in her fourth year: *"Also, not just the perfect family – not just one mom and one dad and a dog and a brother and a sister"* (FG 4A).

Other student teachers in the fourth year appeared to engage with this practice in a more noteworthy way – they also seemed committed to inclusivity of different types of families and the ways in which text represent these but they suggested critical questions which shape their evaluation of the text, as explained by Betty:

And the characters in the story. Are they only fair haired, blue-eyed mommy and daddy in a perfect family in a perfect picture. Is that normal? Do I feel represented in that story? Do I need to read it? (FG 4B)

Some student teachers in the fourth year appeared to engage with citizenship by way of their commitment to equality and their awareness of the needs of others:

Knowing that every child has the right to access to equal education that impacts the way that you would teach in a classroom context. Understanding that their needs will be different ... understanding that every child is meant to have the same level of education will impact the way you teach on a classroom level because each child has to get access to their best. That's within their rights and so the way in which I teach reading has to change in order to get the best out of every child in that classroom (PD).

What's important in this reported sophisticated engagement with this practice is that the student teachers suggest that they have to be willing to change the ways in which they teach in order to promote the development of every learner ("best out of every child").

Independence, the fifth teaching practice associated with the respect dimension, fosters children's motivation to take some responsibility for their own learning" (Louden et al.,

2005). Student teachers appeared to engage with this practice from the first through to the fourth year. In the first year the student teachers' perspectives on reading teaching practices showed noteworthy commitment to this as they acknowledged that learners must take responsibility for their own reading development by giving them reading tasks to do at home with a follow-up activity at school, as described by Barbara:

[...] I [the learner] must read today and I must come back and tell re-tell the story. Maybe you have a book corner, you give them the stories. They go home. They read and they come back and re-tell the story So I think also that can help develop them. (FG 1A)

What was important in this excerpt was the student teachers' reference to the part that the teacher played (teacher gives books from her book corner) and the part that the learner played (they must read, retell). In the fourth year the student teachers seemed to give different shape to this practice. Their perspectives on the practice of independence seemed sophisticated - they referred to the role of the teacher, the learner, as well as the peers in developing learners' responsibility in their own reading development, as Nelly explained:

I don't always have to be the teacher. Your friend can be your teacher as well. So that literacy, to me, is probably the key point where you have the variety of text in your class, let them use it and benefit from each other instead of me just babbling, babbling. (FG 4A)

This excerpt showed that, as with student teachers in the first year, the fourth year student teachers also referred to the accessibility of (variety of) text and allowing learners to use it together with the interaction with their peers.

5.3.1.7 Summary of breadth and depth of reading teaching activities

This study found that the breadth of the student teachers' perspectives on reading teaching practices expanded over time during the four year teacher education program and the depth of perspectives on reading teaching practices varied between entry into and exit from teacher education:

- First year student teachers' perspectives on reading teaching practices ranged between straightforward and noteworthy, mostly towards the straightforward end of the depth continuum; and
- Fourth year student teachers' perspectives on reading teaching practices ranged between straightforward and sophisticated, mostly towards the sophisticated end of the depth continuum.

The following table summarizes student teachers' breadth and depth in their practices.

Table 5.9: Development over time: Perspectives on reading teaching practices

Perspectives on reading teaching practices				
Timing	Breadth		Depth	
Continuous (First and fourth Year)	Practices Dimension		First Year	Fourth year
	Participation	Stimulation	Straightforward	Noteworthy
		Pleasure	Straightforward	Noteworthy
	Knowledge	Environment	Straightforward	Noteworthy
	Orchestration	Structure	Straightforward	Straightforward and Sophisticated
	Differentiation	Variation	Straightforward	Noteworthy
	Respect	Credibility	Straightforward	Noteworthy
		Citizenship	Straightforward	Straightforward, Noteworthy and Sophisticated
		Independence	Noteworthy	Sophisticated
Static (First Year only)	Knowledge	Explanations	Noteworthy	
Inventive (After first Year)	Knowledge	Modelling		Sophisticated
		Substance		Sophisticated
	Orchestration	Awareness		Straightforward
		Pace		Noteworthy
	Support	Feedback		Sophisticated
		Assessment		Sophisticated
		Persistence		Noteworthy
	Differentiation	Challenge		Sophisticated
		Individualization		Sophisticated
	Respect	Warmth		Sophisticated
	Rapport		Sophisticated	

The interpretation of data displayed in this table was based on the overarching agreement of views and practice among the student teachers:

5.4 CONNECTING READING TEACHING AND PROFESSIONAL CAPABILITIES FOR PUBLIC GOOD

From the presentation of the data pertaining to the student teachers' perspectives on reading teaching activities and practices, their professional concerns for public good in their teaching of reading became apparent. My study found that the student teachers' multifarious views on the activities and practices dimensions in their reading teaching indicated their responsiveness to socio-economic-political realities. For example, many of the excerpts which illustrated their perspectives on activities and practices above also showed that in their reading teaching they intended to respond to a range of socio-economic-political contextual realities through the ways in which they would:

- compensate for absent parental literacy support,
- be attentive to racial, cultural and linguistic diversity,
- be alert to the lack of resources,
- be mindful of the lack of reading culture in some communities, and
- respect the rights of learners in the reading teaching and learning setting.

These findings from the focus group data alluded to how their professionalism in their reading teaching perspectives was coupled with transformation issues in South Africa. They appeared, amongst others, committed to their role as public good professionals as well as to the social goals in the curriculum, each of which was investigated in this study and is presented in the next chapter with the findings on how student teachers *understand* their professional capabilities for public good.

This section proceeds with a presentation of data regarding the professional capabilities which appeared to underpin student teachers' reading teaching perspectives. The data from the focus group question, *how do you connect the social goals in the curriculum to your reading teaching*, as presented above, alluded to professional capabilities which underpin their reading teaching. These trends were then explicitly investigated in the participatory

dialogue question which asked: *How do you connect your understanding of the professional capabilities to your reading teaching?*

My study found a connection between eight professional capabilities and their teaching of reading perspectives. The eight emergent professional capabilities in my study (as articulated by Walker & McLean, 2010:855) were:

1. Informed Vision
2. Affiliation
3. Resilience
4. Social and collective struggle
5. Integrity
6. Assurance and confidence
7. Knowledge, imagination, practical skills
8. Emotions

The explicit ways in which each of these professional capabilities for public good appeared to underpin their reading teaching perspectives are explained below with the use of excerpts from the participatory dialogue (PD) data.

5.4.1 Social and collective struggle

Walker and McLean (2010:856) described a few examples of what this professional capability entails:

Community empowerment approach/promoting human rights; contributing to policy formulation and implementation; identifying spaces for change/Leading and managing social change to reduce injustice; working in professional and inter-professional teams; participating in public reasoning/listening to all voices in the 'conversation'; building and sustaining strategic relationships and networks with organisations and government.

In my study the student teachers showed their social and collective struggle in their reading teaching perspectives through their commitment to

- (i) Promoting the right to education
- (ii) Identifying spaces for change – inequality and life opportunities
- (iii) Empowering parents towards learners’ reading literacy success.

5.4.1.1 Promote the right to education

The student teachers’ professional ways of reportedly doing their reading teaching in the classroom was apparently shaped by their consciousness about human rights which in turn was exemplified by their creation of opportunities for learners to develop at their best. For example, a student teacher in the fourth year explained:

Knowing that every child has the right to access to equal education that impacts the way that you would teach in a classroom context. Understanding that their needs will be different ... understanding that every child is meant to have the same level of education will impact the way you teach on a classroom level because each child has to get access to their best. That’s within their rights and so the way in which I teach reading has to change in order to get the best out of every child in that classroom.

(PD)

Of key importance in this excerpt was the student teachers’ promotion of fundamental human rights – the right to access equal education.

5.4.1.2 Identify spaces for change – inequality and life opportunities

The student teachers’ professional ways of reportedly doing their teaching in the classroom was apparently shaped by their commitment to expanding the reading capabilities of their learners in lieu of securing improved life opportunities for them. This was apparently bound up in their conception of ‘reading for life’ for all in society:

And also, when I think of reading teaching I also think of when they finish matric, if they have had adequate reading teaching and writing and all those things and the kind of things that you need writing and reading for in life. And if they don’t know how to do those things, you haven’t taught them properly because it may be your sense of inequality if you don’t know that you’re doing it. You know what I’m saying?

It influences the way you see the kids, the way you teach them and then it has this long term effect on their future. (PD)

What was particularly striking in the latter part of this excerpt was the student teachers' recognition of the power of their own capability as being influential in the life trajectory of their learners and also their awareness of their potential ignorance of their own sense of inequality which could, in turn, abate their useful power and influence.

5.4.1.3 Empowering parents towards learners' reading literacy

This study showed that their perspectives on reading teaching seemed to equate reading proficiency with notions of empowerment. They seemed to endorse the practice of working with others (including parents in the classroom) for the purpose of securing better opportunities for learners to succeed with learning to read:

Also the community empowerment, what I've seen at the school where I was at, the teacher would get in a mom that wasn't working and she would let this mother do the reading aspect of that timeslot and how I see how that empowered that group of kids was ... after school that kids would still get what I have taught in the class - the technique or strategy in the class and they would get a double portion of it basically because the parent was also doing it. So the parent was empowering that child, as a whole. (PD)

What was particularly striking in the latter part of this excerpt was the student teacher's reference to the development of the learner 'as a whole' which alluded to their conception of the multidimensionality of the learners with whom they engage with professionally.

5.4.2 Assurance and Confidence

Walker and McLean (2010:856) describe a few examples of this professional capability:

Expressing and asserting own professional priorities; contributing to policy; having confidence in the worthwhileness of one's professional work; having confidence to act for change.

In my study the student teachers' perspectives on reading teaching indicated their assurance and confidence in their reading teaching through their commitment to selecting:

- (i) Best reading teaching strategies
- (ii) Own text, structure and substance

5.4.2.1 Best reading teaching strategies

The student teachers' professional ways of reportedly being and doing their reading teaching in the classroom was apparently shaped by their confidence in their decision-making for reading teaching:

Because of the last teaching prac and the experience I had, I reflected on expressing my priorities and also learnt like strategies to teach and so you basically base your decision [to teach reading] on what you feel is best. (PD)

This excerpt shows that they have a perspective of their own reading teaching priorities which they judge according to its teaching and learning value – “what you feel is best”.

5.4.2.2 Own text, structure and substance

The student teachers' perspectives with regard to practices of selecting text, the structure in the classroom and the substance in the reading teaching showed their asserted professional priorities. What was particularly striking in this excerpt was the confident, professional interconnectedness of these three teaching features:

You get those things [priorities] across through your reading teaching like through the type of story you tell and this can help with discipline and also your discussions afterwards. (PD)

They suggested that the type of story facilitated structure in the classroom setting and accomplished substance in the learning (“discussion afterwards”).

5.4.3 Knowledge, imagination and practical skills

Walker and McLean (2010:857) describe a few examples of this professional capability:

Having a firm, critical grounding in disciplinary, academic knowledge; valuing indigenous and community knowledges; having a multidisciplinary / multi-perspectival, stance; being enquiring, critical, evaluative, imaginative, creative and flexible; integrating theory and practice; being problem-solvers; open minded.

In my study the student teachers showed their knowledge, imagination and practical skills in their reading teaching through their commitment to:

- (i) Using multilingualism as a resource
- (ii) Imaginative, creative and flexible responses

5.4.3.1 Using multilingualism as a resource

The student teachers' perspectives on reading teaching revealed that they were critical and evaluative of particular experiences with multilingualism in their reported reading teaching. They problematised learning to read English as a first language and they promoted the notion of being open-minded with solutions to the complexities which this posed to teachers. They seemed discontented with the university's limited and limiting responses to people in this regard i.e. students who are 'additional language' learners:

If you are already in the frame of mind that everyone can read already and then you come here [university] and you realize that people who don't speak English – English first language – pronounce words differently in their language, you won't be able to be open to their way of reading and teach them the right way using their way of reading as well. (PD)

This excerpt showed that they valued multiple forms of teaching and learning language. They proposed to respect and utilise diverse engagement with English in their teaching – recognize different pronunciations and ways of reading. Their discontent with the university seemed to be its lack of valuing multiple perspectives on issues pertaining to multilingualism (“you won't be able to be open to ...”).

5.4.3.2 Imaginative, creative and flexible responses

The student teachers' perspectives on reading teaching indicated that they were imaginative, creative and flexible in their reading teaching perspectives through their responses to stimulating learner interest in learning to read. For example, they considered stereotypic, gender interests in text:

And also using different texts for reading. So you may have been used to working with Janet and John type of books but when you get to a kid who's going 'I'm not reading, I'm not reading, you've got to find a way – okay you are a boy and you like sports so let's find you a book about that. You've got to be open-minded to do something that it is classified as 'he is reading properly'. (PD)

The last sentence in this excerpt also showed their progressive stances on what counts as reading progress. In so doing, they apparently distinguished usual stances on learners' reading progress from their alternative views on this issue.

5.4.4 Informed vision

Walker and McLean (2010:856) describe a few examples of this professional capability:

Understanding how the profession is shaped by historical and current socio-economic-political context national and globally; understanding how structures shape individual lives; being able to imagine alternative futures and improved social arrangements.

In my study the student teachers' perspectives on reading teaching indicated their informed vision in their reading teaching through their commitment to:

- (i) Diverse textual relevance in reading teaching
- (ii) Attitude to diverse textual relevance
- (iii) The need for change in linguistic inclusion

5.4.4.1 Diverse textual relevance

The student teachers appeared to understand, in their perspectives of reading teaching, that diversity was a key feature of the current socio-economic-political context. From their reported teaching practice sessions it appeared they responded directly to this diversity:

Like the books that you use in the classroom and the text that you choose you need to account for all the different groups and the communities that the children come from so you can just have the ideal family anymore, you have to account for everybody, their cultures, their languages and bring them into the text that you read and expose children to. (PD)

Interestingly, their responses included the recognition of diverse families, as well as cultures and languages.

5.4.4.2 Attitude to diverse textual relevance

Their understanding of the current socio-economic-political context, as presented in their perspectives on reading teaching activities and practices, displayed the sincerity in their commitment to carrying an attitude that was conducive to working with well-thought out text in the diverse local context:

Also your attitude towards teaching reading. I mean if you are teaching reading to learners who aren't the first language of the language that you are teaching, you need to be accommodating and not do it begrudgingly, so your attitude has to change as well as the text that you are reading. (PD)

Of importance in this excerpt was their acknowledgment of the potentially pessimistic teacher behaviour (“begrudgingly”) that could potentially be associated with the current socio-economic-political context.

5.4.4.3 The need for change in linguistic inclusion

The student teachers' discontent with the status of some languages in the current socio-economic-political context seemed apparent in their perspectives on reading teaching. They appeared to suggest that there had been no change, nationally, in this regard. This was implied in their references to their experiences at university:

The problem is that the old is still there. You are still forced to learn Afrikaans [unanimous, approving laughter from all other participants] and there are no facilities for Xhosa speaking students. There is a campus for Afrikaans speaking students and there is a campus for English speaking students so where is the change?
(PD)

This excerpt illustrated that the student teachers located language education (e.g. reading teaching) within a broader education context as well as a national political context which they expected to have been transformed. Interestingly, they suggested that isiXhosa was ignored and that Afrikaans was "forced" on them, while English was also catered for preferentially.

5.4.5 Integrity

Walker and McLean (2010:856) describe a few examples of this professional capability:

Acting ethically; being responsible and accountable to communities and colleagues; being honest; striving to provide high-quality service.

In my study the student teachers' perspectives on reading teaching revealed their integrity in providing quality reading teaching to learners through their commitment to:

- (i) Knowledge of approaches, strategies and scaffolding techniques
- (ii) Discernment between different approaches
- (iii) Taking context specificity of various strategies into account
- (iv) Own preferences for different reading teaching strategies.

5.4.5.1 Knowledge of approaches, strategies and scaffolding techniques

Their perspectives of reading teaching showed how they associated quality reading teaching with knowing about approaches to teaching reading, different reading teaching strategies as well as scaffolding:

It has everything to do with that we now know about different strategies for teaching reading, the ways to scaffold learners and things like that, resources that we can use.
(PD)

This excerpt was important as it showed the recognition of their development in their knowledge, over time. It also showed that they did not think about teaching resources in deficit mode (e.g. lack of resources) but in terms of a range of resource that could be used.

5.4.5.2 Discerning between different approaches

The student teachers associated quality reading teaching with their discernment between different approaches to teaching reading:

... different approaches – top-down and bottom up and why certain approaches are better than others. (PD)

What was important in this excerpt was their specification of two approaches and the necessity of knowing the preferential underpinnings of each, in the quality of the reading teaching.

5.4.5.3 Taking context specificity of various strategies into account

Their perspectives on reading teaching presented the association that they make between quality reading teaching and the comparative value of different reading teaching strategies in diverse contexts:

Knowing about different strategies and how you can compare them in different contexts. (PD)

This excerpt was important as it showed their argument for relativity in the value of different strategies in relation to diverse context.

5.4.5.4 Own preferences for different reading teaching strategies

The student teachers' perspectives on reading teaching indicated how they associate quality reading teaching with the teachers' agency in selecting reading teaching strategies.

On teaching practice you can see how the different reading [teaching] strategies can or cannot work for you. (PD)

This excerpt was important because it also showed that they evaluated reading teaching strategies at the level of their individualized professional judgement.

5.4.6 Affiliation

Walker and McLean (2010:856) describe a few examples of this professional capability:

Accepting obligations to others; care and respect for diverse people; understanding lives of poor and vulnerable; developing relationships and rapport across social groups and status hierarchies; communicating professional knowledge in an accessible way/courtesy and patience.

In my study the student teachers' perspectives on reading teaching exhibited their affiliation with the poor and vulnerable in their reading teaching through their rationales to

- (i) Adapt the pace for the learners who are poor and vulnerable
- (ii) Seek textual relevance of literature for the poor and vulnerable.

5.4.6.1 Adapt the pace for the learners who are poor and vulnerable

Their reported professional ways of doing their reading teaching in the classroom was apparently shaped by their commitment to seeing possibilities for all learners' success. They apparently accepted their professional responsibility to understand the lives of vulnerable learners – learners who do not have domestic structures which support the development of learning to read:

You put more effort into it [reading teaching] with those children because they are not getting what they need at home. You give them more leeway – if it takes them that much longer to get to reading – I gave my learners more time because they are not getting it at home. They are only getting it from me. It will take them longer. Children who are getting reading at home for four hours a day are going to get it faster. (PD)

Of key importance in this excerpt was their care and respect for diverse learning needs in their teaching of reading.

5.4.6.2 Seek textual relevance for poor and vulnerable

The student teachers' perspectives on reading teaching presented their rationales for selecting text which appeared to stem from their respect for diverse learners and their understanding of the lives of the poor:

It also comes to the literature that you choose when it comes to that. Like I found if I had to choose books like ...things that they are not used to. It's like outside their context so they couldn't relate. It was difficult because they [poor and vulnerable learners] couldn't put themselves in that person's shoes. (PD)

This excerpt showed how they considered the context of their learners in their selection of text so as to minimize the risk of compromising the learners' familiarity with the information in the text, which could hamper reading comprehension.

5.4.7 Resilience

Walker and McLean (2010:856) describe a few examples of this professional capability:

Perseverance in difficult circumstances; recognising the need for professional boundaries; fostering hope; having a sense of career security.

In my study the student teachers showed resilience in their reported reading teaching through their commitment to:

- (i) Acknowledge reading teaching complexities

- (ii) Persevere with struggling readers
- (iii) Have resourceful attitude towards learner achievement

5.4.7.1 Acknowledging reading teaching complexities

The student teachers' perspectives on reading teaching alluded to their perseverance in difficult reading teaching circumstances by disclosing that the teaching of reading is complex and it requires tenacity:

Keep at it. It's vital ... it's not as smooth-sailing as you think it is or you hear that it is. It's not just a recipe ABC. You have to keep at it. You have to keep trying new things - different children, different reading strategies. Different barriers. You got to keep adapting and changing. (PD)

This excerpt showed that they had planned to exercise their tenacity through their repertoire of diverse strategies for diverse learners which necessitated change and adaptation, accordingly.

5.4.7.2 Persevering with struggling readers

The student teachers' perspectives on reading teaching showed their commitment to persevering in difficult reading teaching circumstances by suggesting that perseverance in the teaching and learning of reading is two-fold.:

[...] they were not good readers. But like when you gave them something that really, really interested them they tried their best to read because they wanted to show their teacher that they want to read, so that made me persevere because you can't give up on the kids. If you persevere they will persevere in their reading as well.

According to them persevering in difficult reading teaching circumstances involved the teacher persevering with learners who appear to be struggling with learning to read so that they could be motivated to persevere as well. It also involved not giving up on learners.

5.4.7.3 Resourceful attitude towards learner achievement

The student teachers' perspectives on reading teaching presented their commitment to persevering in difficult reading teaching circumstances by suggesting that the teacher's attitude was vital in the success of teaching learners to read, especially those who are totally reliant on the school for this success:

I think also to do with the attitude that I would to teach do the reading was different because now, I saw a child who had a need. And that child perhaps could not help themselves because of the background that they come from. The parent might not be literate to read. So now I have an opportunity to do something different that was never done for me as a child.... You walk alongside the child and then one day you see wow this child is reading the reading piece and stuff like that. (PD)

This excerpt also showed that they viewed their professional role, in this case, as an opportunity to create opportunities for learners to develop, especially those in vulnerable circumstances (e.g. illiterate parents).

5.4.8 Emotions

Walker and McLean (2010:857) described a few examples of this professional capability:

Empathy/ narrative imagination; compassion; personal growth; self care; integrating rationality and emotions; being emotionally reflexive.

My study found that student teachers' perspectives on reading teaching revealed their capability for feeling empathy, narrative imagination and integrating emotions and rationality. What was interesting in this professional capability finding was that not only did it underpin the student teachers' reading teaching per se, but this study found a strong link between the capability for resilience and the capability to feel emotions and empathy.

5.4.8.1 Feeling empathy and compassion for struggling readers

The underlined phrase in the excerpt below illustrated the student teachers' empathy and compassion for vulnerable learners. This is illustrated from the same excerpts used for resilience to explicitly show the link with emotions as indicated in bold font:

[...] *they were not good readers. But like when you gave them something that really, really interested them they tried their best to read because they wanted to show their teacher that they want to read, **so that made me persevere because you can't give up on the kids. If you persevere they will persevere in their reading as well.***

5.4.8.2 Narrative imagination for reading success

This study found that the student teachers' perspectives on reading teaching exhibited a capability for narrative imagination which stemmed from their own personal experiences with learning to read as shown in the excerpt (bold font) below which was previously used to illustrate the student teachers' resilience:

*I think also to do with the attitude that I would to teach do the reading was different because now, I saw a child who had a need. And that child perhaps could not help themselves because of the background that they come from. The parent might not be literate to read. **So now I have an opportunity to do something different that was never done for me as a child You walk alongside the child and then one day you see wow this child is reading the reading piece and stuff like that.** (PD)*

The latter phrase in this excerpt illustrated the student teachers' capability to integrate their capability for emotions with their professional reading teaching rationality. They imagined a scenario of capability expansion for the learners.

5.4.9 Summary of the connection between professional capabilities for public good and reading teaching

The findings on the student teachers' explicit connection between their professional capabilities for public good, and their reading teaching, cumulatively showed their reported and intended professional ways of being and doing reading teaching for public good. This can be summarized in the table as follows:

Table 5.10: Summary of the connection between professional capabilities for public good and reading teaching

Professional Capability	Reading Teaching
Social and Collective Struggle	Promoting the right to education
	Identifying spaces for change
	Empowering parents towards learners' reading literacy success
Affiliation	Adapt the pace of reading teaching and learning for the learners who are poor and vulnerable
	Seek contextual relevance of literature for poor and vulnerable
Assurance and Confidence	Best reading teaching strategies
	Text, structure and substance reading teaching and learning
Knowledge, Imagination and Practical Skills	Using multilingualism as a resource for reading teaching and learning
	Imaginative, creative and flexible professional responses to learner success
Informed Vision	Changes in social, cultural and language demographics call for diverse textual relevance in reading teaching
	Sincere attitude towards diverse textual relevance
	The need for change in linguistic inclusion
Resilience	Acknowledging reading teaching complexities
	Persevering with struggling readers
	Attitude towards learner achievement
Emotions	Empathy to persevere
	Rational with emotions and persevering with learner achievement
Integrity	The teachers' knowledge of various reading approaches, strategies and scaffolding techniques
	The teachers' discernment between different approaches
	Taking context specificity of various strategies into account for reading teaching
	The teacher having her own preferences for different reading strategies

5.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented data regarding the student teachers' teaching of reading for public good. It showed that the student teachers' perspectives on reading teaching were overtly

connected to professional capabilities for public good. The first set of data presented in this chapter was an exposition of the student teachers' perspectives of reading teaching activities, the second set pertained to their perspectives on reading teaching practices, and the last set of data presented in this chapter was about the connection between their professional capabilities for public good and their perspectives on reading teaching.

In this chapter the depth of the student teachers' perspectives on reading teaching activities was shown to vary between entry into and exit from teacher education. In the first year the student teachers' perspectives on reading teaching activities ranged between pragmatic and sophisticated, mostly towards the pragmatic end of the depth continuum. In their fourth year student teachers' perspectives on reading teaching practices ranged between straightforward and sophisticated, mostly towards the sophisticated end of the depth continuum.

This chapter presented data on the connection between the student teachers' perspectives on reading teaching and the professional capabilities which underpin this. Their multifarious perspectives on reading teaching activities and practices showed that their professionalism in their reading teaching was coupled with transformation issues in South Africa. Eight professional capabilities which appeared to underpin their perspectives on reading teaching practices were presented with the use of excerpts from the participatory dialogue (PD).

The next chapter presents data pertaining to the student teachers' views on the roles of the teacher and their views on the social goals in the curriculum which respectively described their identity as public good professionals.

CHAPTER SIX

PRESENTATION OF DATA: STUDENT TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL CAPABILITIES

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter presents data on the perspectives of reading teaching as well as the professional capabilities for public good which appeared to underpin their perspectives of reading teaching. The data presented in this chapter continues to develop the argument of this thesis on the intersection between the student teachers' reading teaching and their professional capabilities for public good by describing their identity as public good professionals.

Three sets of data pertaining to the student teachers' professional capabilities for public good are interpreted. The first two sets of data were gathered in the focus group discussions. Two questions were asked in the focus group discussions:

- How do you see your role as a teacher in South Africa?
- What are your thoughts about the social goals in the South African curriculum?

The third set was gathered from one of the questions in the participatory dialogue:

- What do you understand by each of the professional capabilities?

Data pertaining to each of these questions are presented in this chapter and discussed in chapter eight.

6.2 STUDENT TEACHERS' VIEWS ON TEACHERS' ROLES

Given the challenging political backdrop of literacy, language policies, language teaching and schooling in South Africa, some of which were alluded to in the reading teaching findings in the previous chapter, this study investigated the student teachers' contextual understanding of their task as a teacher. Reed and Black (2006:5) clarified that a contextual understanding of the educational system and a deep inquiry into issues of equity and social justice, lead to a reexamination of the essential task of an educator. Liston and Zeichner (1996) cautioned: "Future teachers cannot, on their own, solve the many societal issues confronting the schools, but they should certainly know what those issues are, have a sense

of their own beliefs about those issues, and understand the many ways in which those issues will come alive within their school's walls”.

In the main, the data showed that the student teachers viewed their role as a teacher in South Africa as multiple ‘ways of doing’ the following:

- I. Community care
- II. Community empowerment
- III. Obligation to learners’ social needs
- IV. Understanding the socio-economic vulnerabilities of learners
- V. Developing relationships across diverse learner populations
- VI. Persevering in difficult teaching circumstances
- VII. Prioritising change in education
- VIII. Restoring and sustaining the integrity of the teaching profession
- IX. Attempting to alter effects of structures which shape children’s lives
- X. Being critical and imaginative
- XI. Being compassionate
- XII. Being rational with emotions
- XIII. Being conscious of personal growth
- XIV. Strive for positive teacher identity and accountability

The data provided insight into their views on some of the societal issues confronting schools, their own beliefs about those issues, and the ways in which they might respond in their classrooms. The data illustrates their commitment to working for public good. They intended to contribute in different ways to expanding and securing comprehensive capabilities for their learners, but specifically for vulnerable learners.

6.2.1 Development over time

The findings pertaining to the student teachers’ view on their role as teachers in South Africa showed an expansion in the breadth of their views, over time, during their teacher education. This ‘development over time’ was not only manifested in the breadth of their

views but also in the depth. The same breadth-depth and continuum range, as previously shown in chapter five, was used to interpret this data.

With regard to the breadth trends, the overarching views of the student teachers seemed to develop from the first through to their fourth year (continuous); Other overarching views developed only after the first year (inventive); and further central roles seemed to be mentioned in the first year but not continuous to fourth year (static).

In terms of the depth of these views, distinctions were interpreted as pragmatic or straightforward (as a 'lower' pair) and noteworthy or sophisticated (as an 'upper' pair). These interpretations depicted in figure 6.1 below become clearer from the presentation of the data.

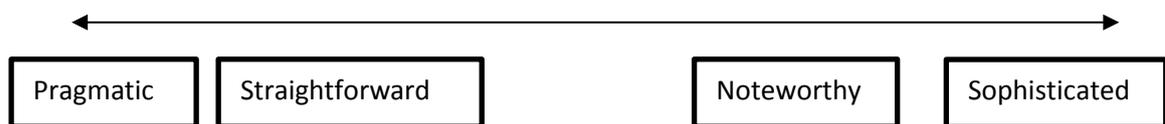


Figure 6.1: Developmental depth in student teachers' views on teachers' roles

on the 'lower end' of the depth continuum was the apparent lack of depth which was interpreted as a pragmatic – student teachers' simple, one dimensional understanding of the role of the teacher. The straightforward ways in which the student teachers understood the role of the teacher were interpreted from their minimal elaboration of the role which they mentioned.

In the uppermost vicinity of the depth continuum was the student teachers' profound, multi-dimensional articulation of the role of the teacher. The noteworthy ways in which they saw their roles as teachers in South African society was interpreted in terms of their wide-ranging explanations of these roles/rationales.

Data pertaining to the breadth and depth of student teachers' view on their role as teachers in South Africa are presented below. Thereafter the same is done for the views on the social goals in the curriculum. Both sets of data are presented to provide insight into the argument of this thesis with regard to the ways in student teachers' public commitment is shaped. These insights have major implications for teacher education particularly for making a link

between reading teaching and public good commitment among student teachers who are on the eve of graduating and entering the teaching force.

6.2.1.1 Community care and empowerment

With regard to student teachers' views of their role as teachers in South Africa, this study found that student teachers in their first year were familiar with a 'textbook' version of the roles of the teacher – they cited the 'seven roles of the educator'. In addition, they seemed to respond to that version with their own personal, extended insight into the tasks of the teacher by appearing to think of the teacher's role beyond the commonplace associations with teaching - they appeared to suggest that the role of the teacher included being a community leader and caregiver, as explained by Nelly, a coloured student teacher in her first year:

[...] looking at the 7 roles of an educator, we no longer take that role only as a teacher. I think it's more now to do with the pastoral and the community care that we are developing ... So I see us as more of community leaders and having to care more than teaching. (FG 1A)

This data was interpreted as the student teachers' commitment to working for public good as it confirmed their social and collective struggle in their tasks as teachers. Worth mentioning is that the student teachers in their first year stated community leadership and care as a role of the teacher but they did not appear to state how this might ensue.

While the data indicated that all student teachers in the first year concurred with the views on community leadership and care, some appeared to broaden their views by leaning more towards a community empowerment approach rather than purely leadership and care. Their rationales cited for this empowerment leaning apparently encompassed concerns for issues of gender, race, and disease – mainly their unease for these social constructs that were prone to stereotyping on the one hand and silence on the other hand. This is illustrated in the following example where Hayley, a black student teacher in her first explained, in her response to the previous excerpt:

I'm planning to go back to my community and teach there. I want them to see that it's ok to be black, that sex is there and on the HIV pandemic we did the erm, the HIV manual, and I think what I've learnt here, I can like surely bring it back, because my community is very stereotyped... so I want them to see... because I know that our teachers are like afraid to speak to their learners about HIV... (FG 1A)

This data was interpreted as the student teachers' notion of professional responsibility and accountability to the community. What is worth mentioning here is that student teachers in their first year apparently did not state how they might address the issues which concerned them, hence they seemed to have a straightforward articulation of the role of the teacher.

6.2.1.2 Obligation to others

In the first year the interpretation of the data indicated their deep inclination towards accepting obligation to their learners. Their view on the task of the teacher included a range of accepted obligatory deeds. For example, this view was particularly evident in the recurrence of the words, 'have to' (formatted in bold) in the excerpt of Karla's (white student teacher in first year) views of her role as a teacher:

*I just want to add to that, my role as a teacher is, I see my role as a teacher is, moving to beyond what is expected, [hmmm agreement from peers], like certain roles might not be enough, you can go extra mile, like... some children they don't have parents and sometimes **we have to** listen to them and maybe maybe in class they won't cooperate and there is a reason behind, hmmm peers in agreement, **you have to listen** to them ... say you love them, just to feel welcomed and to realise that life is worth living ... and also help them to be good members of the community. (FG 1A)*

Furthermore, it is important to note that their affiliation with their learners, which was apparently illustrated by their obligatory deeds, at first year level, seemed about creating opportunities for learners to see the worth of life as was stated in the last part of the excerpt – “to realise that life is worth living”. It was interpreted as their noteworthy articulation of the role of the teacher.

6.2.1.3 Understanding the socio-economic vulnerabilities of learners

The data illustrated further examples of student teachers' affiliation with learners, in addition to their obligation to others. In their first and fourth year they showed a deep inclination for understanding the lives of children in vulnerable communities and they assumed responsibility for them through their professionalism as a resource. This data apparently appeared in the FG where, for example, Fiona a coloured student teacher in her first year explained her responsiveness to vulnerable teaching and learning contexts (e.g. crime):

I'm very excited ... I told myself if there's only 1 child that I can help... I will go and teach at that school even if there's so much crime I will go there because I'm not thinking about myself cos if every teacher thinks no I don't wanna teach there, there's so much crime, this that and the other then at the end of the day, who's gonna teach that children? (FG 1B)

What's worth mentioning in this excerpt was the energized way in which this student teacher viewed her professional role as a resource in teaching and learning contexts that, in her opinion, appear to be in need of resources, due to the unappealing locations for most teachers. What's also important is that this data was interpreted as her energized affiliation for helping learners as was apparent in her words - "*I'm very excited ...*" which is conceivably more value laden than purely accepting obligation. This kind of articulation of the role of the teacher was located in the sophisticated vicinity of the depth continuum.

As was the case with student teachers in their first year, the data revealed that in their fourth year they also showed a deep inclination for understanding the lives of children in vulnerable communities and they continued to assume responsibility for them through their professionalism as a resource. Some of the vulnerable circumstances which they pointed out in the fourth year included the lack of safety and the lack of care due to parental absence that stems from apparent unavoidable work constraints. For example, Fiona, a coloured student teacher in her fourth year said:

I thought from my side, from seeing and being in the community it is a responsibility, no, not a responsibility, but more a role to make that the child feel safe when they are in class because there is so much happening around ... It is our role to make them feel safe. Make them feel that they want to be there. And also to know that there is someone there who is caring for you, because their parents are working I care about you and I care about where you are heading. (FG 4B)

It was notable that this excerpt was from the same student teacher (Fiona) who, in her first year, showed an energized affiliation for helping learners as was apparent in her words - *"I'm very excited ..."* (in the paragraph above). The concern which she showed for the safety of the children, which renders them vulnerable, was also evident in her fourth year. An important interpretation of the data is that her view of her role, in this regard, seemed to take into consideration the learner's life trajectory and not only the immediate respite that her unnamed actions might offer – *"I care about where you are heading"*. This kind of articulation of the role of the teacher was interpreted to lie in the sophisticated vicinity of the depth continuum.

6.2.1.4 Developing and sustaining relationships

The data demonstrated that student teachers in their first and fourth year viewed the task of the teacher in South Africa as developing and sustaining relationships across diverse racial, cultural and linguistic groups. Their affiliation for their learners, in this regard, was particularly manifest in the following first year focus group excerpt of Nelly's (coloured student teacher in first year) description:

[...] if you look at children - the children that are born now they don't see colour, [hmm in agreement from peers] ... majority of my class were IsiXhosa speaking and I was overwhelmed, I was like wow, how the other cultures would just flow into their culture, and how they would, you know, take that and embrace it ... To me, that was like, as an outcoming teacher I should keep that alive in that child ... (FG 1A)

This excerpt was interpreted as the student teacher's goal to sustain existing healthy relationships across racially, culturally and linguistically diverse learner populations in the

classroom as was particularly clear in the last part of her statement – “... *as an outcoming teacher I should keep that alive in that child ...*”. What is worth mentioning is that the student teachers in their first year did not appear to state how they might sustain existing healthy relationships across racially, culturally and linguistically diverse learner populations in the classroom, hence they seemed to have a straightforward articulation of the role of the teacher.

In the fourth year a similar interpretation of the data concerning relationships across diverse groups, emerged. Whereas the student teachers’ affiliation in the first year was interpreted as sustaining existing healthy relationships across racially, culturally and linguistically diverse learner populations in the classroom, in their fourth year the emphasis on their affiliation for relationships across diverse groups appeared to be related to development. They saw their role as developers of relationships across racially, culturally and linguistically diverse learner populations. For example, Karla, a white student teacher in her fourth year said:

I think I want to be a role model for the children. Show the children how you can interact with others. It doesn't matter who you are, to accept one another and appreciate one another for being unique. Not pulling out the differences the whole time – why we are similar and why we should all get along because technically if you get along there won't be these issues that arise all the time. Lead by example. (FG 4A)

While the student teachers in their first year did not appear to state how they might sustain existing healthy relationships across racially, culturally and linguistically diverse learner populations in the classroom, this did not appear to be the case in the fourth year. Their reported and intended ways of being and doing their affiliation with relationships across diverse learner populations in the fourth year was apparently specified in multiple action words as was evident in the excerpt above – *be, show, accept, appreciate, pulling out, get along, lead*. This was interpreted as a more extensive description of their affiliation (development) in the fourth year than in the first year (sustainability), hence they seemed to have a sophisticated articulation of the role of the teacher.

6.2.1.5 Persevering in difficult teaching circumstances

Student teachers in their first and fourth year associated their task as a teacher in South Africa with difficult teaching circumstances. The way in which they viewed their task as teacher was interpreted as persevering in these circumstances accordingly. These circumstances apparently alerted them to their feelings of fear and their resultant role as requiring resilience. In the first year they cited violent crime (rape), unpredictable issues and the integrity of children's lives as some of their concerns. For example, Betty, a coloured student teacher in her first year explained her feelings of fear and her resultant role as being resilient:

To be honest I'm actually scared, coming from nursing and all that I thought it would be better. I suppose it is because I see myself as a teacher, I see myself as a teacher in a classroom with children ... but ... I saw a poster, ' A child 12 years old, raped in bathroom'. I don't see myself in that situation, how do I deal with that? In a hospital everything's controlled, there's protocol, there's you do things a certain way, there [the classroom] it's children's lives and it's a little scary and it's only first year but I feel that I'll be able to maybe, cope at the end of the 4 years. (FG 1B)

What's important to note in this excerpt is the student teacher's apparent fears. Her justification for these fears were apparently in relation to a different professional context – nursing. The view of resilient teacher, at first year level, was cognizant of the integrity of children's lives as was stated in the latter part of the excerpt – *“it's children's lives and it's a little scary”*. Also, it is notable that the student teacher was hopeful that the resilience, which she identified as characteristic of the teacher in South Africa, might develop over time during her teacher education program – *“I'll be able to maybe, cope at the end of the 4 years”*.

Another student teacher in the same first year focus group discussion also explained her feelings of fear and the ensuing formation of her role as resilient professional with multifarious functionality (teacher, mother, accountability to parents, management and administrative tasks). Katherine, a coloured student teacher in her first year said:

*Maybe that's probably the most scary part ... when **you** out there it's **your** class and **you** have 30 lives in your hands. Their minds are completely reliant on **you**. And **you** are a mother, **you** deal with like kids' problems and issues and **you** must know how to deal with parents and management and admin and so on. (FG 1B)*

The demands felt by this student teacher were perhaps imprinted by her repetitive use of the word 'you' (bold format). It was interpreted as exemplifying her professional ownership of the multifarious functionality as teacher and the subsequent resilience required for this role. Another student teacher in that focus group discussion iterated this finding with her simplistic comment: *"It's also a very big responsibility that's what I realized"*.

This first year view of the role of teacher as resilient, multi-functional professional appeared to continue into the fourth year. A clear illustration of this is the profile of Betty, a coloured student teacher who had the nursing background (excerpt on previous page). In her fourth year, she yet again explained her fears and her justification for these fears in relation to a different professional context – nursing:

It got scary for me. Starting out I thought, 'you can do this man', you know what I mean? This [teaching] is working with children, it's play, it's fun. But the responsibility is, besides being in the classroom it's all the other stuff you have to be aware of. All the baggage that children have, and the politics and the staff room and the law and your own space and your own things around you...Nursing can overwhelm you and then I stopped and thought, teaching can also overwhelm you. (FG 4B)

At the outset, it is important to note that in her fourth year Betty continued to compare her resilience required for nursing to resilience required for teaching. Whereas she made a vivid reference to nursing in her first year (e.g. controlled environment with clear protocols and definite ways of being and doing in the hospital), in her fourth year she showed a vivid description of the responsibilities of the teaching context and beyond e.g. *'children's baggage, other stuff, staffroom politics, law'* and the self in her fourth year. Worth

mentioning in this finding is her standpoint that the role of the teacher has the potential to 'overwhelm'.

6.2.1.6 Prioritise change

The data in this study suggested that student teachers in their fourth year viewed the role of the teacher explicitly as agents of change. Student teachers seemed to have the confidence to assert their own teaching priority, namely to start change. Their notion of change appeared similar to a notion of human development. This was evident when a student teacher in her fourth year, for example, Nelly explained:

My role personally is to start change. That's my role as an educator – change. Especially the fact that I don't want to work in a 'lardy – dah' school. I do not want to go work in one of those schools because how are we going to change the mindset of our people if I am moved to or steered to that side where it is already developed. So I see myself as a change maker. Also, somebody that is able to develop people. And not society. People. Because if a person is developed that will affect the next person and the next person and that then becomes the society. If I can change one little life I think that ripple effect will continue. I see myself as a change maker – if it's just for one, so be it. If it is for a whole school, so be it – it's a bonus. But the target is just one child at a time. If I make the difference in the child's life, that child will 'pay it forward' for the next person. (FG 4A)

It is important to note, in this data, that in her fourth year Nelly apparently saw herself as having an interdependent life with those living less than middle class lives, as captured in her statement – “*I don't want to work in a 'lardy – dah' school* “. This was interpreted as a socially conscious novice professional who appeared to hold robust public service values in her goals to make a positive difference with learners. Furthermore, it is essential to make a note of Nelly's capability to feel responsibility to society and improved lives, as was stated in the excerpt with repetitive reference to 'life' – “*if a person is developed ... that then becomes the society. If I can change one little life ... If I make the difference in the child's life ...*” Interestingly, she specified the kind of change which she proposed to attain – a mindset change – which apparently indicated that she understood development beyond the material

and into another sphere – developing the mind as an advisable undertaking. Hence, this seemed a noteworthy articulation of the role of the teacher.

6.2.1.7 Restoring and sustaining the integrity of the profession

The data in this study exhibited that the student teachers in their fourth year viewed their role as teacher in South Africa as a worthwhile profession. They expressed their priority of restoring the value of teaching as a professional resource, which was articulated in terms of community empowerment. This was evident, for example, in Hayley's (a black student teacher) explanation:

I think that the society that I come from, there is a lot of negativity about our profession. I think when I go in there I want to spread positivity with the children... I want to change that with the learners as well – to see that being a teacher you are not mad. You want to make a difference. You want to make a change and you want to empower your community. (FG 4A)

What is important in this data is that the interpretation of this data that the student teacher viewed the role of the teacher from a community empowerment perspective when she was in her first year as a result of her unease with social constructs that were overtly prone to stereotyping on the one hand and silence on the other hand (e.g. race and disease in her own community). The excerpt above shows that she appeared to have continued her responsibility to her own community, in her fourth year, with a sense of assurance and confidence that resided in her view of her professionalism as a positive resource: “... *being a teacher ... make a difference ... make a change ... empower your community*”.

Another student teacher (Fiona) in the fourth year also expressed the view of the task of the teacher in South Africa as restoration of the teaching profession. Like Hayley, Fiona explained in another focus group discussion:

I think as teachers also we have a role to play in this whole perception of education ... doctors get known, the engineers get known, But you, as a teacher, you are nothingYou [those professionals] had a teacher who brought you where you are today.

And I was speaking to my mommy the other day about buying clothes. I want to buy me nice shirts and smart pants. She said no, it's going to be a waste because you don't – teachers don't dress like that. I said exactly, teachers don't dress like that. It is our responsibility to change that perception. (FG 4B)

It was clear from the excerpt above that this student teacher expressed and asserted her view of re-elevating the value which, in her opinion, should be attributed to teachers for the valuable teaching and learning which they offered to other future professionals in South Africa. This showed a profound, multi-dimensional articulation of the role of the teacher.

6.2.1.8 Attempting to alter effects of structures which shape learners' lives

With regard to student teachers' views of their role as teachers in South Africa, the data in this study revealed that student teachers had standards for what children's lives should entail. They seemed to be acquainted with the contextual realities of their learners' domestic circumstances. Their responses to these realities were interpreted as the way in they viewed their role as teacher - doing something about the domestic structures that shape children's lives. Their responses included an alteration of their learners' ways of thinking about life – a shift towards a constructive mode of consciousness. For example, Cindy, a coloured student teacher in the fourth year student said:

We need to change their mindsets. Show them what really is important. They get home and the TV is their babysitter. So, that's why we have to try and show them there are more important things. But show them the reality of life, but not in a demotivating way. Show them to be conscious". (FG 4B)

Another fourth year student clarified their thoughts on their constructive mode of consciousness with regard to the contextual realities of their learners' domestic circumstances referred to above. Ally, a white student teacher in her fourth year said:

The parents work. But you can place limits on everything. Like, 'go outside and play'. Go make friends across the road. Those social skills, we don't have it. And as much as we have twitter, BBM and facebook we are communicating but we are not

communicating ... dealing with people directly you understand the world better. You know put a limit on TV time, do school work, play outside. These things, social skills come up in the class. (FG 4B)

What was notable in this excerpt was Ally's identification of the complexities of the lives of children:

- The main domestic issue – i.e. the parents work
- The implied primary consequence of this issue – i.e. limitations need to be set for children (e.g. put a limit on TV time)
- Possible alternatives to primary consequences are suggested – i.e. outdoor play, make friends with neighbours
- Confirmed secondary consequence was identified – lack of social skills
- Possible supplementary reasons for secondary consequences were stated – social media (Twitter, BBM, Facebook)
- Classroom manifestation of issue was identified – social skills
- Role of teacher was proposed – encourage direct communication with people in order to understand the world better.

For the most part, the student teachers in the fourth year appeared to want to alter the social structures which shape children's lives, by being vigilant of the consequences of current domestic issues, their ways of being in those circumstances, as well as current social media. The student teachers' explication of the alteration of the consciousness seemed to suggest that these structures unconstructively formed children's lives. As such, this study interpreted that the student teachers viewed their role as making professional attempts to alter these structures by, for example, encouraging direct communication with people in order to understand the world better. This showed a sophisticated articulation of the role of the teacher.

6.2.1.9 Being enquiring, critical and evaluative

In their fourth year student teachers seemed to view their role as teacher as helping learners to be enquiring, critical and evaluative. Interestingly, this had become their

personal way of being as well. For example, Betty, a coloured student teacher in the fourth year explained:

Also, we had this lecture last week on critical citizenship. Me, growing up, I was always - follow the rules, be a good girl. But actually you have to think about the rule that you are following. And with children, just to make them aware of, to question what they are doing and why they are doing it, how they are doing it .(FG 4B)

This showed a sophisticated articulation of the role of the teacher. This study found that in their fourth year student teachers seemed to view the role of the teacher as multi-perspective activist for the good of society, as explained by Nelly, a coloured student teacher in the fourth year:

[...] She [the lecturer] said we are to educate people and I was sitting there and thinking that being educated has something to do with transformation of the mind because if you are not educated by your mindset, you won't be able to educate the next person. So it's also a lot to do with how you perceive things as an individual ... it doesn't matter where you come from, your culture, you must embrace that and show kids this is able to work. I mean wouldn't we then have a healthier society? (FG 4A)

It is important to note the interpretation of the first two sentences in this excerpt above: it revealed what the student teachers deemed as the key ingredient in their role as multi-perspective activists for the good of society – using the transformation of their own minds (as a result of their education) to transform the minds of others. In the main, this study interpreted this as a key finding – they view their role as teacher in South Africa as transforming the minds of others for the good of society. And they associated the outcome of embracing diversity and showing that embrace to learners, with the development of a potentially better society. This showed a profound, multi-dimensional articulation of the role of the teacher.

6.2.1.10 Being rational with emotions

The data indicated that in their first year student teachers seemed to want to get personally involved with their learners but that they were aware of the emotionally healthy scope of their involvement as explained by Fiona, a coloured student teacher in her first year:

The role of the teacher: I'm very excited, giggles I told myself if there's only one child that I can help that's an achievement for me because I, initially I wanted to do social work, but it wouldn't have worked out because I get too personal with things even in my community. (FG 1B)

This was interpreted as the student teacher in her first year viewing the role of the teacher within the ambit of personal involvement. She appeared to be rational about this through her watchfulness of the extent of the personal involvement in her professional role as teacher which she appeared to consider as less involved in comparison to social workers. This was interpreted as a noteworthy response to the role of the teacher in as far as analysing the perceived emotional involvement of professionals in diverse fields.. The issue of emotional rationality was an overarching concern for all.

6.2.1.11 Being compassionate

Student teachers in their first year seemed to view the role of the teacher as a compassionate professional as explained by Fiona in her first year:

And there's lots of children I see that they actually need help and the teachers don't offer it, they not interested, it's probably because they have so many children in their class but they don't erm, they just block the children's problems off ... I think that's just so wrong because there's always, like even when I was on teaching prac, there was this boy and he was very, very naughty and he used to fight a lot and I'm sure there are issues he has to deal with but nobody's helping him. Like when I spent time with him, the teacher put him out, he'd come to our class and when you spend time with him, he's actually such a sweet boy. So you wonder what went wrong. (FG 1B)

This was interpreted as a noteworthy response to the role of the teacher who was unswerving in her various compassionate utterances as shown in the underlined words.

6.2.1.12 Being conscious of personal growth

The data in this study showed that the student teachers were conscious of their personal growth in their professional role as teacher from the first through to their fourth year. For example, Betty explained her awareness of coping with the task of teacher:

To be honest I'm actually scared, coming from nursing and all that I thought it would be better, I suppose it is because I see myself as a teacher, I see myself as a teacher in a classroom with children ... I saw a poster, "A child 12 years old, raped in bathroom"... I don't see myself in that situation, how do I deal with that?... it's a little scary and it's only first year but er I feel that I'll be able to maybe, cope at the end of the 4 years. (FG 1B)

It is also important to note the interpretation of this data: Betty acknowledged that the role of the teacher is not limited to an ideal-typical professional scenario. She said that she saw herself as 'a teacher in a classroom with children' but she added her apprehension, with reference to the media headline on the poster, about dealing with the various societal issues (e.g. rape) in the classroom. Betty also appeared hopeful that her personal growth, over the four years in her teacher education program, would give her the capability for managing these daunting societal realities in her classroom. This was therefore interpreted as a noteworthy articulation of the role of the teacher.

In her fourth year Betty responded to the same question, in the focus group discussion, with a response about her personal growth in her views on the role of the teacher:

Starting out I thought, 'you can do this man', you know what I mean? This [teaching] is working with children, it's play, it's fun. But the responsibility is, besides being in the classroom it's all the other stuff you have to be aware of. All the baggage that children have, and the politics and the staff room and the law and your own space and your own things around you. My mom was saying, I was giving away nursing

books, 'are you making peace?' and I was 'yes'. Nursing can overwhelm you and then I stopped and thought, teaching can also overwhelm you. (FG 4B)

Betty, like many of the other student teachers in their fourth year, appeared precise about the overwhelming nature of the role of the teacher. Whereas in the first year Betty was hopeful of learning to manage feeling overwhelmed, in the fourth year she, like her peers, appeared to be realistic about the escalating demands of the teacher's task that they need to 'make peace' with.

Furthermore, the student teachers in the fourth year seemed to recognize the vast scope of the teachers' role in relation to their personal lives, as said by Katherine: *"Then you must still go home and have your own life"* after Cindy explained:

You have 30 lives in your hands their minds are completely reliant on you. And you are a mother, you deal with like kids' problems and issues and you must know how to deal with parents and management and admin and so on. (FG 4B)

This showed the sophisticated articulation of the role of the teacher by student teachers in their fourth year.

6.2.1.13 Strive for positive teacher identity and accountability

In the fourth year the student teachers showed a strong view of the role of the teacher as being professionally responsible and accountable to their colleagues, the learners and their parents, for the purpose of striving to provide high-quality service. They suggested, for example, that the image that teachers sometimes portray jeopardises the professional image that is needed for the professional task of teaching. Fiona, a coloured student teacher explained her views on this:

[...] the profession is taken so lightly because teachers come in sweat pants. You don't look like you want to be there [the classroom]. What are you showing to that parent? I am not taking an interest in your child's education then. I am not professional about

my job so where is the responsibility to change that perception? We can change it. Not just for the parents, but also for all those old teachers ... Your inspiration will rub off on your children [learners]. (FG 4B)

Similar sentiments regarding a positive teacher identity and accountability were also stated by Hayley, a black student teacher in her fourth year, in the other focus group discussion:

I think when I go in there I want to spread positivity with the children as well... So want them to see the light and the future in education as well. So positivity is the one thing that I want to spread. With the teachers as well because they have negative vibes within themselves, within the staff.

These views showed the sophisticated articulation of the role of the teacher by student teachers in their fourth year.

6.2.1.14 Developmental trends in student teachers' view on role of teacher

As described above, by the end of their fourth year, the breadth and depth trends of the student teachers' view on their role as teachers varied. This is summarized below and then tabulated.

In the first year student teachers:

- confirmed their social and collective struggle in their tasks as teachers
- were familiar with a pragmatic 'textbook' version of the role of the teacher
- had an extended insight into their role which included community leadership and caregiving
- appeared to lean towards a community empowerment approach rather than purely leadership and care
- confirmed their sophisticated affiliation for creating opportunities for their learners so that they might see the worth of life
- showed a deep inclination for understanding the lives of children in vulnerable communities by assuming responsibility for them through their professionalism as a

resource in teaching and learning contexts that might typically be professionally unappealing for most teachers

- confirmed affiliation for their learners through their goal to sustain existing healthy relationships across racially, culturally and linguistically diverse learner populations in the classroom
- associated their task as a teacher in South Africa with difficult teaching circumstances
- seemed hopeful that they might develop resilience over time during their teacher education program
- referred to the teachers' multifarious functionality e.g. teacher, mother, accountability to parents, management and administrative tasks.

In their fourth year student teachers:

- continued to show their sophisticated inclination for understanding the lives of children in vulnerable communities (as they did in their first year)
- continued to assume responsibility for them through their professionalism as a resource
- pointed out some of the same vulnerable circumstances (as in the first year) e.g. lack of safety and the lack of care for children due to parental absence that stems from apparent unavoidable work constraints
- took into consideration the learner's life trajectory and not only the immediate respite that their actions might offer
- confirmed affiliation for their learners through their goal to sustain existing healthy relationships across racially, culturally and linguistically diverse learner populations in the classroom
- saw their role as developers of relationships across racially, culturally and linguistically diverse learner
- viewed their role as teacher in South Africa as worthwhile as a profession
- confirmed their assurance and confidence as agents of change
- were confident to assert their own teaching priority, namely to start change which they seemed to regard as tantamount to human development
- appeared to have an affinity for those living less than middle class lives

- appeared to hold robust public service values which were beyond material attainment
- acknowledged the potentially overwhelming nature of responding to their vivid descriptions of the responsibilities of the teaching context
- appeared to want to alter the social structures which shape children's lives
- articulated standards for what children's lives should entail which they endeavoured to achieve by altering their learners' ways of thinking about life
- viewed the role of the teacher as multi-perspective activist for the good of society
- viewed their role as teacher in South Africa as transforming the minds of others for the good of society
- associated the outcome of embracing diversity and showing that embrace to learners, with the development of a potentially better society.

These interpretations of the data pointed to student teachers' responsiveness to issues of equity and social justice which appeared to manifest in their professional capabilities "which directly bear on enabling the people with whom they work to have more capability" (Walker & McLean, 2010). To recap briefly, the professional capabilities as proposed by Walker and McLean (2010) are: Informed Vision, Affiliation, Resilience, Social and collective struggle, Emotions, Integrity, Assurance and confidence, and Knowledge, imagination, practical skills. The congruency between their views on the role as teachers in South Africa and professional capabilities became apparent. This congruency, as well as the development of their views over time, is shown in table 6.2:

Table 6.2: Student teachers' views on roles as teacher, development over time and congruency with professional capabilities

Breadth of views of teacher's roles	Depth over time		Professional Capability
	First Year	Fourth Year	
Community care	Straightforward		Social and Collective struggle
Community empowerment	Noteworthy		
Obligation to others	Sophisticated		Affiliation
Understanding the lives of vulnerable people	Sophisticated	Sophisticated	
Developing relationships across diverse groups	Straightforward	Sophisticated	
Persevering in difficult teaching circumstances	Noteworthy		Resilience
Prioritising change		Sophisticated	Assurance and Confidence
Restoring and sustaining 'worthwhileness' of teaching profession		Sophisticated	
Attempting to alter structures which shape children's lives		Sophisticated	Informed Vision
Having multiple perspectives on teaching and learning		Sophisticated	Knowledge, Imagination and Practical skills
Being critical and imaginative about education		Sophisticated	
Rational emotional involvement	Noteworthy		Emotions
Be compassionate	Noteworthy		
Personal growth	Noteworthy	Sophisticated	
Strive for positive teacher identity		Sophisticated	Integrity

From this table (and the descriptive synopsis above), it was apparent that the student teachers' professional capabilities were concerned with the social good of their learners in their professional teaching roles. The same seemed to hold true for the ways in which they responded professionally to the social goals in the curriculum. This is explained in the next section which presents findings pertaining to their thoughts on the social goals in the curriculum.

6.3 STUDENT TEACHERS' VIEWS ON THE SOCIAL GOALS IN THE CURRICULUM

Griffiths (2003:58) suggested that "social justice and education are extremely complicated to understand and work with". In terms of policy, the social justice clauses in the South African Constitution have profound implications for education because they commit the state to ensuring that all South Africans have equal access to schooling (Manifesto on

Values, Education and Democracy, 2001:14) and the National Education Policy Act of 1996 committed the state to “enabling the education system to contribute to the full personal development of each student, and to the moral, social, cultural, political and economic development of the nation at large, including the advancement of democracy, human rights and the peaceful resolution of rights” (Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy, 2001:7). In addition, the National Curriculum Statement (2002) of South Africa tried to ensure that all Learning Area Statements reflected the principles and practices of social justice, respect for the environment and human rights as defined in the Constitution (DoE, 2002).

My study was conducted when student teachers were engaging with the National Curriculum Statement (2002). As such, this study sought to find out how student teachers would respond professionally to the social goals in the South African curriculum of the time. The student teachers’ responses to the focus group question: *What are your thoughts on the social goals in the curriculum*, yielded interesting findings. The interpretation of the data in this study suggests that the student teachers’ responses signified that they

- I. Were critical of the social goals
- II. Recognized the value of multiple perspectives to the social goals
- III. Were evaluative of the curriculum and the political context
- IV. Persevered with attainment of social goals
- V. Were keen on the promotion of human rights in social goals
- VI. Asserted confidence in the teachers’ task with social goals
- VII. Endorsed the development of social skills, relationships and bonds across social groups
- VIII. Strived for high quality teaching, learning and assessment
- IX. Prevented disadvantageous bias
- X. Encouraged parental involvement as community practice

In the main, this study found that these reported and intended ways of being and doing showed their commitment to working for public good.

6.3.1 Development over time

The data pertaining to the student teachers' views on the social goals in the curriculum was interpreted as an evident expansion in the breadth of their views, over time, during their teacher education. This 'development over time' was not only manifested in the breadth of their views but also in the depth. The breadth of the student teachers' views of the social goals in the curriculum developed over time and some of the same views also appeared to be understood in a deeper way over time.

6.3.1.1 Critical of social goals

This data revealed that in their first year student teachers seemed critical of the social goals in the curriculum, as explained by Betty, a coloured student teacher:

[...] the curriculum provides like morals, values. But the point is who decides what are good values and bad values? And in certain societies and family, your beliefs provide core values and morals to you know and understandably if you don't get it from home or in society you'll need to get it from school but who sets the standard? What is their background? (FG 1B)

What was notable in this data was that the student teachers seemed to delineate social goals in terms of values and morals and they were noticeably critical of the underpinning of these – “*But the point is who decides...*” In so doing, it appeared that they questioned the partiality of social goals in a sophisticated way – “*but who sets the standard? What is their background*”?

The data in this study was interpreted as an indication of first year student teachers appearing to be critical of the attainment of certain social goals in the curriculum and they recognized the risky implications that certain goals, like democracy, might carry for the well-being of learners, as explained by Karla, a white student teacher in her first year:

[...] I think democracy is okay because everyone is able to express himself or his or hers in own way. I feel there's too much also of independence. I mean children are

still dependent ... the parents don't get involved and we need to build that culture in society that parents must help children not only the teacher's job but parents also.(FG 1A)

What was notable in this excerpt was her concern for possible reckless interpretations of democracy being equated with excessive independence which she implied was counterproductive to the well-being of those for whom it was intended to develop – the learners, their parents and the greater society. Worth mentioning was that in the first year they viewed education, in a noteworthy way, as a combined effort between parents and teacher – “*not only the teacher's job but parents also*”.

6.3.1.2 Recognising the need for multi-perspectives on social goals

This data revealed that student teachers in their fourth year were decisive about modeling social goals but that they connected this to the teachers' understanding of social goals. They appeared to hold the view that social goals necessitate the teacher to recognize multiple perspectives about social goals. This was evident in the following excerpt from Fiona's explanation:

And us role modeling our response to these issues. And our perception of it. You might think it is democracy, but she might not think it is democracy. So what is democracy? What is that to you? You actually have to kind of go out, find out ... (FG 4B)

This was interpreted as an apparent, sophisticated forethought about steering their own perspective in their teaching, so as to circumvent disadvantageous bias in the classroom, is important to note in this finding.

6.3.1.3 Evaluative of social goals

In the data student teachers in their first year appeared to evaluate the social goals in the curriculum in relation to the historical trajectory of curriculum. For example, Nelly, a coloured first year student teacher affirmed in the focus group discussion:

I think in terms of the equity and those things - it's good for the curriculum. The curriculum doesn't seem to be good though. I think some of the aspects in the curriculum is good like ... focussing on unity ... I think we should go back to the normal routine where the teacher goes back to certain things but also bring the OBE into it, ... and looking at the equity I think it's so difficult ... because the teachers themselves were part of the era of the...the politics going on ... (FG 1A)

What was important in this data was that while the student teachers in the first year concurred with the political significance of the social goals in the curriculum, they appeared to show discontent with the type of curriculum with which it was associated - OBE.

6.3.1.4 Persevering with attainment of social goals

Through an interpretation of the data, it appeared that student teachers in their fourth year evaluated the social goals in terms of their

- perceived lack of understanding of the social goals in the curriculum and,
- task of creating explicit learning opportunities about social goals (as opposed to implementation of the social goals through everyday classroom practices as was evident in their first year).

They affirmed an obscurity about their practical skill of teaching about social goals. For example, Ally, a white student teacher in the fourth year explained:

I don't always understand it. It's hard to explain to a seven year old child – justice. Like they know what's fair and not fair. That's it. But justice is at a deeper level. Like when looking at whether Johnny stole your sweets or not. Equality is easier to explain but not justice. (FG 4B)

Certain social goals were easier for them to explicate (in terms of teaching about it) than others. They perceived equality as easier to explain to learners than justice. This showed their noteworthy articulation of working with social goals.

6.3.1.5 Promoting human rights

Student teachers in their first year seemed to view the social goals in the curriculum as useful for endorsing the right to a safe learning environment, as Katherine explained:

Bring the morals out of the child ... ask the children, what rules should we have in the class? Ok, don't run, why don't we run ... if everyone has an agreement ... then someone who doesn't know that will learn from their peers in a safe environment so to speak. (FG 1B)

This data was interpreted as the straightforward ways in which student teachers in their first year gave classroom meaning to their understanding of the social goals - their inclination for the teaching practice of learner participation in an orderly environment.

In their fourth year they also appeared to continue to endorse the promotion of human rights. They seemed to favour accountability in freedom of choice for their learners. For example, Nelly declared:

The democracy part is good. I like a child to have their own freedom of choice. Not freedom of choice 'miss I'm not doing your work today'. Freedom of choice when it comes to other things. (FG 4A)

6.3.1.6 Confidence in teachers' task with social goals

Student teachers asserted confidence in the teachers' function in working with the social goals in the first and fourth year. In the first year they appeared compliant with what the curriculum obliged teachers to execute in terms of social goals. Nelly, a coloured student teacher in the first year explained in the focus group discussion:

[...] those things can be implemented: the equity, the democracy ... you know you have some teachers that misuse those words and use it according to their advantage because if you look at the curriculum, the curriculum says that you need to do certain things and it's the child's learning opportunity ... (FG 1A)

What was noteworthy in this excerpt was that they validated the function of the teacher in creating learning opportunities for learners – “... *those things can be implemented*”, but they were attentive to some teachers jeopardizing the social goals – “*some teachers that misuse those words*”.

Whereas in the first year the data indicated that they appeared confident with the teachers’ function with social goals, in the fourth year their confidence in the teachers’ function with social goals seemed to be demonstrated in their distinct implementation of the social goals through everyday classroom practices. This was evident in Betty’s explanation:

I think that is where the teacher needs to be aware. The way she deals with issues will portray equality and those goals. She’s got to deal with it when the opportunity arises. And she must make the most of that opportunity. It doesn’t need to have a label. It just needs to be seen in practice. (FG 4B)

This excerpt shows that in the fourth year some student teachers seemed to assert their confidence in the teachers’ flexible function with social goals. The use of the word ‘just’, in “*It just needs to be seen in practice*”, bears out that they had a noteworthy preference for responding to the social goals in a spontaneous way in their everyday teaching than an explicit planned attainment of these goals – they seemed to show no anxiety of attaining the teaching and learning expectations of social goals in the curriculum in this way.

6.3.1.7 Endorsing the development of social skills and relationships

The data revealed that in their fourth year the student teachers’ view of the social goals in the curriculum endorsed the development of social skills, relationships and rapport across social groups. This was apparent from the following excerpt of Nelly’s explanation:

I think it’s also the social skills that they are taught now is way better than what was taught before. Then it was just the clustering of society, now the children are exposed to language, accents, different things. It’s like wow, it enriches people...So that skills needs to be taught but now the problem is we teach it to our kids but how do we impact our parents? Teaching is to do with parent and school, like walking alongside

each other so that is also important – to educate the parent with the same social skills. (FG 4B)

It is important to note that Nelly (and other student teachers in their fourth year) supported the ways in which diversity was beneficial to learners – *“children are exposed to language, accents, different things.... enriches people”*. This excerpt also showed that they had a sophisticated, comprehensive view of the social goals in the curriculum – it included the learners’ home context as well.

6.3.1.8 Strive for high quality teaching, learning and assessment

Student teachers’ views on the social goals in the curriculum, in their first year, was characterised by their connections to quality teaching, learning and assessment. They suggested that social goals can be implemented and that the implementation involved creating consistently high quality opportunities for learners to learn. For example, Nelly suggested:

those things [social goals] can be implemented - the equity, the democracy ... you know you have some teachers that misuse those words and use it according to their advantage because if you look at the curriculum, the curriculum says that you need to do certain things and it's the child's learning opportunity ... we had another example in our class where the student brought the assignment, what, (hmmm agreement from peers), two months ago, she [the lecturer] took it. She told the student: 'you can't expect more than 50'. My question is: why do we still accommodate people? (agreement from peers), when the curriculum state XYZ?

This excerpt was interpreted as first year the student teachers showing value for professional integrity.

6.3.1.9 Prevent disadvantageous bias

In the fourth year the student teachers appeared to link their work with the social goals in the curriculum to being professionally responsible and accountable to the learners for the

purpose of preventing the transmission of their biases. Fiona, a coloured student teacher in the fourth year explained, for example:

And our perception of it. You might think it is democracy, but she might not think it is democracy. So what is democracy?... What is that to you? ... put your personal feelings aside because you don't want to force your views and opinions on that child because you might do more damage than anything else. (FG 4B)

6.3.1.10 Encourage parental involvement as community practice

The first year student teacher data indicated that they appeared to imagine an enhanced culture of parental involvement as a fruitful materialization of the social goal, democracy. This was interpreted as their informed vision for encouraging parental involvement as an innovative community practice. For example, Karla, a white student teacher in her first year commented:

I think democracy is okay ... I think parents they need to be educated as well ... they don't use their [democratic] rights ... parents don't get engaged with their children's education. Especially where I come from, they just ignore what their rights are ... the parents don't get involved and we need to build that culture ... that parents must help children. It's not only the teacher's job but parents also. (FG 4B)

This excerpt displayed that Karla appeared to see the social goals in the curriculum as not restricted only to the classroom context. Her vision with the social goals in the curriculum included the learners' parents. This view of having a vision for parents to be involved with the social goals in the curriculum was iterated in a similar by Fiona, a coloured student teacher in her first year, who commented on the social goals in the first year focus group discussion:

But it's also you can only do so much, everything, when that child goes home, everything that you did goes down the drain because my mommy do it that way, my daddy do it that way, who's the teacher to tell me, it's not my parents and so perhaps

... so it's ok to instill it [social goals] in the children in the school but it should go, it shouldn't just be in the classroom, it should be at home, everywhere.

This data was interpreted to mean a sophisticated way in which the student teachers in their first year appeared to view the social goals in the curriculum seemed to carry through, for some of them, to their fourth year, as Nelly, a coloured student teacher suggested a similar vision for parental involvement with the social goals in the curriculum:

[...] the problem is we teach it [social goals] to our kids but how do we impact our parents? Teaching is to do with parent and school, like walking alongside each other so that is also important – to educate the parent with the same skill. (FG 4B)

6.3.1.11 Developmental trends in student teachers' view on social goals in the curriculum

As described above, by the end of their fourth year, the breadth and depth trends of the student teachers' view on the social goals in the curriculum varied. This was interpreted and summarized below.

This study found that in their first year student teachers

- delineated the social goals in terms of values and morals
- seemed assured of the worth of social goals in the curriculum
- attempted to give classroom meaning to their understanding of the social goals
- concurred with the significance of the social goals but showed discontent with the curriculum with which it was associated
- were critical of the underpinning of the social goals
- were critical of the attainment of certain of the social goals
- were critical of the risky implications of certain goals, for example democracy
- drew attention to the complexity in working with a social goal like equity.

This study found that in their fourth year student teachers

- were confident with modeling some of the social goals
- appeared to endorse the promotion of human rights
- asserted assurance in the teachers' task with social goals through their distinct implementation of the social goals through everyday classroom practices
- declared their lack of consistently understanding of some the social goals in the curriculum
- affirmed their limitations in creating explicit learning opportunities for learners to learn about social goals
- judged that social goals necessitated the teacher to recognize multiple perspectives about social goals.

These findings pointed to student teachers' responsiveness to issues of equity and social justice which appeared to manifest in their professional capabilities "which directly bear on enabling the people with whom they work to have more capability" (Walker & McLean, 2010). To recap briefly, the professional capabilities as proposed by Walker and McLean (2010) are: Informed Vision, Affiliation, Resilience, Social and collective struggle, Emotions, Integrity, Assurance and confidence, and Knowledge, imagination, practical skills. These were elaborated on in the previous chapter. The congruency between their views on the role as teachers in South Africa and the professional capabilities became apparent. This congruency, as well as the development of their views over time, is shown in table 6.3:

Table 6.3: Student teachers' views on social goals in curriculum, development over time and congruency with professional capabilities

Breadth of views of teacher's roles	Depth over time		Professional Capability
	First Year	Fourth Year	
Keen on promotion of human rights	Straightforward	Straightforward	Social and Collective struggle
Endorse development learners' social skills, relationships and rapport across social groups		Sophisticated	Affiliation
Assert confidence in working with social goals	Noteworthy	Noteworthy	Assurance and Confidence
Being critical of social goals	Noteworthy		Knowledge, Imagination and Practical Skills
Being evaluative of curriculum and political context	Noteworthy		
Recognising the need for multiple perspectives on social goals		Sophisticated	Integrity
Strive for high quality teaching, learning and assessment	Sophisticated		
Put own feelings aside to prevent disadvantageous		Sophisticated	Emotions
Encourage parental involvement as an innovative community practice	Sophisticated	Sophisticated	Informed Vision
Persevering with the attainment of some of the social goals		Noteworthy	Resilience

6.4 EMERGENT PROFESSIONAL CAPABILITIES

The data pertaining to the student teachers' views on the role of the teacher and the social goals in the curriculum indicated a range of professional capabilities which showed a commitment to public good. A synopsis of these two sets of findings which delineate the student teachers' identity as public good professional is tabulated as follows:

Table 6.4: Delineation of student teachers' professional capabilities

Professional Capabilities	Student teachers' views	
	Role of teacher	Social goals in curriculum
Social and Collective struggle	Community care; Community empowerment	Be keen on the promotion of human rights in social goals
Affiliation	Obligation to others; Understanding the lives of vulnerable people; Developing relationships across diverse groups	Endorsing the development of social skills, relationships and rapport across social groups
Resilience	Persevere in difficult teaching circumstances	Persevering with the attainment of some of the social goals
Assurance and Confidence	Prioritise change; Restore and sustain 'worthwhileness' of teaching profession	Assert confidence in teachers' worthwhile task with social goals
Informed Vision	Attempt to alter structures which shape children's lives	Encourage parental involvement as an innovative community practice
Knowledge, Imagination and Practical Skills	Have multiple perspectives on teaching and learning; Being critical and imaginative about teaching and learning	Be critical of the social goals; Be evaluative of curriculum and political context; Allowing for multi-perspectives and responses on social goals
Emotions	Be rational with emotions; be compassionate, personal growth	Put own feelings aside to prevent disadvantageous bias
Integrity	Strive for positive teacher identity	Strive for high quality teaching, learning and assessment

Against the backdrop of these interpretations, this study proceeded to investigate what additional associations the student teachers made with each of these professional capabilities. Whereas the interpretations regarding student teachers' views on the role of the teacher and the social goals in the curriculum were delineated from the focus group discussions, data pertaining to the associations that student teachers made with each of these professional capabilities was gathered in a participatory dialogue (PD) with the student teachers in their fourth year. They were asked: *What do you understand by each of these professional capabilities?* These findings are presented below.

6.4.1 Social and collective struggle

The focus group data showed the student teachers' interest in community care and empowerment as well as their commitment to promoting human rights.

Their interest in community empowerment as well as human rights re-emerged in the participatory dialogue data where they indicated that: *"every child has a right to high quality education and everything they need to further their learning"*. They suggested that *"education can empower communities because they are going into the community"*. Further investigation showed that their discernment of community empowerment and human rights was apparently shaped by their views of education as the vehicle through which children could *"learn about human rights"*. They added that it had the ability to *"make the community aware of their own rights because once their mindsets are changed knowing their rights they will empower the rest of the community"* (PD).

6.4.2 Affiliation

The focus group data showed the student teachers' deep inclination towards accepting obligation to their learners by creating opportunities for them to see the worth of life. The focus group findings also showed that they viewed their professionalism as a resource and a response to the poor and vulnerable.

Further investigation in the participatory dialogue showed that they discerned affiliation in terms of their *"empathy"* and *"compassion"*. They enlightened that these virtues were *"only helpful if it is followed by action"*. The action that they referred to was that teachers needed to *"take responsibility"* and *"do something in our own capacity"*. They explained that the teacher's best response to understanding the lives of the poor and vulnerable was to serve their *"main purpose which is to educate"* (PD).

6.4.3 Assurance and Confidence

The focus group findings showed their confidence in the teachers' tasks concerning social goals; confidence in the importance of creating learning opportunities for learners; attentiveness to the danger of the teacher's misuse of the social goals; and their distinct

implementation of the social goals through everyday classroom practices. The participatory dialogue data showed that they discerned “*teacher discipline*” whereby the “*teacher has to be focused on her priorities in her classroom in ways in which she follows through*”. They proposed that they might express their teaching priorities through “*reflection*” which they clarified as follows: “*knowing why you have that as a priority, you will be able to express it to someone*” (PD).

In the participatory dialogue they also discerned their assurance and confidence in their critique about teachers’ expertise for creating learning opportunities - the “*teacher can only express and assert her own teaching priorities if she has [a repertoire of] methods and strategies*” to enable these teaching priorities. Additionally, they seemed to understand their capability for assurance and confidence as “*promoting individuality as a teacher*” and that as novice “*teachers this can be achieved with staff members through diplomacy*”. What they were alluding to was their capability for reverent assurance and confidence – “*you want to express and assert your professional priorities but you don’t also want to offend anybody by justifying and being respectful while you are doing all of that*” (PD).

6.4.4 Knowledge, Imagination and Practical skills

The focus group data revealed that their views on the role of the teacher, for example, involved multiple perspectives on teaching and learning as well as being critical and imaginative about teaching and learning. Further investigation in the participatory dialogue showed that they discerned this professional capability with teacher flexibility - the *teacher needs to be flexible*” and she needs to be mindful that teaching is at best ‘*unpredictable*’ because *there is so much that it brings something new out of you*. They advocated that this professional capability called for a *dynamic* teaching persona with the teacher being *open to new, innovative practices even if it meant deviating from the curriculum* so that *you can change a few things to suit them* [children]. They added that being open-minded about teaching meant wanting to *go the extra mile*.

6.4.5 Informed vision

The focus group data revealed that the student teachers deemed the alteration to structures which shape children's lives as important. They suggested that they might attain this by having standards for what children's lives should entail. They were acquainted with the contextual realities of their learners' domestic circumstances and they recognised the need to alter learners' ways of thinking about life – a shift towards a mode of constructive existence.

Further investigation in the participatory dialogue showed that they raised their concerns about "*access to education*" for diverse racial and class groups and the eminent disparities across schooling contexts. They were resolute about *education as a tool for society in order to make the country a good economic player in the world*. In the main, their comments about learners were directly framed by socio-economic considerations. They seemed concerned about the *lack of learner performance* and the fragile teacher morale. They unanimously explained the pre-OBE to the current OBE historical curriculum context in South Africa with a somewhat unenthusiastic outlook and they referred to the current curriculum transition to the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) and the *new challenges* that the next wave of change will present to teachers.

6.4.6 Resilience

In the focus group data the student teachers indicated their resilience to difficult teaching circumstances and their associated fears for violent crime (rape), unpredictable arising teaching issues, the integrity of children's lives, teaching and learning responsibilities, maternal roles, learners' problems, parents, school management, and administrative tasks. Further investigation in the participatory dialogue showed that they largely understood resilience in relation to the difficult teaching circumstances and not their capacity to persevere, as such. It appeared to matter to them to know what they needed to persevere through much more than the dispositions required for those circumstances. They listed the following difficult teaching circumstances: *difficult kids, staff clashes, poor finances of schools, overcrowded classrooms, under-resourced classrooms, difficult parents, language barriers and other barriers*.

6.4.7 Integrity

In the focus group data the student teachers' integrity became apparent. They were attentively striving for high quality teaching through their multiple teaching activities and practices, as well as consistently considering the context in which these practices and activities were ratified.

Further interpretation of the participatory dialogue revealed that they associated the provisioning of high-quality teaching to learners with *teacher competency*. They suggested that a competent teacher was key to high quality teaching and they equated *knowing how to teach* and *know the content being taught* with high quality teaching. As was the case with the interpretations of the focus group discussions, the PD data also showed that they considered context as a key element of providing high-quality teaching to learners: "*context is as important as content and knowing how to teach it*". Of note was their explication that the building block of *fun* was an essential consideration for context and content, *no matter how diverse teaching contexts are* and that *planning the content for the context* was vital, together with the teachers' skill of *reflection as part of the planning cycle*. In the main, this showed sophistication in the depth of their understanding.

6.4.8 Emotions

In the focus group data the student teachers' capability for emotions became apparent. Furthermore the focus group data indicated a strong link between the student teachers' capability for resilience and their capability for emotions. In the participatory dialogue the student teachers made a strong link between with their capability for emotions and their capability for affiliation as explained above: *empathy* and *compassion* which they associated with *action, responsibility* and their *our own capacity* to do something.

6.4.9 Synopsis of student teachers' associations with professional capabilities

The findings from the student teachers' understanding of their respective professional capabilities as it emerged in the (PD) are summarized as follows:

Table 6.5: Synopsis of student teachers' understanding of their professional capabilities

Professional Capability	Explicit associations with capabilities (PD)
Social and Collective struggle	Learner right to quality education; Right to further learning; Community Empowerment
Affiliation	Empathy and compassion; Teacher action; Take responsibility; Main purpose is to educate
Resilience	Difficult teaching circumstances: difficult kids, staff clashes, poor finances of schools, overcrowded classrooms, under-resourced classrooms, difficult parents, language barriers, and other barriers
Assurance and Confidence	Teacher discipline; Reflection; Creating learning opportunities; Teaching methods and strategies; Promoting individuality as a teacher; Diplomacy and respect
Informed Vision	Access to education; Education as a tool for society; Lack of learner performance; Fragile teacher morale; Unenthusiastic curriculum outlook; Curriculum challenges for teachers
Knowledge, Imagination and Practical Skills	Teacher needs to be flexible; Teaching is dynamic teaching person; Open to new, innovative practices; Deviating from the curriculum; Go the extra mile
Integrity	Teacher competency; Knowing how to teach; Know the content being taught; Context is as important as content; Fun; Planning the content for the context; Reflection as part of the planning cycle
Emotions	Linked to affiliation: Teacher action; Take responsibility; Main purpose is to educate

This summary, together with the respective summaries of the views on the role of the teacher and the views on the social goals in the curriculum, provided a good synopsis of the characteristics of the student teachers' professional capabilities for public good. The following table provides a synopsis of the characteristics of student teachers' professional capabilities for public good:

Table 6.6: Synopsis of the characteristics of student teachers' professional capabilities for public good

Professional Capabilities	Characteristics of student teachers' professional capabilities for public good		
	Views on role of teacher (FG)	Views on Social goals in curriculum (FG)	Associations with capabilities (PD)
Social and Collective struggle	Community care; Community empowerment	Keen on the promotion of human rights in social goals	Learner right to quality education; Right to further learning; Community Empowerment
Affiliation	Obligation to others; Understanding the lives of vulnerable people; Developing relationships across diverse groups	Endorsing the development of social skills, relationships and rapport across social groups	Empathy and compassion; Teacher action; Take responsibility; Main purpose is to educate
Resilience	Persevere in difficult teaching circumstances	Persevering with the attainment of some of the social goals	Difficult teaching circumstances: difficult kids, staff clashes, poor finances of schools, overcrowded classrooms, under-resourced classrooms, difficult parents, language barriers, and other barriers
Assurance and Confidence	Prioritise change; Restore and sustain 'worthwhileness' of teaching profession	Assert confidence in teachers' worthwhile task with social goals	Teacher discipline; Reflection; Creating learning opportunities; Teaching methods and strategies; Promoting individuality as a teacher; Diplomacy and respect
Informed Vision	Attempt to alter structures which shape children's lives	Encourage parental involvement as an innovative community practice	Access to education; Education as a tool for society; Lack of learner performance; Fragile teacher morale; Unenthusiastic curriculum outlook; Curriculum challenges for teachers'
Knowledge, Imagination and Practical Skills	Have multiple perspectives on teaching and learning; Being critical and imaginative about teaching and learning	Be critical of the social goals; Be evaluative of curriculum and political context; Allowing for multi-perspectives and responses on social goals	Teacher needs to be flexible, 'dynamic' teaching persona, 'open to new, innovative practices, deviating from the curriculum', go the extra mile'
Integrity	Strive for positive teacher identity through multiple actions in and outside of the classroom	Strive for high quality in teaching, learning and assessment practices	Teacher competency, Knowing how to teach, Know the content being taught Context is as important as content Fun and planning the content for the context, Reflection as part of the planning cycle
Emotions	Don't get too personally involved, Manage the self in relation to professional and personal life, Acknowledge overwhelming nature of being a teacher	Put own feelings aside to prevent disadvantageous bias	Professional action and responsibility

6.4.10 Connecting professional capabilities to reading teaching

Bearing in mind that the research question was: *How does the student teachers' teaching of reading intersect with their public good commitment*, this data showed an intersection between their perspectives on reading teaching activities and practices and their public good commitment. Their professional capabilities underpin their commitment to public good reading teaching which are manifested in their reasoning about their selection of reading teaching activities and practices. Another way of stating this holds true: the student teachers' reading teaching activities and practices in their teaching of reading is shaped by their public good commitment to reading teaching which is enabled by their professional capabilities for public good.

The following figure shows the connection between the student teachers' reading teaching activities and practices, their public good reading teaching commitment and their professional capabilities. For the purpose of circumventing a linear impression of this finding, the arrows indicate a two-way conceptual relation regarding the intersection between the student teachers' reading teaching and their public good commitment which appeared to be non-sequential and synergistic. This is discussed in chapter eight.

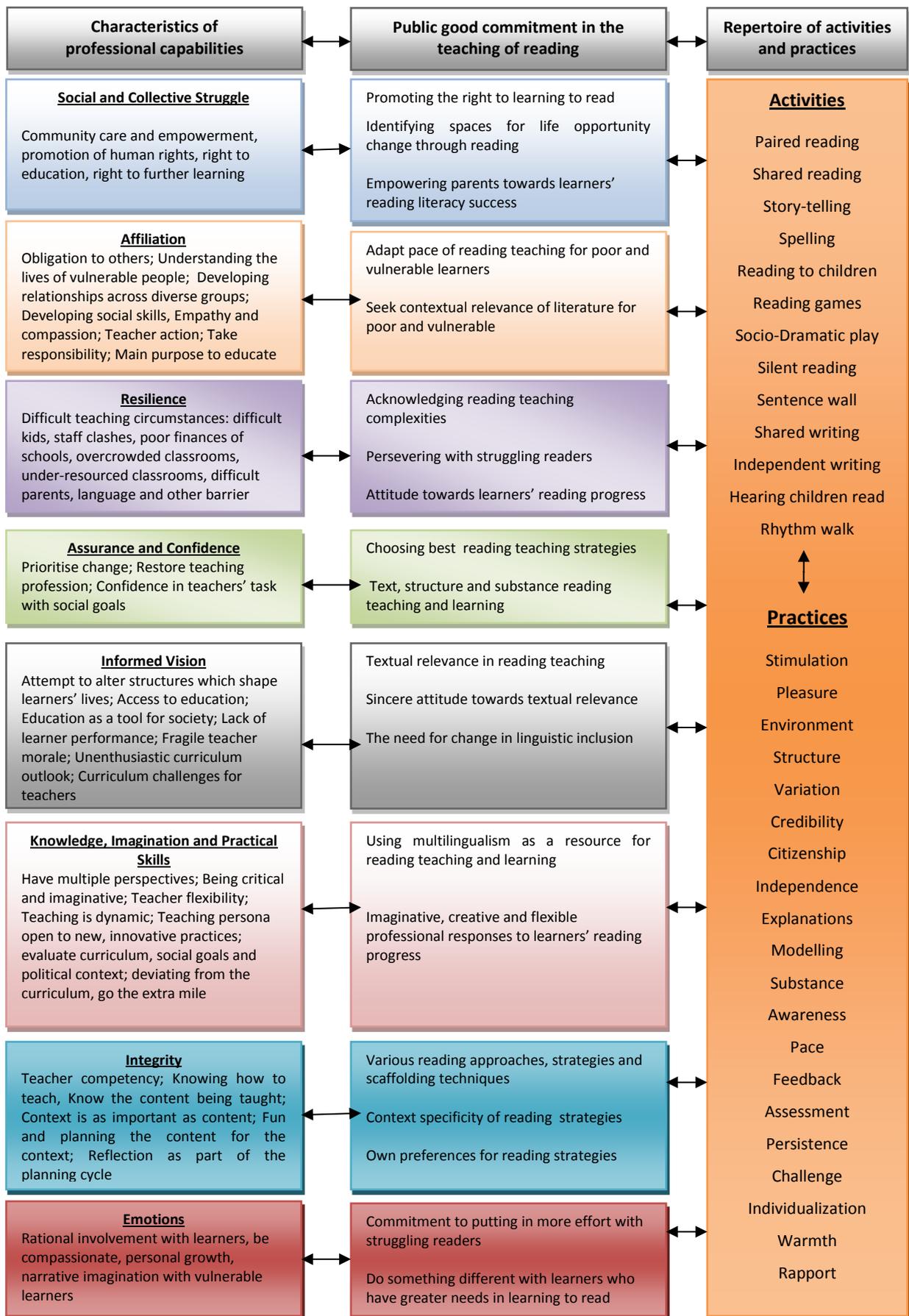


Figure 6.2: Public good reading teaching

6.5 CONCLUSION

Three sets of data pertaining to the student teachers' professional capabilities for public good were presented in this chapter. Data pertaining to two focus group questions on how student teachers viewed their role as a teacher in South Africa and their thoughts about the social goals in the South African curriculum were respectively presented. An interpretation of the breadth and depth trends of the development of these views was included in the presentation of this data.

The third set of data on student teachers' understanding of each of their professional capabilities, from the participatory dialogue data, was presented in this chapter. The three sets of interpretations were connected in tabular form to present a delineation of student teachers' professional capabilities for public good. This was used to make a connection with the summary from reading teaching findings in the previous chapter. It was conceptually linked by a common concept, namely professional capabilities for public good.

The next chapter presents data pertaining to the ways in which teacher education contributed to the formation of the student teachers' professional capabilities which appeared to underpin their teaching of reading.

CHAPTER SEVEN
PRESENTATION OF DATA: STUDENT TEACHERS' FORMATION IN TEACHER EDUCATION

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous two chapters reported on the student teachers' reading teaching activities and practices, and their professional capabilities which appeared to underpin these. Included in these chapters was the notion of development over time during the four year teacher education program. This chapter presents findings pertaining to the ways in which teacher education contributed to the formation of the student teachers' professional capabilities which appeared to underpin their reading teaching.

This study found that the contribution of teacher education, to the formation of student teachers' professional capabilities, was multifarious. Three main teacher education facets were influential in their formation in apparently productive or unhelpful ways. This study also found that for a few student teachers, teacher education was of no consequence in the formation of a few of their professional capabilities. The influence of teacher education in the student teachers' formation could be categorized into four main facets:

- I. Teaching Practice
- II. Teacher Education Coursework
- III. Other Teacher Education experiences
- IV. No Teacher Education influence

These facets of teacher education are explained in this chapter. The trends regarding the number of student teachers who regarded these facets as having been most influential in the formation of their professional capabilities, is presented. The findings presented in this chapter were from the focus group (FG) discussion, participatory dialogue (PD) and questionnaire data. In the focus group discussion the student teachers were asked: What has influenced the ways in which you consider social goals in your reading teaching? The participatory dialogue shown in this chapter was captured from student teachers' comments and clarifications about the questionnaire items. The questionnaire data

quantified which of the teacher education facets (i-iv) student teachers thought was most influential in the formation of their professional capabilities.

7.2 TEACHING PRACTICE (TP)

In this study, Teaching Practice emerged as a primary facet in the student teachers' formation of professional capabilities for public good by providing:

- I. Variation of the schooling context
- II. Theory and practice connection
- III. Disparaging encounters

Each of these is explained and illustrated with FG and PD excerpts below.

7.2.1 Variation of the schooling context

From the focus group data, this study found that the variation in TP schooling contexts was influential in the student teachers' formation. It apparently created an opportunity for them to experience diverse schooling contexts which they then located within some challenging societal issues which, in turn, called for their responsibility towards society beyond the typically, associations limited to teaching and learning (e.g. social and collective struggle and affiliation).

Multilingualism, race and class were some of the issues which confronted them. For example, Hayley, a black student teacher in the first year, who had Afrikaans as her second additional language, described her TP experience with race and language as follows:

Like what I did when I was on my teaching prac, I went to a coloured school and I was speaking Afrikaans to them and they were like, teacher can speak Afrikaans, teacher speaks Afrikaans well and you know. So I want, also, to encourage students to read. I mean, the learners to read and I can also read Afrikaans books to them. To see I'm black. I can read Afrikaans. You can also read Afrikaans. (FG 1A)

The varying TP contexts also seemed to provide an opportunity for student teachers to actively embrace multilingualism positively as Nelly, a coloured student teacher in her first year agreed:

There's also the basic things of additional language. All of us speak English but I also speak Afrikaans, you speak Xhosa and you speak Hebrew so, you have that - where you can use that in the classroom in the reading. (FG 1A)

The TP apparently provided them with diverse experiences with race, language and socio-economic circumstances, from the first through to the fourth year. For example, Barbara, a white student teacher described the influence of the diverse linguistic and socio-economic TP experiences in her first year as follows:

[...] the school that I was at for teaching practice, they all read in English books. It was a previously disadvantaged school so there weren't many books ... (FG 1A)

And in her fourth year, Barbara described another, similar positive TP experience in a completely different schooling context:

I taught at Herzlia [Jewish school] earlier this year and I knew Hebrew but none of my kids knew that I knew it, other than the prayers that I did with them. So I decided I am going to be brave and teach a Hebrew lesson, never mind the fact that I haven't spoken it in how many months or years. I practiced and practiced the day before. (FG 4A)

Another student teacher in the fourth year iterated the value of having diverse TP experiences and its contribution to their formation. Cindy, a coloured student teacher explained:

You know you live in your own world. You don't see what is out there. The only school we knew is that school we were at [as learners]. So we don't know it from the other point of view. Being exposed to that [TP schools] You have a responsibility. It's not just about reading a story now and teaching a lesson now. It's bigger than that. (FG 4B)

Another student teacher, Katherine, concurred: *"I think it's what we've seen and witnessed at the schools. We see what's out there"*. These excerpts show that TP provided the opportunity for them to experience diverse teaching contexts which appeared to be

contrary to their own personal past schooling context (as learners and not student teachers). The focal point in this finding was that TP also alerted them to reading as a complex process which involved multifaceted responses to teaching and learning: *“You have a responsibility. It’s not just about reading a story now and teaching a lesson now. It’s bigger than that”* (FG 4B).

Commenting on the value of diverse TP contexts for developing an understanding of the lives of the poor and vulnerable, a student teacher in the fourth year explicitly explained: *“What about where the schools are situated. This has an impact on the teaching as such”* (PD). Another student teacher, elaborated: *“I was aware that there are poor and vulnerable people but to actually understand what’s going on in their lives, I learned that during teaching practice”* (PD).

7.2.2 Theory and Practice connection

TP was influential in the student teachers’ formation of professional capabilities for public good as it apparently provided an opportunity for them to gain practical experience with the theory. For example, a student teacher suggested: *“For me we learn the content but on teaching practice we see the theory and how it should be done”* (PD). In addition, the student teachers in their fourth year evaluated the theory which they were given access to in teacher education and deemed it shallow in contrast to the deeper creativity which the TP experience offered. For example, they explained why they selected TP in the questionnaire:

I thought that a lot of the things that we get on campus, not all of it but a lot of it, is very superficial. And then we are thrown into teaching prac [TP] and then I did a lot of improvising”. (PD)

TP apparently located their understanding of specific theory, i.e. curriculum, within a broader practice context. Another student teacher in the fourth year clarified this finding:

You can see the difference between the curriculums from the older teachers on teaching prac [TP]. How the old teachers are still in that old system of teaching. As new teachers we were taught with the new curriculum so you can actually see the

difference between the two curriculums. At campus you don't see the old because all we've been exposed to is the new curriculum. (PD)

What was important in this finding was that they reflected on curriculum change and it mattered to them to see the old and the new – the visible curriculum transformation.

7.2.3 Disparaging encounters

Some student teachers appeared to have disparaging encounters during their TP sessions. For example, Katherine lamented:

Obviously not teaching prac [practice]. I got like a lot of negative things not positive things like you. You see these things happening and you then, you think like oh, but she [the class teacher] should've done it that way maybe or why didn't she think of doing that rather ... (FG 1B)

Another student teacher iterated this negative TP trend which apparently facilitated positive growth:

And there's lots of children I see, that they actually need help. And the teachers don't offer it, they not interested. I think that's just so wrong ... when I was on teaching prac, there was this boy and he was very, very naughty ... nobody's helping him So I tried to be a better teacher than what those teachers are doing (FG 1B).

This negative trend was not exclusive to the first year TP session. A student teacher in the fourth year, commented: *"I didn't see quality teaching during teaching practice and knew that it's not right. So I was going to go the opposite way and put all of it [high quality teaching] into it"* (PD).

These first and fourth year excerpts showed these disparaging encounters to be valuable in their formation as it apparently shaped their critical and evaluative stances of quality teaching practices and activities and their comprehensive professional capabilities e.g. their integrity (quality teaching and learning).

7.3 TEACHER EDUCATION COURSEWORK

Teacher education (TE) coursework, in this teacher education program, emerged as another important facet in the formation of student teachers' professional capabilities for public good by providing the following:

- I. Multiple perspectives for teaching vision
- II. Assessment task exposure to human rights ideas
- III. Practical skills: imagining, creating and using alternative resources

Each of these is explained and illustrated below.

7.3.1 Multiple perspectives for teaching vision

The student teachers seemed to value the multiple perspectives that they were given access to in their T E coursework. It appeared to provide them with an understandable vision for their agency – it expanded their thinking about the complexities of teaching. For example, Cindy a coloured student teacher in the fourth year explained it as follows:

[...] also our course. You get different perspectives of the same thing. You look at the bigger picture and know there is something that you need to do. You have a responsibility. It's not just about reading a story now and teaching a lesson now. It's bigger than that. (FG 4B)

Important in this finding was the actions that they considered which were best captured in the last sentence of this excerpt, “... *you need to do ... not just about reading a story now and teaching a lesson now*”. The word ‘now’ also indicated the association with time – it hinted at how they might have thought differently about teaching in the earlier part of their teacher education, than at the end, where they were apparently more aware of the complexities of what they might previously have thought of as simple lessons to be taught.

Another poignant example of the contribution of TE coursework in their formation was the following statement of Betty, a coloured student teacher in the fourth year:

Also, we had this lecture last week on critical citizenship. Me, growing up I was always following the rules, be a good girl. But actually you have to think about the rule that you are following. (FG 4B)

This excerpt alluded to the value of the course content which apparently made them critically evaluate social phenomena e.g. the 'rules of society'.

7.3.2 Assessment task exposure to human rights ideas

This study found that the T E assessment tasks contributed to the formation of the student teachers' professional capabilities for public good. For example, a particular research task assigned in one of the subjects (Professional Studies), appeared to develop the student teachers' understanding of community empowerment and human rights. A student teacher in the fourth year elaborated: *"Professional studies - in terms of my research into the policy documents – the human rights part and equal access to education"* (PD). This apparently developed her professional capability e.g. social and collective struggle.

7.3.3 Practical skills: imagining, creating and using alternative resources

Coursework, on the topic of the availability and acquisition of teaching and learning resources, was apparently useful for student teachers. Their receptiveness to creating and imagining unconventional teaching and learning resources (in materially deprived schooling contexts) which they gained from their coursework, appeared to be influential in the formation of their professional capabilities in this regard.

Important in this finding was their pro-poor way of being, professionally. For example, student teachers in the fourth year identified particular courses (Education, Literacy and Numeracy) and the significance of these in their formation: *"Education and Literacy. In literacy she [the lecturer] teaches you to make use of what you've got – practically - not all schools are going to have fancy books"* (PD). Another student teacher concurred: *"Numeracy: You don't always need fancy equipment to teach them a concept ... you can use things from the garbage bin - recycle!"* (PD).

7.4 OTHER TEACHER EDUCATION EXPERIENCES

This study found that in addition to TP and T E coursework, other experiences in teacher education also shaped the formation of their professional capabilities for public good. These other teacher education experiences were as follows:

- I. Interaction with peers
- II. Own agency
- III. Institutional language policy
- IV. Lecturer integrity

Each of these is explained and illustrated below.

7.4.1 Interaction with peers

The student teachers' interaction with their TE peers contributed to the formation of their professional capabilities for public good. It was apparently the active dialogue amongst themselves which they considered valuable. Betty clarified this:

And what you are saying, what you see and what you know. You hear what others also say. You hear their comments and their fears. (FG 4B)

However, whereas some student teachers were affirmative about the interaction with their peers others recognized destructive occurrences with their peers as a hindrance to their formation. They pointed out the lack of respect amongst them. Katherine explained this as follows:

And also at varsity we are adults and we are teaching next year and we have similar problems that our children are going to have – socially. We don't respect each other. (FG 4B)

Ally echoed these sentiments:

[...] some disturb everyone else's learning in almost every lecture. As much as we tell the kid in the class, listen, you are disturbing everybody else. Surely after four years, you click that you are rude. (FG 4B)

Apart from the dialogue amongst themselves it was ostensibly the diverse racial demographics of their peers which, for some, were momentous in their development, as described by Fiona, a coloured student teacher in her fourth year:

I think also our relationships at campus ... I was in my bubble ... When I came here it was the first time I spoke to a white person. I was so please with myself It's everything that influences. (FG 4B)

Important in this finding was the student teachers' references to the extension of their lived experiences in terms of limited racial diversity and their receptiveness to determining the new racial diversity in their teacher education context as constructive in their formation.

7.4.2 Own agency

The student teachers' own agency during their TE contributed to their formation of professional capabilities for public good. Their chosen ways of thinking about issues and actively deciding for themselves, was vital in their formation, as expressed by Fiona:

And it is also what you choose to think. There is positive thinking and negative thinking and you can find middle ground ... but it is really what you take from it and how you want to go forward. You can decide for yourself what is important. (FG 4B)

Important in this finding was their commitment to taking ownership of their formation – 'how you want to go forward'.

7.4.3 Institutional language policy

Some student teachers made allegations of the university's variance with human rights. They alleged that the university showed disregard for diverse linguistic provisioning. It appeared that they were very alert to the university's conspicuous preference for English and its alleged failure to provide linguistically for student teachers who have English as an additional language:

I can see the discrepancy between if you are a second language speaker. And like, I am a first language English speaker. And there are many people here who are not. And I feel, obviously, these people chose to be at an English speaking university. But there is the discrepancy because there is no provision and through that I learnt about that and rights. (PD)

This perception of the university's disregard for diverse linguistic provisioning seemed to contribute to their alertness to human rights as they were clearly dubious of the university's affiliation for its people. This, in turn, pointed towards their affiliation and their social and collective struggle capabilities, respectively.

7.4.4 Lecturer integrity

This study found that some lecturers' apparently weak integrity in managing assessment tasks influenced the formation of the student teachers' professional capabilities. They seemed perturbed by the lecturers' compromise of quality when dealing with late submission of assessment tasks by student teachers. For example, Nelly, a student teacher in the first year explained:

[...] the student brought the assignment, what, (hmmm agreement from peers), two months ago, she [the lecturer] took it. She told the student: 'you can't expect more than 50'. My question is: why do we still accommodate people (agreement from peers), when the curriculum state XYZ? (FG 1A)

Important in this finding was that the student teacher was concerned about the compromise of quality teaching and learning.

7.5 NO TEACHER EDUCATION INFLUENCE

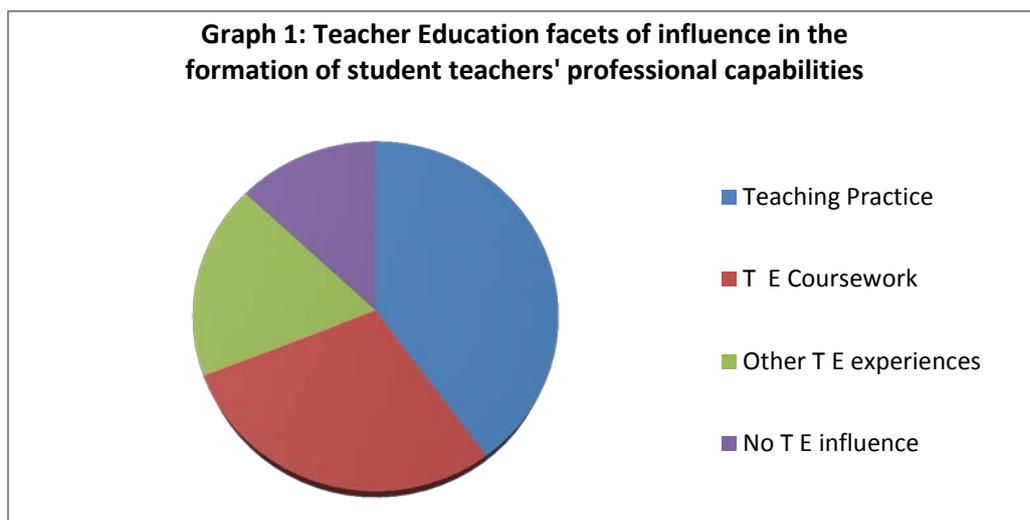
A few student teachers considered that their teacher education was of no consequence in the formation of certain professional capabilities. One of the reasons cited for this sentiment was the prescriptive lecturer guidelines which they felt curtailed the expression of their professional teaching priorities:

I feel like a lot of lecturers try to push us to conformity. To try to push us to agree with them and when you ask them something you feel like you get shot down...like this is my way, this is the way you do it. And I feel like many of the teachers are like that in the schools as well, like this is my way and this is the way you do it.(PD)

Important in this finding was that the student teachers apparently suggested that their TE, through its ominous lecturer conduct, might have inhibited the expansion of their knowledge, imagination and practical skills, as well their assurance and confidence.

7.6 QUANTIFIABLE TRENDS IN TEACHER EDUCATION INFLUENCE

This study gathered quantifiable evidence (from clicker responses to the questionnaire) regarding the most influence each facet had in the formation of their professional capabilities for public good. To recap, the student teachers were asked which of the fixed responses (TP, TE coursework, other TE experiences) they considered as most influential in developing each of the capabilities, if at all (no TE influence). The idea of ‘most influential’ was based on the finding that all three TE facets might have collectively played a role in the student teachers’ formation but that for each professional capability any one of these facets may have been most influential. The following pie graph depicts the general quantifiable trend of which TE facet, on average, was regarded by student teachers as most influential in their formation of professional capabilities for public good:



Graph 1 shows that on average

- TP facet was immensely influential in their formation (40% of student teachers)
- TE coursework was moderately influential (29% of student teachers)
- Other TE experiences had low influences (18% of student teachers)
- A small number of student teachers regarded their TE as having no influence (13% of student teachers)

The following table disaggregates graph 7.1 by showing the percentage number of student teacher selections per professional capability:

Table 7.1: Quantifiable synopsis of T E facet of influence per professional capability

Professional Capabilities		Teacher Education Facets			
Capabilities	Capabilities in the context of teaching	Teaching Practice	T E Coursework	Other T E experiences	No T E influence
% number of student teachers					
Integrity	Providing high quality teaching to learners	51	37	12	0
Assurance and Confidence	Capability to express and assert own teaching priorities	47	17	10	26
Knowledge, Imagination and Practical Skills	Being open-minded about teaching	55	29	10	6
Resilience	Persevering in difficult teaching circumstances	69	3	28	0
Social and Collective Struggle	Understanding community empowerment and human rights	10	44	23	23
Informed Vision	Understanding that teaching is shaped by historical and current socio-economic and political circumstances	27	67	6	0
Affiliation	Understanding the lives of the poor and vulnerable	21	3	35	42

Table 7.1 showed that the TE facets either had a low, moderate or immense influence on the formation of student teachers' professional capabilities for public good. These three interpretive percentage bands were used to interpret the quantifiable trends:

- 1-20 % (of student teachers) was regarded as a low influence
- 21-40 % (of student teachers) was regarded as a moderate influence;
- More than 41% (of student teachers) was interpreted as immensely influential in the formation of their professional capabilities for public good.

The findings for each of the teacher education facets are interpreted below.

7.6.1 Teaching Practice

The findings in table 7.1 showed that a varying number of student teachers (between 10 and 69%) considered the TP as influential in the formation of each of their respective professional capabilities. On average, 40% of student teachers (as shown in the pie graph) considered TP as most influential in the formation of their professional capabilities for public good. Within this average, TP appeared to have either a low, moderate or immense influence in their formation in this regard.

7. 6.1.1 Immense influence

TP appeared immensely influential in the formation of the following professional capabilities with the TP having the greatest influence of the formation of resilience:

- i. Resilience (69% of student teachers)
- ii. Knowledge, Imagination and Practical Skills (55% of student teachers)
- iii. Integrity (51% of student teachers)
- iv. Assurance and Confidence (47% of student teachers)

This questionnaire data verified what was described in the focus group and participatory dialogue data where the student teachers suggested that TP was influential in their formation as it provided them with variation of the schooling context which was apparently immensely influential in the formation of their resilience, integrity and, assurance and confidence especially for some students who had disparaging encounters where they needed to 'improvise' in their learning to teach. Furthermore, this questionnaire data verified the student teachers suggestions that TP was influential in their formation as it provided them with theory and practice connection which apparently was most influential in the formation of their capability for knowledge, imagination and practical skills.

7.6.1.2 Moderate influence

TP appeared to have a moderate influence on the formation of the student teachers’:

- i. Informed Vision (27% of student teachers) and
- ii. Affiliation (21% of student teachers).

7.6.1.3 Low influence

TP appeared to have a low influence on the formation of their Social and Collective Struggle (10% of student teachers).

7.6.2 Teacher education coursework

The findings in table 1 showed that a varying number of student teachers (between 3 and 67%) considered their T E coursework as influential in the formation of their respective professional capabilities. On average, 29% of student teachers considered T E coursework as most influential in the formation of their professional capabilities for public good. Within this average, TE coursework appeared to have either a low, moderate or immense influence in their formation in this regard.

7.6.2.1 Immense influence

TE coursework appeared immensely influential in the formation of two of the professional capabilities, the most influence being on the student teachers’ informed vision:

- i. Informed Vision (67% of student teachers)
- ii. Social and Collective Struggle (44% of student teachers)

This questionnaire data confirmed what was described in the focus group and participatory dialogue data where the student teachers suggested that TE coursework was influential in their formation as it provided (i) Multiple perspectives for teaching vision (informed vision) and (ii) assessment tasks which exposed them constructively to human rights ideas (social and collective struggle).

7.6.2.2 Moderate influence

TE coursework appeared to have a moderate influence on the formation of:

- i. Integrity (37% of student teachers) and
- ii. Knowledge, imagination and practical skills (29% of student teachers).

This questionnaire data appeared to verify what was described in the focus group and participatory dialogue data where the student teachers suggested that TE coursework was influential in their formation as it provided practical skills for constructively imagining, creating and using alternative resources (knowledge, imagination and practical skills).

7.6.2.3 Low influence

TE coursework appeared to have a low influence on the formation of student teachers':

- i. Resilience (3% of student teachers),
- ii. Affiliation (3% of student teachers) and
- iii. Assurance and Confidence (17% of student teachers).

In the focus group and participatory dialogue data the student teachers did not allude to the influence of their coursework in the formation of these professional capabilities.

7.6.3 Other teacher education experiences

The questionnaire findings showed that a varying number of student teachers (between 6 and 35%) considered other TE experiences as influential in the formation of their professional capabilities. On average, 18% of student teachers considered other TE experiences as most influential in the formation of their professional capabilities for public good. Within this average, other TE experiences were only moderately or negligibly influential in the formation of their professional capabilities. It did not show to have an immense influence.

7.6.3.1 Moderate influence

The focus group and participatory dialogue data showed that the other teacher experiences were (i) interaction with peers, (ii) Institutional language policy and (iii) their own agency. These other T E experiences appeared to have a moderate influence on the formation of student teachers':

- i. Affiliation (35% of student teachers)
- ii. Assurance and Confidence (28% of student teachers)
- iii. Social and Collective Struggle (23% of student teachers)

7.6.3.2 Low influence

Other TE experiences appeared to have a low influence in the formation of:

- i. Knowledge, Imagination and Practical Skills (10% of student teachers)
- ii. Assurance and Confidence (10% of student teachers)
- iii. Integrity (12% of student teachers)

7.6.4 No Teacher education influence

This study found that on average, 13% of student teachers considered that TE was inconsequential in the formation of four of the professional capabilities. Within this average:

- i. A vast number of student teachers considered TE as inconsequential in the formation of their affiliation (42% of student teachers).
- ii. A moderate number of student teachers considered TE as inconsequential in the formation of their knowledge, imagination and practical skills (26% of student teachers), and social and collective struggle (23% of student teachers)
- iii. A low number of student teachers considered TE as inconsequential in the formation of their assurance and confidence (6% of student teachers).

The finding regarding the 42% of student teachers who considered TE as inconsequential in the formation of their capability for affiliation warranted closer scrutiny of the data in which they made numerous descriptive references to the poor and vulnerable. In all the focus group discussions as well as in the participatory data the student teachers' references to the

poor and vulnerable was almost exclusively linked to factors outside of teacher education, for example, their lived experiences.

7.7 LIVED EXPERIENCES

It is important to note that most of the excerpts which illustrated the descriptive findings on the influence of teacher education in the formation of the student teachers' professional capabilities represented the voices of the student teachers when they were in their fourth year. When they were in their first year they cited non-teacher education factors as influential in their formation of professional capabilities for public good. They brought these experiences into their teacher education. These were:

- (i) Negative experiences as a learner
- (ii) Grim experiences in their community,
- (iii) Activist experiences with community engagement,
- (iv) Non-teaching career experiences, and
- (v) Personal desire to enable human development.

7.7.1 Negative experiences as a learner

For some student teachers, their negative experiences that they had as learners were influential in their public good commitment. For example, in her first year, Fiona, a coloured student teacher explained:

[...] I wanted to become a teacher, not be like some of the teachers that I had, honestly, no really, they were bad ... and then you were at a disadvantage. And the subject wasn't fun. And you didn't want to learn. I want to ... motivate all my learners to want to do the best and achieve any levels or heights they want to. Do what they can. That's what I want to do. (FG 1A)

What was apparent in this excerpt was the influence of Fiona's past schooling experience on her way of thinking about the disadvantageous effects that teachers could have on learners and her subsequent desire to do otherwise. Interestingly, it appeared that the practices of

pleasure (*'the subject wasn't fun'*) and stimulation (*'motivate all my learners'*) were important for her. She connected these to creating opportunities for learners in the classroom.

Another student teacher reiterated the disadvantageous effects that teachers could have on the teaching and learning experiences of learners. Barbara, a white student teacher said: *"it's personal experiences and teachers can put a mental block in the child"* (FG 1A). And Nelly, a coloured student teacher in the first year concurred: *"something that put me off was the fact that they never made the time to get to know who I was and so it's important that the teacher takes that time"* (FG 1A). What was interesting in this latter excerpt was that the student teachers valued what resembled the practice of individualization. Karla, a white student teacher expressed similar sentiments about her experiences as a learner:

Especially like the way like our class teachers have like, with like how they modelled to like to like me became like I wanted to become a teacher, not be like some of the teachers that I had, honestly, no really, they were er bad, like some of them were just, I don't know how to say it but it's like they weren't, I think they could've been better and they could've been more involved. (FG 1A)

7.7.2 Grim experiences in community

For other student teachers their negative experiences in their communities seemed to shape their public good commitment as expressed by Fiona:

It's a lot of things that influence the way I think. The one thing ... is my community I live in because I see so much bad. Probably what I see and what I hear, the news. Also I'm very involved with news and politics. I like to know. Probably I just want to make a difference. (FG 1B)

What was apparent in this excerpt was the influence that her experiences with grim happenings in her community and through her observations or the media, had on her knowledge and imagination towards making a difference. It was interesting to note that this

Fiona esteemed having up-to-date knowledge of the current social and political state so as to inform her sense of responsibility towards it.

7.7.3 Activist experiences with community engagement

For some student teachers their positive experiences with volunteering in community engagement projects seemed to influence their public good commitment. Fiona explained:

I think from life experience ... I helped at the community just outside where I lived...We built a clinic and we'd just played with the kids on Sundays. And then they built a school. And now's there's like a community centre. And like two Grade R classes. Just to see the kids and how hungry they are ... teachers are needed and good teachers are needed ... the kids want to learn ... (FG 1B)

What was apparent in this excerpt was her consciousness of the complexities of poverty, her affiliation for poor and vulnerable children as well as her proactive response to teaching and learning as a necessary resource for development in this kind of vulnerable living context.

7.7.4 Prior non-teaching careers

Life experience from careers prior to teacher education appeared to have an influence on their public good commitment in teaching. For Betty, for example, her apparently daunting experience with a prior career namely, nursing, appeared to influence her positive outlook on teaching:

I think where I come from as well, plays a role. Me, nursing and seeing all that er, sickness and that's why I wanted to do teaching, because it's healthy minds ... and potential ... (FG 1B)

What was apparent in this excerpt was Betty's way of thinking about learners as having 'healthy minds' and the contribution that she could make to it reaching its potential. Another student teacher, Cindy, who also had work experience prior to her entry into teacher education said:

I'm glad that I'm studying now, later, worked and everything because I have more of a richer background for it ... I can give a more educated answer not just like a fresh out of school. (FG 1B)

7.7.5 Personal desire for human development

For some student teachers their personal desire for human development seemed to influence their public good commitment and values. Katherine said:

... you have the ability. You are in the place to intervene, so to speak. And even it's like a major issue the child has, they are at your stop. They are at your station. And you can decide to do something or not. And whether or not the child remembers it, or you know that you've added a brick in their wall for the future" (FG 1B)

The two metaphors in this excerpt carry great insight into the ways in which Katherine thought about public good and human development. The first metaphor is the bus/train station ('stop' and 'station') which alludes to the learners' life trajectory and the power that the teacher has to take action in that child's life ('you can decide to do something'), regardless of the scope ('major issue') of the child's issues at hand. The second metaphor is the wall which alludes to the building blocks in the child's life. The teacher's contribution to the child's life is seen as a long-term contribution in reference to the child's future.

7.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented data pertaining to the ways in which teacher education contributed to the formation of the student teachers' professional capabilities which appeared to underpin their reading teaching. The findings presented in this chapter were from the focus group (FG) discussion, participatory dialogue (PD) and questionnaire data. The findings in this chapter showed that the contribution of teacher education, to the formation of student teachers' professional capabilities, was multifarious. Three main teacher education facets which were influential in their formation in either productive or unhelpful ways were reported on: teaching practice, coursework and other teacher education experiences. This

chapter also showed that for a few student teachers, teacher education was of no consequence in the formation of a few of their professional capabilities.

The trends regarding the number of student teachers who regarded these facets as most influential in the formation of their professional capabilities, were presented. The lived experiences which student teachers bring into their teacher education as shapers of their public good commitment were briefly presented in this chapter.

Bearing in mind that the research question in this study was: *How does the student teachers' teaching of reading intersect with their public good commitment*, and the sub-questions in this study were: (i) *What activities and practices do student teachers see as supporting their teaching of reading?* (ii) *What professional capabilities underpin their teaching of reading?* (iii) *How has teacher education shaped the formation of their professional capabilities which they manifest in their teaching of reading?* and (iv) *How has their societal experiences shaped the formation of their public good commitment*, the next chapter discusses what these findings mean and how and why they are valuable.

CHAPTER EIGHT DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

8.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous four chapters presented data regarding three domains in which student teacher live, work and learn:

- Student teacher as citizen– public domain
- Student teacher as reading teacher for public good - classroom domain
- Student teacher as public good professional - classroom domain
- Student teacher as teacher education student–university domain

This chapter discusses what this interpretation of the data means and how and why the sets of data are valuable. It presents an answer to the main research question as well as the sub-questions. The research question was: How does the student teachers’ teaching of reading intersect with their public good commitment? The sub-questions in this study, within the respective domains, were as follows:

1. What societal experiences shaped the formation of their professional capabilities?
2. What activities and practices do student teachers see as supporting their teaching of reading?
3. What professional capabilities underpin their teaching of reading?
4. How has teacher education shaped the formation of their professional capabilities which they manifest in their teaching of reading?

Public

Classroom

University

This chapter discusses the findings in relation to these questions by bringing the data and the literature together. In addition, a discussion of the capability approach used in this study is used extensively to do so. This chapter is organized to discuss the following:

- Society (public domain) as a shaper of capabilities
- Connectedness between public and professional discourses
- Public positionality and professional capabilities
- Professional domain of the student teacher: The classroom for public good reading teaching
- The higher education domain: Bringing the public into higher education discourses

8.2 SOCIETAL EXPERIENCES AS SHAPER OF CAPABILITIES

The Human Development approach, also known as the Capability Approach, Capabilities Approach or the Human Development and Capabilities Approach (Nussbaum, 2011) asks the same important questions which have made it appealing for use in my study. It asks: “What are people actually able to do and to be? What real opportunities are available to them?” (Nussbaum, 2011:x). The key people that I refer to in this study are the student teachers and their learners. Nussbaum (2011:x) commented that although these questions seem simple they are laden with complexity because it focuses on quality of human life which “involves multiple elements whose relationship to one another needs close study” (Nussbaum, 2011:X).

The capabilities approach is useful for “showing us a different picture of what our priorities should be” particularly in a society like South Africa with its “urgent human problems and unjustifiable human inequalities”(Nussbaum, 2011:xi) that have persisted in diverse old and new forms long after the inception of democracy in 1994. Nussbaum (2011:xi) recommended that “improving people’s quality of life requires wise policy choices and dedicated action on the part of many individuals”. What was particularly appealing for my study was that this approach “takes each person as an end, asking not just about the total or

average well-being but about opportunities available to each person". The student teacher as human being, South African citizen, and novice professional reading teacher was important in this regard. Each of these identities has what Nussbaum refers to as "combined capabilities – a kind of freedom" which is understood as the totality for choice and action in their specific political, social and economic situation (Nussbaum, 2011:21).

In short, capability means "opportunity to select" and functionings "are beings and doings that are outgrowths or active realizations of capabilities" (Nussbaum, 2011:25). Nussbaum furthermore distinguished the concept of internal capabilities and she asserted that

one job of a society that wants to promote the most important human capabilities is to support the development of internal capabilities – through education, resources to enhance physical and emotional health, support for family care and love, a system of education, and much more (Nussbaum, 2011:21).

She cautioned though, that it is not possible "conceptually to think of society producing combined capabilities without producing internal capabilities" (Nussbaum, 2011:22).

My study found that the student teachers appeared to suggest that although many of the South African youth's internal capabilities were somewhat developed, their combined capabilities and functionings were disconcerting, particularly their weak sense of morals and values, and their weak sense of meaningful existence (*I think of how we grew up – morals, values and definite boundaries but now we are living through someone else's life, like soapies – it's an escape*). Furthermore, the student teachers were concerned that the development of South Africans' capabilities could be compromised by virtue of this generation's disregard for society and their excessive regard for the self (*It's not about society – it's about me, what can everybody give me – it's not what can I give back*). In short, the student teachers seemed to carry a dismal view of this generation with its apparently aimless and demotivated youth who could at best be recognized by their lack of boundaries in their doings (*I think society, well our generation, well the younger generation, are kind of aimless, lost, let me put it that way, demotivated*). Of utmost importance in this finding was that the student teachers suggested action - their priority was not to fixate on the self (as

they saw in the youth of this country) but to contribute developmentally to the society in which they move and act.

Considering the various areas of human life in which people move and act, the capabilities approach to social justice asks: What does a life worthy of human dignity require? (Nussbaum, 2011). A few student teachers in my study appeared to think about SA society in terms of constructive growth – an upward curve in the quadrant of human dignity. They minimally recognized harmful sentiments (e.g. crime or poverty) in this regard and they appeared to enjoy the opportunities to interact with diverse people.

Most of the student teachers however recognized harmful social sentiments which were prevalent in SA society (e.g. stereotyping). They also appeared to experience segregation in SA society. They seemed pessimistic about SA society in this regard by suggesting that some citizens *'still live in the past'*. For the most part, they had a pessimistic outlook on SA society by suggesting that the present society was still reminiscent of a past racial political dispensation, which would imply a coarse compromise of their combined capabilities.

Dignity is one element of the capabilities approach “but all of its notions are seen as interconnected, deriving illumination and clarity from one another” and it is important to note that “in a wide range of areas, moreover, a focus on dignity will dictate policy choices that protect and support agency, rather than choices that infantilize people and treat them as passive recipients of benefit” (Nussbaum, 2011:30). My study investigated what experiences student teachers had with life in South African society by asking them what they think of it. In short, their descriptions showed that the absence of key areas of freedom mostly mirrored a life of compromised human dignity. The findings showed that the student teachers experienced, what I categorized as (i) segregation, (ii) false transformation, (iii) downbeat development, (iv) upbeat development and (v) generational compromise of human capabilities.

Some student teachers seemed to experience SA society in terms of their perceived discord between official political policies and current social realities, in particular their perplexity with race and class representation in their communities. They implied that they were still

living in mono-racial communities and that poverty remained a concern in the country. What was interesting in their 'evaluation' of SA society was their recognition that past inequalities continued to shape their lived experiences. They suggested that although they experienced diverse cultures in SA they felt that they were inadvertently being associated with specific race groups. What was important to note was that their outlook on SA was apparently about the insufficiency of authentic diversity and many student teachers appeared to experience false transformation in SA society. They located this perceived falseness in terms of the overt shift in the racial demographics of the past and present political leadership as well as the policies (e.g. Black Economic Empowerment) that came with this shift.

What was also interesting in some of the student teachers' outlook of false transformation was their reference to the self in terms of race – 'a midline person' (neither black nor white) and the subsequent concern for authentic transformation for all race groups, especially within the employment domain (e.g. Black Economic Empowerment) which, for some, was a hindrance to their potential opportunities of development. As Nussbaum (2011:30) puts it:

The claims of human dignity can be denied in many ways, but we may reduce them all to two, corresponding to the notions of internal capability and combined capability. Social, political, familial, and economic conditions may prevent people from choosing to function in accordance with a developed internal capability: this sort of thwarting is comparable to imprisonment.

Some student teachers felt that their higher education enhanced their internal capabilities but that national policies were of little use to developing their combined capabilities because access to employment in this country was problematic in terms of race relations.

The student teachers also raised concerns about false transformation by suggesting their mistrust in the current political leadership. What was important to note was their proposition that the current government of transformation was merely more sophisticated in their oppressive practices than the previous oppressive, non-democratic government. They said that this government has merely perfected the art of lying in more sophisticated

ways, to its people. In the main, most student teachers' stances were leaning towards, what I categorized as, the downbeat development in SA society. They furthermore connected this to their classroom experiences with linguistic segregation where they seemed concerned about the preferred clustering of children into their respective language groups in the classroom.

A few student teachers appeared to think about SA society in terms of the constructive growth as well as the downbeat development the country. It was important to note, in this finding, that there was some hopefulness for the improvement of the quality of life in SA. For example, they specified the transformative gains made in the education sector. This clarification was important to note because it drew attention to what student teachers deemed important: life opportunities that contribute to shaping learners' life-long success. It also showed that they associated these opportunities with hard work and schooling.

In terms of general quality of life, they appeared to be of the opinion that SA society had regressed, for example in terms of the high crime rate, which in turn presented SA children with a less favourable quality of life. Rape, in particular was mentioned as a prominent violent crime in South Africa. It was unsurprising that the 100% female sample of student teachers feared this as women, and feared dealing with it as an issue in the classroom. Nussbaum (2011:31) commented on the damage that this particular crime does to an individual by explaining that amongst the many devastating effects, rape violates a "woman's dignity because it invades her internal life of thought and emotion, changing her relationship to herself".

8.3 PUBLIC AND PROFESSIONAL DISCOURSES

This study found that the lived experiences, outlined in the section above, influenced the ways in which the student teachers considered social goals in their reading teaching. This study considered the teaching of reading as a social issue. As stated above, it was concerned with "social injustice and inequality, especially capability failures that are the result of discrimination or marginalization" (Nussbaum, 2011:19). Hence, the capabilities approach for public good was selected for this investigation because it directed attention to the social

features associated with the teaching of reading and it supported an adequate analysis of it. It was exceptional for working with the research question: How does the student teachers' teaching of reading interconnect with their society?

A basic answer to the research question, how does the student teachers' teaching of reading intersect with their public good commitment, began to emerge: the state of the South African society in which the student teachers live shapes their professional capabilities for public good which in turn shapes their reading teaching activities and practices. There was a strong connection between the ways in which they read society and the ways in which they seem to be and do in their teaching of reading. This connection seemed to have been cultivated in their lived experiences as citizens of South African society. As such, the public, professional and higher education domains intersected to initiate the intention of student teachers to teach reading for public good through (i) locating the professional self in the public discourse, (ii) bringing the public into the professional discourse such that their lived experiences shape professional capabilities for public good, and (iii) constructing a public good teacher identity. Each of these warrants further discussion.

8.3.1 Locating the self in a public discourse

This study looked at forms of citizenship, pedagogy and content and the nature of classroom interaction, as well as teacher education. As such it heeded Nussbaum's (2011:20) suggestion:

Users of the Capabilities Approach need to attend carefully to issues of both pedagogy and content, asking how both the substance of studies and the nature of classroom interactions (for example, the role give to critical thinking and to imagining in daily study of material of many types) fulfill the aims inherent in the approach, particularly with regard to citizenship.

Kincheloe (2004:17) believed that "the question of what educators teach is inseparable from what it means to locate one's self in public discourses and invest in public commitments". In my study the teaching of reading was regarded as a resource for societal transformation

because it interconnected with the society in which student teachers work, learn and live. Kincheloe (2004:17), for example, provided good clarification for this standpoint:

Educational work at its best represents a response to questions and issues posed by the tensions and contradictions of the broader society; it is an attempt to understand and intervene in specific problems that emanate from those sites that people concretely inhabit and actually live out their lives and everyday existence.

Unlike numerous studies concerning the teaching of reading, this study was not about approaches to reading teaching and learning, neither was it about the effectiveness of reading teachers. These concerns did, however, arise but in the main, this study was about the social dimension of reading teaching because the professional domain in which reading teachers attend to pedagogy and content, are at best diverse and inequitable in South Africa as highlighted in the discussion of the student teachers' lived experiences, above. The professional context in turn, signifies the daily realities of life in a diverse and inequitable South African public domain in which opportunities, since the onset of democracy, "have improved dramatically for some, but for most life remains grim" (Soudien & Alexander, 2003:258). Howie, Venter, van Staden, Zimmerman, Long, Scherman and Archer (2007:12) who reported on the PIRLS 2006 study report on a few distinctive South African contextual features. They say that South Africa has, amongst others:

- The lowest life expectancy at birth of 46 years
- The highest mortality rate (53 per 1000 live births)
- The highest learner: teacher ratio
- 10th poorest average in terms of the percentage of GDP and public expenditure on education
- The results of the international PIRLS study showed, amongst others, that only 10 education systems fell below that international mean, with South Africa at the lowest.

What was clear in my study was that the public, higher education and professional domains were interconnected in the teaching of reading.

8.3.2 Bringing the public into the professional

This study found that the student teachers' lived experiences prior to their entry into teacher education were influential in their formation of professional capabilities for public good. These lived experiences were categorized as: (i) disconcerting experiences as learners (ii) grim experiences in the community (iii) activist experiences with community engagement (iv) Non-teaching career experiences and (v) personal desire to enable human development. With regard to the latter, Sen (2008:335) explained that the capabilities approach constitutes an implicit call to people to take responsibility "to bring about the changes that would enhance human development in the world" (in Walker & McLean, 2010:852).

For some student teachers, the negative experiences that they had as learners were influential in the ways in which they considered social goals in their everyday reading teaching, for example. It influenced their ways of thinking about the disadvantageous effects that teachers could have on learners and their subsequent desire to do otherwise, as professionals. Interestingly, it appeared that the practices of pleasure (*'the subject wasn't fun'*) and stimulation (*'motivate all my learners'*) were important in their prevention of these potential shortcomings in the classroom.

Much of the literature on learning to teach suggested that their own experiences as learners and their experiences with working with children (e.g. community projects) contribute widely to their perceptions of what teaching and learning entails (Calderhead & Robson, 1991; Soudien, 2003). Feiman-Nemser (1990) suggested that teacher education needs to confront these experiences and perceptions and to work with student teachers in learning from these for the purposes of their own teaching and learning. My study argues that this learning needs to include an explicit emphasis on teaching activities, practices and professional capabilities for public good.

For some student teachers their positive lived experiences with volunteering in community engagement projects seemed to influence their formation. It had an influence on their consciousness of the complexities of poverty, affiliation for poor and vulnerable children as well as proactive responses to teaching and learning as a necessary resource for

development in this kind of vulnerable living context. Many authors cautioned that teacher educators should not think that student teachers who come to teacher education know nothing about teaching because they bring their own understanding of what teaching entails and this is based on their previous experiences of working with children (Lortie, 1975; Calderhead & Robson, 1991; Tomlinson, 1995).

Student teachers come into teacher education with diverse interests, attitudes and knowledge bases (Lortie, 1975; Shulman, 1987a). Life experience from careers prior to teacher education appeared to have influenced the formation of the student teachers in my study. For one student teacher, for example, her apparently daunting experience with her prior career namely, nursing, appeared to influence her positive outlook on teaching. Her way of thinking about learners as having 'healthy minds' and her contribution to creating opportunities for those minds to develop, apparently shaped the formation of her professional capabilities, mainly resilience.

For some student teachers their personal desire for human development influenced their formation. One student teacher, for example, used two metaphors which provided insight into the ways in which she thought about social goals. The first metaphor was the teacher as a bus/train station ('stop' and 'station') which alluded to the learners' life trajectory which has come to stop or pass through the teacher (station) for her input and the power that she has in taking action in that child's life (*'you can decide to do something'*), regardless of the scope of the child's issues at hand. The second metaphor used by the student teacher was the 'building blocks' in the child's life. The teacher's contribution to the child's life (the building blocks) was seen as a long-term contribution to the child's future.

For other student teachers negative experiences in their communities seemed to influence their formation. What was apparent was the influence that grim happenings in the community had on the formation of their professional capabilities. It was interesting to note that some student teachers esteemed having up-to-date knowledge of the current social and political state so as to inform their sense of responsibility towards it (social and collective struggle).

8.3.3 Constructing a public good teacher identity

Given the challenging political backdrop of literacy, language policies, language teaching and schooling in South Africa, the role of the teacher is of paramount importance when placing teaching and learning into a particular social justice context for enabling learners to have more capability. Reed and Black (2006:5) clarified that a contextual understanding of the educational system and a deep inquiry into issues of equity and social justice, lead to a reexamination of the essential task of an educator.

With regard to the implications of this for student teachers, Liston and Zeichner (1996) cautioned that future teachers cannot, on their own, solve the many societal issues confronting the schools, but they should certainly know what those issues are, have a sense of their own beliefs about those issues, and understand the many ways in which those issues will come alive within their school's walls. As such this study investigated the student teachers' views on their professional roles as teachers. Walker and McLean (2010:848) cited Sullivan (2005:283) who explained professionalism as "an evolving social enterprise", which can be shaped by those involved.

The student teachers in my study revealed their involvement in their professional teaching role. Shulman (1997:504) suggested that teaching is "perhaps the most complex, most challenging, and most demanding, subtly, nuanced, and frightening activity that our species invented". In my study the student teachers viewed their professional role beyond the commonplace associations with teaching. For them, the role of the teacher included being a community leader and caregiver. This finding indicated their commitment to working for public good. It also alluded to their identity as public good professionals. Their views of the teacher as community leader and caregiver ratified their social and collective struggle (professional capability). For example, some student teachers stated community leadership and care as a role of the teacher but others were leaning more towards a community empowerment approach rather than purely leadership and care which stemmed from their concerns about gender, race, and disease (HIV/AIDS). They illustrated their worry about the current situation of these social constructs which they thought were overtly prone to stereotyping on the one hand and silence on the other hand. The findings in this regard

were significant because it indicated their professional responsibility and accountability to communities in which these social constructs were most worrying.

Student teachers associated their task as a teacher in South Africa with difficult teaching circumstances. The way in which they viewed their task as teacher was thus framed around persevering in these circumstances accordingly. In their first year they cited violent crime (rape), unpredictable issues and the integrity of children's lives as some of their concerns. They also later cited other complexities which would require perseverance (professional capability): teaching and learning responsibilities, maternal roles, learners' problems, parents, school management, administrative tasks and the like as some of the motives for their feelings of fear. It was notable that they were hopeful that the resilience, which was identified as characteristic of the teacher in South Africa, might develop over time during the teacher education program – *"I'll be able to maybe, cope at the end of the 4 years"* and they clearly articulated view that the role of the teacher has the potential to *"overwhelm"*.

Their identity construction as public good professionals showed a deep inclination towards accepting obligation to their learners. Their view on the task of the teacher included a range of accepted obligatory deeds which seemed to be in lieu of creating opportunities for learners to see the worth of life - *"to realise that life is worth living"*. This clearly marked their professional capability (affiliation). Furthermore, they showed a deep inclination for understanding the lives of children in vulnerable communities (e.g. crime) and they seized responsibility for this through their professionalism as a resource. What was significant in this finding was the energized way in which some of the student teachers (in their first year) were eager to obtain future professional teaching positions in contexts that were unappealing for most teachers. In their fourth year they continued to assume responsibility in vulnerable circumstances e.g. the lack of safety and the lack of care due to parental absence. An important finding regarding their affiliation (professional capability) was that their professional capability reflected on the capabilities in the learner's life trajectory – *"I care about where you are heading"*.

The findings demonstrated that student teachers' identity construction as public good professionals included their role in developing and sustaining relationships across diverse

racial, cultural and linguistic groups. Bartolome (2004:117) proposed: “Educating teachers to understand the importance of their role as defenders and cultural advocates for their students also needs to be addressed and encouraged in coursework and practicum experiences”. Whereas the student teachers’ affiliation in the first year was about *sustaining* existing healthy relationships across racially, culturally and linguistically diverse learner populations in the classroom, in their fourth year they saw their role as *developers* of relationships across racially, culturally and linguistically diverse learner populations. Their ways of being and doing their affiliation for relationships across diverse learner populations was apparently specified in multiple doing words such as *be, show, accept, appreciate, pulling out, get along, lead*.

This study found that student teachers’ identity construction as public good professionals was characterized by agency. That is, they viewed the role of the teacher explicitly as agents of change. They seemed to have the confidence to assert their own teaching priority, namely to start change. Their notion of change appeared tantamount to human development. A case in point was one student teacher who apparently saw herself as having an interdependent life with those living ‘less than’ middle class lives. This socially conscious novice professional appeared to hold robust public service values in her assurance and confidence (professional capability) to make a positive difference with learners. She illustrated her responsibility to society and improved lives by specifying the kind of change which she proposed to attain – a mindset change – which apparently indicated that she understood development beyond the material and into another sphere – developing the mind as an advisable undertaking for human development. Interestingly, Walker and McLean (2010) also included poverty of the mind in their conceptualisation of working with poverty as a public good professional.

This study gained important insight into the student teachers’ informed vision and their assurance and confidence in teaching as a worthwhile profession. They expressed their priority of restoring the value of teaching as a professional resource which they said contributed to the development of other future professionals in South Africa. With regard to their informed vision, they had standards for what children’s lives should entail. They seemed to be acquainted with the contextual realities of their learners’ often grim domestic

circumstances and their responses to these realities gave an idea that they viewed their role with action - doing something about the domestic structures that shape children's lives. They wanted to alter their learners' ways of thinking about life – a shift towards a constructive mode of consciousness in terms of the main socio-economic domestic issue – i.e. the parents work.

For the most part, the student teachers wanted to alter the social structures which shape children's lives, by being vigilant of the consequences of current socio-economic domestic issues and their ways of being in those circumstances. Their explication of the alteration of the consciousness seemed to suggest that these structures unconstructively formed children's lives and as such, they viewed their role as making professional attempts to alter these structures by, for example, encouraging direct communication with people in order to understand the world better. They suggested that children have too much unconstructive freedom as a result of parental absence and they proposed that limitations need to be set for children (e.g. put a limit on TV time); children need more outdoor play, make friends with neighbours. This was in lieu of developing social skills which they thought were lacking. This was also connected to their suggestion, as stated previously, that South African youth seemed to lack boundaries and that they appeared aimless. Leistyna (2004:1) explained the kind of critical consciousness that the student teachers displayed as "presence of mind" and said that it is

[...] the ability to analyze, problematize (pose questions), and affect the sociopolitical, economic, and cultural realities that shape our lives. Such a level of consciousness, according to Freire, requires that people place themselves in history, the assumption being that we are never independent of the social and historical forces that surround us.

Freire proposed that education should help students to achieve a critical understanding of their own reality and to engage in transformative actions.

The professional capability, knowledge, imagination and practical skills, was illustrated in their view of the role of the teacher in helping learners to be enquiring, critical and evaluative. Interestingly, this had become their public way of being as well. Furthermore, their identity construction as public good professional was characterised by the notion of

teacher as multi perspective activist for the good of society. It revealed what the student teachers deemed as the key ingredient in their role as multi perspective activists for the good of society – using the transformation of their own minds (as a result of their education/ internal capabilities) to transform the minds of others. In the main, this study interpreted this as a key finding – their identity as public good teacher in South Africa was indicative of transforming the minds of others for the good of society. For example, they associated the outcome of embracing diversity and showing that embrace to learners, with the development of a potentially better society.

8.4 PUBLIC POSITIONALITY AND PROFESSIONAL CAPABILITIES

Griffiths (2003:58) suggested that “social justice and education are extremely complicated to understand and work with”. In terms of policy, the social justice clauses in the South African Constitution had profound implications for education at the time of this study because they committed the state to ensuring that all South Africans have equal access to schooling (Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy, 2001:14) and the National Education Policy Act of 1996 committed the state to “enabling the education system to contribute to the full personal development of each student, and to the moral, social, cultural, political and economic development of the nation at large, including the advancement of democracy, human rights and the peaceful resolution of rights” (Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy, 2001:7). In addition, the National Curriculum Statement (2002) of South Africa has tried to ensure that all Learning Area Statements reflect the principles and practices of social justice, respect for the environment and human rights as defined in the Constitution (DoE, 2002).

The student teachers’ views on the social goals in the curriculum illuminated an understanding of their professional responses to their public convictions regarding social justice concerns. My study found that student teachers were decisive about modeling social goals but they connected this to the teachers’ understanding of social goals. They appeared to entrench the view that social goals necessitated the teacher to recognize multiple perspectives, which Martin and van Gunten (2002:47) refer to as positionality - a concept that acknowledges that we are all raced, classed, and gendered and that these identities are

relational, complex, and fluid positions rather than essential qualities (Alcoff, 1988; Haraway, 1988; Maher & Tetreault, 1993, 1994). Bartolome (2004:99) added that “educators who do not identify and interrogate their negative, racist, and classist ideological orientations often work to reproduce the existing social order” and that “even teachers who subscribe to the latest teaching methodologies and learning theories can unknowingly end up perverting and subverting their work because of unacknowledged and unexamined dysconscious racism (King, 1991) and other discriminatory tendencies”. This did not seem to be the case for the student teachers in my study who seemed very alert to their own ideological orientations apparently as a result of their lived experiences within an inequitable South Africa.

Research has indicated that student teachers are often unable to comprehend the role that their various positionalities and attitudes about those positionalities have played in their abilities to be successful teachers and students (Martin & van Gunten, 2002:51). However, the student teachers in my study seemed to recognize their own perspective in teaching and the necessity to circumvent this potentially disadvantageous bias in the classroom. These authors also cautioned that “comprehending the construction of knowledge from multiple positions is essential to understanding how to create equitable and culturally representative pedagogical strategies” (Martin & van Gunten, 2002:49). These authors suggested that some student teachers “become aware of a singular positionality and develop an awareness as women, persons of color, members of low-income groups, gays or lesbians, or as physically challenged individuals” and that there is the risk of them fully embracing “only one position that they fail to acknowledge the complexities of multiple positionalities”.

The student teachers appeared to evaluate the social goals in the curriculum in relation to the historical trajectory of curriculum change in the country. This was an important finding. While they concurred with the political significance of the social goals in the curriculum, they appeared to show discontent with the type of curriculum with which it was associated, namely OBE. OBE “is, in essence, an instructional method in which curriculum planners define the general knowledge, skills, and values that learners should acquire” and “has its roots in the behaviourist psychology of B. F. Skinner, the pedagogical principles of Paolo Freire, the mastery learning techniques of Benjamin Bloom, and the curriculum objectives of

Ralph Tyler” (HSRC, 2010:157). With regard to curriculum and its political dimension, Giroux (2004) clarified that

[...] a curriculum and its supporting pedagogy are a version of our own dreams for ourselves, our children, and our communities. But such dreams are never neutral; they are always someone's dreams and to the degree that they are implicated in organizing the future for others, they always have a moral and political dimension.

The dilemma that the student teachers had with OBE was possibly that OBE turned out to “work best in privileged schools where teachers enjoyed relatively small classes, had plenty of access to textbooks and other resources, and were already accustomed to group work and the teaching of critical thinking”(HSRC, 2010:157). Furthermore, such schools

[...] typically had built up libraries and supplies of textbooks and other teaching materials over a long period of time. Conversely, OBE posed difficult, and in some cases insurmountable, challenges for black schools in low-income communities that lacked even the most rudimentary libraries and media centres and where teachers were unsophisticated in using resources such as textbooks even when they did become available (HSRC, 2010:157).

The student teachers also raised the issue of the complexity of working with a social goal like equity. Their rationale appeared to be that the teachers’ lived experience in a context which was previously impartial to equity might render the teachers’ function with social goals, thorny. In addition some student teachers revealed their perceived lack of understanding of the social goals in the curriculum. They affirmed strain with their practical skill of teaching about social goals. Apparently, certain social goals were easier for them to explicate (in terms of teaching about it) than others – they perceived equality as easier to explain to learners than justice.

Other student teachers asserted confidence in the teachers’ function in working with the social goals as well as in the teachers’ flexible function with social goals. They showed preference for responding to the social goals in a spontaneous way in their everyday

teaching than an explicit planned attainment of these goals. They seemed to show no anxiety for attaining the teaching and learning expectations of social goals in the curriculum. They seemed to view the social goals in the curriculum as useful for endorsing the right to a safe learning environment. Some student teachers gave expression to this in their inclination for the teaching practice of learner participation in an orderly environment. This validated the function of the teacher in creating learning opportunities for learners – “... *those things can be implemented*”. However, various student teachers were attentive to some teachers jeopardizing the social goals – “*some teachers that misuse those words*”. In addition they also appeared to endorse the promotion of human rights by favouring accountability in the freedom of choice for their learners. They wanted to develop this capability in their learners. Nussbaum (2011:25) explained that capability means “opportunity to select” and that the “notion of freedom to choose is thus built into the notion of capability”. This author asserts that “to promote capabilities is to promote areas of freedom ... and freedom has intrinsic value”. Nussbaum (2011:24) explained that “on the other side of capability is functionings” which is “an active realization of one or more capabilities”.

The student teachers’ views of the social goals in the curriculum endorsed the development of social skills, relationships and rapport across social groups. This was apparently apparent from their support of the ways in which diversity was beneficial to learners – “*children are exposed language, accents, different things enriches people*”. This showed their sophisticated, comprehensive view of the social goals in the curriculum but they appeared critical of the attainment of certain social goals in the curriculum as they recognized the risky implications that certain goals, like democracy, might carry for the well-being of learners: they seemed concerned about possible reckless interpretations of democracy being equated with excessive independence which they implied was counterproductive to the development and well-being of those for whom it was intended – the learners, their parents and the greater society. It was interesting that they viewed education as a combined effort between parents and teacher – “*not only the teacher’s job but parents also*”.

8.5 PUBLIC GOOD READING TEACHING IN THE CLASSROOM

Nussbaum (2011:18) put forward that when literacy skills “are absent many avenues of opportunity are closed” (Nussbaum, 2011:155). The Department of Education, under the leadership of Minister Pandor, for example, “recognized reading literacy and language in education as one of the most important priorities in education” (Howie, Venter, van Staden, Zimmerman, Long, Scherman & Archer, 2007:5) and Freire (1985) saw language and literacy as key mechanisms for social reconstruction.

The student teachers’ resourcefulness in their teaching of reading for public good was the focus of this study. Public good was a key concept in this study and the notion of resourcefulness in relation to this needed careful illumination. It was considered to incorporate activities and practices in the classroom as well as the student teachers’ professional capabilities which set these in motion. Hence the three sub-questions that are discussed here: What activities do student teachers see as supporting their teaching of reading? What practices do student teachers see as supporting their teaching of reading? What professional capabilities underpin their teaching of reading?

This study found that the student teachers’ perspectives on the teaching of reading included 13 reading teaching activities and 20 reading teaching practices which were shaped by eight professional capabilities for public good. The stance of this study was that reading teaching activities and practices were fundamental to the student teachers’ resourcefulness but that it only embodied part of their functioning as public good professionals. Their professional capabilities for public good contoured these activities and practices.

The activities, practices and professional capabilities synergistically culminated in the student teachers’ resourcefulness in the classroom context where issues related to poverty, race, social environment, health, class, gender, language and the like converged on their teaching of reading. The findings indicated that this synergy was characterised by two main professional facets in their teaching of reading:

- Social justice
- Teaching and learning

These facets set the synergy of activities, practices and capabilities in motion as depicted in figure 8.1 below:

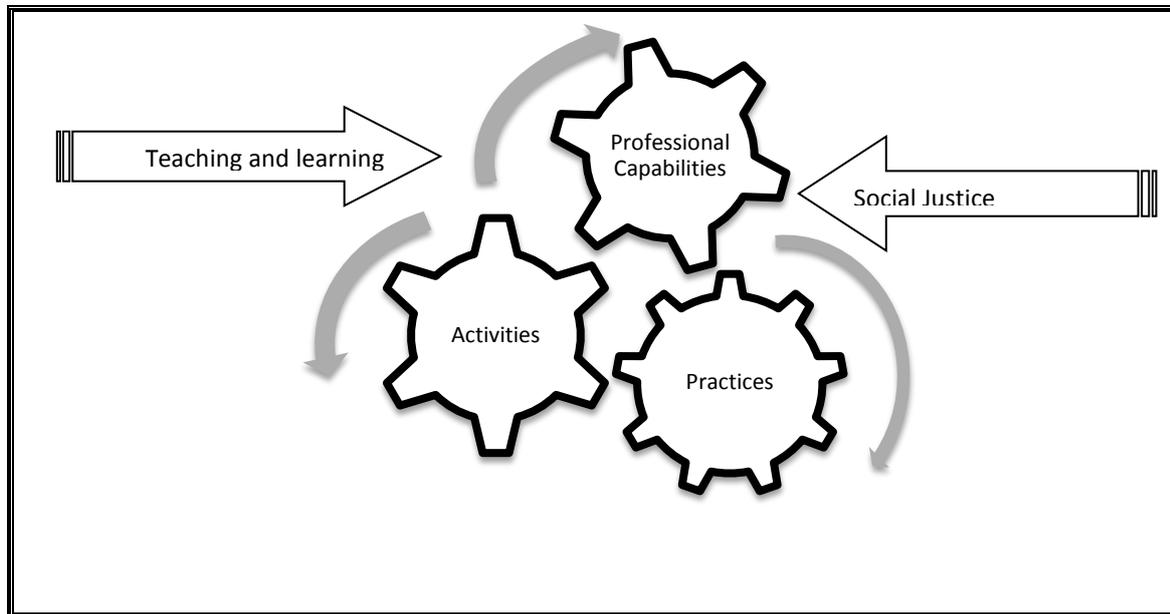


Figure 8.1: Synergy of activities, practices and professional capabilities

The findings discussed below were interpreted in terms of the social justice and, teaching and learning facets shown in figure 8.1.

8.6 SOCIAL JUSTICE

Social justice was a robust facet which set the student teachers' activities, practices and professional capabilities synergistically in motion. In short, social justice includes issues related to poverty, race, social environment, health, class and the like. These are the often grim structural realities which shape the existence of many children in South Africa. It is the context in which they live and learn.

Auerbach (1993) proposed that literacy should be considered a social issue that is linked to class, gender, and race oppression, and Corley (2003) suggested that it must be linked to efforts that redress social inequities. Most importantly for teaching and learning, the suggestions put forward by Auerbach and Corley respectively mean what Kincheloe (2004:21) proposed: "we cannot attempt to cultivate the intellect without changing the

unjust social context in which such minds operate". By this description, the teaching of reading was therefore considered as more than an intellectual activity. It is a social justice doing as well which needed to be nurtured and supported. Hence, the public good reading teaching position of this study, with the idea of public good as signifying broad social justice gains.

The capability approach asks, "among the many things that human beings develop the capability to do, which ones are the really valuable ones, which are the ones that a minimally just society will endeavour to nurture and support" (Nussbaum, 2011:28). It was significant to note, in this study, that the student teachers valued the following beings and doings (functionings) in their professional public good endeavours:

- Circumventing the effects of learning material deprivation
- Creating opportunities for meeting learners' needs
- Executing advocacy and agency

Each of these warrants further discussion.

8.6.1 Circumventing the effects of learning material deprivation

In my study, the student teachers' engagement with reading teaching activities and practices were shaped by their professional responses to social justice issues. One of the recurring issues which they raised, as teachers of reading, was the lack of access to educational resources in their professional domain. Their responsiveness to this was not defeatist. On the contrary, they pursued specific reading teaching activities and practices in response to this.

With regard to the activities, for example, paired and shared reading was their preferred professional responses to the lack of access to educational resources. These two activities were not openly suggested for their typical, recognized learning value but moreover as a means of circumventing the potential effects of a lack of material provisioning for reading teaching and learning which they experienced during TP. They associated their responses to this lack of material provisioning for reading teaching and learning, to their integrity. It seemed that their integrity overtly shaped their responses in these teaching circumstances

by their continuity to provide quality teaching. Walker and McLean (2010:856) described integrity as a professional capability which is characterised by acting ethically; being responsible and accountable to communities and colleagues; being honest; and striving to provide high-quality service.

Their practices synergistically connected with their activities. Their practice of engaging with the classroom environment through their pragmatic ways of accessing and using alternative sources of hard copy text, such as the newspaper, attested to this. By the end of their fourth year, the ways in which they thought about using the literate environment as a teaching resource sophisticatedly showed their multifarious vision for a literate environment. They were keen on advancing multilingualism, they had confidence in developing emergent reading skills, and they wanted to enhance reading comprehension in the literate environment regardless of the paucity in learning material provisioning. In this case in point, the activities of paired and shared reading, the practice of environment and the professional capability, integrity synergistically combined in their teaching of reading.

8.6.2 Creating opportunities for meeting learners' needs

Social justice as a professional facet of the student teachers' reading teaching was characterized by their ways of creating opportunities for meeting learners' needs. Jacobs (2006:23) cites Adams, Bell, and Griffin (1997) who offer this definition of a socially just society:

A socially just society is one in which all members have their basic needs met and all individuals are physically and psychologically safe and secure, able to develop to their full capabilities and to participate as effective citizens of their communities and nation.

The student teachers in my study were concerned about the learners' needs being met. They proposed to create opportunities for them to develop their full capabilities. Nussbaum (2011:21) explained the implication of a concern for meeting the needs of people in society and the place of education in this: "One job of a society that wants to promote the most important human capabilities is to support the development of internal capabilities –

through education, resources to enhance physical and emotional health, support for family care and live, a system of education, and much more”.

In terms of undertaking their proposal to create opportunities for their learners to develop their full capabilities in their professional domain (the classroom), the student teachers were attentive to the idea that their professional undertakings were dependent on, amongst others, access to and redistribution of resources for teaching and learning, particularly within the South African context with its history of a recognisable lack of access to educational and other resources for the majority of its people before 1994. Interestingly, around the time of the first data collection for this study in 2008, the WCED Literacy Strategy 2002-2008 was launched. It aimed to ensure that all Foundation Phase classrooms had Book Kits: 100 or more books of varying titles, by 2008. And at national level, the Department of Education, under the leadership of Minister Pandor, “recognized reading literacy and language in education as one of the most important priorities in education” (Howie, Venter, van Staden, Zimmerman, Long, Scherman & Archer, 2007:5).

The student teachers pursued their proposition to create opportunities for their learners to develop their full capabilities through reading teaching and learning. In particular, their practices in the differentiation dimension were useful to them in this regard, specifically their engagement with the challenge, individualization and variation practices. The results in this study showed their engagement with the challenge practice through their intent on moving learners beyond the basic encounters with text, towards a more insightful grasp, through higher order questions. Furthermore, individualization, which is concerned with the ways in which individual needs are addressed within curriculum planning and implementation (Louden et al., 2005:225), was steadfast with student teachers who recognized the individuality of the child, the needs of the child, the inclusion of individual learners in the tasks, and a child’s rights to access his/her best potential. They also used grouping as a means of responding to children’s learning needs which were apparently understood as their responsibility to supplementing the absent literacy support at home. This was not done to foreground difference in learners’ domestic conditions but to provide additional experiences with language. Louden et al. (2005:225) explained this practice of

variation as the ways in which teachers use grouping as a means of responding to children's learning needs.

Although all children in a literate society have numerous experiences with language and literacy (Harste, Woodward, & Burke, 1984; Heath, 1983) their engagement with literacy differs and teachers need to respond to these differences. The student teachers did not only use grouping as a means of responding to children's learning needs. They facilitated "the inclusion of all children within and across tasks" (Snow et al., 1998; Wray et al., 2000). Wilson (2004: 48) stated that "we have sorely underestimated the role of environment in helping or hindering the development of reading and writing habits". This was an important finding in relation to Pretorius and Machet's (2003:14) study which showed that low levels of literacy are linked to poverty and drawing on the work of Bergin (2001), Moore and Hart (2007) claimed that children of literate, middle-class South African families acquire approximately 1000 hours of parental interaction with texts before they enter school. By contrast, children from oral and working class backgrounds are likely to get little or none and they are immediately placed at a disadvantage because they do not have the necessary orientation to text that the schooling system assumes (Moore & Hart, 2007).

The student teachers apparently accepted their professional responsibility to understanding the lives of vulnerable learners – learners who do not have domestic structures which support the development of learning to read. Sleeter, Torres and Laughlin (2004:1) remarked that as teachers "we feel obligated to create opportunities and learning situations for students, to question why some people suffer, lack opportunities, and lose hope despite their hard work and resilience, while others have anything they want and more in a relatively easy way". The student teachers' understanding of vulnerable learners' lives was apparently shaped by their affiliation. Walker and McLean (2010:856) describe this professional capability as, amongst other, accepting obligations to others; care and respect for diverse people; understanding lives of poor and vulnerable; developing relationships and rapport across social groups and status hierarchies; communicating professional knowledge in an accessible way/courtesy and patience.

Their commitment to persevering in difficult reading teaching circumstances was shown in their suggestion that the teacher's attitude was vital in the success of teaching learners to read, especially with those learners who were totally reliant on the school for this success. This finding was important as it showed that they viewed their professional role as an opportunity to create opportunities for learners to develop, especially those in vulnerable circumstances (e.g. illiterate parents) by disclosing that the teaching of reading is complex and that it required their tenacity to adapt and change reading strategies and to try new things. Gupta and Saravanan (1995) acknowledged that the teaching of reading is complex and that it "can be a problem". However, of note in the results of my study was the student teachers' view that the teaching of reading was "*not just a recipe ABC. You have to keep at it*" which showed their professional capability – resilience, which Walker and McLean (2010:856) describe as including perseverance in difficult circumstances and fostering hope, was useful to them. Cochran-Smith (1991, 1995b, 1998) suggested that "we need teachers who enter and remain in the profession not expecting to carry on business as usual but prepared to teach differently and to join others in major efforts to change the ways we think about teaching, schooling, and social change".

In the main, this study found that the student teachers were willing to alter their practices to the uniqueness that each child brought to the classroom. This alluded to their differentiation practices which, in sum, "concerns the ways in which teachers tailor the curriculum and pedagogic practices to the unique cognitive and socio-cultural understandings and practices that each child brings to the classroom, while at the same time maintaining group cohesion" (Louden et al., 2005:225). This was a significant result in my study as it showed the student teachers' concern for equity by providing diverse learners with the diverse support and resources in accordance with their needs. Jacobs (2006) stated that teachers concerned with equity give students what they need to succeed, while teachers who care about equality provide all students with the same support and resources regardless of need. In addition, the student teachers showed noteworthy skill at "facilitating inclusion and meeting individual needs by modifying and adjusting instruction and scaffolding to support individual levels of understanding", within "whole class literacy tasks"(Louden et al., 2005:226).

These practices seemed in accordance with what Kincheloe (2004:18) suggested that “what students learn and how they learn should amplify what it means to experience democracy from a position of possibility, affirmation, and critical engagement”. This finding was significant because it pointed to their desire for equity in their teaching and learning of reading. They did not seem to lean towards the notion of equal chances of success for their learners which is important to note in view of Jacobs’ (2006) clarification of the notion of ‘equal chance of success’. To reiterate, teachers concerned with equity give students what they need to succeed, while teachers who care about equality provide all students with the same support and resources regardless of need.

What was clear in the results was that the student teachers in my study created moments for their learners’ needs to be met. Sleeter, Torres and Laughlin (2004:1) maintain that the “educator takes responsibility for creating the inductive moment, but then guides students in undertaking the process as soon as possible” and Shor and Freire (1987:1580) agree: "We can't sit back and wait for students to put all the knowing together. We have to take the initiative and set an example for doing it". Shor (1982) also wrote about "the withering away of the teacher," which meant that while the teacher is indispensable as a change agent, he/she should engage students in meaningful learning, with scaffolding, and gradually pull back, turning the necessary power over students to construct knowledge (in Sleeter, Torres & Laughlin, 2004:1). Interestingly, the student teachers associated their integrity (professional capability) with scaffolding practices. In particular, they connected their provision of high quality teaching to scaffolding.

The student teachers’ integrity set specific practices and activities in motion. Their resourcefulness in the class was embodied in these planned teaching actions. They illustrated their preference for the syntactic pedagogic code which builds on language processes and connections (Bernstein, 1990:79). This preference was manifested in their reading teaching practices, like their sophisticated engagement with the assessment practice (in the support dimension) which demonstrated the use of their fine-grained knowledge of the learners’ reading and writing achievement in their planning and teaching. For example, they identified that some learners were unable to develop a story on their own and to think about it independently. Consequently, they planned experiences with text from

an aesthetic stance (Rosenblatt, 1995) in order to provide a free, creative space for what Freire and Macedo (1995) explained as the teacher providing an opportunity for learners to clarify these textual dilemmas and work towards resolving it. According to Rosenblatt (1995:350), the aesthetic stance is mostly a private stance in which the readers “focus on the experiential qualities of what is being evoked during the reading event and give more attention to the private aspect, the personal aura in which the referential is embedded—sensations, images, feelings, emotional, and intellectual associations”. Calderwood (2005:7) appealed to teachers to create spaces where learners feel comfortable enough to “risk” aesthetic responses to reading and other learning processes.

The student teachers’ rapport with their learners’ rapport seemed to have supported the success of their provision for a free, creative space for clarifying these learners’ textual dilemmas. Rapport, according to Loudon et al. (2005), concerns the “development of relationships between the teacher and children that consistently support tactful literacy interventions” (Loudon et al., 2005:233). The student teachers explained how they developed and sustained a light-hearted mood with the learners which prompted them [learners] to respond confidently to potentially thorny teaching and learning moments. This light-hearted mood appeared to support their intervention with sensitive issues like pronunciation and it gave an idea about how they proposed to respect and utilise diverse engagement with English (first language) in their teaching by recognizing multiple pronunciations and acknowledging local ways of learning to read. This attested to their professional capability of knowledge, imagination and practical skills which Walker and McLean (2010:857) describe as having a firm, critical grounding in disciplinary, academic knowledge; valuing indigenous and community knowledges; having a multidisciplinary / multi-perspectival, stance; being enquiring, critical, evaluative, imaginative, creative and flexible; integrating theory and practice; being problem-solvers; open minded.

The student teachers’ intention to acknowledge and utilise local ways of learning to read was a significant finding. They seemed to want to bring local knowledge on language education into the open. This gives an idea about how their interrelated responses to diversity issues, and the complexity of language, literacy and culture and its impact on their activities, practices and professional capabilities. Scribner and Cole (1981: 236) would

perhaps concur with the rationale for drawing on learners' funds of knowledge in reading teaching as they defined literacy as a set of socially organized practices which have distinguishing purposes and contexts of use. Dantas (2007:79) claims that "the complex and rich intersection between school and family/community practices requires that teachers become "cultural brokers" (Gay, 1993) in order to bring the diversity of students' and families' funds of knowledge into the learning/teaching process". This author validates the funds of knowledge approach as it draws on a sociocultural frame to make visible the accumulated bodies of knowledge and social, cultural and linguistic practices of diverse communities (Moll, Amanti, Neff & González, 1992; Moll, 1994; González, Moll & Amanti, 2005).

What was significant in this result was that the student teachers did not allude to their learners' language and textual dilemmas as barriers which required reductionist remedial interventions which are typically seen as 'fix up' arrangements, which Bernstein (1990:74) referred to as introducing the "repair system" associated with characteristic visible pedagogy (Bernstein, 1990) which emphasizes measurement of learner competence in terms of who can and who can't. Another practice which seemed to have supported the success of the student teachers' provision for a free, creative space for clarifying the learners' textual dilemmas was their practice of warmth (in the respect dimension). Their respect for the learners' mispronunciations was maintained by a light-hearted mood which quashed possible apprehension for being mocked. The warmth in the classroom invited feelings of security amongst learners to be amused by themselves and others in their learning context when they did not get things right (e.g mispronunciation of English words).

8.6.3 Advocacy and agency

The student teachers' ways of doing reading teaching through their specific activities attested to their advocacy and agency roles. They did not see the lack of material provisioning for reading teaching and learning as debilitating. Their agency in this regard was especially apparent. Kincheloe (2004:2) explained agency as a "person's ability to shape and control their lives, freeing self from the oppression of power". On the contrary, they illustrated imaginative, creative and flexible professional responses which in turn confirmed

their advocacy and change agency in their professional domain. Ukpokodu (2007:9) explained that “when teachers understand the sociopolitical context of schooling, they are more likely to deepen their commitment to students and broaden their role to include advocacy and change agency”.

My study found that the student teachers appeared clear on what actions they would take in the complexities of the teaching of reading. They seemed to discern why some reading teaching activities options were important – social justice and, teaching and learning reasons. For example, they discerned paired reading for its learning value in the development of writing. They also discerned enthusiasm for shared reading for its valuable connection to shared writing. Teachers who are critical of their own teaching philosophies and practices seek to find deeper understandings to complex issues as they query their perspectives, biases, purposes, and motivation (Lassonde, 2009).

Apart from the lack of material due to dismal provisioning for teaching and learning in the school, they were attentive to the mismatch between school and family/community literacy practices. They referred to the literacy practices in some communities and how it seemed to them to be at odds with the reading culture in the classroom. They were aware of the lack of reading culture in some communities and they wanted to change it. Giroux (2004) deemed this pedagogy as “a moral and political practice that is always implicated in power relations and must be understood as a cultural politics that offers both a particular version and vision of civic life, the future, and how we might construct representations of ourselves, others, and our physical and social environment”. The student teachers’ engagement with story-telling, for example, also attested to this. In their first year, for example, they were keen on contextualizing printed stories to ensure that children could relate to the text in terms of their race, age, culture or general community values. This was significant because the classroom can often be far less considerate in this regard, thereby putting learners at risk. For example, Kincheloe (2004:12) cited Gaines (1999) who was vigilant with regard to this issue:

Children and young adults are under siege in both public and higher education because far too many of them have increasingly become institutional breeding grounds for commercialism, racism, social intolerance, sexism, and homophobia.

What was also significant about their advocacy and agency was that the student teachers demonstrated awareness of the social diversity of the learners in the classes that they worked in during their teaching practice sessions, and were able to act agentively in sourcing a range of rich textual resources to support reading teaching and learning for all learners. The ways in which they described the actions that they had taken showed their commitment to the value of the literate environment as an all-encompassing space which suggests some awareness of the critical pedagogic practices advocated by Giroux (2004): “at the very least, critical pedagogy proposes that education is a form of political intervention in the world that is capable of creating the possibilities for social transformation”.

Their affiliation (professional capability) for diverse people was manifested in their dedication to using text that accounted for diverse learners from diverse communities. As such they were unswerving in their attempts to introduce the concept of ‘funds of knowledge’ (Moll, 1994) by cultivating reading activities that recognized and sustained the values, experiences and interests of marginalized emergent readers into the classroom. A range of educational researchers have suggested that teachers need to become more aware of cultural differences, appreciating learner diversity as a factor that enriches the classroom setting (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992; Gonzales, Moll, & Amanti, 2005; Lee, 2008).

While apartheid might have come to an end politically, the professional trend with the student teachers was that they were on high alert with racial stereotypes linked specifically to language and not race or class. They were resolute in their agency with their transformative intentions to support multilingualism by detaching it from weakening racial stereotypes. They appeared to have a core belief that the rich linguistic diversity of eleven official languages in South Africa was fitting but that the racial stereotypes associated with each language was obstructive – they acted on these beliefs in their professional domain as reading teachers. Renzaglia, Hutchins and Lee (1997:361) elaborated that teachers are likely to “cultivate firmly established core beliefs and practices needed to act as change agents in their classrooms” when they act with a social justice perspective. They seemed to identify the activity of reading to children as a tool for modelling good reading skill on the one hand,

and multilingualism on the other hand. In the case of the latter, the purpose of reading to children was to respond to language racial stereotypes. As such, this finding was significant as it indicated that they distinguished that the orders of race and language exist intimately, both of which were inseparable cornerstones of apartheid.

The student teachers employed other activities in their advocacy and agency within the race discourse. Their use of the socio-dramatic play activity, for example, also showed their agency with their transformative intentions to disengage racial stereotypes. Giroux (2004) seemed affirmative of this as he stated: "Approaching pedagogy as a critical and political practice suggests that educators refuse all attempts to reduce classroom teaching exclusively to matters of technique and method". The student teachers were keen on selecting text which depicted racially, culturally and gender diverse characters which the learners could role play. This showed the explicit links that they constructed between teaching and learning, and issues related to race as well as culture, gender and equity. Soo Hoo (2004:192) proposed that learners need critical, reflective teachers who help learners deconstruct relations of power and their role in the production of subjectivity, knowledge, incentive, and strife. She believed that it is in these experiences that learners learn to "articulate a moral position, forge coalitions, and develop the courage to stand up for equity, justice, and democracy".

Student teachers furthermore engaged with citizenship by way of their commitment to equality and their awareness of the needs of others. They confirmed their priority to ensure that every child has the right to access to equal education because it is the learners' right and as such the student teachers were very clear on the ways in which they teach reading has to change in order to get the best out of every child in that classroom. The student teachers were furthermore committed to racial and cultural tolerance, and linguistic inclusivity. This showed the manifestation of their social and collective struggle professional capability which Walker and McLean (2010:856) describe as entailing, amongst others, the promotion of human rights.

Another language alarm which the student teachers raised was the status of some languages in the current socio-economic-political context. They appeared to suggest that

there had been no change, nationally, in this regard. This finding illustrated that they located language education (e.g. reading teaching) within a broader education context as well as a national political context which they expected to have been transformed. Interestingly, they suggested that isiXhosa was ignored and that Afrikaans was “forced” on them, while English was preferentially catered for. This showed their informed vision in their teaching of reading, which Walker and McLean (2010:856) describe as understanding how the profession is shaped by historical and current socio-economic-political context national and globally; and understanding how structures shape individual lives; being able to imagine alternative futures and improved social arrangements. The student teachers used their practice of credibility (in the respect dimension) to perform their commitment to linguistic inclusivity. They made an effort to showcase their own proactive responses to linguistic diversity which added learning value to the reading ‘lessons’ and they acknowledged that it meant making effort to extend their professional expertise in this regard. They tried to speak more than two languages – either official or unique to a particular learning community (e.g. Hebrew in a Jewish school).

The student teachers clearly saw the contribution that their professional resourcefulness in their reading teaching could offer towards the eradication of race, class and gender division. Critical pedagogy attempts to provide teachers with a better means of understanding the contributions which schools offer with regard to race, class and gender division (Giroux, 1988; McLaren, 1989). The student teachers appeared to engage with the citizenship dimension in their teaching practices. Louden et al. (2005) referred to citizenship as an effective literacy teaching practice as it involves the promotion of equality, tolerance, inclusivity and awareness of the needs of others. They were committed to selecting texts which were inclusive of different types of families and the ways in which text represents these. They also suggested critical questions which apparently shape their evaluation of text selection:

- Are the characters in the story representing only fair haired and blue-eyed mummies and daddies in a perfect family in a perfect picture?
- Is that picture representative of ‘normal’ families?
- Do I feel represented in that story?
- Do I need to read it?

Interestingly, the student teachers' responses included the recognition of diverse families, as well as cultures and languages. This finding was significant because it showed that they appeared to understand diversity as a key feature of the current socio-economic-political context and that their teaching responded directly to it. It also showed the sincerity in their commitment to carrying an attitude that was conducive to working with well-thought out text in the diverse local context.

Dowd (1992:220) argued that "from reading, hearing, and using culturally diverse materials, young people learn that beneath surface differences of colour, culture or ethnicity, all people experience universal feelings of love, sadness, self-worth, justice and kindness." Jenkins and Austin (1987) stressed the value of good text for teaching literacy because it can reflect the values, beliefs, ways of life, and patterns of thinking of a particular culture (Mei-Yu, nd). This finding signified their professional capability of informed vision in their reading teaching. Walker and McLean (2010:856) described informed vision (professional capability) as understanding how the profession is shaped by historical and current socio-economic-political context national and globally; understanding how structures shape individual lives; being able to imagine alternative futures and improved social arrangements.

8.7 TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching and learning, as a facet which set the student teachers' reading teaching activities and practices, and professional capabilities synergistically in motion, was characterized by their

- Critical pedagogy: quality reading teaching, assessment and support
- Familiarity with the complexity of reading teaching

Each of these warrants further discussion.

8.7.1 Critical pedagogy: Quality reading teaching, assessment and support

The student teachers' affiliation (professional capability) shaped their reading teaching activities and practices rationales. For example, they selected specific text which appeared

to stem from their respect for diverse learners on the one hand and their sustainability of learners' familiarity with the information in the text for assisting with reading comprehension on the other hand. Theorists like Freire and Horton were "adamant about connecting societal and educational dimensions because social change pursued in isolation could recklessly foster anti-intellectualism" (Kincheloe, 2004). As Horton and Freire (1990:54) put it, a teacher cannot be a coordinator or facilitator: "if you don't know anything just get out of the way and let somebody have the space that knows something". Walker and McLean (2010:856) described affiliation as, amongst others care and respect for diverse people; and communicating professional knowledge in an accessible way/courtesy and patience.

Classroom teachers are directly linked to the quality and equitable delivery of education and student academic achievement (Kozol, 1991; National Commission on Teaching, 1996; Darling-Hammond, 1997a; Ayers, 1998; Ladson-Billings, 2000; Nieto, 2000; Flores-Gonzalez, 2002; Marzano, 2003). Being familiar with the potential ways in which certain activities could render learning ineffective if not managed correctly, is important in the sustainability of quality teaching and learning. Kincheloe (2004) cautioned that today, critical pedagogy has been associated with everything from simply the rearrangement of classroom furniture to "feel-good" teaching directed at improving students' self-esteem. This author advises that critical pedagogy is often awarded restrictive interpretations of simply caring about students. But while this caring is necessary it does not constitute critical pedagogy. He proposed that the power dimension must be brought to bear in a way that discerns and acts on correcting the ways particular students get hurt in everyday life of schools" (Kincheloe, 2004:9). In my study, for example, student teachers were critical of the unconstructive potential of a silent reading activity which they observed – some student teachers in their fourth year appeared dubious about the learning potential of this reading activity based on their observation of inadequate learner participation. Their concern was for the learner's achievement because it appeared that the silent reading activity which they observed looked like a type of unproductive 'busy-work' which, in their opinion, did not seem to offer substantial reading engagement for the learners.

Researchers like Hattie (2003) and Luke, Freebody and Land (2000) illuminated the problem of 'busy-work' by suggesting that substance can be regarded as the provision of lessons or tasks that lead to substantial literacy engagement. The student teachers showed their assurance and confidence in the silent reading example – they wanted to ensure substantial reading engagement for the learners. Walker and McLean (2010:856) described a few examples of the assurance and confidence professional capability: Expressing and asserting own professional priorities; contributing to policy; having confidence in the worthwhileness of one's professional work; and having confidence to act for change. In my study the student teachers also appeared to manifest their assurance and confidence in their reading teaching through their commitment to text, structure and substance in reading teaching and learning.

What was also particularly significant was the student teachers' confident, professional interconnectedness in their understanding of text, classroom structure and substance. They suggested that the type of story which they use could facilitate structure in the classroom setting which in turn accomplished substance in the learning (through discussions with learners afterwards). In addition, they were able to discern different approaches to the teaching of reading. They referred to it as top-down and bottom-up and they claimed that the teacher should know which one holds better teaching and learning possibilities. Reyhner (2008) proposed that various approaches to reading presume that children learn differently.

Condy and Forrester (2000), for example, discerned two types of approaches to teaching children to read at school: word-centred and meaning-centred approaches. The former is also known as the bottom-up approach and the latter is the top-down - the student teachers used these terms in this study. The ways in which the student teachers discerned the approaches was associated with their professional capability, namely, integrity which Walker and McLean (2010:856) describe as, amongst others, striving to provide high-quality service because they deemed their selection of either approach as indicative of quality teaching and learning. Interestingly, although not the purpose of this study, the student teachers were clearly leaning towards a top-down (meaning-centred) approach to their teaching of reading. This was easily distinguishable by their numerous references to commencing their reading (and writing) teaching from a textual context.

The student teachers responded to their concern for learner achievement not only in their critique of some activities (e.g. silent reading) but also in their practices. The practice of substance (associated with the knowledge dimension), confirmed their commitment to quality teaching and learning. They engaged with this practice sophisticatedly in their strongly sequenced and paced story writing from the context of a book which was followed by learner brainstorming and writing their own stories, followed by paired reading.

The scope of their reading 'lesson' was aimed at substantial literacy engagement. This was a significant finding as it revealed the use of their collective activities which included the use of books for reading and extended writing, especially in light of the President's Education Initiative (PEI) research (1999) and Hart's (2000) results which found very little extended writing happening in classrooms they observed and that books were rarely used (cited in Moore & Hart, 2007:16). It was significant to note the resemblance of the student teachers' sequencing and pacing in their described 'lessons', to Bernstein's (1990) notion of visible pedagogy and its implications for potentially stratifying learners or reducing their participation with typical teacher control. However, their sequencing and pacing was not stirred by teacher control but by a worthwhile syntactic pedagogic code which aimed to build on language processes and connections (Bernstein, 1990:79).

Zeichner and Liston (1991:38) claimed that teachers frequently face situations of conflict where it is not clear what action or option ought to be taken. These authors cited instructional choices, curriculum development, administrative directives, parental concerns, cultural differences, and socioeconomic inequalities as points of numerous conflicts for the teacher, and they explain that if teachers are going to be able to approach these conflicts in ways that do not rely blindly on authority or special interests, then they must be able to discern good reasons for their educational actions. The student teachers seemed to be clear on what teaching and learning actions needed to be taken. But of greater significance in this finding was that they seemed intent on creating an experience with text rather than just a 'lesson' which included text. More significant still, in this result, was that some of the student teachers seemed to take what Rosenblatt (1985) referred to as an aesthetic stance which gives learners the opportunity to release themselves into the text in a way that does

not present the teacher as the concierge for checking their right and wrong responses. Kincheloe (2004:23) cautioned that

It is crucial to reiterate that any pedagogy that is attentive to its own democratic implications is always cautious of its need for closure; it self-consciously resists totalizing certainties and answers. Refusing the pull of dogmatism and imperious authority, educators must at the same time grasp the complexity and contradictions that inform the conditions under which they produce and disseminate knowledge.

The student teacher did not show a preference for 'totalizing certainties and answers' in their teaching of reading.

As a case in point, the aesthetic stance (Rosenblatt, 1995) was manifested in their practice of responsiveness in the support dimension. Brophy and Good (1986) and Hattie (2003) suggested that teachers who share and build on children's contributions in such a way that the child contributes to the teaching point, are persistent in their provision of many opportunities to practice and master new literacy learning. In my study the student teachers recognized that they needed to persist, over time, in their provision of repeating the reading activity. Kincheloe (2004:27) advised that "at stake here is the need to insist on modes of authority that are directive but not imperious, linking knowledge to power in the service of self-production, and encouraging students to go beyond the world they already know to expand their range of human possibilities". This finding was particularly significant because it generated insight into the ways in which student teachers might function as reading teachers by using their authority in the reading teaching scenario to "intervene and shape the space of teaching and learning to provide students with a range of possibilities for challenging a society's commonsense assumptions, and for analyzing the interface between their own everyday lives and those broader social formations that bear down on them" (Kincheloe, 2004:20).

The ways in which the student teachers shaped the space of teaching and learning was evident in their independence practice (associated with the respect dimension). It "fosters children's motivation to take some responsibility for their own learning" (Louden et al.,

2005). On the one hand the student teachers acknowledged that learners must take responsibility for their own reading development by giving those reading tasks to do at home with a follow-up activity at school. On the other hand, the student teachers' independence practice seemed to develop over time in their teacher education as they viewed the teacher's role differently by the end of their fourth year. They referred to the role of the teacher, the learner as well as the peers in developing learners' responsibility in their own reading development. They seemed to shift the power relations in the teaching space quite radically by suggesting that they were not the exclusively the source of teaching and learning in the classroom but that peer learning was a vital element. They were not relinquishing professional responsibility – they assumed the role of provisioning of textual variety and allowing learners to use it with their peers.

8.7.2 Being in sync with the complexity of reading teaching

The student teachers seemed to be in sync with the complexities of reading teaching. This was significant in terms of Freire's assertion that "no teacher is worth her salt who is not able to confront students with a rigorous body of knowledge" (Kincheloe, 2004:21). Reading teaching knowledge is undoubtedly rigorous and Lyster (2003:38) explained: "reading is an enormously complex process involving perceptual, cognitive, affective and social factors".

In my study the student teachers drew attention to the cognitive, affective, social and perceptual factors in their teaching of reading. For example, they valued the sentence wall activity for its cognitive and affective worth (i.e. their reference to self-esteem). They sophisticatedly drew attention to the value of their contribution to the development of learners' writing ideas as an affective factor. Kincheloe (2004:25) suggested "the role that affect and emotion play in the formation of individual identities and social collectivities" by arguing that "any viable approach to critical pedagogy suggests taking seriously those maps of meaning, affective investments, and sedimented desires that enable students to connect their own lives and everyday experiences to what they learn". This author clarified that "pedagogy in this sense becomes more than a mere transfer of received knowledge, an inscription of a unified and static identity, or a rigid methodology; it presupposes that students are moved by their passions and motivated, in part, by the affective investments

they bring to the learning process". A further example of the ways in which they attended to the affective in the reading process was in their awareness of the sensitivities surrounding learner pronunciation given the link between multilingualism and spoken language. For example, they pointed out that they used humor tastefully when they were listening to a child read with diverse, multilingual-flavoured pronunciations.

Their reading teaching activities, as well as their practices, attended to cognitive and perceptual factors. In their reading teaching activities they clearly linked picture support to sentence construction; they associated the sentence wall activity with shared writing; and they were attentive to textual meaning. Furthermore, they made other explicit connections between reading and writing, particularly shared writing, reading aloud and independent writing. Their modeling practices (within the knowledge dimension) showed how they posed metacognitive questions by asking the learners to think about their thinking behind why they did not regard their writing attempts as valuable. Modelling refers to demonstrations of literacy tasks which include metacognitive explanations (Louden et al., 2005).

Other tools which they suggested for the complex reading process involving perceptual, cognitive, affective and social factors included play - reading game activities emerged in their repertoire of reading teaching activities for the purpose of creating and sustaining a fun environment, particularly within an additional language teaching and learning context. With regard to their pleasure practices (in the participation dimension), they were keen on creating pleasurable learning opportunities by ensuring an enthusiastic and energetic classroom which used specific text and games. My study found that the student teachers appeared to create an inviting ambiance for learning by becoming aware of the matters that interest the learners so as to appeal to their enthusiasm to learn to read. Their respect practices were useful for achieving the desired social context for reading teaching and learning. The dimension 'respect' refers to a group of teaching practices concerned with the social context of the classroom (Louden et al., 2005:232).

Another significant finding was that the student teachers connected the learning environment to their own planning, together with the structure (learner expectation) and stimulation. They invited learners to interact with them as a central part of the reading

activities. The student teachers showed that they were imaginative, creative and flexible in their reading teaching through their responses to stimulating learner interest in learning to read by providing texts that interest the learners. Most important in this findings, though, was their progressive stances on what 'counts as reading progress'- they apparently distinguished typical stances on learners' reading progress from their alternative views on this issue which they implied was subjective and subsequently dependent on what the teacher considered reading progress to be. This seemed a clear manifestation of their knowledge, imagination and practical skills as Walker and McLean (2010:857) describe this as, amongst others, having a multidisciplinary / multi-perspectival, stance; being enquiring, critical, evaluative, imaginative, creative and flexible; integrating theory and practice; being problem-solvers; open minded.

8.8 BRINGING THE PUBLIC AND PROFESSIONAL DISCOURSE INTO HIGHER EDUCATION

Walker and McLean (2010:851) proposed the discourse of professionalism as a resource in a transforming South Africa and they argued that the integrity of professional life is necessary to the health of civic culture. In terms of what this means for higher education, they suggested that university departments are responsible for educating professionals for performance, for ethical judgment as well as for a disposition towards society and clients (Walker & McLean, 2010:851). In the case of teaching, the client is the learner in the classroom. Walker and McLean (2010:851) alluded to a particular professional identity, namely commitment to transformation in South Africa.

As was the case for Walker and McLean (2010:852) who based the identity of such a professional on "ideas about human development that emphasise capability expansion for both professionals and their clients", this study also used capabilities approach for investigating the student teacher's responsibility, in South Africa's context, to public good development. Within the higher education domain of this study, teacher education was viewed as a process of capability expansion that would facilitate developmental pathways for student teachers to be public good professionals who create opportunities for others.

This study found that teacher education contributed to the formation of student teachers' professional capabilities. In the main, my study also found that student teachers' that the student teachers had what Walker and McLean (2010:857) referred to as "four non-hierarchical metafunctionings". These were "by virtue of their professional education at university" what they ought "to be able to do and to choose to do, in all these multi-dimensional ways, as public good professionals: (i) recognise the full dignity of every human being; (ii) act for social transformation and to reduce injustice; (iii) make sound, knowledgeable, thoughtful, imaginative professional judgements; and, (iv) work/act with others to expand the comprehensive capabilities ('fully human lives') of people living in poverty.

Three main teacher education facets were influential in their formation: Teaching Practice, Teacher Education Coursework and Other Teacher Education experiences. This study also found that for a few student teachers, teacher education was of no consequence in the formation of some their professional capabilities. The quantitative results showed that the TP facet was immensely influential in their formation; T E coursework was moderately influential; other T E experiences had low influences and a low number of student teachers regarded their teacher education as having no influence.

8.8.1 Teaching practice formation

A plethora of literature indicated that the experiences that student teachers gain during their TP sessions plays a huge role in their development of teaching activities and practices (Calderhead & Shorrock, 1997; Samuel & Pillay, 2003; Darling-Hammond et al., 2005; Haigh, 2005). My study found that TP was a primary facet in the student teachers' formation of teaching activities and practices as well as their professional capabilities for public good. Findings from Reddy (2003:187) showed that student teachers considered TP as "the most successful part of their teacher education because it provided them with a hands-on experience". In my study the TP providing them with: (i) variation of schooling contexts, (ii) theory and practice connections (iii) troubling encounters and (iv) commitment to teaching tasks.

The variation in TP schooling contexts was influential in their formation as it created an opportunity for them to experience diverse schooling contexts which enabled them to locate themselves within some challenging societal constraints (e.g. poverty). This, in turn, called for their responsibility towards society (e.g. social and collective struggle and affiliation) beyond the typical associations limited to teaching and learning. Maynard and Furlong (1993; 1995) affirm that the TP context is important in the student teachers' development. Berliner (2001: 466) put forward that context affects the teaching practices of student teachers "subtly but powerfully" while Maynard and Furlong (1995) proposed school context as one of four domains in which the student teacher's practical teaching knowledge develops (the other three domains are learners in the class, subject matter knowledge, and knowledge of strategies).

Multilingualism, race and class were some of the issues which confronted them at their varied TP contexts. For example, a black student teacher, who had Afrikaans as her second additional language, found herself confronting race and language in her first year – she embraced multilingualism positively. It also apparently provided student teachers with diverse experiences with race, language and socio-economic circumstances. For example, a white student teacher from a middle-class background described her positive experience with diverse linguistic and socio-economic circumstances in her first year and in her fourth year she described another, similar positive TP experience in a completely different schooling context. TP clearly provided the opportunity to experience diverse teaching contexts which was frequently contrary to their own personal past schooling context (as learners and not student teachers). The focal point in this finding was that it also alerted them to reading teaching as a complex process which involved their multifaceted responses. In the main, it formed their understanding the lives of the poor and vulnerable. Giroux (2004) argues that

One consequence of linking pedagogy to the specificity of place is that it foregrounds the need for educators to rethink the cultural and political baggage they bring to each educational encounter; it also highlights the necessity of making educators

ethically and politically accountable for the stories they produce, the claims they make upon public memory, and the images of the future they deem legitimate.

TP was influential in their formation as it provided an opportunity for them to gain practical experience with theory. They evaluated the theory which they were given access to in TE and deemed it shallow in contrast to the deeper creativity which the TP experience offered. Calderhead and Shorrock (1997:196) cautioned that learning about teaching “can seem quite irrelevant to student teachers unless it is introduced at a time when they can appreciate the link between ideas, the practical problems and their own practice as teacher”. TP apparently located their understanding of specific theory, i.e. curriculum, within a broader practice context. What was furthermore important in this finding was that they also reflected on curriculum change and it mattered to them to see the old and the new – the visible curriculum transformation.

Some student teachers appeared to have troubling encounters during their TP sessions which outwardly facilitated positive growth for some. Of note in this study was that all the troubling encounters were connected to the lack of high quality teaching and learning. Marais and Meier (2004) defined these negative TP experiences as including, amongst others, teachers who are not competent. Raths and Lyman (2003:211) described incompetence in teaching as “acts of commission or omission on the part of the teacher that interfere with the learning process of learners or that fail to advance them”. The student teachers were distressed by the in-service teachers’ lack of integrity in terms of failing to offer learners high quality teaching which they observed during their TP sessions. Raths and Lyman (2003:211) clarified their notion of commission or omission as including, amongst others, the teacher’s lack of subject knowledge and a lack of engaging learners in high-quality learning. Interestingly, these student teacher experiences and judgements shaped their critical and evaluative stances of quality teaching activities and practices and their professional capabilities e.g. their integrity (quality teaching and learning).

The quantitative results showed the extent to which the TP was influential in each of the professional capabilities. TP had the greatest influence on the formation of their resilience (69% of student teachers). This was correlated with the vast descriptions of persevering

through difficult professional encounters during their TP sessions. TP was also immensely influential in the formation knowledge, imagination and practical Skills (55% of student teachers); integrity (51% of student teachers); and assurance and confidence (47% of student teachers). TP was moderately influential in the formation of the student teachers' informed vision (27% of student teachers) and affiliation (21% of student teachers). It appeared to have a low influence on the formation of their social and collective struggle (10% of student teachers) which, for most of the student teachers, seemed to have been developed most by their teacher education coursework.

8.8.2 Teacher education coursework formation

Teacher education (T E) coursework, in this teacher education program, emerged as another important facet in the formation of student teachers' professional capabilities for public good by providing (i) multiple perspectives for a clear teaching vision, (ii) assessment tasks which exposed them constructively to human rights ideas, and (iii) practical skills for constructively imagining, creating and using alternative resources.

The student teachers seemed to value the multiple perspectives that they were given access to in their T E coursework. It appeared to provide them with a comprehensive vision for their agency – it expanded their thinking about the complexities of teaching. It made them critically evaluate social phenomena e.g. the 'rules of society'. Bartolome (2004:117) proposed that “one effective way to ensure that pre-service teachers begin to develop and increase their political and ideological clarity is by having teacher education classrooms explicitly explore how ideology functions as it relates to power” and that “it is also important for prospective teachers to examine the political and cultural role that counter-hegemonic resistance can serve to contest and transform the exclusionary, harmful, and fundamentally undemocratic values and beliefs that inform dominant educational practices”. The student teachers made clear references to this in the findings.

Coursework that addressed the topic of the availability and acquisition of teaching and learning resources was apparently useful for student teachers. Their receptiveness to creating and imagining unconventional teaching and learning resources (in materially

deprived schooling contexts) which they gained from their coursework, appeared to be influential in their formation. Important in this finding was their pro-poor way of being, professionally. According to Freire (1998a, 1998b), beyond technical skills, teachers should also be equipped with a full understanding of what it means to have courage-to denounce the present inequities that directly harm certain populations of students - and effectively create psychologically healthy, culturally responsive, humanizing, and self-empowering educational contexts (in Bartolome, 2004:118) . Linked to this were the teacher education assessment tasks which contributed to their formation. For example, a particular research task in their Professional Studies subject appeared to provide them with experiences which developed their understanding of community empowerment and human rights (their professional capability - social and collective struggle).

The quantitative results showed the extent to which the T E coursework was influential in the formation of each of the professional capabilities. T E coursework had the greatest influence in the formation of their informed vision (67% of student teachers). It was also immensely influential in the formation of their social and collective struggle (44% of student teachers) which was unsurprising a particular research task assigned in one of the subjects (Professional Studies), appeared to develop their understanding of human rights.

The quantitative results showed that T E coursework was moderately influential in the formation of integrity (37% of student teachers) and Knowledge, Imagination and Practical Skills (29% of student teachers). It appeared to have a low influence on the formation of their assurance and confidence (17% of student teachers), resilience (3% of student teachers), and affiliation (3% of student teachers).

8.8.3 Other or no teacher education formation

In addition to TP and TE coursework, other experiences in teacher education also shaped their formation of professional capabilities for public good: (i) interaction with their TE peers, (ii) the institutional language policy, (iii) their own agency, and (iv) a few lecturers' questionable integrity. These were largely grim encounters which the student teachers appeared to direct constructively in their formation by thinking critically about it.

Active dialogue with, and racial diversity amongst their TE peers were the two pleasant TE encounters which shaped the formation of their professional capabilities. Their interaction with their TE peers contributed to their formation through the active dialogue about teaching and learning, amongst themselves. Apart from the dialogue, it was ostensibly the diverse racial demographics amongst themselves which, for some, was momentous in their development. Important in this finding was their reference to the limited racial diversity in their lived experiences and their receptiveness to racial diversity amongst themselves in their teacher education.

However, whereas some student teachers were affirmative about the interaction with their peers others recognized destructive occurrences with their peers as a hindrance to their formation. They pointed out the lack of respect which some peers' disruptive behavior in lectures burdened them with. The professional behavior of one or two lecturers also troubled them. This study found that the lecturers' apparently weak integrity in managing the student teachers' submission of assessment tasks influenced their formation of professional capabilities. They seemed perturbed by the lecturers' compromise of quality teaching and learning when accepting late assessment tasks by student teachers.

Another negative encounter which contributed to the student teachers' formation was the university environment. Some student teachers made allegations of the university's variance with human rights. They alleged that the university showed disregard for diverse linguistic provisioning through its conspicuous preference for English and its alleged failure to provide linguistically for student teachers who have English as their additional language. This perception contributed to their alertness to human rights as they were clearly dubious of the university's affiliation for its people. This, in turn, pointed towards the formation of their affiliation, and their social and collective struggle capabilities, respectively.

The student teachers' own agency during their TE contributed to their formation of professional capabilities – They chose ways of thinking about issues and actively decided to take ownership of their formation in this regard. For “graduate professionals to work to expand the capabilities of those living in poverty, they need themselves to develop as

transformative agents, having professional capabilities which enable them to choose to act in this way” (Walker & McLean, 2010:865).

The quantitative results showed the extent to which these other T E experiences were influential in the formation of each of their professional capabilities. Other T E experiences were only moderately or negligibly influential in the formation of their professional capabilities. It did not show to have an immense influence. It was moderately influential in the formation of their resilience (35% of student teachers), assurance and confidence (28% of student teachers), and social and collective struggle (23% of student teachers). It appeared to have a low influence on the formation of their knowledge, imagination and practical skills (10% of student teachers), assurance and confidence (10% of student teachers), and integrity (12% of student teachers).

A number of student teachers also considered that their teacher education was of no consequence in the formation of certain professional capabilities. One of the reasons cited for this sentiment was the prescriptive guidelines from many lecturers which they felt curtailed the expression of their professional teaching priorities. Important in this finding was that the student teachers apparently suggested that their T E, through its ominous lecturer conduct, might have inhibited the expansion of their knowledge, imagination and practical skills, as well their assurance and confidence (*I feel like a lot of lecturers try to push us to conformity. To try to push us to agree with them and when you ask them something you feel like you get shot down...like this is my way, this is the way you do it.*) Maynard and Furlong (1995:98) found that student teachers’ development during their TP is influenced by “the attitude and beliefs they hold, and the way these interact with the attitudes and beliefs of their supervising teacher and the university tutor”. As their references to lecturers was linked to their coursework, one could infer that the quantitative results in that regard were useful as it also showed that only 29% of student teachers felt that the coursework influenced the development of their knowledge, imagination and practical skills and only 17% felt that their coursework developed their assurance and confidence.

The quantitative results showed that a vast number of student teachers considered teacher education as inconsequential in the formation of their affiliation (42% of student teachers),

a moderate number of student teachers considered T E as inconsequential in the formation of their Knowledge, Imagination and Practical Skills (26% of student teachers), and Social and Collective Struggle (23% of student teachers), and a low number of student teachers considered T E as inconsequential in the formation of their assurance and confidence (6% of student teachers).

8.9 DEVELOPMENT OVER TIME

Steele (2003:108) highlighted the complexity of teacher education by warning that “producing teachers is more than simply accumulating a compendium of skills and competencies, no matter how impressive the articulation of the theory supporting these competencies may be”. Maynard and Furlong (1995:98) argued that this perception of teaching as a complex undertaking is central to the student teacher’s development. Teacher education programs play a key role in their development over time and Fraser et al. (2005:256) proposed that student teacher competence in this regard would include what they “do with their learners in their classroom”. My study argues that their ways of being and doing their teaching is a much more comprehensive approach to their development over time and that needs to include the activities and practices as well as the professional capabilities which set these in motion. Given the past and present condition of South African society, this certainly is necessary for teacher education.

The findings showed that during their teacher education student teachers developed their repertoire of reading teaching activities and practices as well as their professional capabilities which set these in motion, over time. The breadth of their activities repertoire expanded over the four year teacher education program. The depth of their engagement with the reading teaching activities in this repertoire varied between their entry into (first year) and exit from (fourth year) T E. In the first year their engagement with reading teaching activities ranged between pragmatic and sophisticated, mostly towards the pragmatic end of the depth continuum. In their fourth year their engagement with reading teaching activities ranged between straightforward and sophisticated, mostly towards the sophisticated end of the depth continuum.

In the first year they appeared to engage two activities in their reading teaching repertoire which did not seem to continue through to the fourth year. These were spelling activities (straightforward depth) and reading to children (noteworthy depth). They engaged three more activities from the first year which continued to deepen through to the fourth year: paired reading (pragmatic depth in first year and sophisticated in fourth year); shared reading (pragmatic depth in first year and sophisticated in fourth year); story-telling (sophisticated depth in first year and noteworthy in fourth year). After the first year they appeared to add eight more activities to their growing repertoire: reading games (straightforward depth); socio-dramatic play (noteworthy depth); hearing children read (noteworthy depth); silent reading (noteworthy depth); sentence wall (sophisticated depth); shared writing (sophisticated depth); independent writing (noteworthy depth); and the rhythm walk (straightforward depth).

The breadth of their practices repertoire also expanded during the four year teacher education program. The depth of their engagement with reading teaching practices varied between entry into (first year) and exit from (fourth year) T E. In their first year their engagement with reading teaching practices ranged between straightforward and noteworthy, mostly towards the straightforward end of the depth continuum; and in their fourth year their engagement with reading teaching practices ranged between straightforward and sophisticated, mostly towards the sophisticated end of the depth continuum.

In their first year they appeared to engage one reading teaching practice which did not continue through to the fourth year. This was explanations (noteworthy depth). They engaged seven more reading teaching practices which continued to deepen from first through to fourth year. These were as follows: stimulation (straightforward depth in first year and noteworthy in fourth year); pleasure (straightforward depth in first year and noteworthy in fourth year); environment (straightforward depth in first year and noteworthy in fourth year); structure (straightforward depth in first year and, straightforward and sophisticated in fourth year); variation (straightforward depth in first year and noteworthy in fourth year); credibility (straightforward depth in first year and noteworthy in fourth year); citizenship (straightforward depth in first year and,

straightforward, noteworthy and sophisticated in fourth year); and independence (noteworthy depth in first year and sophisticated in fourth year). After the first year they appeared to add 11 more practices to their reading teaching repertoire. These were as follows: modeling (sophisticated depth); substance (sophisticated depth); awareness (sophisticated depth); pace (noteworthy depth); feedback (sophisticated depth); assessment (sophisticated depth); persistence (noteworthy depth); challenge (sophisticated depth); and individualization (sophisticated depth); warmth (sophisticated depth) and rapport (sophisticated depth).

In addition to the development of their reading teaching activities and practices, the findings showed that the student teachers' professional capabilities also developed over time. In their first year their social and collective struggle was either straightforward or noteworthy and in their fourth year they showed straightforward and sophisticated depth. With regard to their assurance and confidence it seemed to develop from noteworthy to sophisticated depth. Their affiliation appeared sophisticated at the time of their entry into teacher education and it apparently remained so by the time they exited from teacher education. Their knowledge, imagination and practical skills were noteworthy and sophisticated in their first year but it was mostly sophisticated in their fourth year. Their resilience was noteworthy at the outset of teacher education but was clearly sophisticated by the end of their teacher education (fourth year). With regard to their informed vision it was noteworthy in their first year and sophisticated by their fourth year.

The findings pertaining to their views on the social goals in the curriculum showed an evident expansion in the breadth and also in the depth during their teacher education. Student teachers became more critical of the social goals in the curriculum. They seemed to delineate social goals in terms of values and morals and they were noticeably critical of the underpinning of these – *But the point is who decides...* In so doing, it appeared that they questioned the partiality of social goals in a sophisticated way – *but who sets the standard? What is their background?* This was contrary to Bartolome's (2004:99) claim that "more progressive literature on teacher education suggests that prospective teachers, regardless of their ethnic background, tend to uncritically and often unconsciously hold beliefs and attitudes about the existing social order that reflect dominant ideologies that are harmful to

so many students” (see Bloom, 1991; Haberman, 1991; Sleeter, 1992; Davis, 1994; Gomez, 1994; Macedo, 1994; Gonsalvez, 1996; Freire, 1997,1998a, 1998b) and that these teachers “tend to see the social order as a fair and just one”.

8.10 CONCLUSION

At the outset, the purpose of this study was to provide a rich local understanding of reading teaching and student teacher development in a country (and province) where a few unique contextual features prevail - several curriculum changes in the past decade, embarrassingly weak literacy performance in international testing and an alarming increase in violent crime with some of the highest global statistics in this regard, to name a few. This was the unique local context in which the classroom, higher education and public domains of the student teachers intersected. They live, learn and work with this quality of life. Most of them stay in the country to take on these challenges as novice professionals.

The social dimension of reading teaching was foregrounded in the professional domain in which reading teachers attend to pedagogy and content. Attention was brought to diverse and inequitable professional contexts in South Africa through the perspectives of student teachers. Reading teaching as a resource for societal transformation was clarified in this discussion. The development of reading teaching activities, practices and professional capabilities in terms of breadth and depth was thrashed out and the notion of resourcefulness was considered to incorporate activities and practices in the classroom.

This chapter discussed how the state of the South African society shaped these student teachers’ professional capabilities for public good which in turn set their reading teaching activities and practices in motion. The intersection of three domains namely the classroom, higher education and society seemed strongly to liberate their intention to teach reading for public good.

The activities, practices and professional capabilities which synergistically culminated in the student teachers’ resourcefulness in the classroom context where issues related to poverty, race, social environment, health, class, gender, language and the like converged on their

teaching of reading, was discussed and the two main professional propelling facets in the teaching of reading, namely social justice and, teaching and learning were discussed.

The capabilities approach for public good was discussed in relation to the social features associated with the teaching of reading. Citizenship, pedagogy and content, and the nature of classroom interaction were attended to in the discussion. It located student teachers in public discourses and their investment in public commitment through their resourcefulness as teachers of reading, as well as in university discourses. The discourse of professionalism was argued for as a necessary resource in a transforming South Africa. This chapter discussed the identity of student teachers as public good professionals who create opportunities for others. It did so by applying Walker and McLean's (2010) Index of Public Good to student teachers' teaching of reading in the context of their teacher education and their (student and institution) responsibilities to society.

This chapter discussed teacher education's contribution to the formation of student teachers' professional capabilities. Three main teacher education factors were extrapolated: Teaching Practice, Teacher Education Coursework and Other Teacher Education experiences. The qualitative and quantitative results showed the influence of each facet.

In the main, this chapter provided a rich snapshot of this study's main result - the states of the South African society in which the student teachers live shapes their professional capabilities for public good which in turn contours their reading teaching activities and practices. It discussed the significance of these in light of previous research. The next chapter explains the wider implications of my work for teacher education and it will mention the problems and limitations of this study before it makes suggestions for improvement.

CHAPTER NINE CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 INTRODUCTION

This research investigated how the student teachers' teaching of reading intersected with their public good commitment and values. The study was conducted with a sample of student teachers who were completing the Bachelor of Education: Foundation Phase degree in the Faculty of Education at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology's Mowbray campus. The findings in this study related to a dynamic variety of aspects, namely student teachers' lived experiences in South African society, their activities and practices in their teaching of reading, their professional capabilities, their teacher education and the interconnectedness of these factors with the notion of public good.

The main findings and my reflections on these are concluded in this chapter. The key findings included the ways in which student teachers attended to the social dimension of reading teaching in their activities and practices and their professional capabilities which shaped these. Social justice factors which set their activities and practices, and their professional capabilities in motion in the diverse and inequitable professional contexts, in which they do their reading teaching in South Africa, formed an important part of this study.

This study argued that reading teaching as a resource for societal transformation is a viable undertaking and identified the teacher education facets which contributed to the formation of the student teachers' reading teaching activities, practices and professional capabilities. Other key findings in this study established how the state of the South African society shaped student teachers' professional capabilities for public good. The synergy between the classroom, higher education and society was argued as a dynamic which influenced student teachers' commitment to teach reading for public good when they attended to issues related to poverty, race, social environment, health, class, gender and language.

The capability approach for public good was found to elucidate student teachers and teacher education in a public discourse and the student teachers' investment in public commitment through their resourcefulness as teachers of reading. It also located public

commitment concisely in university discourses. The identity of student teachers as public good professionals who create opportunities for others was described as being agents of change.

In this chapter key findings are used to suggest a particular course of action for teacher education. The contribution that my study makes to research is emphasized and further research that could continue to broaden our collective understanding of activities, practices and professional capabilities in the teaching of reading, and in teacher education is suggested. This chapter reflects on whether or not my study achieved its aims of the investigation into the student teachers' teaching of reading.

The steps taken throughout the research process, as well as any kind of problems encountered, were reviewed and the limitations of these steps are presented. The aspects of my research methodology which were most useful in terms of providing the most accurate findings are outlined in this chapter. This chapter commences with central aspects of the literature which provided texture to my thinking about teacher education for the teaching of reading from a social justice perspective.

9.2 HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE LITERATURE

Research on novice professionals learning to teach reading has not been the focus in South Africa. I did not find any local studies that spoke to teacher education. However, the Reeves et al. (2008) study on the state of literacy teaching and learning in the Limpopo Province, for example, commented briefly on teacher education as lacking "the capacity to provide the kind of formal primary teacher education, development and expertise". Research into what happens in the classroom, in terms of reading teaching and learning, seems to have taken center stage in the local literature. These have been valuable in as far as describing conditions under which teachers teach, and children learn to read.

Other local studies had diverse research thrusts, for example the inadequate infrastructure in South African literacy teaching and learning contexts. One such study found that over 50% of South African schools were lacking school libraries and learning materials such as exercise books, textbooks and appropriate reading materials (Moore & Hart, 2007). Another

local study conducted by Pretorius and Ribbens (2005:139) called for the monitoring of learners' reading progress. The PIRLS study of 2006 by Howie et al. (2007) was a useful example of this. It followed on from PIRLS 2001 after the first international comparative reading literacy with 32 participating education systems in 1991. The results of the 2006 study showed, amongst others, that only 10 (of 45) education systems fell below the international mean, with South Africa at the lowest. Other findings in this study were also valuable in providing a societal context in which learners' and teachers' lives were situated: South Africa had the lowest life expectancy at birth of 46 years, the highest mortality rate (53 per 1000 live births), and the highest learner: teacher ratio.

In other parts of the world like the USA and Australia the effectiveness of teacher preparation for reading instruction seemed to have been the focus of literacy researchers in recent decades. A key feature of the American studies (Feiman-Nemser, 1990; Wilson, Floden, & Ferrini-Mundy, 2001; Wideen, Mayer-Smith, & Moon, 1998) on effective teacher education, for example, was the focus on the measurement of learner progress in classrooms where novice teachers teach. With regard to learner progress studies in Australia, literacy teaching research on teacher effectiveness (Louden et al., 2005) addressed the teaching activities and practices of the individual teacher in promoting learner progress in literacy achievement.

What was clear from the teacher education literature and the reading teaching literature was the shift in recent years towards an understanding of learning to read and learning to teach reading as respectively complex processes. With regard to the latter, Hoffman and Pearson (2000), for example, argued that "the field has advanced by shifting its focus from technical training-oriented programs to more robust preparation oriented programs based on a view of teaching as a complex domain" (Risko et al., 2008:253). This literature was useful to show the potential of teacher education for expanding the notion of public good with student teachers.

Apart from these distinctions that were apparent in the literature, it became unsurprisingly apparent that numerous theoretical perspectives influenced teacher education research. Risko et al. (2008:255), for example, cited Fenstermacher (1994) who suggested that

cognitive research studies tended to establish what novice teachers need to know, conditions where particular forms of knowledge may be required, and how reflective processes can deepen knowledge and flexible applications while teaching. Citing Wilson et al. (2001), Risko et al. (2008:255) brought attention to constructivist research which focused on teacher education as a learning problem. These authors explained that this type of research documented conditions that may contribute to changes in teachers' use of multiple knowledge sources to solve literacy problems.

My study on learning to teach reading in teacher education was framed within social reconstructionism which emphasizes thinking about issues of equity and social justice that arise in and outside of the classroom and connects the teacher's practice to social continuity and change. It was fitting for my study because it viewed education as a vehicle for social change (Counts, 1932; Gutek, 1997). According to Kliebard (1986:183) a social reconstructionist tradition in teacher education, for example, "derived its central thrust from the undercurrent of discontent about the economic and social system ... and saw curriculum as a vehicle by which social injustice would be redressed and the evils of capitalism corrected". Zeichner and Liston (1991:38) confirmed that only the social reconstructionist framework gives attention to "the giving of reasons, the formation of purposes, and the examination of how the institutional, social, and political context affects the formation of those purposes or the framing of reasons" and they highlight that "it is only the social reconstructionist approach which seriously attempts to situate educational action within a larger social and political context".

Liston and Zeichner's (1991:33) views was a highlight in the literature as it described a social reconstructionist tradition in teacher education as one which defines schooling and teacher education as crucial elements in a movements towards a more just society by preparing teachers to have a critical perspective on the relationship between schooling and social inequities and to have a moral commitment to correcting those inequities through their daily classroom and school activities. This view provided the impetus for thinking about teacher education in South Africa and its many inequities that manifest in the daily civic lives of student teachers and in their impending professional domains of the classroom, particularly their future roles as teachers of reading in the Foundation Phase of schooling.

None of the local or international studies, which I was able to source, reported on the synergistic ways in which student teachers' activities, practices and professional capabilities are set in motion by teaching and learning and, social justice.

The Australian Louden (2005) study confirmed the importance of the individual teacher in promoting learner progress in literacy achievement through their activities and practices associated with reading teaching effectiveness. I found this to be the best, succinctly articulated research which captured an extensive representation of effective literacy teaching which they proposed "may help beginning teachers feel confident in their early careers". While this was the bedrock of the reading teaching and learning aspect of my study, it did not consider the public good contours of these activities and practices which my study aimed to do. My study challenges this by suggesting that activities and practices are not a 'rationale-free' repertoire for effective teaching. Certainly, teaching and learning is the obvious purpose but it is the "giving of reasons, the formation of purposes, and the examination of how the institutional, social, and political context affects the formation of those purposes or the framing of reasons" in the teaching of reading, which contours reading teaching for public good. And this must be made explicit.

In so far as understanding the notion of public good for reading teaching activities and practices, the concept of professional capabilities for public good which emerged from the literature (Walker & McLean, 2010), 'put a face' to what I was trying to conceptualise and articulate. Prior to my engagement with this literature I had commenced with the theoretical perspective (social reconstructionism) on learning to teach which mapped my conceptual pathway towards critical pedagogy. That literature provided my grounding in a social and educational vision of social justice and equality as viable undertakings in the teaching of reading. But it still remained too theoretically presumptuous for me to use as a framework for sorting out constructs which are associated with student teacher's rationales for doing what they do and being as they are in their teaching of reading. Perhaps other researchers might be more successful in working with critical pedagogy in its current 'theoretic state' in their attempts to examine the public and professional lives of teachers and their responses to their learners' lives in the teaching and learning of reading.

Unterhalter and Walker (2007:248) confirmed that critical pedagogy offers a significant resource in its concern for amongst others, the power dimension of pedagogy. They added that it has a “stronger conceptualisation of collective as well as individual agency in learning”, and it “is better at showing how power works and that education may be oppressive as well as transformative”. But these authors also offer the view that “the concern in the capability approach with what we can actually do and be grounds critical pedagogy in processes of learning and equality of learning outcomes and the connection between learning, education, and other processes of social change”. For these well-articulated reasons I gravitated towards the capability approach for working with my research question.

To this end, the literature on the capability approach was instrumental in fine-tuning my research because this approach asked “What are people actually able to do and to be? What real opportunities are available to them?” which fitted well with my study. What was also appealing was that it “takes each person as an end, asking not just about the total or average well-being but about opportunities available to each person” (Nussbaum, 2011:x). The student teacher as human being, South African citizen, and novice professional reading teacher was important in this regard as was the ways in which they approached each individual learner in their care.

Each of these identities has what Nussbaum (2011:21) referred to as “combined capabilities – a kind of freedom” which is understood as the totality for choice and action in their specific political, social and economic situation. In short, the capability approach was described as an innovative theoretic paradigm in the development and policy world which provides an approach to “comparative quality-of-life assessment and to theorizing about basic social justice” (Nussbaum, 2011:18). My study was neither a quality-of-life assessment study nor a policy development one but it was concerned with “social injustice and inequality, especially capability failures that are the result of discrimination or marginalization” (Nussbaum, 2011:19).

The highlight in the capability approach literature was Walker and McLean’s (2010) use of the approach in their study which aimed to “explore how universities might contribute to

poverty reduction through expanding the capabilities and functionings of students in professional education, who in turn are able to expand the capabilities of poor and disadvantaged individuals and communities. They used Sen's (1999) and Nussbaum's (2000) capability approach and a multi-dimensional conceptualisation of poverty. They addressed the concept of professionalism which was also at the heart of my study.

I used their study Walker and McLean's (2010) extensively to work with the professional capabilities findings in my study. They based their identification of professionalism for "professionals bound up with transformation in South Africa" on "ideas about human development that emphasise capability expansion for both professionals and their clients. The most significant outcome from their research was "the participatory production of an evidence-based and theoretically informed public-good professional education Index" (Walker and McLean, 2010:856) which was central to my study in as far as articulating the emergent professional capabilities in my study.

9.3 CONTRIBUTION TO NEW KNOWLEDGE

Reflecting on the findings that emerged from the public good slant of this study, it was gratifying to add value to the 'learning to teach reading in teacher education' literature particularly as it pertains to South Africa. My study framed the teaching of reading learning to teach reading in teacher education with a public good agenda.

Boughey (2007:13) alerted that educational development is being framed 'as a tool for capitalist expansion' (in Walker & McLean, 2010:850) and Walker and McLean (2010:850) observed that "in the face of market forces an economic agenda is displacing the equity agenda". They argued that "universities and the professional education located within them have the potential, enshrined in their histories, to pursue either reproductive or transformative goals" and as such they extended the capability approach to university-based professional education to enable students to develop capabilities relevant to their society while at university.

The findings showed that these student teachers pursued transformative goals in their teaching of reading and that they developed professional capabilities to pursue this during their teacher education at university. This study highlighted what student teachers identify as transformation. They raised concerns about false transformation by suggesting their mistrust in the political leadership by claiming that the current government of transformation was merely more sophisticated in their oppressive practices than the previous oppressive, non-democratic government. They believed that that the government of the day had merely perfected the art of lying to the public in more sophisticated ways. As critical, culturally enriched citizens they were perplexed by their perceived discord between official political policies and current social realities, in particular race and class. They implied that they were still living in mono-racial communities and that poverty remained a concern in the country where the living standards of the majority of its citizens was low.

They also associated their perceived false transformation in their country within employment policies. Some felt that while their higher education enhanced their internal capabilities, national employment policies were of little use to developing their combined capabilities because access to employment in this country was problematic for many of them in terms of race relations (e.g. Black Economic Empowerment). And in terms of general quality of life, they appeared to be of the opinion that SA society had regressed, for example in terms of the high crime rate (especially rape), which in turn presented SA children with a less favourable quality of life.

This study was able to elucidate the lived experiences of student teachers prior to their entry into teacher education as well as the influence that it had on the formation of their professional capabilities for public good. Their lived experiences included disconcerting experiences as learners, grim experiences in the community, activist experiences with community engagement, non-teaching career experiences and a personal desire to enable human development. These experiences influenced the ways in which they considered social goals in their everyday reading teaching. For example, they were cautious about the disadvantageous effects that teachers could have on the capability expansion of their learners and they subsequently expressed a desire to do otherwise as professionals.

Life experience from careers prior to teacher education, for some, appeared to have influenced their formation. For example, one student teacher's apparently daunting experience with her nursing career appeared to influence her positive outlook on teaching as she focused on learners as having 'healthy minds' and her contribution to creating opportunities for those minds to develop. For some student teachers their personal desire for human development influenced their formation – their investment in their learners' life trajectory was seen as a long-term contribution to the child's future. With regard to the student teachers' informed vision, they had standards for what children's lives should entail. They seemed to be acquainted with the contextual realities of their learners' often grim domestic circumstances and their responses to these realities gave an idea that they viewed their role with action. They seemed to view the social goals in the curriculum as useful for endorsing the right to a safe learning environment.

Another case in point was volunteering in community engagement projects which influenced their consciousness of the complexities of poverty, affiliation for poor and vulnerable children which in turn prompted their proactive views of teaching and learning as a necessary resource for development in this kind of vulnerable living context. These were the kinds of findings in my study which revealed the student teachers' professional capabilities. This was significant because Walker and McLean's (2010) Index had not yet been applied to teacher education. This study provided strong, accurate evidence of the role of teacher education in pursuing transformative goals.

This study showed the student teachers' commitment to working for public good by describing their identity as public good professionals, how they manifest this in their teaching of reading and how teacher education contributed to their formation. Their identity as public good professionals showed a deep inclination towards accepting obligation to their learners. Their view on the task of the teacher included a range of accepted obligatory deeds which seemed to be in lieu of creating opportunities for learners to see the worth of life. Furthermore, they showed a deep inclination for understanding the lives of children in vulnerable communities (e.g. crime) and they seized responsibility for this through their professionalism as a resource.

Their views on the social goals in the curriculum also illuminated their decisiveness about modeling social goals and they entrenched the view that these social goals necessitated the teacher to recognize multiple perspectives as well as the potentially disadvantageous bias of their own perspectives in the classroom. In addition they raised the issue of the complexity of working with a social goal like equity by suggesting that the lived experiences of teachers in a context which was previously (and currently) impartial to equity might render the teachers' function with social goals, thorny.

This study illustrated that student teachers' identity as public good professionals included their role in developing and sustaining relationships across diverse racial, cultural and linguistic groups and in short, it was characterized by agency. What enabled this agency was apparently their confidence to assert their own teaching priority, namely to start change which appeared tantamount to human development.

Their views of the teacher as community leader and caregiver ratified their social and collective struggle with some student teachers were leaning towards a community empowerment approach in their teaching which stemmed from their concerns about gender, race, and disease (HIV/AIDS). This confirmed their professional responsibility and accountability to communities in which these social constructs were most worrying. The following framework is offered as a snapshot of student teachers' professional capabilities for public good.

This study gained knowledge about the student teachers' priority of restoring the value of teaching as a professional resource which they believed played an important role in development, particularly the development of learners as future professionals in South Africa. The notion of professional resourcefulness for public good was illuminated in this study. The student teachers' resourcefulness in their teaching of reading for public good was shown to incorporate activities and practices in the classroom as well as professional capabilities which contoured these.

This study revealed that the student teachers' resourceful in their teaching of reading for public good included 13 reading teaching activities and 20 reading teaching practices which were shaped by eight professional capabilities for public good.

It was clear that the activities, practices and professional capabilities synergistically culminated in the student teachers' resourcefulness in the classroom context where issues related to poverty, race, social environment, health, class, gender, language and the like converged on their teaching of reading. This research argued that social justice and, teaching and learning, as two associated factors, set the professional capabilities for public good in motion in their perspectives of teaching activities and practices. Their engagement with reading teaching activities and practices was shaped by their professional responses to social justice issues. One of the recurring issues was the lack of access to educational resources in their professional domain. Paired and shared reading, for example, was their preferred professional responses to this lack of access to educational resources and they associated their responses to this with their integrity.

Their activities synergistically connected with their practices in multiple ways. Their practice of engaging with the classroom environment, for example, through accessing and using alternative sources of hard copy text showed how the student teachers pursued their proposition to create opportunities for their learners to develop their full capabilities through reading teaching and learning. Their engagement with the challenge, individualization and variation practices showed, for example, how the student teachers were willing to alter their practices to the uniqueness that each child brought to the classroom. A case in point was their explanation of how they developed and sustained a light-hearted classroom environment which was useful for supporting their intervention with sensitive reading issues like pronunciation and it gave an idea about how they proposed to respect and utilise diverse engagement with English (first language) in their teaching by recognizing multiple pronunciations and acknowledging local ways of learning to read. This attested to their professional capability of knowledge, imagination and practical skills.

Their intention to acknowledge and utilise local ways of learning to read was also a significant finding as they wanted to bring local knowledge on language education into the open. This gave an idea about how their interrelated responses to diversity issues, and the complexity of language, literacy and culture impacted on their activities, practices and professional capabilities. These are merely a few of the ways which this study found to be indicative of the student teachers' teaching of reading for public good.

This study gained knowledge about the general associations which student teachers made between specific professional capabilities and their teaching of reading. Their professional capabilities underpinned their commitment to public good reading teaching which was manifested in the reasoning about reading teaching activities and practices.

This study illuminated teacher education's contribution to the formation of these student teachers' professional capabilities and the associations with and development of their repertoire of reading teaching activities and practices. It revealed that during their teacher education they developed their repertoire of reading teaching activities and practices as well as their professional capabilities over time. The breadth of their activities and practices expanded over the four year teacher education program. The depth of their engagement with the reading teaching activities and practices developed from pragmatic to sophisticated. Their professional capabilities also developed over time from straightforward to sophisticated depth.

Three main teacher education facets were found to be influential in their formation of professional capabilities in apparently productive or unhelpful ways. The variation in the teaching practice (TP) schooling contexts was influential in their formation as it created an opportunity for them to experience diverse schooling contexts which enabled them to locate themselves within some challenging societal constraints (e.g. poverty). TP provided an opportunity to gain practical experience with theory. Some student teachers appeared to have troubling encounters during their TP sessions, however, which outwardly facilitated positive growth for some. Of note in this study was that all the troubling encounters were connected to the lack of high quality teaching and learning.

They seemed to value the multiple perspectives that they were given access to in their TE coursework. It provided a comprehensive vision for their agency – it expanded their thinking about the complexities of teaching. Coursework that addressed their creativity with and imagining of unconventional teaching and learning resources (in materially deprived schooling contexts) appeared to be influential. The TE assessment tasks contributed to their formation. For example, a particular research task appeared to develop their community empowerment and human rights.

Other experiences in teacher education also shaped their formation of professional capabilities for public good. Active dialogue with, and racial diversity amongst their TE peers, were the two pleasant TE encounters. Important in this finding was their reference to the limited racial diversity in their lived experiences and their receptiveness to racial diversity amongst themselves in their teacher education. Negative experiences included the lecturers' apparently weak integrity in managing submission of assessment tasks as well as their perception of the university's disregard for diverse linguistic provisioning through its conspicuous preference for English which contributed to their alertness to human rights. Their own agency contributed to their formation - they chose ways of thinking about issues during their TE and actively decided to take ownership of their formation in this regard.

A number of student teachers also considered that their teacher education was of no consequence in the formation of certain professional capabilities. Prescriptive lecturer guidelines, they felt curtailed the expression of their professional teaching priorities.

This study produced a number of quantitative results which showed the extent to which each teacher education facet was influential in the formation of each of the emergent professional capabilities. TP, TE coursework and other TE experiences carried various degrees of influence. The quantifiable data showed that on the whole, TP was most influential in their formation; TE coursework was moderately influential; other TE experiences had low influences and a low number of student teachers regarded their teacher education as having no influence in the formation of some their professional capabilities.

Teaching practice had the greatest influence on the formation of their resilience. It was immensely influential in the formation knowledge, imagination and practical Skills; integrity; and assurance and confidence. It was moderately influential in the formation of the student teachers' informed vision and affiliation and appeared to have a low influence on the formation of their social and collective struggle.

TE coursework had the greatest influence in the formation of their informed vision and was immensely influential in the formation of their social and collective struggle. It was moderately influential in the formation of integrity and Knowledge, Imagination and Practical Skills and appeared to have a low influence on the formation of their assurance and confidence, resilience and affiliation.

The other TE experiences were only moderately or negligibly influential. It was moderately influential in the formation of their resilience, assurance and confidence, and social and collective struggle, and appeared to have a low influence on the formation of their knowledge, imagination and practical Skills, assurance and confidence, and integrity.

A vast number of student teachers considered TE as inconsequential in the formation of their affiliation, a moderate number of student teachers considered TE as inconsequential in the formation of their Knowledge, Imagination and Practical Skills, and Social and Collective Struggle, and a low number of student teachers considered TE as inconsequential in the formation of their assurance and confidence. The following graphical figure shows the new knowledge which this study produced with regard the influence of the teacher education facets in the formation of each of the professional capabilities.

From a methodological perspective, the predominant qualitative approach used for this research allowed for a rich documentation of the connection between student teachers' reading teaching and their local, societal context. The focus group interviews captured rich nuances regarding their views on (i) the society in which they live, (ii) the role of the teacher, (iii) the social goals in the curriculum, (iv) their connections between social goals, and reading teaching, and (v) what they thought influenced their formation during teachers education. Findings from these aspects unveiled an indication of their professional

capabilities for public good which was then explored using a combination of qualitative and quantitative means. The participatory dialogue was good for deeper, rapid probing and it also facilitated the incorporation of quantitative part of the research, through the use of clicker technology, to determine quantifiable trends.

9.4 FURTHER RESEARCH

This research explored the question, how does the student teachers' teaching of reading intersected with their public good commitment? In terms of their teaching of reading this study reported on the student teachers' practical teaching experiences with and knowledge of the reading teaching activities and practices during their teacher education. It would be necessary to track student teachers into the workplace after their teacher education in order to understand how their teaching of reading actually intersects with their public good commitment and values in the professional workplace.

This study presented characteristics of student teachers' professional capabilities based on their views of the roles of the teacher, their view on the social goals in the curriculum and their broad associations which they make with each of the professional capabilities. Consequently the characteristics of their professional capabilities shown in this study explain how their professional capabilities underpin what they want to do in their teaching profession. Further research that explains what they actually do with the roles, social goals in the curriculum and the broad associations which they make with each of their professional capabilities in the workplace, will need to be undertaken.

Action reflection research in teacher education pedagogy and curriculum facilitating formation of student teachers' professional capabilities for public good would be a worthwhile activity. This research focused on the student teachers' perspectives of certain facets of their teacher education program. Since the teaching practice (TP) and coursework facets were immensely influential in the formation of their professional capabilities, these would be a meaningful focus for such teacher education studies.

This study was conducted with a cohort of Foundation Phase student teachers in one teacher education program. It would be interesting to learn about the reading teaching activities and practices of other student teachers at other universities as well as their public good commitment and values. Furthermore, this study looked at how their professional capabilities underpin their teaching of reading. It would be useful to investigate how these professional capabilities underpin their teaching of other aspects of English first language education, English first additional language education, numeracy and other learning areas.

9.5 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Whether this was a professional capabilities study or a reading teaching study was a pertinent question that I reflected on midway through conducting this research. What was unambiguous was that it was a teacher education study. This study set out to investigate the connection between student teachers' reading teaching and their society. The professional capabilities emerged as such an integral part of the reading teaching investigation because of the notion of public good.

The connection between student teachers' views on their society, the role of teacher and the social goals in the curriculum, and the ways in which they considered these in their knowledge of and practical experiences with reading teaching all pointed towards their professional capabilities for public good which necessitated deeper investigation in order to understand how their repertoire of reading teaching activities and practices works for their public good teaching.

This study argued that from a social justice perspective, the teaching of reading cannot be limited to activities and practices. Because South Africa is mired in an excess of unresolved social justice issues, a fruitful reflection on the teaching of reading in this country obliges researchers to turn their gaze towards the professional capabilities as well as the activities and practices which enable reading teaching resourcefulness for capability expansion. Amid unequal learning and living in South Africa, test scores do not provide a comprehensive picture of the outcomes of teachers' activities, practices and professional capabilities in the reading teaching context.

Teacher education is well poised to pursue transformative goals with student teachers. Its connections and responsibilities to society were apparent in this study. Such a task seems workable because most student teachers appear to enter their teacher education with some form of social consciousness. Their teacher education has equipped them in various ways with knowledge, practical skills and public service values that could make a positive difference in the lives of their learners. Strong evidence in my study asserts that teacher education is one locale for shaping the relationship between the integrity of professional life and the well-being of public life. This locale is however not predicament-free as my study suggests that amid the numerous supportive curriculum and pedagogy, there were encumbrances to student teachers' capability expansion which presented largely in the departmental or institutional policies and practices.

The Capability Approach appeared to be a wise decision for organizing my understanding and articulation of student teachers' ways of being and doing as human citizens and professional individuals. My analysis looked at the student teachers' beings and doings at their point of entry in and exit from teacher education. For those teacher educators who carry a social justice 'drive' in their work, the Public Good Professional Education Index (Walker & McLean, 2010) current work on professional capabilities could help such a teacher educator think about the public good and what that might constitute in their curriculum, pedagogy and other professional nuances which encourage student teachers' professional ways of being. For the language education teacher educator, this opens up a kaleidoscope of colourful creativity in taking student teachers on a developmental, professional journey of reflecting deeply on the public good as a nuanced plan for reading teaching activities and practices.

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