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**Title of Research**

*The Knower Gazes of teachers: Struggles for legitimacy between established and newly  
qualified teachers in South African schools*

**MDiss RESEARCH THESIS**

*Prepared by*

**Student name**

*PHILIP HLATSHWAYO*

**Student number**

670477

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**Supervisor: Prof Lee Rusznyak**

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# ABSTRACT

The South African education system is in a state of crisis. In a mostly dysfunctional education system which is characterized by inequalities, poor standards and poor performance, newly qualified teachers (NQTs) have been positioned as essential actors that can bring about change and transformation. The integration of NQTs into schools is gaining considerable attention recently as the national rollout of an induction programme for NQTs is planned. In light of the induction programmes for NQTs, it is essential to understand the struggles that NQTs face in their transition into the workplace. Previous research work on the struggles that NQTs face in their integration focused on assimilation, positioning the challenges NQTs face on the difficulties of assimilating into the environment, and adopting the prevalent culture and values. However, previous research work failed to address the underlying principles of legitimacy between NQTs and established teachers as actors whose ‘knower gazes’ view the practices of teaching from different standpoints.

The purpose of this study is to explore the extent to which knower gazes legitimize NQTs and established teachers’ teaching practices in different ways. It will do this by analysing the ways in NQTs and experienced teachers respond similarly or differently to common dilemmas that teachers face in their classroom practices. The study adopts Legitimation Code Theory (LCT) as a conceptual and analytic framework for this study. It compares the constellations of meaning held by NQTs and established teachers in relation to their views of what is valued and should inform teaching practices. The research data was collected through six individual interviews and a focus group with participants from a historically disadvantaged school in Daveyton, Gauteng.

The findings show that NQTs and established teachers occupy different stances with respect to the importance of knowledge for practice, relations to power, authority and control within school contexts, and in relation to teachers’ responsibilities. Findings illustrate that there are code clashes between the stances valorized by NQTs and established teachers concerning teaching practices. The findings suggest that NQT participants tended to place greater legitimacy in a principled and structured framework for practice. In contrast, participants who were established teachers tended to place the legitimacy of their teaching practices in the social community and the collective

nature of the teaching profession.

These differences have important implications for the induction of newly qualified teachers in the South African education system. Struggles between NQTs and established teachers are on the knowledge stances held about the practice rather than assimilation. The study positions the understanding of these clashes as essential in informing NQTs' induction into the profession and contributing to the ongoing research into issues affecting the integration of NQTs.

*Keywords: Legitimation Code Theory; knower gaze; beginner teachers; workplace transition; induction.*

# DECLARATION

I, **PHILIP HLATSHWAYO (670477)**, declare that this research study is my own work. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination in any other university. All the work taken directly from other works has been cited accordingly, and the full list of references has been provided. I fully understand that the University of the Witwatersrand will take disciplinary action against me if evidence suggests that this is not my own unaided work or that I failed to acknowledge the sources of the ideas or words in my writing.

.....

University of the Witwatersrand, March 2020

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# ABBREVIATIONS

**#FMF-** Fees Must Fall

**CoP-** Community of Practice

**ER-** Epistemic Relations

**LCT-** Legitimation Code Theory

**MRTEQ-** Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualification

**NQTs-** Newly qualified teachers

**PLCs-** Professional Learning Communities

**SR-** Social Relations

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this dissertation to my mother, my entire family and friends. Thank you for the support, prayers and patience.

## Table of Contents

ABSTRACT .....	2
DECLARATION .....	4
ABBREVIATIONS .....	5
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	6
DEDICATION .....	7
<b>CHAPTER 1:.....</b>	<b>11</b>
INTRODUCTION .....	11
1.1 Initial Teacher Education in South Africa .....	12
1.1.1 Student Activism for Quality Education and Social Justice .....	14
1.1.2 Tracing the Possible Implications of #FMF in the Teaching Practice.....	15
1.2 Problem Statement.....	16
1.3 Research Aims .....	17
1.3.1 Research Objectives.....	17
1.3.2 Research Questions.....	18
1.4 Rationale and Significance of Study .....	18
1.5 Structure of The Dissertation .....	19
<b>CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW .....</b>	<b>21</b>
2.1. Initial Teacher Education and Knowledge .....	21
2.2 Knowledge Bases and Learning How to Teach.....	22
2.3 Debates About Beginner Teachers and Their Readiness for The System.....	27



2.4 NQTs Work Within School Communities .....	30
2.5 Knowledge Blindness of Induction Programmes.....	41
2.6 Teaching Against the Grain.....	44
2.7 Summary .....	50
<b>CHAPTER 3: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK .....</b>	<b>51</b>
3.1 introducing Legitimation Code Theory (LCT).....	52
3.1.1 Teachers as knowers .....	53
3.1.2 Knower gazes.....	54
3.1.3 Specialization Dimension .....	58
<b>CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>61</b>
4.1 Research Paradigm.....	61
4.2 Research Approach.....	63
4.3 Research Design.....	63
4.4 Selection of Participants .....	65
4.5 Research Data Collection Methods.....	66
4.6 Data Analysis.....	69
4.7 Data Interpretation.....	74
<b>CHAPTER 5: TEACHERS AS KNOWERS.....</b>	<b>79</b>
5.2 Teachers' Relations to The Knowledge for Practice .....	79
5.3 Relations to Power, Authority, And Control .....	89

5.4 Relations to Teachers' Responsibilities.....	99
<b>CHAPTER 6: RE-IMAGING THE NARRATIVE OF THE STRUGGLES BETWEEN NEWLY QUALIFIED AND ESTABLISHED TEACHERS .....</b>	<b>106</b>
6.1 Introduction.....	106
6.2.1 Teachers Priorities in Practice: Valorized Stances .....	107
6.2.2 The Convergence of Priorities: Revealing New Struggles Between Established And NQTs .....	118
6.2 Implications of The Research .....	123
6.3 Limits of the Study .....	124
6.4 Recommendations for Future Research .....	125
6.5 Closing Remarks: Reflections.....	126
References .....	128
Appendices.....	137

# CHAPTER 1

## Introduction

The South African education system is in a crisis state. Teachers, district staff, politicians and policymakers who constitute the education system are described as failing the children (Fleisch, 2018). Evidence indicates that between 60 per cent and 70 per cent of South African schoolchildren are getting to the end of primary school “without being able to read, write, and do mathematics at a proficiency level required by the official curriculum” (Fleisch, 2018, p.10). In a mostly dysfunctional education system still suffering from the inequalities of the past, there is a growing expectation that newly qualified teachers (NQTs) may be better positioned to bring change and transformation to the sector. Teaching has been declared a graduate profession (Norms and Standards for Educators, 2000) and preliminary evidence suggests that younger teachers who qualify with a degree have much stronger levels of content and pedagogical knowledge (Taylor, 2019). To fast-track a supply of well-qualified teachers into the schooling system, a massive financial investment in the Funza Lushaka bursaries was established to attract academically strong school leavers into the teaching profession.

Recent research suggests that NQTs experience significant challenges in being accepted into schooling communities. NQTs are often marginalized by experienced and senior staff members who use their positions of power to advance their interests over them (Whitelaw, de Beer and Henning 2008; Gravett, Henning and Eiselen, 2014). For example, marginalization of new teachers is done by giving young teachers “loaded timetables, giving them more ‘difficult’ classes and [by] expecting them to be more heavily involved in administrative and extra-mural activities than their more experienced colleagues” (Whitelaw et al, 2008, p.34). One prevalent position that dominates the conversation about NQTs is that they are underprepared for the realities of classroom life by a university-based education and need support in adjusting to the norms and systems set out in the schooling system. An alternative view positions NQTs as potential agents of change who have the knowledge, skills, and motivation to recognize and disrupt poor prevalent teaching practices. Teaching ‘against the grain’ brings NQTs into tension with established systems and structures in the schooling contexts (Cochran-Smith, 1991). The findings of my Honours study showed that

NQTs bring formal knowledge to their teaching practices and new ideas for transforming their schools. However, many felt intimidated to bring their ideas to the attention of senior teachers in their school and remained silent. Despite this, they flew ‘under the radar’, using their different teaching approaches in the privacy of their own classrooms. Anecdotal evidence suggests that some NQTs are becoming more brazen about confronting and challenging their marginalization in schools, as well as practices that potentially marginalize learners.

The integration of NQTs into schools has gained considerable attention recently as the rollout of an induction programme for NQTs is planned. The envisaged induction programme focuses on the first view – NQTs who are assumed to be under-prepared for the realities of the schooling system. The planned induction programmes might not sufficiently consider the possibility that NQTs are resisting aspects of the system that they find dysfunctional and in need of transformation. If this aspect is not recognized, then there is a risk that any induction programme is less likely to succeed. The question is not merely about whether the NQTs are sufficiently ready to work in South African schools. Instead, what is fundamentally important in a transforming system, is whether the schools are prepared to accommodate cohorts of NQTs whose practices may be substantively different from those of established teachers.

### **1.1 Initial Teacher Education in South Africa**

Universities in South Africa are tasked with the responsibility of preparing teachers through offering knowledge and sharpening their ability to teach in conceptually informed and contextually responsive ways. Since the establishment of the 2000 legislation on Norms and Standards for Educators (enacted fully only six years later) (Department of Education, 2000), which required the first cohort of teachers to hold a university degree in order to qualify, the preparation of pre-service teachers has shifted from skill-based teacher training to knowledge-based teacher education. Since 2000, legislation has required a degree for entry into the teaching profession. This may either be a BEd degree or a first degree plus a Post Graduate Certificate in Education (Department of Education, 2000). In order to ensure that teachers are prepared as professionals who can draw on “various types of knowledge that underpin teachers' practice” (DHET, 2015, p.9), teaching has thus become a graduate profession. In South Africa, the Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications (MRTEQ) (2015) look to the NQTs as agents of transformation who can

“address the critical challenges facing education in South Africa - especially the poor content and conceptual knowledge found amongst teachers” (DHET, 2015 p.9). NQTs’ positioning in policy is that of becoming crucial agents of transformation who are able to draw on a strong theoretical foundation in order to teach all learners in diverse contexts.

The MRTEQ government policy took a knowledge-focused approach, requiring strong attention to education theory, content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge (DHET, 2015). The change meant that organizing principles and ideologies had to change to a policy that focuses on the roles of the educator to the types of knowledge required by a teacher for practice. The organizing principles that define the identity of qualifying teachers tend to be critically reflective of the dysfunctional schooling system. According to Rusznyak (2015 p.20), some dysfunctional schooling practices include “experiences related to learner exclusion and/or marginalization, insufficient engagement with conceptual knowledge, limited opportunities for extended reading/writing classwork tasks, and the continuing use of corporal punishment”. The curricula offered by initial teacher education programmes prepare prospective teachers to assume a corrective stance towards the system with intent to challenge existing practices and to possibly transform them.

As university graduates, NQTs have been required to assume a reflective and conceptually informed approach to their teaching practices, which may be fundamentally different from the technical training approaches that many teacher training colleges used when established teachers undertook their initial teacher preparation. For instance, one of the curriculum imperatives of some of the BEd degree programmes intend to “distantiate prospective teachers from their experientially acquired norms of teaching, to equip them with the conceptual tools to analyze (and where necessary, to revise and/or deepen) their assumptions about what constitutes effective teaching and learning” (Rusznyak, 2015, p.20). The imperatives are both achieved through theory-laden structures and practical teaching in the classroom. The theory-laden structures and practical teaching help to filter and regulate the initial teaching perceptions formed by a beginner teacher in ‘apprenticeship of observation’, which is the knowledge of teaching developed watching own teachers, which is often without access to underpinning knowledge and pedagogical reasoning that inform teacher choices in action. (Lortie, 1975).

The integration of NQTs into the education system and schools, in particular, is a challenging task

because of the existing structural conditions associated with the practices of teaching. Power dynamics play a role in any field of practice where there is a hierarchy in social settings (Bourdieu, 1984), including that of a school. According to Whitelaw, de Beer and Henning (2008, p.27), new teachers face “a new system of activity and [their] role as an actor[s] in this system is new”. Working within a new system of activity and assuming a new role is one of the challenges new teachers face.

### **1.1.1 Student Activism for Quality Education and Social Justice**

In recent years, students attending Higher Education Institutions challenged the State and the higher education sector demanding the provision of free, decolonized, and quality higher education. Their struggle marked a shift in the way students engaged with those in authority – be it with university management or with officials in the higher education departments. This shift raises a question about the transition into the workplace of pre-service teachers who were part of the Fees Must Fall movement (henceforth #FMF) and who have since graduated and joined the teaching profession itself. Most studies published on the impact of the #FMF have focused on unpacking the social movement, its objectives, and the impact it has had in higher learning institutions. Produced through a curriculum that uncovers the inequalities in the education system, raises issues of agency and structure, epistemological exclusion and marginalization and so on – NQTs acquire many of the conceptual underpinnings of being an agent of transformation not only from social movements but also from their teacher-education curricula. It is of interest how the involvement of student teachers in the #FMF may have caused a gaze-shift going into the professional space or, how developing professional gazes may have attracted the students to the FMF movement in the first place. The expectation is that they then proceed to work productively within an education system similar to that which they fought against as students and which has inherent challenges both in terms of its resourcing capacity, infrastructure and quality.

The aspect of age dynamics played a significant part in the unfolding of #FMF movement, and this stems from the influence of African socio-cultural norms which require younger people to ‘respect their elders’ (Gyekye, 1996 & Mbiti, 1990). The prevailing narrative amongst many of the older generation during the #FMF period was that students were unruly, violent and disrespectful towards authorities and elders. An academic argued that the existing higher institutional culture is “Very hierarchical. Very much like a school. Doesn’t really encourage critical thinking. It’s very

much, do as we say, sit up and shut up” (Ndelu, 2017, p.17). However, contrary to the analysis by the academic, the realities of the unfolding of events are recounted by a student from Cape Peninsula University of Technology, who said:

“We said VC must also address the mass. He stood up and addressed us on the Freedom Charter – we told him to stop right there. When we got to the meeting, we said, ‘Amandla! Izwe Lethu! Sizowfunda Ngenkani!’ This thing is not [party] political, making sure that we are not divided – we are united. He was politicising it by only saying Amandla! The students started howling at him and threw him with water bottles” (Ndelu, 2017, p.24-25).

In African culture, the acts described by the student from Cape Peninsula University of Technology often signify unruly and disrespectful behaviour in the eyes of African communities. However, the act of the students is symbolic of the stance students took to challenge those in authority regardless of their age-status. According to Rwezaura (1989, p.5), many writers on traditional African social systems have stressed the importance of “age as a significant criterion for the attainment of authority, power, privilege, prestige and leadership position in the community”.

### **1.1.2. Tracing the Possible Implications of #FMF in Shaping the Perspectives of Younger Teachers**

In the professional contexts of today, there is an emerging cohort of graduates emerging from higher institutions where student activism against power structures have made a mark through unconventional methods, notably, the #RhodesMustFall, #FeesMustFall, #TransformWits, OpenStellenbosch, and other movements. Not much is known about how NQTs act in their role as employees of the same state they once challenged. It is important to understand how they reconcile their student activism against the ongoing constraints and inequalities that still plague the provision of basic education within the same education system that they fought against as students.

The most recent cohort of NQTs who completed their initial teacher education during the fallist movements consists of both student activists and observers who have been in the centre or on the periphery of a large-scale social activist movement. It would, therefore, be a mistake for *established teachers* to assume that NQTs have been through a similar process of pre-service teacher preparation as to that which they had. In addition, their experiences in the #FMF movement may have also influenced their gaze on their roles and practices as prospective teachers. Butelli

and Le Bruyns (2017), in their exploration of the feesmustfall movement, say that a “noteworthy aspect is the issue of power and class” identified in feesmustfall movement. So understanding that the fundamental mission of the feesmustfall movement was to challenge power structures, the fallist cohort of NQTs may draw from the feesmustfall movement tradition and/or from their theoretical perspectives from the university coursework in how they navigate their professional space and the teacher roles they take on.

It is now an opportune moment in research to explore the implications of NQTs in general professional contexts and how these graduates integrate within existing power structures and cultures of resistance to change. For a cohort of NQTs that advocated for the transformation of higher learning institutions, decolonization of the curriculum, and the transformation of policies in institutions of higher learning, the integration of the fallist cohort of NQTs may come with an unexpected shift in the power dynamics of school communities. The experienced teachers, like the fallist NQTs, also have historical experience of activism in their own right, and this may impact on the roles they assume too. Some policies that sought to regulate the work of teachers have persisted in the South African education system over decades. Mokgalane et al. (1997) argue that the regulation efforts of the teaching profession in South Africa have been unequal, uneven and unmanageable for a long time. Mokgalane et al. (1997) give an account of the experienced generation era where the influence of unionism was prevalent. Union driven activism still carries much influence today, although it has faced significant criticism through the lenses of professionalism. Jansen (2004, p.3) argues that the regulation and inspection motives and methods used by the department of education under the apartheid regime left “behind a telling legacy of suspicion and resentment against state involvement in the supervision and monitoring of teachers and teachers’ work within the school environment”. There are unavoidable implications of such a legacy of hostility towards regulation that may still bear a strong influence on how experienced teachers take on particular identities or roles as teachers.

## **1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

This research seeks to explore whether there are differences on the basis in which newly qualified and experienced teachers legitimize their teaching practices. This, I will argue, has crucial implications for understanding how NQTs operate in their schools and how they seek to address the



challenges and injustices they face in their professional working spaces. The premise of the study is that both the fallist cohort of newly qualified teachers as well as experienced teachers have come through vastly different teacher preparation and continuous development programmes, and have vastly different experiences in classroom contexts and their social and community spaces. The newly qualified and established teachers may both come from historical experiences where they have struggled with power structures through student social movements, anti-apartheid movements and unions, respectively. However, the discourse around the induction of NQT into schools is largely focused on an assimilation model – helping the NQT to fit in with existing structures and practices. This is concerning in a time when schools are largely dysfunctional, and NQTs are being prepared as agents of change. Instead of understanding power relations as reflecting the interests in the dominant group (of established teachers), I seek to explore whether there are epistemological or ontological principles underlying the practices of the dominant group that conflict with those underlying the developing practices of NQTs entering into the social spaces.

### **1.3 RESEARCH AIMS**

This is an empirical research study with two aims. The first aim is to understand the extent to which newly qualified and experienced teachers share common perspectives on their roles as teachers and how the practice is legitimized. Secondly, the interpretation of the findings suggests whether any differences in their stances may lead to potential conflict or struggles within the school institution or in the education system more generally. This study seeks to explore the extent to which NQTs and experienced teachers, reflect their role as knowers working in schools as a social field. To do this, the data will analyse how they possess professional goals, interests, and motivations that may vary depending on their teacher preparation, their experience, their involvement in social movements and teacher organisations, as well as their contexts and personal circumstances - all of which unfold in a knowledge-based practice.

#### **1.3.1 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE(S)**

- To explore the extent to which newly qualified and experienced teachers respond similarly or differently to common dilemmas that teachers face in their classroom practices.
- To gain insight into the ways in which newly qualified and established teachers' teaching practices reflect differences in knower gazes.

### **1.3.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

What principles legitimate the conceptions and priorities of teaching held by established and NQTs in South African schools? To what extent may these differences contribute towards struggles for legitimacy within a school community?

#### **INVESTIGATIVE QUESTIONS:**

- What stances do established teachers and NQTs occupy in relation to teaching practices in their context?
- In what ways do these stances explain the differences and similarities in how newly qualified and established teachers respond to various dilemmas in a teaching context?

### **1.4 RATIONALE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The findings of my Honours study revealed that NQTs had reasonably well-established ideas of good teaching practices and their responsibilities as professional teachers. They revealed deep commitment to issues of social justice and providing quality education to their communities. Moreover, they were able to identify some of the challenges they faced in their school context and the marginalizing teaching practices dominant at their school. These findings have important implications for the role of NQTs as agents of change in a struggling education system. NQTs were, however, somewhat reluctant to address some of them with the powerful teachers in their school contexts, preferring to enact them quietly in their isolated classroom spaces. While that research focused on the practices of the NQTs, it did not explore the underlying basis of the struggles that may exist in school professional spaces. Neither did it consider the extent to which such struggles either enable or constrain their ability or willingness to take action in addressing the challenges that they had identified. The existing ‘professional’ teaching settings for both the experienced teachers and NQTs are supposed to encourage professional engagements, yet what is understood as professional engagements may be vastly different given the reality of these professional settings. This follow-up study will significantly contribute to the understanding of the extent to which struggles for legitimacy about what constitute good teaching practices may affect the induction and agency of NQTs in a sample of school settings.

## **1.5 STRUCTURE OF THE DISSERTATION**

This dissertation contains a total number of seven chapters. The fundamental purpose of chapter one was to give a background and context of the study, establishing a ground from which we can understand the aspects that affect teachers in their teaching practice. In the chapter, I position NQTs as integral to the dominant views about tensions in the teaching practice. Various authors hold a view that NQTs are agents of change who possess the necessary skills to transform poor teaching practices and bring about transformation. In juxtaposition with research that outlines that NQTs are marginalized, the chapter offers an alternative position which argues that there are far-reaching underlying reasons - such as the struggles for legitimacy. The chapter further discusses the rationale for conducting the study, the significance of the study, objectives and the research questions that guide the research.

Chapter two provides a literature review which outlines the debates about NQTs and how they fit or struggle to fit into schooling structures. The literature review shows the research gap – that is, the knowledge-blindness and the position that NQTs are not merely implementers of policy but are taught to be agents of social change – and therefore their conception of practice might not be well aligned to existing structures.

Chapter three outlines the reasons why Legitimation Code Theory is an appropriate framework for this study – and draws the concept of dilemmas and dilemmatic spaces and the will to consensus to show that constant dilemmas characterize teaching practices and that interactions in the struggle for legitimacy should strive for consensus amongst the teachers.

Chapter four covers the methodology which provides justifications through the research process, methods, and how the data is collected, organized and analysed. Moreover, the methodology chapter provides the research paradigm which guides the research tone.

Chapters five and six provide a presentation of findings and the critical analysis of the teachers' interviews and the focus group discussions. The findings reveal the ways in which NQTs and established teachers legitimize their stances about teaching and their responses to dilemmas in the classroom.

The final chapter discusses the findings and compares the analysis of NQTs and established teachers.

This chapter will draw on concepts from the substantial theories outlined in the literature review and conceptual framework to pull key components together. In the discussion of the findings, the chapter gives further meaning to the findings and consolidates these findings to give direction to future research studies. The final part of the chapter outlines the implications of the research and my reflections on the entire study.

# CHAPTER 2

## LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to understand the challenges and struggles of newly qualified teachers in South Africa, it is necessary to review several bodies of literature. The review of the literature is organized into the debates about the preparation of pre-service teachers and their transition and induction into working contexts. The second section looks at studies about how new teachers work within schools and how they are received into the schooling system through the following subsections: the positive status NQTs enjoy in communities of practice; the marginalization of NQTs in what is referred to as ‘pseudo-communities of practice’ (Whitelaw et al., 2008); and lastly, NQTs as agents of change in communities of practice, bringing something new, and being driven by a social justice agenda. This section begins with a brief overview of the prevalent views of international and local research on both NQTs and established teachers’ experiences in practice.

### **2.1 Initial Teacher Education and Knowledge**

The role of initial teacher education has always been part of the strategy to improve teaching practices and effecting change in the education system. It is also blamed when poor quality of teaching persists. In light of the recent policy development concerning the qualifications of teachers, professional teacher knowledge is positioned as a critical component of initial teacher education. The recently revised Minimum Qualifications for Teacher Qualification (MRTEQ) policy sets a distinction in the constituency of the teaching practice. This means that teachers who were trained prior to the implementation of the revised MRTEQ differ fundamentally from the newly-qualifying teachers who were educated after the implementation of the revised policy (DHET, 2015). The current set up of initial teacher education in South Africa requires that prospective teachers hold a degree as part of their academic/professional qualification/s. There are two routes in this regard: the first is the completion of a four-year Bachelor of Education degree and the second is completing a degree in any a field cognate with school teaching subject/s together with a one-year postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE). The teacher-knowledge prioritization in the MRTEQ is of fundamental importance because it highlights the core

differences in the current teaching force. According to the MRTEQ key knowledge pillars for teacher education include:

“*disciplinary learning* (which includes educational theoretical knowledge, as well as subject content knowledge and its associated skills), *pedagogical learning* (including general pedagogical knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge), *practical learning* (knowledge acquired from observing, analysing and reflecting on one’s own teaching and the teaching of others), *situational learning* (learning about the diverse contexts in which education exists) and *foundational learning* (the generic knowledge and competences that are not teacher-specific, but might be useful in the day-to-day work that teachers do)” (DHET, 2015, pp.10-11). To elaborate on the knowledge base as being a central aspect in the preparation of NQTs, theorists like Shulman further expound on the idea of knowledge bases as a basis for the design of teacher education curricula. Considering the implications of the centralization of teacher knowledge, it is essential to understand the manner in which a teacher’s knowledge base is constructed and how teachers learn.

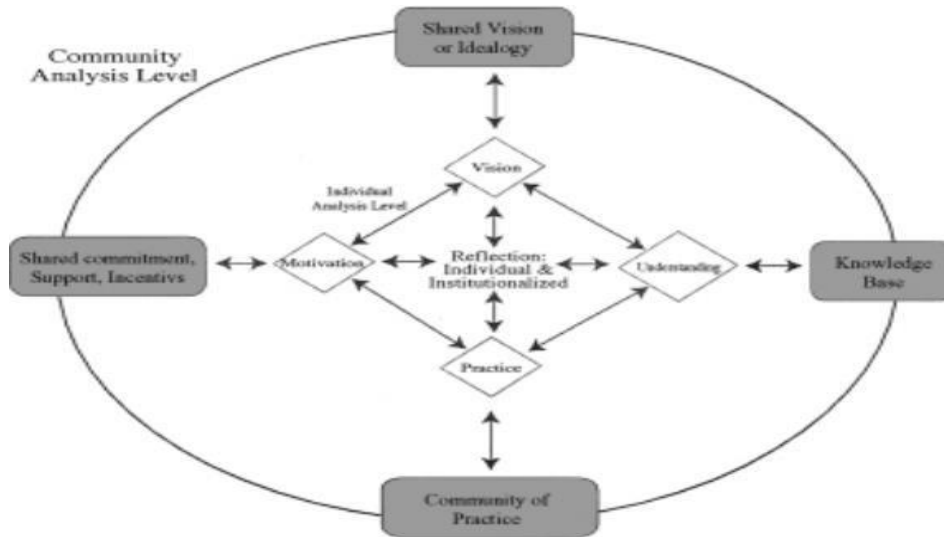
## **2.2 Knowledge Bases and Learning How to Teach**

Professional teaching practices are interactive spaces where ideas, knowledge and good practices are shared. Moreover, teaching practices are spaces where professional relationships are forged. The central component of these teaching practices is how practitioners work with knowledge as individuals and as a community and how it is translated in the classroom. The possession and demonstration of vast knowledge capital in practice is often the signifier of an expert teacher - who is usually an established teacher (Lachner, Jarodzka & Nuckles, 2016). According to Lachner et al. (2016, p.198), as teachers “gain experience in teaching, they tend to organize their knowledge around encountered cases and experiences, which may result in more elaborated and coherently organized knowledge structures”. This organization of knowledge is termed ‘curriculum scripts’. The curriculum scripts are described as “higher-order knowledge structures which integrate the subject-matter knowledge to be conveyed together with pedagogical content knowledge, such as suitable representations of concepts or students’ potential misconceptions, and with general pedagogical knowledge about learning processes and instructional strategies” (Lachner et al., 2016, p.198). If curriculum scripts rest on the work experience of a teacher, then the implication of the ideas suggested here means that the inexperienced NQTs may have relatively poor or no curriculum scripts at all.

NQTs enter the profession with ‘isolated knowledge’ and Lachner et al. (2016, p.199) argue that isolated knowledge is “gradually integrated and organized into curriculum scripts”. A critical consideration of Lacher et al.’s assertion would reveal the intricacies of the ‘gradually integrated’ claim they are making, which is inconsistent with the dynamics of the professional teaching communities and how NQTs adjust into these spaces. Perhaps the sole consideration of teachers’ knowledge bases, that is, pedagogical content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and content knowledge in the absence of dilemma-laden communities of practice, would prove Lachner et al.’s claim to be true. It could be a reasonable expectation to have considerable allegiance amongst teaching practitioners about what constitutes content knowledge in various subject-matters but when pedagogical knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge which are mostly linked to the teachers’ training are discussed, differences are expected to emerge. As shown in the diagram below, teaching practice in context is defined by many factors over and above the knowledge bases (pedagogical content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and content knowledge).

Lachner et al. (2016, p.200) admit that an assumption is made that “these cognitive processes constantly alternate and interact with one another throughout the teaching experience in a recursive and cyclical manner”. The teaching practice consists of both knowledge and knower structures, but the conventional narrative in substantial theories that explore the practice seems to give more attention to the knower structures. The model developed by Lachner et al. (2016) depicts a knowledge structure that is at the core of the practice which informs the relations between teachers. The components explored here are integral to the teachers’ trajectory, and their development is linked to the teaching experience and the engagement with the knowledge structures. The following model indicates the integration of both knowledge and knower structures which give a holistic view of the teaching practice, which is both knowledge-knower-laden. The commitment, vision, and knowledge-base do differ between newly qualified and established teachers as they come from different dispensations and were trained differently in their respective teacher-education systems. Therefore, the figure below may indicate a model for teachers but the reality in the South African context differs for each generation (not based on age but training) of teachers.

## Learning Communities



**Figure 2. Learning communities at the individual and institutional levels. Shulman & Shulman (2007)**

Knowledge has always been at the centre of the teaching practice, and an example can be drawn from the California State Board Examination for elementary school teachers from March 1875, which covered a range of topics which included; “Written Arithmetic; Mental Arithmetic; Written Grammar; Oral Grammar; Geography; History of the United States; Theory and Practice of Teaching; Algebra; Physiology; Natural Philosophy (Physics); Constitution of the United States and California; School Law of California; Penmanship; Natural History (Biology); Composition; Reading; Orthography; Defining (Word Analysis and Vocabulary); Vocal Music; Industrial Drawing” (Shulman, 1986, p.4). The knowledge requirements on admission were very strict and therefore it meant a teacher could not practice if he/she lacked some of these fundamental requirements. To indicate the importance of this examination, the “examiners were instructed to score for the correctness of responses and to deduct points for errors of composition, grammar, or spelling” (Shulman, 1986, p.4). To take this examination meant a candidate had to have a deep understanding of the tested topic, leading to teaching practices at the time to be characterized as having a stronger knowledge structure than knower structures.



In South Africa, the legacy of technikon or teacher-training colleges on what it takes to be a teacher focused on the practical nature of the teaching practice, and accordingly, knowledge was downplayed. In order to refocus on building knowledge capacity in practice, the restructuring in the form of a “substantive process of reconfiguring teacher education at the curriculum and governance levels” (Sayed, 2004) occurred. The political aspects of restructuring initially motivated the changes to bring knowledge back to the centre of the practice. It is thus imperative to understand that the cohorts of teachers in the system today come from the different dispensations of training, and this could have severe implications for the development of epistemic and social relations in practice. In the case cited above, the California State Examinations for teachers indicated that “ninety-five percent of the test [was] on the content, the subject matter to be taught, or at least on the knowledge base assumed to be needed by teachers, whether or not it is taught directly.” (Shulman, 1986, p.5). The practice experience gap that exists between newly qualified and established teachers may result in different knowledge-based relations that tend to affect the way teachers build communities of practice amongst themselves.

According to Lachner et al. (2016), NQTs begin their practice as teachers possessing ‘isolated knowledge’ and through their ‘induction’ and experience, they gradually accumulate experience knowledge. There is a clear distinction between expert and novice teachers, and one that stands out is the different epistemic reactions to problems in practice. Lachner et al. (2016, p.200) argue that “expert and novice teachers differently notice and interpret problematic classroom scenes by using eye-tracking and think-aloud-analyses to obtain online measures of cognitive processes”. The teaching experience becomes a significant attribute to the aspects of the practice that require a well-developed gaze and understanding of how things work. Lachner et al. (2016, p.200) further accentuate that:

...teachers with extensive teaching experience were more likely to notice critical cues in classroom videos and interpret them in relation to relevant classroom management issues than novice teachers. Novice teachers’ attention, in contrast, was more scattered and dispersed, and they described more superficially salient cues. These findings suggest that experienced teachers’ reasoning was driven more by curriculum scripts of routine classroom situations as compared to novice teachers’ reasoning.

Quite evident from these arguments is the fact that NQTs possess a disintegrated knowledge in

practice and therefore their reasoning tends to lean towards the theories of practice and the subject knowledge. But the lack of experience derails them from successfully working within the practice. The view is consistent with that of the idea that universities and training colleges never prepare teachers adequately for the practical demands within the profession. However, the emphasis on the practical demands of the teaching practice gives the impression that socially developed skills over time are more critical than ‘knowledge’ itself. Knowledge, in this case, becomes extremely fluid, without boundaries and definition, because it rests on the individual exercising their ‘reasoning’ that we identify the curriculum scripts, as Lachner et al. (2016) argue.

In the definition of curriculum scripts, Lachner et al. (2016) make an emphasis on the ‘high- order knowledge structures’, however, there is no certainty that teachers’ individual actions, reasoning (professional and personal) are guided by these ‘high-order knowledge structures’. Their argument here seems to confirm the concern Howard and Maton (2011, p.193) expressed by saying “While usefully highlighting that knowledge or ‘epistemic’ issues are significant, their primary concern is with relations among Knowers...”. Unless we can prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the ‘reasoning’ differences between newly qualified and established teachers exist because of the lack of developed ‘high-order knowledge structures’, the need to investigate this thoroughly remains an unavoidable necessity. Consistent with the argument above is Shulman’s (1987, p.1) argument that “While many characteristics of an effective teacher exist, most of these dwell on the teacher’s management of the classroom...few descriptions or analysis [on] the management of ideas in classroom discourse”. So although Lachner et al. (2016) position ‘high-order knowledge structures’ as playing a pivotal role but their interpretation of the ways in which it plays out moves away from knowledge structures as the basis of actions.

Shulman (1987, p.4) argues that the “rhetoric regarding the knowledge base, however, rarely specifies the character of such knowledge. It does not say what teachers should know, do, understand, or profess that will render teaching more than a form of individual labour, let alone be considered among the learned professions”. The knowledge-structures in the teaching practice are trivialized which renders the practice ‘knowledge-blind’, One fundamental concern of LCT is the pressing need in educational research and practice to overcome “knowledge blindness” and take “knowledge seriously as an object of study” (Maton, 2014 pp.7-9) and knower blindness, in which the different gazes of social actors are not acknowledged, and consequences from these

contestations are not recognized. Bringing back the conversation of knowledge in the teaching practice allows us to treat the practice as a knowledge-laden practice acknowledging that actors in this practice do not act from a vacuum, but there are consistent and evident knowledge structures that dictate their actions.

Interestingly, Shulman (1986, p.4) notes that new teachers' "development from students to teachers, from a state of expertise as learners through a novitiate as teachers exposes and highlights the complex bodies of knowledge and skills needed to function effectively as a teacher". Shulman (1986, p.5) presents a teaching profession that driven by a complex knowledge structure which NQTs need to acquire to become effective teachers; he argues that "the knowledge, understanding, and skills we see displayed haltingly, and occasionally masterfully, among beginners are often demonstrated with ease by the expert". Important to note here is that Shulman (1986) like Lachner et al. (2016) does not render new teachers as clean slates but people who possess knowledge that is not well integrated due to the lack of field experience. My study moves from the premise: NQTs possess knowledge at the beginning of their career, which means that the only premise from which they 'default' is the knowledge structures that they acquired during their teacher education. There are evidently knowledge and competencies required from upcoming qualifying teachers, which begs the question, whether the newly-qualifying teachers are ready for the system? The subsequent subsection attempts to answer this question.

### **2.3 Debates about Beginner Teachers and their Readiness for the System**

There is a debate in the field regarding the extent to which NQTs can be entirely prepared for practice by teacher education programmes. On the one hand, international educational researchers like Feiman-Nemser (2001) argue that the time spent in initial teacher preparation is too short, and that there is too much for novices to learn to be fully ready for the workplace. Beyond the impact of initial teacher education, international studies point to other aspects such as the inadequate induction of novice educators which reflects a poor school leadership that cannot induct novice teachers (Van Niekerk & Dube, 2010); the adjustment of novice teachers to the "work they are required to do and the environments in which they must work, as well as the colleagues and learners with whom they must interact" (Steyn & Schulze, 2004, p.235); how the context shapes and reshapes new teachers' identities over a period of time and how there is a powerful relationship between personal histories and contextual influences (Flores & Day, 2006). This means that NQTs

face a wide range of demands upon entering the profession, and these act on shaping whom they become over their professional practice trajectory. Educational researchers like Bransford and Darling-Hammond (2005), Darling-Hammond (2006), and Grossman and McDonald (2008), argue that through a 'powerful' teacher education programme, NQTs can have a formulated a powerful set of principles, capacity for reasoning and the skills and acquired a depth of content knowledge that enables them to teach effectively from their first teaching position. To this end, the integration of new teachers into professional spaces that have been constructed and which bear a particular culture often determines the expectations placed on new teachers (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012).

The issue of preparation is a common concern across many countries as it serves as mitigation to the high levels of attrition in the teaching profession. In concurrence Beck, Kosnik and Rowsell (2007, p.51) assert that preparing teacher candidates "to be successful in their first year of teaching should be a major goal of preservice education". Beck et al. (2007) position the successful preparation of new teachers into the education system as the highest priority of the teacher education institution curriculum and programs. An array of roles, duties and demands characterizes a full-time teaching position, and this places a burden on initial teacher education institutions to prepare the NQTs to meet these demands. The argument reveals the critical aspect of the context in the preparation of qualifying teachers which acknowledge the inherent structural conditions in which new teachers are meant to work. Some studies like the work of Feiman-Nemser (2001) positions new teachers as knowledge-practitioners and argues that they must develop this aspect in order to be well integrated into the system.

Writing on the concerns of pre-service education preparation and how new teachers transition into the actual practice, Dewey (1938) strongly suggests that "every experience should prepare a person for later experiences of deeper, more expansive quality" (Feiman-Nemser, 2001, p.1015). From this perspective, pre-service teacher education can never prepare new teachers enough for the roles they need to take up in the actual schooling system. Feiman-Nemser (2001) propose some of the integral aspects of focus in pre-service teachers preparation, namely: "Analysing Beliefs and Forming New Visions; Developing Subject Matter Knowledge for Teaching; Developing Understandings of Learners and Learning; Developing a Beginning Repertoire, and Developing the Tools to Study Teaching" (Feiman-Nemser 2001, p.1016). The aspects proposed by Feiman-Nemser (2001) are founded on the argument that new teachers have a pre-developed capital of

beliefs and visions they carry into the profession, which is used as a navigating tool and assists in their integration and their development of an understanding of the dynamics of knowledge and experiences they encounter.

In emphasis of the point made above, it is argued that new teachers “must also form visions of what is possible and desirable in teaching to inspire and guide their professional learning and practice” (Feiman-Nemser, 2001, p.1017). Unlike many studies on NQTs, Feiman-Nemser (2001) is one of the few researchers that focuses on the aspect of knowledge - which is a fundamental issue in my study although my study explores it in relation to the practice, not the individual. On one of the central components that new teachers are required to have as tools, Feiman-Nemser (2001, p.1017) suggests that NQTs would be expected to “understand the nature of knowledge and inquire into different fields”. Feiman-Nemser (2001) places the priority on knowledge, advocating for knowledge-depth of the subjects teachers teach. Moreover, Ladsen-Billings (1999) and Zeichner and Hoeft (1996) assert that teachers should “cultivate the tools and dispositions to learn about students, their families, communities and to build on this knowledge in teaching and learning” (Feiman-Nemser, 2001, p.1018).

Although Feiman-Nemser (2001) focuses on the classroom and how teachers use their pedagogical content knowledge expertise to navigate classroom cultures. There is a gap in Feiman-Nemser’s research, which neglects the debate about knowledge in the teaching practice and how members of the practice grapple with it rather than in the general aspects of schooling and classroom management. One of the most critical aspects of the new teacher’s trajectory is developing a “basic repertoire for reform-minded teaching” (Feiman-Nemser 2001, p.1018). A basic repertoire for reform-minded teaching entails a teacher’s use of his/her professional capacity to work the curriculum, teaching the content knowledge, and the assessment of that knowledge. Furthermore, Feiman-Nemser (2001, p.1019) proposes that “pre-service teachers must come to see that learning is an integral part of teaching and that serious conversations about teaching are a valuable resource in developing and improving their practice”. There are usually pre-existing expectations created and placed on the incoming teachers, and these are discussed in the subsequent sub-section.

The South African context reflects a commitment to have newly-qualifying teachers as the future of the teaching profession. Studies reveal that new teachers are integral to the education system and that pre-service education must prepare them to be successful in the early years of teaching

(Arends & Phurutse, 2009). The preparation of NQTs is an essential part of any education system and this not only for their benefit but also for the state as their failure to cope with the demands of the profession to the point of leaving “translates into a waste of resources” that went into their initial teacher education (Arends & Phurutse, 2009, p.2). However, the number of recruits or qualifying teachers is not the only bone of contention. The quality and the calibre of NQTs is as important. In a teacher development summit held in 2009, several delegates expressed a view that teacher education institutions were successful in preparing qualifying teachers for the practices of teaching but were failing to prepare them for the complexities within the existing schooling system (Gravett, Henning & Eiselen, 2014, p.124). Research presents NQTs as having deeper levels of subject knowledge expertise (Arends & Phurutse, 2006). Consequently, there is a widespread expectation on new teachers in this regard. The expectations that often demand NQTs to instantly be well-acquainted with the structures and processes of a schooling system may be insurmountable and “NQTs are highly unlikely to have developed expertise in all aspects of the phase learning areas” (Reeves & Robinson, 2010, p.17). However, through the research done by Arendse and Phurutse (2006), it is revealed that NQTs have excellent subject knowledge expertise. While new teachers may have a grasp of the subject knowledge and institutions of training may prepare them to some extent, it is always when “they are responsible for learners in their own classes that the reality sinks in” (Gravett & Henning, 2012, p.125).

According to Botha and Rens (2018, p.1), right after qualifying “beginner teachers enter the workforce and most likely accept a full-time teaching position. The expectation is clear that they will successfully transition from a theory-orientated pre-service teacher to a well-rounded practice-based teacher within the first few years of employment”. As discussed earlier in the chapter, the recently revised MRTEQ, which speaks directly to the issues of teacher education highlights teacher knowledge as an integral aspect of the qualification of the teacher.

## **2.4 NQTs Work within School Communities**

The third body of literature relevant to my study considers what research says about the various ways in which NQTs work within their school contexts. The expectations that the education system has set for the NQTs are often met with confusion, under-preparedness, and inexperience - such that the new teachers are left fending for themselves. The next sub-section explores the existing

literature about NQTs and their integration into professional spaces and school communities to show that most of these studies do not question the knowledge practices in school communities and professional spaces.

## I. NQTs as Newcomers into a Community of Practice

Some literature argues that NQTs are welcomed as colleagues into a school staff setup, are acquainted with the systems and structures and are mentored by senior staff members into their new roles. This ‘Community of Practice’ idea was introduced by Lave and Wenger (1991) to study and understand situational learning and ways of sharing knowledge (Hartung & Oliviera, 2013). There is a vast international contribution of studies to the concept of community of practice. Community of practice (CoP) is defined as “groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise on this topic by interacting on an ongoing basis” (Wenger, Mcdermott & Snyder, 2002, p.4). The definition of the concept of CoP acknowledges one of the central conditions of the people’s convergence in practice, and ideally envisioned teaching community of practice is where teachers share common educational concerns, sets of teaching and learning problems, and passion about the improvement of the learning and teaching experience. Moreover, teachers thrive on equipping themselves with the knowledge and deepening their expertise by interacting with one another continuously.

The argument put forward by Wenger, Mcdermott and Snyder (2002) advances the idea that communities of practice are spaces in which knowledge can be contested, developed and shared amongst individuals in the group. According to Wenger (1998) “people who want to participate in communities of practice get ready to share their knowledge, sharpen their expertise, build up interpersonal networks and pursue their interest” (Gau, 2014, p.449). Individuals in communities of practice need other members of the community to interact and continue the engagement to link different knowledge bases and to build up the shared meaning of knowledge (Hara, 2009). Wenger et al. (2002) suggest that there are fundamental ways in which ‘knowledge’ is handled in CoPs, that is, contestation, development, and sharing. The contestation of knowledge would require a space in which all members of a particular CoP are given a platform to engage one another on the knowledge bases they may possess and be open to ideas they may disagree with.

Building on the idea of contestation which leads to development, Lave and Wenger (1991) reveal that the idea of a community of practice emerged as a descriptive term in research, explaining how meaning is negotiated and reflected in different professional groups. A community of practice is also referred to as a 'learning community' characterized by a "common desire among its members to achieve change (i.e. improve existing practices); which provides regular opportunities for collaborative reflection and inquiry through dialogue; and ultimately it develops common tools, language, images, roles, assumptions, understandings, and a shared world view" (Wesley & Buysse, 2001, p.118). There is a consistent view of 'commonality' that is expressed in most of the descriptions of CoP. The consistent expression has serious implications for CoPs that are not well integrated, which means that the sharing of the development of knowledge may be downplayed in these contexts. Critical to the status of any community of practice is the community individuals' ability to discuss and debate different meanings that shape their practice and world view. If the idea of communities of practices presents this positive light, what could be the reason it is challenging to develop a shared understanding and vision of central parts of various communities of practice?

The ideal view of a community of practice can be expected to yield professional cohesion. However, Venters and Wood (2007, p.352) argue that a community of practice is "a highly unstable social configuration that is influenced by the context within which it resides and the power relations within that community". Venters and Wood (2007) advance a fundamental argument based on context and power relations, and which is critical considering that the activity of a community of practice is socially constructed. Teachers socially construct their professional spaces. A critical aspect to note about the construction of teaching professional spaces, where experience plays a crucial role in the status given to the practitioners, is the professional and generational gap that exists between the participants of the spaces. In support of this view, Lave and Wenger (1991) strongly suggest that the critical element of a community of practice, that is, learning, is embedded within the continuous practices done by groups in the community through social interaction. To further accentuate the contrast of an 'ideal' community of practice view, Fox (2000) draws on ideas from Foucault's conceptions of power. According to Fox (2000), a community of practice theory highlights elements such as learning, share-activity, and social-behavioural inclinations. The theory was developed to look into issues of social context and



unequal power relations in existence.

The understanding here is that communities of practice as social spaces of interaction and learning create specific geographies of practices and identity, and members of these spaces make meaning and achieve particular statuses through the existing structures. In the case of NQTs, the identification and status-appropriation in the teaching professional practice bear consequences in how they are treated and how they function in practice. Lave and Wenger (1991) present a triadic analogy into group relations, suggesting that group relations in practices are between ‘masters’ (‘old-timers’), ‘young masters’ (‘journeymen’) and ‘apprentices’ (‘newcomers’). The idea of experience and generational gap emerges in Lave and Wenger’s (1991) argument to help us understand some of the reasons that CoPs are not a linear phenomenon. The suggestion here is that “newcomers must learn from old-timers...must also make a contribution to the work of the group, typically by doing the simple, routine aspects of practice” (Fox, 2000, p.855). The culture set out for the newcomers may be the reality of how the NQTs integrate into teaching spaces in the South African context, that is, through fulfilling stagnant activities that are routine and thereby failing to contribute meaningfully in CoPs. This aspect of a community of practice poses considerable potential for disharmony considering Malm’s (2009) argument that positions prospective teachers who enter communities of practice with a complete vision and an idea of the kind of professionals they want to become.

This practice of isolation in Lave and Wenger’s description refers to ‘legitimate peripheral participation’ (Lave & Wenger, 1991) where “newcomers start by participating in a practice, or set of practices, and this immediate contribution makes them a legitimate member of the community. As they master more and more of these peripheral practices, their legitimacy increases within the group; socially, they move towards the centre and identify personally more and more with the community of practice in question” (Fox, 2000, p.855). The NQTs come into teaching communities with energy and ambitions, yet the reality of these new professional spaces are not welcoming, and they are “still beaten down for being too enthusiastic” (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012, p.28). The argument expressed here is consistent with Rogers and Babinsky’s (2003) view of the teaching profession as a solitary practice.

Moreover, Achinstein (2002) also argues that coming into a profession and community of practice

that is as complex as teaching, which is known for its lack of mentorship for NQTs adds onto the challenging experience. Hence, there is a call by Beck, Kosnik and Rowsell (2007, p.51) for the preparation of “teacher candidates to be successful in their first year of teaching [there] should be a major goal of preservice education”. However, this begs the question, how does a teaching profession system that ostracizes NQTs and fails in mentoring and supporting newly qualified even begin to create an environment where these newcomers can thrive?

Fox (2000, p.856) argues that communities of practice “face a changing environment and as a consequence, newcomers are ‘caught in a dilemma.’” Fox further states that “Power conflicts within communities of practice are possible as a result of such dilemmas”. International evidence suggests that “educational reform’s progress depends on teachers’ individual and collective capacity and its link with school-wide capacity for promoting pupil’s learning” (Stoll, Bolam, McMahon, Wallace & Thomas, 2006, p.221). International research reveals a greater need to build capacity in the teaching profession because of educational objectives that seem to be incumbent in the collaboration efforts of teachers. Like many countries, the South African teaching profession has developed capacity through small-scale groups. These small-scale groups are professional learning communities (PLCs). In order to be productive and successful in “a changing and increasingly complex world, the school communities need to work and learn together to take charge, finding the best ways to enhance young people’s learning” (Stoll et al., 2006, p.222).

The implications for induction in this view is one of assimilation - that NQTs are acquainted with and learn to work within the existing structures of the school. It assumes that the established teachers are benevolent and supportive of NQTs and that there is no tension between the existing practices and those of the new teachers. There is an existing conservative culture that exists in practice and how some established teachers possess this particular identity. Therefore, the struggles for legitimacy between newly qualified and established teachers into communities of practice reflects a need for a much deeper consideration of a myriad of factors involved.

On the one hand, in an international context, Fox (2000, p.856) suggests that newcomers “need to engage in the existing practice, which is developed over time: to understand it, to participate in it, and to become full members of the community in which it exists”. On the other hand, the South African context reveals that “young teachers... have to work with an often daunting corps of senior

teachers with whom they need to build some sort of relationship” (Whitelaw et al., 2008, p.28). In support of the counter-argument presented by Whitelaw et al. (2008), an active community of practice is necessary for the teaching profession because while NQTs may have grounded knowledge of the content they teach and have been trained in recent developments in education research, there is still a gap that needs the rich working experience of the established teachers for crafting. Gravett and Henning (2012, p.125) argue that “preparing for a professional degree cannot replace everyday classroom practice and that, no matter how well stimulated experiences at university are designed and executed, or how often students ‘experience’ teaching in their time spent in clinical work in schools, it is always when they are responsible for learners in their own classes that the reality sinks in”. A fundamental trait of a community of practice is shared-learning; therefore, there is a need for newly qualified and experienced teachers to share their various and distinct expertise to be successful in their professional practice.

### Knowledge-Blindness in Understanding the Challenges of NQTs Entering the Workspace

One of the central shortcomings of the idea of communities of practice is that it underemphasizes the knowledge component as a basis of practice – so much attention is placed on practice as relationships between colleagues and this view closes possibilities for understanding clashes between practices – rendering the perspective as knowledge myopic (the fields’ shortcomings in exploring and defining the aspects of knowledge in depth) (Maton, 2013).

## **II. NQTs as Outsiders into a Pseudo-Community of Practice**

There are power dynamics that exist in school communities where the established teachers occupy powerful positions on the staff and use this power to marginalize the NQTs. In contrast to the discussion on COPs, the teaching profession is not an ideal community of practice - it is constituted of different individuals with a different set of professional and social capital which is often seen in their interactions with others. Therefore, the idea of ‘common’ is mystified by the group dynamics and hangs on the tread of policies that govern the work in practice. Hence the idea advocated for here is knower-myopic as it does not account for the attributes of social actors and the implications of their actions. While there are expectations incumbent on the journey of the NQTs, one of the significant drawbacks is the system into which they are integrated being one of marginalization. In countries such as Spain, established teachers are described as holding an “underlying belief that

newcomers have nothing to offer them” (Correa, Martinez-Arbelaiz, & Aberasturi-Apraiz, 2015, p.66). In emphasizing the previous argument, Kardos, Moore-Johnson, Peske, Kauffman and Liu (2001), as well as Russell and McPherson (2001) do not acknowledge NQTs as legitimate knowers who possess knowledge, skills and beliefs about their teaching and their personal goals as teachers. Instead, they are regarded as unknowing subjects whose embryonic practices are nebulous and undeveloped.

Kelchterman’s (1996, p.311) description of the Australian school communities, argued that the schools were “much more characterised by disagreements over goals” Moreover, he adds that “Principals, teachers, and occasionally parents do not necessarily all act from the same, commonly held vision of what ‘good education’ is”. While developing a commonly held vision of what ‘good education’ is, is essential, the make-up of the teaching practice proves to be a hostile terrain. Being in a professional pyramid that consists of principals, deputy-principals, heads of specific departments, and teachers, there is seldom a consensus on what ‘good education’ or ‘good teaching’ is. A dominant view, however, which is often determined by the dominant group comes to be enacted in school communities. In the category of teachers, newly qualified and experienced teachers, grouping creates an understated hierarchical concern. The difference in perceptions and understanding of the teaching practice, professional ambitions, or what ‘good education’ is, potentially results in differences in identifying what might be problematic in the context, and agreeing on the preferred approaches in addressing the challenges faced.

Instead of avoiding suppressing conflicts and promoting a false community of practice, Hargreaves (2003) argues that PLCs “demand that teachers develop grown-up norms in a grown-up profession—where difference, debate, and disagreement are viewed as the foundation stones of improvement.” Grossman, Wineburg and Woolworth (2001) established that “the cracks of conflict start to show more and more as teachers realize that a shared perspective and sense of care requires openness and the willingness to critique and experience conflict” (Whitelaw et al., 2008, p.28). Unfortunately, NQTs go into teaching spaces where the school staff subscribes to the falsehood of ‘pseudocommunity’ (Whitelaw et al, 2008), yet they are still expected to grow in their professional expertise through collaboration with experienced teachers.

Over and above the pseudocommunity of practice, which promotes the suppression of conflicts, the professional teaching spaces proves to be a hostile terrain for NQTs. NQTs, as a result, tend to isolate themselves and find refuge in their classrooms where they can obtain “modicum of

autonomy” and exercise minimal professional agency (Wood, 2003). According to Hargreaves and Fullan (2012, p.28), too many young teachers “are still beaten down being too enthusiastic”. The consequences of the suggestion made by Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) unfortunately are that this kind of treatment towards the NQTs may consequently produce apathy and retreat when it comes to collaboration. Therefore, hostility and marginalization of the NQTs threaten the whole idea of a community of practice and in context, threatens the professional learning communities. The conditions that NQTs come to face in professional communities are inadvertently pushing most of these young professionals out of the profession. There is an overwhelming pressure that NQTs encounter in these spaces.

The community of practice culture can be encouraged in teaching professional communities; however, principals and various leaders “can only create conditions fostering a commitment to the collective good; they cannot ensure it will happen” (Stoll et al., 2006, p.236). The implication is that while there is a great need to integrate NQTs in professional communities that are free of marginalization, discrimination, and oppressive senior teachers, the professional teaching community of practice cannot be directly manipulable.

The South African context research findings are a no exception, in fact the findings suggest that new teachers face difficulties in establishing themselves in the school communities, which is linked to the problems of marginalization (Whitelaw et al., 2008; Gravett & Henning, 2014). This is important considering that established teachers can act as gatekeepers in the integration of the NQTs. NQTs have to work “with an often daunting corps of senior teachers with whom they need to build some sort of relationship” (Whitelaw et al., 2008, p.27). In the process of building these relationships, Whitelaw et al. (2008, p.33) warn that “opportunities for relational tensions to arise and for collisions to occur are many”. Whitelaw et al.’s position means that there are relational tensions such as ‘cultural adjustment’, existing attitudes, and passive involvement that gives rise to the marginalization of new teachers in the school community. While the process of moving towards the centre of the community of practice seems guaranteed and ideal, South African NQTs as newcomers are still participating from a peripheral position in communities of practice. According to Whitelaw, de Beer and Henning (2008) and Gravett, Henning and Eiselen (2014), NQTs are ‘legitimate peripheral’ participators in their communities of practice. This means that with the ever-changing environment of South African schools and communities of practice, these conditions pose a significant challenge to the NQTs who may destabilise the status quo as new members of communities of practice.

As newcomers and knowers, NQTs in communities of practice are confronted with potential conflicts and isolation driven by the dynamics of the existing relationship. In fact, it is argued that the teaching profession is known for its isolationist traits (Whitelaw et al., 2008; Rogers & Babinsky, 2003). Moreover, according to Whitelaw et al. (2008, p.27) teaching “is not a collaborative profession, despite the hype around the various efforts to create community and collaborate and work in a team in the face of what [is] referred to as ‘discontinuities’”. This means that even though there are dominant public relations efforts that present the teaching profession as a collaborative profession, little is accounted for in the actual practice. Ideally, the teaching profession should be a community of practice promoting and upholding the idea of collaborative work as imagined in the community of practice theory. When a newly qualified teacher “enters the workplace, she is confronted with a new system of activity, and her role as [an] actor in this system is as new. She has to define it on many levels and build relationships with many adults and also with the pupils and their families” (Whitelaw et al., 2008, p.27).

NQTs tend to admit their shorting comings and can be critical of their status in terms of practical work. In some studies, NQTs attest that universities and colleges have not adequately prepared them for the actual demands of the teaching profession (Gravett & Henning, 2012, p.128). Therefore it is incumbent on the department of education to develop professional training programs to compensate for this shortfall and for the school communities to create an environment where there is a harnessing of skills and learning is encouraged and supported. However, the success of this proposition requires a collective action by the teaching community of practice to fulfil the desired outcome. While the desired outcome is to have a teaching environment that builds capacity, mentors and develops the newly qualified teacher, the critical counter-reality that Whitelaw et al. (2008) outlines, should be critically considered in find a solution to the problem.

The reality of teaching communities of practice is that the “notion of being welcomed into a community” is far from what happens to new teachers. According to Whitelaw et al. (2008, p.28), the best a new teacher can do, is mimic entry...by way of adopting discourse”. Whitelaw et al. (2008) refer to the ingenuine practice of ‘community-ship’ in the teaching profession as “Pseudocommunity” (Whitelaw et al., 2008, p.28). The disharmony, lack of genuine collaboration and support that exists between newly qualified and experienced teachers is due to a pseudocommunity practice. According to Whitelaw et al. (2008, p.28), pseudocommunities are

maintained to ensure a “suppression of conflict”, and this is done through an “illusion of consensus and requires of the participants to ‘play community’—to perform identities that the participants think will please the group”. This deviates from the original nature of communities of practice, which are dilemma-laden, and where participants hold differing views and ideologies which can be contested. Whitelaw et al. (2008) however, do not acknowledge that this reality may be attributed to the basis of legitimization of NQTs’ practice rather than the difference in positions. This renders their argument as knowledge-blind. Pseudocommunity practice compromises and threatens the development of NQTs’ learning and teaching, and compromises the success of an establishment of a collaborative culture in the teaching profession in its entirety.

The reason for this is revealed in studies that argue that NQTs “avoided staff rooms and also found their classrooms to be a safe space” (Whitelaw et al., 2008, p.30). It is explicitly evident in research that hostile teaching practice communities cannot promote shared-learning, collaboration, collective responsibility, and collective ownership of the practice. The reality presented by various research outcomes indicates that the findings compromise and pose a substantive concern to the holistic development of the teaching communities of practice.

According to Whitelaw et al. (2008, p.33) NQTs “have to adapt to the sometimes overly specific culture of a school. NQTs accept attitudes and performing actions determined by the particular school where they work”. This approach strips NQTs of their ability to professionally express themselves from a position of authenticity and to fully participate in the make-up of professionalism in their practice. There are several implications such as the ones stated above, but the one of concern is that NQTs are “unable to communicate honestly when their need to adapt to the workplace requires them to be either silent, or perform a desired identity ‘frontstage’” (White et al., 2008, p.33).

NQTs are forced to conform to the existing teaching practice status quo, and the notion of value and experience that forces new teachers to keep allegiance with the existing status quo and ‘old habits’ is “an excuse for abuse of power” (Whitelaw et al., 2008, p.33). This kind of abuse of power is evident in most teaching professional communities, where NQTs face silencing and victimization for speaking out ‘against’ power. The abuse of power and its implication are detrimental to the success of educational objectives. According to Whitelaw et al. (2008, p.33), there is another form of abuse of power called “institutionalised bullying”. This type of abuse of

power has been a contributing factor in the NQTs' attrition rates. In institutionalized bullying, the NQTs are dismissed, suppressed, and "generally placed right at the bottom of the heap...being "put in their place" by the holders of organizational power entrenched in them" (Whitelaw et al., 2008, p.33).

If new teachers know "methods and tools that are more closely aligned with the new policy" (Whitelaw et al. 2008, p.37), then they must be empowered so that there can be constructive participation and where they can partake in the holistic shaping of the professional teaching practice.

The community of practice model reveals some of the integral insights into the unfolding of group dynamics that exist in teaching practice where common ideas, identity and collaborative efforts of teachers are recognized. However, one of the fundamental shortcomings of the CoP model is that it is prone to knowledge-myopia. That is, the model acknowledges knowledge, but undervalues its importance for shaping practice – in that what shapes practice is deemed to be social interactions (Maton, 2016). According to Howard and Maton (2011, p.193), while these communities of practice highlight "that knowledge or 'epistemic' relations are significant, their primary concern is with relations among knowers in such communities". Maton refers to this phenomenon as a knowledge paradox where 'knowledge is everything, and nothing', and where knowledge is acknowledged as a centre of the practice, yet the processes in practice do not reflect the claim.

Knowledge practice fields as 'knowledge economies' "based on the creation, circulation and consumption of information rather than material goods are said to require workers to engage in 'lifelong learning' to keep pace with the resulting fluidity of labour markets" (Maton, 2016,p.1). A knowledge economy is a distinctive feature between the general communities of practice and professional learning communities. While the community of practice theory focuses on the social configuration of practices, the group dynamics, group identities and the social existing structures, a professional learning community re-positions the significance of knowledge to the centre of the practice. The distinctive nature of knowledge in practices is further discussed in the next section that focuses on the epistemic and social relations in teaching practices to elicit the knowledge blindness nature of practices.



## 2.5 Knower Blindness of Induction Programmes

One of the blind spots of the marginalization perspective is that it presents NQTs as illegitimate knowers, having no views, and lacking agency – it ignores NQTs as knowers who have a set of practices and a moral imperative, and who have agency. Through a critical view of the perspectives on the schools as pseudocommunities, one can conclude that it acknowledges and positions established teachers as legitimate knowers of teaching, but the perspective is knower- blind with respect to NQTs.

In this view, the NQTs have a different quest to that of established teachers - to seek to transform aspects of the education system that they find untenable. To explore this, the subsection begins by recognizing three of the many ways that could legitimize teachers' approach to their work within the teaching practice. I draw on the concept of knower gazes (Maton, 2007, 2014, & 2016) to conceptualize the grounds on which teachers develop through different pathways as knowers, with particular gazes that frame their ways of being, perceiving, engaging and acting. In particular, the study will explore the extent to which established and NQTs occupy different knowledge stances that create identities. These are not the only identity options, but might be useful in understanding how teachers are positioned as knowers in their schools. According to Carrim (2019, p.36), identities that teachers possess are influenced by the social category to which they belong, "which construct who the teacher, in fact, is". The possible constellations could, for example, be"

(i) Teachers who legitimize their roles as civil servants or workers employed by the State, where they claim neither specialist knowledge nor specialist gazes. Teaching as 'work' is strongly determined by external factors such as compliance with the expectations of their employer. As such, they are "constantly assailed with other people's goals and expectations...to raise test scores, appease pushy parents, keep to the basics, turn everything around in a year or less, or implement the latest pet programs" (Hargreaves and Fullan, 2012, p.30). Teachers as workers adhere to those specific and strict boundaries in which they are allowed to act.

(ii) Teachers who position themselves as professionals who are accountable to learners and to a council, and whose practice is legitimized by specialist knowledge and ways of thinking about the learning they make possible. Their gaze may have been primarily cultivated through engagement

with theoretical ideas about teaching, exposure and analysis of models of teaching and charged with an obligation to their learners. Teachers as professionals draw from their professional mandate and professional specifications such as accountability, and ethical practices (Gamble, 2010).

(iii) Teachers who regard teaching as a deeply political act, and who regard themselves as social activists. Such teachers possess a gaze that has been cultivated through their knowledge, experience and participation in social movements. They approach their teaching with an agenda for equity and social justice. Teachers as social activists extend their work beyond the confinements of the school. Jansen (2011) describes these as ‘the courageous activists’ who can link their practice to the broader politics in the society. Teachers are more than professionals, and various aspects of their lives determine their identities. Carrim (2019 pp.47-48) strongly suggests that professionals “cannot simply be treated as if they are not at the same time representations of ideological forms and orders”.

These possible constellations are mere heuristics, and the data may reveal completely different ways in which teachers legitimate their practices. Furthermore, there may be critical points of intersection where teachers can, for example, identify themselves primarily as a worker and professional [A]; a professional and social activist [C]; as a worker and social activist [B]; the combination of all or none of these. There may, of course, be other constellations not discussed here. It is unclear the extent to which experienced teachers, many of whom have a long history of personal and/or unionized resistance to Apartheid education regulations efforts, and fallist generation NQTs will work collectively to resolve a pressing challenge in their school context.

On the other hand, the idea of professionalism has a different appeal to the different constellations teachers occupy in practice. There are various knower gazes that teachers are identified by, yet professionalism/professional is one of the most consistent and traditional expectations put on each teacher. This section extends the discussion of different constellations discussed in the prevalent roles and identities section. The motivation for teacher professionalism is reflected in the teachers’ sense of accountability. Teachers that assume a professional identity in practice are most likely to uphold the element of accountability as integral to their work. There is a binary distinction of accountability: bureaucratic accountability entails following prescribed procedures, and professional accountability is “a set of commitments, policies, and practices that are designed to heighten the probability that good practices will occur for students and reduce the probability that

harmful practices will occur” (Urbanski, 1998, p.452). Teachers locate their accountability in different aspects of their work, and this has a bearing on the roles they assume.

Urbanski’s (1998, p.452) argument is particular in addressing the issues of self-determination and ownership of the practice. Moreover, through his argument we learn that teachers cannot be held accountable “for the outcomes of decisions that they do not make”. He describes this as equivalent to saying, “I’ll reserve the right to make all decisions, but I’ll hold you responsible for the results of these decisions”. Various departments in education can claim that the teaching practice is collectively shaped by most stakeholders in the sector. However, a counter-argument may ensue, which may claim that representatives of the teaching profession, such as the unions, are involved in decision-making on behalf of teachers. However, the problem with that line of argument is that it fails to account for each teacher in all schools in South Africa and that there are teachers (identifying as professionals) that are members of unions that do not hold a firm support ground in the profession.

It is, therefore, naïve to assume that all teachers professionally identify themselves in the same way. The professional teachers’ identity cannot be described as just a linear and straightforward trait because it has complexities and degrees through which teachers gauge the intensity of this identity. In fact, teachers’ identities cannot be discussed in an abstract way since these identities have a direct influence on their professional practice (Carrim, 2019). Gamble (2010) unpacks the idea of a continuum of forms of professionalism. Gamble (2010) proposes that there are two domains of professionalism: ‘pure’ professionalism; and bureaucratic professionalism. In Gamble’s (2010) summarization of the ‘pure’ professionalism category, there is an emphasis on a tension that exists between autonomy and accountability. With regards to bureaucratic professionalism, the central tenet exists in the tension between autonomy and professional authority. The distinction means that for teachers motivated by pure professionalism, there is always a need to strike a balance between being autonomous and being accountable. On the other hand, bureaucratic professionalism faces the need to be autonomous, given professional authority such as the employer. Gamble suggests that there is a conflict between professionals’ endeavour to take ownership of their practice by determining their own standards versus the government (as an employer) defining the conditions and norms for the professional practice. The current conditions in the South African teaching profession practice reflect this sort of tension, as some teachers struggle for autonomy from the State, the State continues in its rightful position to develop

and enact policies that implicitly and explicitly strip the teaching profession of its chance to be self-determinant and autonomous.

## **2.5 Teaching Against the Grain**

In looking at the different agendas that shape teachers' identities, Freire (1993) sets up a straightforward binary between conservative and progressive teachers. Though Freire's distinction creates a binary between the two types of teachers, it can be understood that newly qualified and experienced teachers may take on different roles as teachers. For Freire, the identity of a progressive educator as transcending the mere teaching of the content, is that it must be "associated with a "critical reading" of reality" (Freire, 1993, p.24). Freire's contention is that progressive educators do not "teach content by itself as if the school context in which this content is treated could be reduced to a neutral space where social conflicts would not manifest themselves, nor can the exercise of 'thinking correctly' be disconnected from the teaching of content" (Freire, 1993, p.24). It is clear that for Freire, the education space and the contextual societal factors are coexistent, and the latter has an impact on the educational practice, and that progressive educators are mindful of this reality.

Critical to Freire's contention is the emphasis on the competence of both progressive and conservative educators. The emphasis is due to the tendency to lose "professional status in the face of increasing activist status" as highlighted by Marshall and Anderson (2008, p.5). Activists and progressive teachers, in this case, capture the same idea. In reference to the educational history of the South African context, activist teachers "served as a catalyst for the redress intent of post-apartheid education policies which urged the interpretation and enactment of curriculum as a contextualized social process that is cognizant of the socio-economic, geo-political, and historical-cultural permutations of South Africa" (Perumal, 2014, p.747). The historical reality as highlighted by Perumal (2014) indicates the central elements of Freire's work (1993) on the critical analysis of the contextual realities and the active educators' response to it in the school context.

Today, as guided by political correctness, activist newly qualified teachers and experienced teachers assume an identity of 'transformative intellectuals' where they are critical, and examiners of "political and educational institutions that maintain social inequalities with the intention of transforming them" (Perumal, 2014, p.747). Despite the description, the identity of progressive,

activist, transformative intellectuals or social activists, the maintained principle of acting on the situations finds expression in all these views. Critical pedagogy follows that there must be a critical analysis of the cultural, institutional, economic, and political demographics of school through the lenses of power relations that are perpetuated by differences such as race, gender, and class (Apple, 2007).

Echoing the predisposition of taking an active role and the union work that some teachers identify with, Macrae (2008, p.1) describes a 'social justice activist teacher' as "one who advocates for the rights of minority groups, challenges widely held attitudes and assumptions about curriculum and teachers' roles, and works for change beyond the confines of their own classroom". The consistent theme here is that of an active role and it necessary to understand that progressive or activist teachers find the meaning of their work in addressing issues within and outside the classroom to transform these spaces of learning. While the descriptions of these teachers sound blissful, Marshall and Anderson (2008, p.5) argue that "Teachers' activism and challenging creates trouble". According to Paul and Smith (2000, p.137) teachers "who do not toe the line, who question policy, and creatively maladjust to school cultures that do not value all children, are often dubbed as 'troublemakers'". The possible reality is that teachers who identify as progressive or activist teachers may take up unprofessional labels in the professional space, and this may lead to hostile treatment. One of the unavoidable consequences of being progressive is the loss of professional status, which Freire (1993) avoids by emphasizing the 'competence' of progressive educators.

The teaching aptitude of both conservative and progressive teachers cannot be judged based on the identity they assume because the subject they teach still follows the rules of the game. Freire (1993, p.23) strongly argues that the collective aspect of progressive and conservative teachers is that "they both need to know what they teach...I do not want to say that four times four equals sixteen for a progressive educator and fourteen for a conservative teacher. What I want to say is that the very comprehension of what teaching is, what learning is, and what knowing is, has connotations, methods, and ends that are different for one another". Therefore the ultimate distinction of the progressive and constructive teachers in the face of critical pedagogy is the perspectives held by the teachers about their work and their roles as teachers.

In the case of newly-qualifying teachers, Cochran-Smith (1991, p.279) poses an important

question: “Can prospective teachers learn to be both educators and activists, to regard themselves as agents of change, and to regard reform as an integral part of the social, intellectual, ethical, and political activity of teaching?”. Freire (1993) advances an argument that tackles this question, by emphasizing that teachers’ engagement with activism work does not reduce their capacity to fulfil other important roles of their job. In a system characterized by inherent challenges, Cochran-Smith (1991) proposes ‘teaching against the grain’ as an approach for qualifying teachers to tackle issues in the profession and become agents of change. Although, she warns it cannot be suggested that “teachers alone have the power or the responsibility to reform education by “teaching better,” or that teaching can be understood in isolation from the cultures of schools and communities or the historical and political contexts of school and society” (Cochran-Smith, 1991, p.280). The argument advanced is consistent with the ideas of critical pedagogy that looks at schooling and the work of teachers as a holistic engagement.

Moreover, Cochran-Smith (1991) charges the newly-qualifying teachers with a great responsibility of understanding that they integrate into greater struggle and that they must assume reformatory responsibility rather than perpetuating the existing practices. Concurrent with the view that the university teacher-education does not adequately prepare teachers for the schooling system and the teaching practice, Cochran-Smith (1991, p.280) warns that ‘teaching against the grain’ is not “a generic skill that can be learned at the university and then “applied” at the school”. Highlighting the non-generic train of ‘teaching against the grain’ emphasizes that the skill cannot be collectively learned or imparted and therefore, not every prospective teacher graduates with the capacity to exercise this skill. Furthermore, Cochran-Smith (1991, p.280) extensively argues that:

*Teaching against the grain stems from, but also generates, critical perspectives on the macro-level relationships of power, labor, and ideology – relationships that are perhaps best examined at the university, where sustained and systematic study is possible. But teaching against the grain is also deeply embedded in the culture and history of teaching at individual schools and in the biographies of particular teachers and their individual or collaborative efforts to alter curricula, raise questions about common practices, and resist inappropriate decisions.*

It would seem that even though ‘teaching against the grain’ is directed to the role prospective teachers get to play once they graduate, there is still an emphasis of acting within a particular

group, culture and context that is already burdened by various struggles. Secondary to acquiring the ‘teaching against the grain’ skill, Cochran-Smith (1991) places an important collaborative element between qualifying teachers and established teachers. There are two approaches to prepare qualifying teachers to teach against the grain: *critical dissonance* and *collaborative resonance*. The former teaches qualifying teachers to be non-compliant to the existing status quo, to “help them develop stronger, more critical perspectives that confront issues of race, class, power, labor, and gender, and to call into question the implications of standard school policy and practice” (Cochran-Smith, 1991, p.281). The highlighted issues that qualifying teachers have to confront are similar to the issues the recent generation of fallists grappled within their struggles against the state. The difference is that perhaps with the fallist generation there was no deliberate action to develop these critical perspectives but Cochran-Smith’s (1991) proposal calls for deliberate action to arm qualifying teachers with the skills to challenge the status quo.

Collaborative resonance is concerned with developing analytical skills that are prerequisite for enabling qualifying teachers to “critique standard procedures and connect theory and practice, but also the resources needed to function as reforming teachers throughout their teaching careers in diverse school contexts. The goal is to prolong and intensify the influences of the university and school experiences, both of which are viewed as potentially liberalizing” (Cochran-Smith, 1991, p 283). Collaborative resonance further encourages the critique of existing cultures of teaching, practice and schooling, for teachers to be critical about their own practices and to scrutinize the policies “that are taken for granted” (Cochran-Smith, 1991, p.283). The argument highlights the importance of the theory in teacher-education describing the potential for developing a critical outlook by the qualifying teachers. Moreover, this argument bears fundamental implications for the South African context which sees the integration of newly-qualified teachers who come with an intensive theory-based teacher education over established teachers who did not go through an intensive university program in their training. In conclusion, Cochran-Smith (1991) fundamentally believes that prospective teachers can take on the work of agents of change in the career. Both Cochran-Smith (1991) and Freire (1993) accentuate the view that one does not replace the other.

Progressive teachers’ actions can be informed by a myriad of ideologies and Freire (1993) proposes that critical pedagogy may be one of the ideologies. The inescapable reality of the education practice is that “its necessarily directive nature, the objectives, the dreams that follow in the practice—do not allow education to be neutral as it is always political” (Freire, 1993, p.22). There

could be a high proclivity to avoid the political element in education practice because of the nature of educational issues and short-comings that exist in the South African context. Moreover, Marshall and Anderson (2008, p.1), reveal some of the possible reasons, arguing that education “is often imagined as an apolitical enterprise. Both education and educators are assumed to maintain a respectful distance from hot-button issues and significant political and social movements”. However, according to Freire (1993), the political element of education is unavoidable since the quality of education offered in the education system qualifies the politics in the education practice. Therefore, some of the educational issues in South Africa need the proponents of education to critically interrogate and understand our context concerning Freire’s argument about the politics of education.

*Conscientização* is a fundamental concept developed by Freire (1993, p.17) to refer to an inclination of “learning to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions, and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality”. Freire’s conceptualization of knowledge through critical pedagogy established that “the process of knowledge construction is not centred in the teacher, but has to initiate in the subject of the knowledge, the poor, the marginalised people, the people suffering under abusive conditions in society and the people who have their rights and their dignity violated” (Brutelli & Bruyns, 2017, p.5). A notable element of Freire’s perspective of knowledge is its emancipatory potential through a knowledge-engagement action by the people under the guidance of educators. In a critical view of critical pedagogy, Ross (2016, p.209) argues that critical pedagogy “is understood (and misunderstood) in myriad ways”. Ross’s contention is problematic as it presupposes that the development of the concept has positive and negative epistemic implications. Furthermore, Ross contends that critical pedagogy “did not evolve from a single philosophical source and its core aims and methods can be linked to a variety of philosophical traditions” (Ross, 2016, p.210). Nonetheless, for this study, the focus will be on critical pedagogy as extrapolated by Freire and ideas that are concurrent with his views.

In alignment with Freire, Giroux (1992) proposes that critical pedagogy can lead teachers toward uncovering and dismantling oppressive, sexist, racist, and class ideologies. One of the reasons Freire considers an active role of the oppressed in progressive education practice is because he strongly contends that "it would be naive to expect the dominant classes develop to a type of education which would enable subordinate classes to perceive social injustices critically" (Freire,



1985, p.102). Freire places the oppressed individuals of the society at the centre of their emancipation, arguing that the oppressor does not have any intentions of emancipating the oppressed. Freire's critical pedagogy employs the practitioners to take a proactive role in the addressing of the societal issues embedded in various social structures. To do this, Freire proposes a see-judge-act framework which allows actors to observe, interpret the situation and to do something about it.

Freire strongly believed that “we can see, judge and act—and become nearly impenetrable to lies—if we follow the form and content of critical pedagogy he has conceived” (Gibson, 1999, p.136). Freire argues that see-judge-act “could lead to critical consciousness, that is, an awareness of the necessity to constantly unveil appearances designed to protect injustice” (Gibson, 1999, p.129). It is clear from the see-judge-act methodology that interrogation is at the heart of critically analyzing the power structures in society and creating a space for justice. The development of the see-judge-act methodology emerges from the work of Joseph Cardinal Cardijn, which is considered as a “method [of] a possible framework to better enable these discussions to move from theory to praxis” (Sands, 2018, p.1). According to Sands (2018, p.2), the method “is a movement from engagement and solidarity, then to reflection and understanding, and finally to cooperative involvement and action”. In the method, the ‘See’ refers to the engagement and solidarity; ‘Judge’ refers to reflection and understanding; and ‘Act’ refers to cooperative involvement and action.

Freire submits that teachers must assume a progressive identity founded on the principles of critical pedagogy as foundational elements. Mackin (2012, p.344) accounts that one of the subjects in a church movement expresses the power of the see-judge-act where she says “the [Church] hierarchy was always afraid of us. . .[because of our] class. Consciousness was awakened, we became aware of injustices, we knew the gospel, and we were being empowered toward what? Not to the right. You are empowering that person to go [to the left]”. In this account, the elements of critical pedagogy are identifiable in the testimony and it is symbolic of the framework's power to break through some of the traditional conservative spaces. The study's interest in the methodology is only the ‘see’ dimension which is described as:

*The first movement of any engagement with another person or community should be to ‘see’: to observe and immerse oneself in the lives of that community... to be in solidarity with the poor or oppressed... to adequately ‘seeing’ the issue at hand, one cannot “rely upon book knowledge or a*

*priori ideas: his seeks to prevent is the mentality held by many (usually) well-meaning activists that seem to know what is best for a community without actually understanding that community own its own terms (Sands, 2018, p.4).*

Addressing the Gaps: The study moves beyond knowledge-blindness and myopia, to recognize teaching as a practice that is knowledge informed and has teachers who subscribe to different bases of legitimation. In the study, both established teachers and NQTs are regarded as legitimate knowers, and struggle for dominance in practice is acknowledged. The objective is to establish this argument in the South African context.

## **2.6 Summary of the Chapter**

Various international and national studies report that NQTs experience challenges when adjusting into school contexts. There are various factors attributed to the difficulties in the adjustment, such as the influence of professional culture on the new teachers' roles in the school (Williams, 2003); the influence of school culture on the new teachers' perceptions (Tomlinson, 2004); new teachers' isolation and marginalization in the socialization process within the school community (Berliner, 1987; Carl, 1996; Whitelaw, de Beer & Henning, 2008). These studies, by and large, attribute these difficulties to the complexity of school communities and the realities of classroom teaching, as well as a tendency to overwhelm new teachers with excessive teaching and administrative workloads (Gravette & Henning, 2014). The various insights on how the new teachers are integrated into the teaching profession explore different factors. This section pulled all these insights together to develop an alternative analysis of the significant issues in the subject of NQTs.

Existing studies into the NQTs as reviewed in this chapter tend to display both knowledge blindness and knower myopia. Knowledge blindness refers to the proclivity in particular fields that tend to concern themselves with knowing rather than what is known; and knowledge myopia is the fields' shortcomings in exploring and defining the aspects of knowledge in depth (Maton, 2013).

# CHAPTER 3

## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The previous chapter argued that if NQTs are to become potential agents of change within an education system in crisis, then they should bring something different into the school context. This could be a different knowledge base and/or a different set of principles that legitimizes their practices of teaching compared to those that are prevalent in the system. If they are to become the professional teachers as envisaged in policy, then their approaches to teaching should not be summarily dismissed as illegitimate. It is essential to look beyond the dominant narrative in literature that NQTs are overwhelmed because of unfair workloads as well as the challenges in occupying a new role. It is also essential to explore the extent to which they may feel overwhelmed because very basis of the legitimation of their teaching practices conflicts with the dominant structures in their schools. This requires an investigation into newly qualified and established teachers as knowers who possess particular gazes on their teaching practices. The extent to which the basis of legitimation of their dominant practices matches or clashes within their workplace will help one understand whether the challenges faced by NQTs are simply about adjusting to a new working environment, or whether there are struggles for legitimacy between the knowledge systems of established teachers and those of the NQTs. To do this, the conceptual tools of Legitimation Code Theory (LCT) (Maton, 2014) will be used to analyse the grounds on which new teachers and established teachers struggle for legitimacy within their practices as knowers. The analysis in the study can give powerful insight into why tensions manifest between established teachers and NQTs. It may also provide insight into how the interactions between the groups may enhance or constrain agency. I will also argue how understanding the nature of these codes has transformative potential, and has important implications for induction programmes for newly qualified teachers.

### 3.1 Introducing Legitimation Code Theory (LCT)

Legitimation Code Theory (LCT) offers an explanatory framework which puts at its focus, the knowledge that underpins social practices (Maton, 2014). A principal aim of LCT is to explore “the underpinning rationalities of practice in order to understand what drives fields to develop in the way they do” (Clarence & Mckenna, 2017, p.41). In emphasizing the potentials of the LCT framework, Maton (2014, p. 3) argues that

LCT is being used not only to interpret the world in various ways but also to change it. Concepts from the framework reveal different dimensions of what Bourdieu called the ‘rules of the game’: the bases of achievement underlying social fields of practice. Such bases are often unwritten and unspoken, they ‘go without saying’ in ways that, when accessible only to actors from specific backgrounds, generate social inequality. By making such organizing principles visible, LCT enables these bases of achievement to become accessible to more actors, promoting social justice.

The practices of actors (like teachers) in social settings (like educational institutions) can be understood as languages of legitimation. The tensions and contestations between groups of social actors are theorised as a struggle for legitimation about what counts as the basis for achievement in that context. LCT is to “make knowledge visible, to theorize knowledge by identifying its organizing principles and to enable its exploration in empirical research” (Grenfell, Hood, Barrett & Schubert, 2017, p.5). The framework offers a theoretical framework as well as an appropriate analytic toolkit to “analyze knowledge construction in cultural fields, especially education” (Grenfell, Hood, Barrett & Schubert, 2017, p.193).

Through the use of LCT, this study seeks to reveal the organizing principles underlying how teachers understand their teaching practice and what they value as important for managing knowledge and managing learners in their work as teachers. Although LCT offers five dimensions that theorise the way in which knowledge works in different ways in practice, my analysis draws on the Specializations dimension of LCT, and on the conceptual and analytic tools from the concept of constellations. Constellations are then analysed using relations from the Specialization Dimension of LCT.

### 3.1.1 Teachers as knowers

Using the ‘two culture’ debate, which recalls how the humanistic culture fields in knowledge structures assume a weaker status due to their fragmented and segmented organization of ideas or knowledge, in the knower-structure the humanistic culture assumes a stronger status. According to Maton (2007, p.91), the basis of “specialization in humanist culture was...not knowledge... but the habitus of an ideal knower, and a classical education served as shorthand for these dispositions”. By assuming a stronger status in the knower structures, humanistic culture displays a hierarchical knower structure. The knower structure is concerned with exposing the underlying principles of practice by interrogating the constituent’s personal attribute in relation to an ideal knower (Maton, 2007). To build a discussion around the personal attributes of an ideal knower, the discussion adopts the concept of gazes, which is described as “a particular mode of recognizing and realizing what counts as an ‘authentic’ ...reality” (Bernstein, 2000, p.164).

Knower structures are “based on legitimate knowers. Each ideal knower possesses a privileged gaze and the form taken by this gaze shapes the knower structure” (Maton, 2014, p.94). LCT theorises the development of these gazes as the way in which a knower learns to acquire a legitimate gaze through the interactions with significant others and the extent to which anyone is able to learn to participate in the practice.

Being a legitimate knower is a prevalent theme in teacher education literature. Some literature emphasizes the importance of teachers making decisions that have rationale grounds (e.g. Shalem, 2014), other bodies of teacher-focused literature emphasize dispositions, ways of thinking and capacity for the reasoning of practitioners as important aspects of what legitimates effective teaching practices (Palmer, 2017 & Shulman, 1987). Teachers, through their interactions with others have acquired criteria for what counts as important (Maton, 2014). However, NQTs and established teachers, having had very different kinds of interactions during their professional development, may have developed very different gazes. There are various ways in which teachers occupy and embody their practices as knowers. These differently shaped gazes may lead to struggles for legitimacy as teachers work within the same teaching spaces. This study rests on a hypothesis that part of the challenges of NQTs adjusting into schools might be the different ways in which they construct themselves as knowers, compared to the dominant conceptions in their school spaces.

### 3.1.2 Knower gazes

As a practice is always directed at something and by someone, practitioners are knowers, whose practice in a social activity has engendered ways of thinking, doing and being, called a knower gaze.

There are four gazes as developed in legitimation code theory - born, social, cultivated and trained. *Born gaze* may refer to a legitimate knower who possesses “relatively strong relations...illustrated by notions of ‘natural talent’ and ‘genius’... over artistic ability and by biological and genetic explanations of practice” (Maton, 2014, p.95). And, “less fixed but still relatively strong is where legitimate knowers possess a *social gaze* determined by their social category, such as standpoint theories based on social class or on race, gender and sexuality. Weaker is the *cultivated gaze*, where legitimacy arises from dispositions of the knower that can be inculcated. Relatively weakest is the *trained gaze*, gained through training in specialized principles or procedures” (Maton, 2014, p.95). Practitioners in teaching practice possess different gazes. The important thing here is that through interaction with texts, with learners, with other teachers, and with lecturers, teachers have acquired criteria for judging what is essential and what is less critical in the work they do. They have learnt various ways of thinking and being. Through the trained gaze, they may have acquired [specific knowledge on which their practice rests- the knowledge claims may be formally learnt (trained gaze) or worked out through experience and observations (cultivated gaze) or through belonging to a group (a social gaze). All these different interactions with others shape the gaze that determines what they regard as legitimate and illegitimate.

It may be that new and established teachers have had their views of teaching significantly shaped through their involvement in the positions they occupy in society, different social movements, anti-apartheid for the former and #feesmustfall for the latter. A basis of legitimation of their practice may or may not be strongly legitimized by a stronger social gaze. The third is experience. New and established teachers have different cultivated gazes based on their engagement with colleagues, learners, training and experience in the site of practice. In relation to this study, the development of a knower gaze is beyond the scope of the study, but the concept of gazes and the different kinds of gazes will be useful in interpreting the findings.

From the discussion of gazes, we develop an understanding of the premises from which particular

actors in the teaching practice act. In the case of NQTs, a university-based education programme may intend to develop a trained and/or cultivated gaze in the NQT, depending on the extent to which the programme foregrounds theoretical rigour and incorporates practice-based analysis and field experiences (Langsford, 2020). Also, the nature of training for established teachers was less focused on the acquisition of theory and much more on the development of skills in the context of practice, as in a master-apprenticeship setting. These gazes have serious implications on the ways in which they act towards or in the presence of one another and how they tackle some of the pertinent issues in the teaching practice. Gazes are useful to understand and form the driving forces of some of the implemented actions by individual teachers when faced with problems, dilemmas and tensions during their teaching experience. The following subsection explores dilemmas and dilemmatic spaces in detail.

The proposed conceptual frame of understanding teachers as knowers who operate within ‘dilemmatic spaces’ is evident in different fields, such as politics, social work, and public service (Fransson & Grannas, 2013). However, there is a minimal application of the framework in educational matters. Dilemmas in practice is linked to the weak internal grammar– contestations about the way in which knowledge, skills and protocols relate to the practice. Honig (1994), described dilemmas as “situations in which two values, obligations, or commitments conflict and there is no right thing to do”. He further argued that as a result, this poses “the question of difference and the ineradicability of conflict in a specific and ordinarily familiar setting” (Honig, 1994, p.568). ‘Ineradicability’ in Honig’s argument implies that dilemmas cannot be removed from practice, and that they are forever present. The professional teaching practice is not immune to conflict, and the question always remains ‘what is the right thing to do?’ in particular dilemmatic terrains.

Within the dilemmatic spaces constituted by a school as a social field, I intend to draw on Legitimation Code Theory (LCT) (Maton, 2014; & 2016) to analyse the ways in which different groups of teachers’ practices position themselves similarly or differently in relation to a dilemma. I expect that these differences may impact on tensions in the institutional space and in their ability to attain consensus when seeking to resolve the dilemmas that arise in the complexity of school life. Dilemmatic spaces “vary in intensity and gravity, but none is untouched by conflict and incommensurability” (Honig, 1994, p.569). Although there may be differences in how teachers position themselves in relation to dilemmas in professional practice, conflicts and uniqueness of

situations characterize every dilemmatic space.

## **CONSTELLATIONS**

In the conceptual toolkit offered by LCT, the ‘constellations of meaning’ that social actors adopt determines the stance they take on various issues - where a constellation is regarded as a group of ideas that are thought to be associated together. Constellations of ideas can be configured differently to provide competing positions (from differently positioned stances). In this study, I propose that their social identities, different histories, pre-service and in-service teacher development and experiences in the classroom lead to newly qualified and established teachers occupying different stances in space. These stances give rise to constellations of meaning that do not have arbitrary principles underlying them but can be regarded as a result of the gazes teachers have acquired as knowers in the practices of teaching.

Different groups of actors occupy different stances in space, in which they cluster objects, ideas and connections between into different networks of knowledge (called epistemological constellations), or subscribe to a differently constituted set of beliefs or value systems (axiological constellations). Axiological constellations describe a cluster of beliefs, attitudes or dispositions that emphasize social relations. Epistemological constellations focus on clusters of objects, concepts or skills that have associated meanings, and place a great emphasis on epistemic relations (Maton, 2014). According to Maton (2014, p.153), a condensed set of meanings that exist in a particular “practice may be charged differently”. For example, in a teaching practice, condensing a range of meanings about professionalism may be positively charged in a specific setting where professionalism is associated with status, accountability, autonomy and being a role model. It may be negatively charged in contexts where the right of workers to strike is valued over professional responsibility to provide a service despite unfavourable working conditions. In analyzing the different stances which teachers occupy in relation to several dilemmas that typically confront teachers in their everyday practices, I will seek to identify constellations of meaning that have coherence from a particular viewpoint. There may be epistemological clusters (associated groupings of concepts) as well as axiological clusters (associated groups of beliefs or dispositions) within the constellations of their practice.

Constellations are representations of what is held as significant, and these provide a basis from



which teachers position themselves in relation to a dilemma at hand. Constellations represent what actors in a field choose as a legitimate stance, which in turn reflects their approaches in addressing or resolving a dilemma. The differences in stances between groups of actors may lead to clashes or matches in the legitimation of their constellations, making things compatible, or in flux (where shifts are possible) or incompatible when one has a clash and the groups are unable to see eye to eye at all. When the components of an axiological constellation are positively charged, they are given legitimacy as valid. When others negatively charge the ideas or beliefs associated with a constellation, it is considered illegitimate. Through looking at how teachers position themselves in what is valued and what is vilified, they reveal aspects of the constellations of meaning which make sense of their practices as teachers. In the analysis, I will identify whether teachers present competing or matching constellations in relation to various dilemmas posed. I then will analyse the extent to which, in addressing a dilemma, there is a shift in the legitimation codes.

In the analysis, I will consider the knowledge claims as stances occupied in relation to a dilemma that reflects a constellation of meaning. The justification of teachers in attempting to resolve the dilemma is likely to reveal a constellation. This research intends to analyse how teachers charge a stance. If they negatively charge a stance, they may counter with an alternative knowledge claim. They may resolve the dilemma through code shifts, or simply establish a range of conflicting and irreconcilable positions. My research is based on an expectation that the underlying bases of legitimation of teachers will reveal themselves in how they position themselves in relation to the questions asked in an interview and their responses to various scenarios given to them. Part of the analysis will be to establish the “range and combination of stances viewed by actors as possible within a field” (Maton, 2014, p.152). The following subsection will briefly discuss the ways in which stances are organized within a field.

With Legitimation Code Theory (LCT) adopted as a conceptual framework, coupled with the crucial conceptualization of contested social spaces, that is, dilemmas and dilemmatic spaces, and the will to consensus, which explores how social actors grapple with dilemmas from different knower stances, I explored the extent to which the matches and clashes in their stances enable resolution of simulated dilemmas and how consensus may be arrived at in the face of conflicting sets of ideas.

### 3.1.3 Specialization Dimension

The Specialization dimension of LCT is appropriate for the analysis of constellations as it enables a focus on the “underpinning organizing principles of a field that legitimates that field, and the knowers within it” (Maton, 2014, p.41). Two critical questions face actors (like teachers) whose practices are located within social fields. The first question is “On what grounds am I claiming insight or understanding?”, and secondly, “On what basis do I claim to be a...” particular actor or practitioner (Maton, 2007, p.87).

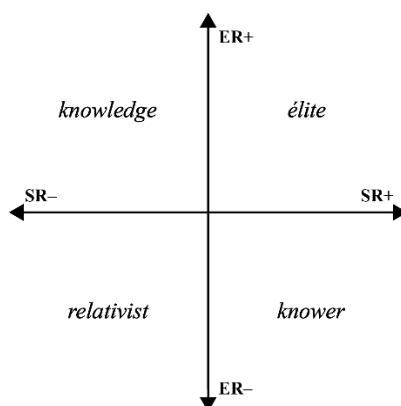
#### Epistemic and Social Relations

The principle of the Specialization dimension is that every practice is oriented towards something and is enacted by someone. It therefore sets up two relations: epistemic relations (between the practice and the object to which it is directed) and social relations (between the practice and those who enact it). Each of these can be stronger or weaker on a continuum and interact with one another to provide the codes that form the basis of legitimation (Maton, 2014).

Epistemic relations (ER) “concern legitimate objects of study and principles for generating knowledge” (Maton, 2016, p.118). Epistemic relations can be understood as knowledge principles and procedures in the field regarded as legitimate knowledge. The degree to which epistemic relations are emphasized in practice depends on how the practice relates to knowledge. In a constellation, stances that reflect a stronger epistemic relation would emphasise a principled position, a body of knowledge, a protocol or a theoretically informed idea. Where the knowledge base for teaching is downplayed, the view, position or practice would be characterized by a weaker epistemic relation (ER).

Social relations (SR) emphasise relations between a practice and the subject (actor) within a particular field (Maton, 2016). They emphasise the disposition, beliefs or attitudes of the knower as legitimizing a stance. In a constellation, the stances taken in relation to a dilemma in practice would be justified by personal views, dispositions and belief systems. Both the epistemic and social relation are understood within a knowledge practice or field, but these take a different shape in terms of the center of concern emphasized in each. The underlying principles of these practices generate a set of four codes that reveal the basis of legitimation as depicted on the diagram below

(Maton 2014):



**Figure 3: The Specialization Plane (Maton, 2014)**

But for the purpose of this study, I will only focus on two of the codes. The first code is (1) a knowledge code (where what the knowledge and procedures of the practice is emphasized), A knowledge code is made up of two relations: ER+ and SR-. (2) a knower code (where the experience, attributes, beliefs and values of the social actor are emphasized). A knower code is made up of two relations. A combination of ER- and SR+.

In this research, I will argue that various conceptions of teaching abound. Theoretically, it would appear that teaching as a practice has a contested knowledge base with weak internal grammar. This means that there is some contestation over the meaning of concepts. A concept such as Pedagogical Content Knowledge, PCK (Shulman, 1987) for example, has countless definitions even after decades of research. There is much debate about the extent to which teaching is a craft (best learnt by apprenticeship) or a knowledge-based practice (requiring the acquisition of a formal knowledge base to inform decision making in complex contexts of practice) (e.g. consensus across the sector about the knowledge base of teaching). The complexity of context, diverse learners, varying teachers' dispositions, are the reasons dilemmas are common in education and teaching. There is no universally agreed protocol or principles of how to resolve dilemmas. So much is contextually dependent, and the responses and ways in which dilemmas are resolved depend on the stances of the teachers involved. For this reason, LCT enables the basis of struggles for dominance between social actors to be revealed.

In other words, there might be significant differences in their knower gazes and those held by established teachers in the schools in which they begin their teaching career. Legitimation Code Theory allows the analysis of different gazes that underpin a social practice, such as teaching. I

hypothesize that while some teachers' practice is legitimized by different kinds of histories that have shaped their 'cultivated' gaze (a way of thinking, doing and being, in this case, as a professional teacher) (Maton, 2014, p.186). There are three grounds on which the knower gaze of new and established teachers may vary. First, the majority of established teachers qualified before the requirements of a university degree for employment admission. Therefore, the study will establish if there are differences in the extent to which new and established teachers foreground or background the epistemic relations when discussing common dilemmas they face in their everyday classroom practices. The second is the extent to which they have developed a gaze, as a result of being a member of a particular group with specific stances or imperatives, or a social gaze with particular ways of thinking about their practices arising from their membership of a group of significant others.

### Summary

In order to shed light on the claim that for 'every knowledge structure, there is also a knower structure', Maton (2007, p.88) developed legitimation codes to conceptualize the "generative principles underlying intellectual fields" beyond the mere descriptions of discursive practices in these fields. In a practice like teaching, cumulative learning is through the development of knowers – with a legitimate gaze, who know, think and behave in particular ways. The problem is that through different interactions in their formative years, teachers may have acquired very different knower gazes. These different knower gazes are embodied in the teachers' identities and inform the way they occupy the roles teachers take and the teaching practices they hone. Moreover, in the face of dilemmas, teachers can adopt different stances in relation to the existing contentions in practice.

# CHAPTER 4

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Chapter Three explored the fundamental conceptual underpinnings of the study, and introduced the analytic tools to be used with the data. The conceptual framework informs this chapter which details methods that will ensure rigour and quality in the research study. The research methodology outlined in this chapter sought to explore and address the following question:

What legitimating codes underlie how established teachers and NQTs in South African schools position themselves in common dilemmas that arise in education? To what extent may differences in these legitimating codes contribute towards potential for consensus and tensions between established teachers and NQTs?

The question requires the adoption of specific and suitable research methodologies, research design, data collection methods, and proper sampling to yield meaningful and useful findings. This chapter describes the methods and procedures employed in the research study to explore the research question.

### 4.1 Research Paradigm

The research was carried out in a tradition of critical realism which offers “a rationale for a critical social science, one that is critical of the social practices it studies” (Sayer, 2000, p.71). In the case of the current research study, it is imperative to establish a critical understanding of the teaching practice as a social space guided by particular social practices and actors. Critical realism creates an opportunity for the study to uncover the knowledge about the struggles for legitimacy between newly qualified and established teachers and possibly the power relationships that exist within school communities that are not easily seen through observation. It seeks to uncover the basis of struggle and contestation and contribute to a more balanced approach to induction - one that acknowledges NQTs as legitimate knowers in their own right. According to Scott and Morrison (2006, p.195), critical realism or critical realists make the following essential claims: “first, both a material and a discursive phenomenon has a real existence. Second, observations cannot be theory

independent, but this does not mean that they are theory determined. Third, discourse never simply describes an independent reality. Fourth, collection of sense data about the world is never adequate because the researcher has to intervene in the world in order to understand it. Fifth, notions of reality are determined by both current and evolving ways of understanding the world”. Through these fundamental aspects of critical realism, we can establish a focal understanding of the social setting that we are studying, while keeping in mind that there are possible realities that exist in the teaching practice regardless of the inquiry of the study or the awareness of the social actors that constitute the practice. Critical realism rejects a stance whereby views of practices are completely relativist and also rejects an absolutist view that knowledge is unconnected to the contexts in which it is produced. Proponents of critical realism contend that knowledge is not universal, absolute, or fluid (Maton, 2013a, pp.10-11), and that research can be used to understand and shape practices and the contexts in which they operate.

The study conducted, examined, through the lenses of critical realism, the possible underlying taken-for-granted assumptions about the professional teaching communities, taking in account the issues of the dominant views of teaching and voices that exist in schools and with an understanding that there are a variety of issues that need critical analysis. Critical realism provides a lens through which to understand teaching practice and teachers’ experience of it. The first is the real, the real is “whatever exists, be it natural or social” acknowledging the realities that exist in the teaching practice regardless of “an adequate understanding of its nature” Secondly, the need to understand their structures and powers...the actual refers to what happens if and when those powers are activated...empirical is defined as the domain of experience” in which the realities exist (Sayers, 2000, p.12). Knowledge and practices have structures that exist outside of an individual’s understanding of those structures – they have a real impact on the worlds of social practice – whether the actors understand them or not. Therefore, critical realism does not only point out social problems but works towards providing an opportunity to assess and address these problems.

## **4.2 Research Approach**

### **Qualitative Research**

The research was conducted through the qualitative research approach. Based on Creswell's (1994) view, qualitative research is described as "an unfolding model that occurs in a natural setting that enables the researcher to develop a level of detail from high involvement in the actual experience" (Williams, 2007, p.67). According to McEvoy and Richards (2006, p.71), the critical strength of qualitative methods, from a critical realist perspective, "is that they are open-ended. This may allow themes to emerge during an inquiry that could not have been anticipated in advance". Through the in-part use of a qualitative research approach in the critical realism paradigm, I intend to gather a more in-depth account of the variety of issues and to understand these findings for the purpose of transforming the social setting.

The qualitative approach provides an opportunity to objectively collect data through questionnaires to obtain an overview of the issues. The nature of the research study was dependent on an in-depth inquiry to ensure the development of an understanding of the interactions between newly qualified and experienced teachers in how they identify, and address challenges faced in the school context. Furthermore, the qualitative research approach unveils the struggle for legitimacy and the existing power dynamics newly qualified and established teachers in townships face daily, and where they need to extrapolate and explore how they challenge or address these power structures in the context of professional communities.

## **4.3 Research Design**

The design adopted for the research is a case study inquiry, which is qualitative in nature. According to Creswell (2008), research designs are a combination of philosophical underpinnings and worldviews, coupled with suitable methods and procedures fit for a specific study. In this study, the premise of the selection of the case study inquiry was based on the idea that this research design develops an "in-depth analysis of one or more events, settings, programs, social groups, communities, individuals, or other "bounded systems" in their natural context" (McMillan, 2012, p.279). Teaching can be regarded as a group of social actors engaged in the practice, and in-depth analysis is employed to gain a deeper analysis of some of the inherent issues and conflicting stances that exist between teachers. Moreover, the case study inquiry is employed within a critical realist

paradigm which will impact future research's potential to promote a transformation of the settings themselves.

According to Punch (2005, p.142), the central ideas of a research design are “the strategy, the conceptual framework, the question of who or what is to be studied, and the tools to be used for collecting and analyzing data”. There are different types of case studies options in research designs, but for this research study, an instrumental case study is selected to study a particular “entity, theme, or issue” (McMillan, 2012, p.281). This is a case study of NQTs and experienced teachers' interactions in a specific context on specific issues where they are both considered experts. In the subsequent section, I explore the context of the study briefly in order to justify the selection of the participants.

### I. Context of the study

Townships in the South African context are an enduring legacy of Apartheid's Group Areas Act (GAA, 1950) in which people occupying different race categories were required to live in areas segregated from people of other race groups. During South Africa's 25 years of democracy, suburban areas have become less segregated, but the townships have continued to be almost entirely inhabited by Black Africans. Some infrastructure and services in townships have been upgraded over the past 25 years, including electrification, refuse removal, and housing. Despite these infrastructure improvements, the continuing condition of the South African townships is characterized by ongoing poverty with an ever-increasing growth in the number of informal dwellings, growing unemployment rates especially amongst the youth, and poor access to health facilities. The legacy of under-resourcing of township schools and the poor social and economic conditions in these areas were coupled with lower subsidies for Black African children. As a result, many schools situated in townships areas still lack sufficient teaching and learning resources, adequate school infrastructure, effective school management and governance structures. These conditions discussed above have a direct impact on the school communities and school cultures that exist in these institutions of learning.

Convenient sampling allows for targeting specific individuals within the schools who are knowledgeable, but also easy to contact or to reach. The location of the school is in the Daveyton township in the Ekurhuleni North District, and the basis of the contexts comes after careful



consideration of the factors that directly impact on professional interactions of newly qualified and experienced teachers in township contexts as explained in the context of the study section.

#### 4.4 Selection of Participants

The selection of the study's participants was done through convenient sampling. Purposeful sampling is commonly used in research for the "identification and selection of information-rich cases for the most effective use of limited resources" (Patton, 2002). Purposeful sampling is deliberate, and the selection of participants is conducted with a clear goal in mind. Through purposeful sampling, the study was able to identify and select "individuals or groups of individuals that are especially knowledgeable about or experienced with a phenomenon of interest" (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). In the case of this study, the participants belong to a specific teaching community, they are suitable for the nature of the study, and the context in which they work bears a critical implication for the findings. The research study undertaken sets out to study the struggles for legitimacy through the interactions between newly qualified (with less than 3 years' experience) and experienced teachers (with at least 15 years of experience).

**The Sampled Participants Table**

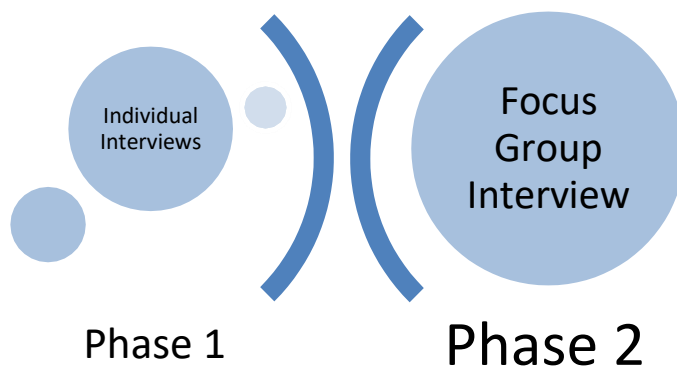
<b>Participants</b>	<b>Teaching Experience</b>	<b>School No of Participants</b>	<b>Criteria for selection</b>
Newly-Qualified	<3	3	Attended university during the #feesmustfall movement 2015-2017
Experienced	>15	3	Established teacher at the schools which has selected NQTs for the study.

<b>Participant Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Teaching Experience</b>	<b>Subject of Specialization</b>
NQT-A	Teacher	26	3	History
NQT-B	Teacher	24	2	History
NQT-C	HOD	28	3	Creative Arts
ET-A	HOD	49	17	Mathematics
ET-B	Teacher	48	15	EMS
ET-C	Teacher	50	24	Sciences

Data were collected in two stages. The first stage involved interviews with individual participants which was then followed by a focus group constituted by both newly qualified and established teachers. The study is a pilot case study with an intent to conduct an in-depth analysis of the interactions between a group of NQTs in a school and their experienced, established colleagues to possibly understand their struggles in practice. In the selection, the participants' categories such as gender were irrelevant, but of relevance was that the newly qualified teacher had been in higher education during the #feesmustfall, teachers' experience, and time from which teachers qualified. Furthermore, the positions of the NQTs and experienced teachers may be of interest but did not form the basis of the selection of the participants. The selection of the experienced teachers explicitly targeted senior teachers that have practiced for fifteen years and longer.

#### **4.5 Research Data Collection Methods**

In the collection of the data, three phrases were adopted by the researcher as shown in the following figure.



*Figure 4: Data collection process*

Researcher's data collection methods are the backbone of the research study and the "techniques selected depend on the research problem, the advantages, and disadvantages of each type, and practical constraints" (McMillan, 2012, p.146).

#### **I. Individual Interviews**

In this study, semi-structured individual interviews and focus group interviews were used. The purpose of the individual interviews was based on specific questions to understand their knowledge and experiences as newly qualified and established teachers and the challenges in confronting what they see as potentially problematic practices in their current school context.

Research interviews methods refer to "a form of data collection in which questions are asked orally, and subjects' responses are recorded, either verbatim or summarized" (McMillan, 2012, p.167). Research interviews offer an opportunity to collect in-depth information on the study concerned. According to McMillan (2012, p.167), "In face to face interviews, the interviewer can observe nonverbal responses and behaviours, which may indicate the need for further questioning to clarify verbal answers". The variation of the data collection methods (in this case, individual and group interviews, provides an opportunity to enhance the depth aspect of the study undertaken. These face to face interviews and focus group interviews make it possible for the interviewer to be present in the sessions which "tends to reduce the number of "no answers" or neutral responses, and the interviewer can press for more complete answers when necessary" (McMillan, 2012, p.167).

## **II. Semi-Structured Interviews**

There are three types of interview questions: structured (commonly used in quantitative studies), semi-structured (used in quantitative and qualitative), and unstructured (commonly used in qualitative research approaches) (McMillan, 2012). For this qualitative research study, we focus on semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews consist of “several key questions that help to define the areas to be explored, but also allow the interviewer or interviewee to diverge in order to pursue an idea or response in more detail” (Stewart & Chadwick, 2008). Semi-structured methods offer an in-depth view of the experiences of newly qualified and experienced teachers and provide a terrain where these participants can without restrictions, express their ideas and justify their assertions. The semi-structured interviews were structured using the questions, as shown in appendix 1.

## **III. Focus Group Interviews**

The second phase of the data collection used focus group discussions. In these sessions, I used three vignettes to pose common dilemmas to a mixed group of teachers, with both experienced and NQTs. The focus group discussion was to access how each group resolves dilemmas and how teachers position themselves as individuals and as a group. The focus group discussion helped reveal the shifts in individual dispositions when placed in a group where other people hold different and strong views. There was a strong need to avoid any potential manipulation of data collection processes, and the use of vignettes allowed for the establishment of limits during the focus group discussions

A focus group interview is a platform where participants can engage in a specific topic as provided by a researcher. According to Cohen et al. (2011, p.436), focus groups are characterised as “contrived settings, bringing together a specifically chosen sector of the population, previously unknown to each other to discuss a given theme or topic, where interaction with the group leads to data and outcomes”. The definition provided by Cohen et al. (2011) makes a specific claim that participants must be “previously unknown to each other”, however since this study uses purposeful sampling, participants must be deliberately selected with the intention of the research in mind.

## 4.6 Data Analysis

The purpose of data analysis is that research is to “discover patterns, ideas, explanations, and understanding” Specific data elements have to be organized and then synthesized to derive the patterns and ideas that will form the basis of the conclusions” (McMillan, 2012, p.297). Data analysis is a fundamental process of research that requires intensive development since the quality of the research is incumbent on this process. The data analysis in research is “done during the data collection as well as after all data have been gathered” (McMillan, 2012, p.295). For the data analysis, three stages were adopted to ensure a thorough process of analysis: empirical thematic analysis, organizational coding and analytic coding.

### *Thematic Analysis and Organizational Coding*

For the nature of this research study and the use of the Legitimation Code Theory (LCT), the data analysis required the development of a translation device, which provides an ‘external language of practice’ to allow movement between the empirical data and the conceptual framework. The first level of analysis begins with a thematic analysis, where the empirical data was coded into broad categories such as social identity, teacher identity, conceptions/characteristics of an ‘ideal’ teacher and teaching in this context, and problems in the context. The thematic analysis focuses on explicit themes and patterns that are inferred from the data. Moreover, Marks and Yardley, (2004, p.138) said

*Thematic analysis moves beyond counting explicit words or phrases and focuses on identifying and describing both implicit and explicit ideas. Codes developed for ideas or themes are then applied or linked to raw data as summary markers for later analysis, which may include comparing the relative frequencies of themes or topics within a data set, looking for code cooccurrence, or graphically displaying code relationships.*

In the use of thematic analysis, six stages of working with the data were employed as summarized in the table below:

**Figure 2**  
Summary of the six phases of thematic analysis



Source: (Braun & Clarke, 2006:35)

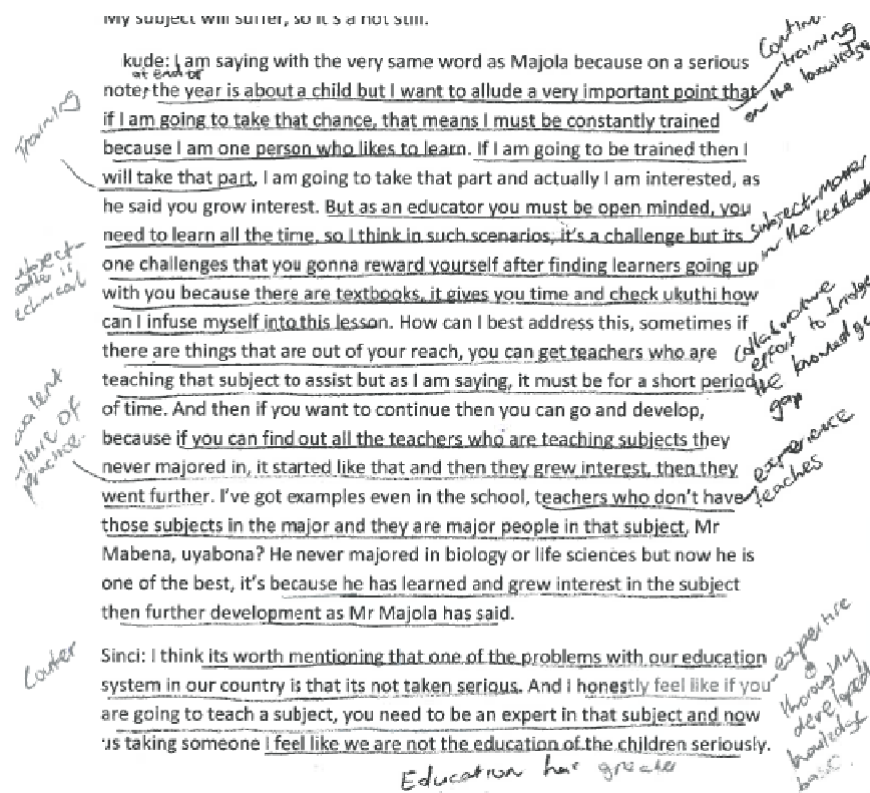
The initial stage of analysis involved a surface reading of the data in order to establish existing patterns emerging from the data. For instance, one of the patterns established in the individual interviews is the motivation that drives teachers' work and determination in their career. The next step was to identify all the data that relate to the established patterns and themes and to expound on these identified patterns (Aronson, 1995). For example, some of the participants expressed intrinsic and extrinsic factors that act as mandates in their teaching career. The next step involves amalgamating the related patterns into sub-themes to establish significant categories of the data. The purpose of developing the themes is to bring "together components or fragments of ideas or experiences, which often are meaningless when viewed alone" (Leininger, 1985, p.60). The themes are consolidated to develop a general idea of the participants' collective experience (Aronson, 1995). According to Maton and Chen (2016, p. 39), thematic analysis provides for the "arrangement of the coded data into a descriptive account using organizing frameworks".

The table below organizes the first level of coding into four major concepts that will capture the essence of the analysis.

**Table: Thematic categories from data are presented**

<b>Concepts</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Coding categories sorted under the concept</b>
Social Identity	Identity attributes of teachers as expressed in terms of their positions as social actors.	a) Transformation b) Justice c) Ideologies d) Culture
Teacher Identity	Identity expressed in terms of their attributes as professional teachers.	a) Teacher roles b) Expertise c) Experience d) Knowledge e) Specialization
Conceptions of Ideal Teaching Practices and Ideal Teacher	Prevalent teaching philosophies and conceptions about the criteria for an ideal teacher and ideal teaching.	a) The State - Policies and Regulations b) The School - Culture - Prevalent Practices - Community of Practice
Problems in the Context	Issues identified by teachers and where they are located in the profession.	a) Rapid Change b) Work Conditions c) Culture Dynamics d) Development e) State Regulation f) School Management and Governance

The six phases of thematic analysis can be collapsed to four major stages: Initialization phase, Construction, Rectification, and Finalization. Initialization involves three stages, that is “reading transcriptions and highlighting meaning units”, “coding and looking for abstractions in participants’ accounts”, and “writing reflective notes” (Vaismoradi, Jones, Turumen & Snelgrove, 2016, p.103). The initialization phase allows for the generation of ideas concerning the data through a close reading of the transcriptions. During the initialization stage, coding helps with the reduction of the data into manageable information. Construction consists of five different phases: “classifying”, “comparing”, “labelling”, “translating and transliterating”, and “defining and describing” (Vaismoradi et al., 2016, p.105). Rectification involves “immersion and distancing”, “relating themes to established knowledge”, and “stabilizing” (Vaismoradi et al., 2016, p.106). And then finalization consists of the stage of “developing the storyline”, which entails presenting a narrative and creating a coherent story which connects the themes.



Depiction of the initialization stage



Once the data for new and established teachers were clustered and categorized, the subsequent process was to look for constellations of meaning within the groups. After the establishment of constellations, concepts from the Specialization dimension of LCT were used to code whether they demonstrated a stronger or weaker epistemic relation (ER), and a stronger or weaker social relation (SR). The way in which various strengths of ER and SR interplay will enable the legitimizing code to the identified.

The similarities and differences in the responses of new and experienced teachers (and their rationale) may reveal insight into differences in the basis of legitimation that underpin the practices of each group. I hope to use this analysis then to hypothesize the basis on which each group legitimates their practices as teachers. The codes that emerge will enable me to identify the extent to which there may be clashes or code matches that are significant in the way that new teachers are positioned in their school context. The code clashes or matches are likely to impact the ways in which newly qualified teachers can adjust into their school settings, and affect the potential they bring for the transformation of the existing schooling practices.

### *Analytical coding*

In order to establish the organizing principles underlying the descriptive data on the context and practices and the constellations of meaning that emerge from it, the specialization code was adopted to develop an understanding of the strength variance of social relation and epistemic relations. In this case, social relations (SR) gave a window to understanding the knowledge practices in the contexts of actors. Epistemic relations (ER) allowed for developing an understanding of knowledge practices and what legitimates the 'known'.

Bernstein, who is the founder of code theory, defined a translation device as a tool that “constructs what is to count as an empirical referent, how such referents relate to each other to produce a specific text, and translate these referential relations into theoretical objects or potential theoretical objects” (Bernstein, 2000, p.133). Substantive theories give us the tools for surface description of the data. LCT, through the translation device, allows us to analyse the data in relation to what the research question is trying to establish. Moreover, a translation device helps

“clarify, systematize and codify the analysis that generate[s] [an] explanation [for the findings]. Second, as a translation device, the external language makes explicit the basis of this explanation. The device thereby makes research more accountable to other researchers in the field: they can use it to critically inspect and recreate the analysis. The external language acts as a kind of key or decoder to the analysis. Third, the device makes the outcomes of the study more available to other researchers in the field: not only can they build on the findings and the substantive theory, they can also adopt or adapt the external language for their own studies. Though likely to need mediation, it provides a valuable starting point that enables work to feed into one another. Last, the translation device, combined with the capacity of LCT concepts to explore the organizing principles underlying dispositions, practices and contexts, gives the study relevance beyond the specific topic” (Maton & Chen, 2016, p.46).

Through the use of the translation device, stronger social relations (SR+) are established as referring to an emphasis on the personal dispositions of a knower, which includes the teachers' emotional response, traits and everything to do with personal character, and stronger epistemic relations (ER-) as referring to a stronger emphasis of knowledge in the practice, in this case teaching. The weaker social relations [SR-] and the weaker epistemic relations [ER-] signify the downplaying of the relations previously discussed. Working with the data to establish the core categories and broader themes paved the way for the development of a translation device that uses organized data to establish the underlying principles of the teaching practice. Proceeding from the three stages of working with data is the development of a translation device (as depicted below) which offers an explanatory tool of analysis for the data.

#### **4.7 Data Interpretation**

The concepts of LCT allows for exploring the underlying organizing principles of the teaching practice as a field, and the translation device provides an external language for description. The following table depicts the translation device used in this study which is broken into social relations and epistemic relations. The translation devices focus on the aspects useful for the type of study and empirical data collected.

### Social Relation Translation Device

Code	Indicators	Empirical data Example
<b>Stronger Social Relations</b> SR +	Foregrounds dispositions, attitudes or beliefs of the teacher as important	<i>“Because I am one person who talks a lot, who likes explaining things you know, so I thought teaching will be perfect for me.”</i>
<b>Weaker Social Relations</b> SR-	Downplays teacher dispositions, attitudes or beliefs as being important.	<i>“The right channel must be followed, uyabona (isiZulu: for ‘you see’), if it’s only that child there must be a person who is going to contact the child”</i>

### Epistemic Relations Translation Device

Code	Indicators	Empirical data Example
<b>Stronger Epistemic Relations</b> ER +	Knowledge, policy and procedures are foregrounded.	<i>“Teaching changes and the curriculum changes now and then” “The school code of conduct and the policy must change. It’s nonsensical so that the kids can’t wear what they want to wear.”</i>
<b>Weaker Epistemic Relations</b> ER –	Knowledge, policy and procedures related to the practice is backgrounded.	<i>“As a teacher I have a duty to teach and I can’t focus 100% on his behavior its gonna take my teaching time and other admin stuff.”</i>

In relation to the translation devices depicted above, if the NQTs’ constellations have clearly bounded knowledge and procedure stances, but de-emphasized beliefs, dispositions and experiences then the findings would be coded as having stronger epistemic relations and weaker social relations (ER+, SR-). This would mean that NQTs tend to go into the knowledge code more often to think about dilemmas in their practice. Likewise, if established teachers’ constellations emphasis on beliefs, dispositions and personal experiences of the teacher, and de-emphasizes knowledge practices then the findings would be coded as having weaker epistemic relations and stronger social relations (ER-, SR+). This would mean that established teachers tend to go into the knower code more often to think about dilemmas in

their practice. Therefore the dominant groups in the practice might ensure that the struggle for legitimacy goes one way or the other – but there are possibilities of a code shift in cases where both NQTs and established teachers can establish a will to consensus – as is the African way of resolving dilemmas. Chapter six offers an application of the translation devices, and this brief outline shows how the findings are interpreted in line with the conceptual framework adopted for the study.

## **ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

As the researcher, I took into account the ethical aspects of the study by acknowledging that “gathering data from subjects or using data in which subjects are identified, ethics are concerned with what is right or wrong, good or bad, or proper or improper” (McMillan, 2012 p.17). This section considers the ethical aspects of this study and how I sought to attain the highest levels of ethical research in this study.

Ethical concerns were addressed in a number of ways. Ethical clearance for the study was obtained from the Wits University Ethics Committee (Protocol Number: H19/11/18) and the support and permission from the Gauteng Department of Education before the collection of the data. Secondly, information sheets and consent forms were given to each of the participants before the first interview and questionnaires. The information sheet explained the objectives and procedures of the study, the benefits of the study to the participant, as well as the participant’s rights to participate voluntarily and to withdraw at any time and this was followed by the signing of consent forms based on the information. Participants’ involvement in this research has been entirely voluntary. Therefore no form of coercion was used to force them to take part without their full consent. Participants have no direct benefits from the research, but it was clearly explained in the information sheet that research findings would be used to inform and contribute to the ongoing research on NQTs’ professional practice and their successful induction into South African schools and communities of practice.

The participants’ confidentiality and anonymity are integral in ethics consideration, and to ensure that there are absolutely no negative consequences to them or the school for taking part in the research study, pseudonyms have been used to refer to the participants and the school.

All information and data collected about participants have been kept confidential. Research data

collected during the research (electronic and material) has been safely kept and locked in an office based at Wits University. There was no discussion about participants in the research with any other participant or person outside the scope of this research. The researcher is bound by and adheres to the ethical boundaries that were given by the Wits University Ethics Committee, and the researcher has an obligation and responsibility to uphold these and adherence to these is a priority.

# CHAPTER 5

## TEACHERS AS KNOWERS

### DISPOSITIONS, ATTITUDES, ATTRIBUTES, BELIEFS, BEHAVIOURS

#### 5.1 Introduction

The literature review showed that the existing body of research attributes the struggles of NQTs entirely to the challenges of learning to assimilate into the dominant teaching practices. In contrast, this thesis has argued that there could very well be struggles for legitimation between newly qualified and established teachers. This may be attributed to the university-based teacher education programmes completed by young teachers and the social transformation imperative, condensed by the #FMF movement. The purpose of this chapter is to compare the axiological constellations held by the newly qualified and established teachers. Constellations that emerged from data are organized into three themes:

- Relations to knowledge for practice,
- Relations to power, authority and control,
- Relations to teachers' responsibility.

Their stances in relation to each of these themes are revealed from data drawn from individual interviews and the focus group discussions. The analysis is set up in terms of what is valued and not valued in the expression of their dispositions, beliefs, attributes, attitudes, and behaviour.

For each constellation from both newly qualified and established teachers has been considered, which should not be seen as setting a binary because there other underlying issues that take effect in how both established and NQTs uphold stances. Following the analysis of both the constellations of newly qualified and established teachers are the implications these hold for their working relations. Although condensation of meanings takes a form of epistemological and axiological constellations, the nature of the findings of the study focuses on axiological constellations. The constellations for both NQTs and established teachers take on an axiological condensation because of the dispositions that emerged

strongly extracts in relation to the research question.

## 5.2 TEACHERS' RELATIONS TO KNOWLEDGE FOR PRACTICE

The analysis of constellations came from the themes coded from the focus group discussion and interviews data. These capture the essence of gazes that both newly qualified and established teachers hold about knowledge in relation to the practice. Teachers have ways of thinking and being – developed as knower gazes. Gazes are shaped by experience and interactions in practice and reflect how teachers come to think about what is important in their practices. The analysis of the constellations will show that NQTs placed more value on teachers having formally-acquired knowledge in the subjects they teach. On the other hand, established teachers placed less value on formally-acquired knowledge in subject-matter. They tended to value more highly what teachers can learn on the job. In addition, management and subject leadership roles in teaching do not necessarily require subject knowledge expertise either. In addition, the analysis will show how NQTs responses were often informed by an imperative to ensure that learners had access to knowledge and learning, whereas the responses of established teachers tended to prioritise issues around their rights as State employees. The following discussion expands further on the positions of both the NQTs and established teachers in their relation to knowledge for practice.

### NQT's STANCE VALUE A KNOWLEDGABLE TEACHER

The findings reveal NQTs' strong stance on the requirement of knowledge and the integral role of formal education in a teacher's journey. One of the NQTs linked the importance of their background teacher-education as playing a key role in the practice. For NQT-C, theory acquired from teacher education is "*the foundation*" that could be used as a 'reference' point to make sense of the practice. Another cited the manner in which acquired ideologies such as "*black consciousness*" have formed his professional identity today (NQT-A). By positioning their teacher-education as a foundation, NQTs were simply advocating that every teacher must have this foundation to be able to teach.

NQTs felt that it is a prerequisite for teachers to have a strong knowledge background because this ensures that they can "*provide [learners] with quality education*" (NQT-A). Although NQTs felt that knowledge was essential for what makes a teacher, NQT-C believes that there is a room for "*personal*

*development*” in practice that can contribute to the teachers’ knowledge-building. However, NQT-B still maintains that *“it’s only about the knowledge that you have”*, which means that the willingness to develop within the practice is important. However, the knowledge attribute of a teacher was still prioritized. NQTs displayed a strong sense of what a teacher should possess: the knowledge of the subject that they teach. A lack of knowledge for a teacher was deemed as compromising the quality of education.

A careful analysis of the constellation reveals the idea of the knowledgeable practitioner as an attribute an ideal teacher must possess. For the NQTs, a lack of knowledge is detrimental to a view of what a teacher is or can be. Also, the NQTs conception of professionalism is underpinned by knowledgeable teachers’ qualities and their impact on the professional teaching practice and state of education. Last but not least, the consideration of the contextual circumstances in the idea of prioritization of knowledge reveals a more axiological constellation, in that it takes into consideration the moral duty of the teacher to teach the learners beyond the constraints imposed by the structure of the practice and regulations around it.

NQTs’ conceptualization of the idea of knowledge is informed and attached to its external nonacademic value, that is, social justice. A participant explains that a lack of the knowledge required in practice would mean *“perpetuating injustice”* (NQT-A) and that learners rely on a teacher to be taught. NQT B maintained that *“it would be an injustice to learners and the school”*. The idea here is that social justice for the learners can be guaranteed if the teacher possesses knowledge as a central component in practice. NQTs valorize subject content knowledge, but the possession of such knowledge does not only implicate teachers’ competencies, but it is positioned to signify *“doing what is right”* for the community and the school in its entirety. There is a critical understanding that separates the knowledge expertise versus the dissemination of information as NQT A argues that even though there are textbooks, he *“wouldn’t be able to teach the kids”* without having undergone training for that subject. The alignment of the teacher to knowledge foregrounds an epistemic relation but maintains an axiological condensation as the teacher remains at the centre of focus.

The NQT-A seems to suggest that there is a possible teaching practice of disseminating information in the name of teaching and labels such a practice as *“unknowing”*. By suggesting that there is a possible *“perpetuating”* of *“injustice”*, NQTs in this study give the impression that there is injustice taking



shape in the schooling system. Displaying a consistent view of social justice through knowledge is NQT-C who strongly positions ‘expertise’ by stating that he “*wouldn't take*” up a teaching position that he does not “*have enough knowledge on*”. Knowledge emerges as a central attribute to teaching, but here the participant takes a further step to bring into question the depth of the knowledge a teacher possesses, which has far-reaching consequences for teachers who take up subjects in which they were not trained. In the matter of depth, NQT-A emphasizes that “*teachers don't read*” and that their disengagement with books results in teachers lacking “*basic information of things*”. In this case, the NQTs express the concern for lifelong learning in a teacher’s professional trajectory.

The valorization of reading as part of the attributes of excellent teachers suggests that teacher- education training is not enough, but that teachers must continuously develop themselves. In support of this view is the NQT-B who asserts that a “*university program is not entirely based on what is happening in schools*”. Therefore the teacher must expose themselves to knowledge beyond that which exists in their interaction with learners and from their teacher-education. Moreover, the element of ‘interest’ emerges as a drive that complements the pursuit of knowledge. As NQT-B explains that “*It's not only about the knowledge that you have to learn of that subject, but it's also about the interest [in the subject]*”, the suggestion here implicates the inclinations a teacher holds towards a particular subject. The newly qualified teacher could be pointing to one of the many aspects that influence the success of a teacher in learning and acquiring more knowledge, but the idea of interest comes as a secondary idea to formal teacher education. In the argument, a strong social relation is presented, which valorizes the ‘interests’ of teachers in the pursuit of the development of knowledge.

NQTs in the study also attribute the underemphasis of the knowledgeable teacher to the problems inherent in the education system and the teaching practice. One of the participants in the study explains

*one of the problems with our education system in our country is that it's not taken seriously. And I honestly feel like if you are going to teach a subject, you need to be an expert in that subject [NQT-A].*

In understanding the status of the South African education system and the teaching profession status, NQT-A is convinced that downplaying the importance of knowledge impacts negatively on the status of both. The idea here is that part of fixing the inherent challenges of the system is the recruitment of knowledgeable teachers who are experts in their subjects. However, the suggestion does not end there - the newly qualified teacher further implicates the professional nature of the schooling system and its

employees. The emphasis of the second part of the implications is captured in a participant's emphasis that the *"suggestion is problematic if it is a professional government school"* (NQT-A). The suggestion here is that a professional school should not compromise on the knowledge requirements for candidate teachers.

The newly qualified teacher's comment positions the school not only as a government school but a 'professional' government school. The implication of the word 'professional' in this case signifies the ideal that underpins professional spaces - which is the strict control in terms of regulation and legitimation of subjects. Therefore, the suggestion is explicit here: that a professional school should employ teachers that are knowledgeable and experts in their subjects if it needs to retain its status as a professional government school. One of the central components that comes from the newly qualified teacher's comment is the idea of professionalization of the teaching profession, which is concerned with the status of the profession. The argument here is that if the school bears a professional status, then the processes of employment should follow suit. It is important to emphasize that NQTs in the study were aware of extreme cases that call for what they regard as extreme measures.

NQTs in this study also felt that there should be a critical interrogation of situations for the reconsideration of some of the stringent requirements for selection. In some cases, NQTs expressed that there are extraordinary situations that call for the relaxation of the existing strict criteria and focus on what is best for the child in a specific situation. NQT-C describes that in some abnormal circumstances that call for any teacher to step up regardless of expertise, he will have to *"take it just for putting the learners in front"* and if he struggles to teach *"they will understand that this guy is actually trying to help, there is no option"*. In NQT-B, a participant says *"if ever I don't take that responsibility the learners will remain without a teacher, that can't happen in my name"* and that he will *"teach a subject that"* he *"did not specialize in for the sake of the learners"*. NQT-A maintains that compromising the standards can be warranted if the school has *"went all the way out"* to find an expert teacher in the subject. This means that NQTs believe that a teacher can learn how to teach on the job, but only in the circumstances that are extraordinary. However, it must be stated clearly that NQTs do not regard learning on the job as developing 'expertise' in subject knowledge, as they maintain that this can only be acquired through a teacher-programme.

The compromise on the importance of knowledge as a teacher's required attribute is considered as a last resort, which depends on the contextual setup and the challenges faced in that particular context.

Even though specialization and having a knowledgeable teacher is downplayed, NQTs call for an interrogation of the situation and circumstances surrounding it and a response according to the contextual circumstances. The use of the word *'if'* and *'went all the way out'*, signifies a unique case. These statements emphasize a stringent control of the way in which things are done in a professional school and practice. The compromises are permissible at a point of no return when the school has explored all other options. All in all, any teacher is better than no teacher in situations where a knowledgeable teacher cannot be found.

#### KNOWLEDGE DOWNPLAYED IN TEACHING AND MANAGEMENT ROLE: ESTABLISHED TEACHERS' STANCE

Unlike the NQTs' view of knowledge as to what makes a teacher and a vehicle for social justice, established teachers hold a different view of knowledge and the purpose it serves. In the analysis of the established teachers, there are two parts that came out strongly: subject knowledge as aspect - one can learn on the job and knowledge is considered insignificant for a subject head management role. Established teachers express the view that any teacher can acquire subject content knowledge on the job and this kind of reasoning devalues the role of teacher education and many aspects that make up a teacher. Established teacher A reveals that when he came into the teaching profession teachers were required to *"just know how to solve for x"*, which gives an impression that there is procedural knowledge on how to obtain the correct answer and professional didactics of teaching were less valued. There is a fundamental devaluing of the role of depth of knowledge as an attribute of a teacher. Instead, the participant reveals that the basic skill of the subject for teaching was all that was required.

Established teacher A's view on the previous requirements on becoming a teacher highlights the most significant difference between the recent teacher-education developments versus the way in which the established teachers became teachers. Established teacher A's view has implications on the importance of pedagogical content knowledge as a requirement to be able to teach, which in teaching methodologies, is often linked to the subject matter. In support of the view above, established teacher B highlights that triviality of expertise in their work by highlighting that there are teachers in his school *"who are teaching subjects they never majored in"* and *"they grew interested, then went further"*. Established teacher B maintains that *"there are textbooks"* and for teachers who have not been trained in specific subjects, there is time to *"infuse"* themselves into the subject. Also, established teacher A supports the idea by stating that *"if there are things that are out of your reach"* a teacher can *"get teachers who are teaching that subject to assist"*. Established teachers understand that any qualified

teacher must have some degree of subject content knowledge to be able to teach. However, their understanding positions knowledge as a means to an end and something that can be developed over time. In their argument, established teachers place no stringent conditions on who can teach what in a school setting, which means any teacher can learn the subject on the job. A teacher that shows interest in a particular subject can be developed in that subject to be able to teach it.

Several aspects emerged from the established teachers' comments. the first was that teachers need not be subject specialists in the subject they teach. The second was the valorization of in-service development as a means for acquiring subject content knowledge - this means that teachers who are not specialists in a subject can learn on the job. This is highlighted by the established teachers' insistence that there are teachers in their own context who were never trained in the subjects they teach, but that they have managed to be good at those subjects. There is a suggestion that teachers can take up the challenge of teaching a subject of non-specialization and develop the required interest as time goes on. The third aspect that emerged was the view that teachers can learn the subject competence on the job, by experience and not necessarily through conceptual means, which devalues the need for a teacher to go through some teacher education programme in preparation for in-service teaching.

The third emerging aspect is that a collaborative effort towards the teaching of subjects can bridge the content knowledge gap in a teacher who takes up a subject of non-specialization. The third aspect places coincidence in the pooling of knowledge of colleagues. Subject-matter is seen in terms of technicalities instead of the depth and complexity of the subject. Through the findings, we find that there is a hidden element of continuous learning that the established teachers embrace and valorize. However, while valorizing continuous learning and development, there is an undervaluing of professional regulation efforts put in place to ensure that a degree of professionalism is maintained. To indicate that established teachers are well aware of the implications of their actions and decisions, established teacher A makes reference to one of the regulation mediums that lingers in the back of his mind as he makes the decision.

*"I know following the labour relations I am not supposed to be doing that [teaching without the required subject content knowledge], but if I am doing it for the child, I would always want to learn."*

The comment above is similar to that raised by the NQTs that there are warranted conditions that push

the teachers to resort to teaching subjects they were not trained in. The difference between the newly qualified and established teachers is that the former see subject knowledge as a precondition, and established teachers see it as something that can be acquired on the job retrospectively and by the experiences of having to teach. In a consistent view, Established teacher A says that he has *“learned quite a lot from [his] colleagues”* and this strengthens the argument of collaborative practice. Established teacher C says that *“as a teacher, you must be a lifelong learner, you must be a learner as a teacher, you must learn from your colleagues, from the professionals and from the learners as well”*. Both established teachers C and A express a strong reliance on the collective nature of the teaching practice and the collaborative practices that take place.

The positions of established teacher C and A about learning from colleagues acknowledge the narrative of the collective nature of the teaching profession, which implies that teachers share approaches, methods, and teaching practices amongst themselves. The legitimacy of established teachers, therefore, resides in the collective experience and wisdom of the community of practice. Moreover, established teachers display the willingness to collaborate with the new teachers, who are positioned as having new ideas. The detriment with such positions is that established teachers are not specific about the extent to which they learn from colleagues in their school. Yet they maintain that learning to teach and the development within the practices are not developed in a vacuum. Instead, a teacher must seek the exchange of ideas with other teachers. A concern remains on the uncertainty of how learning amongst teachers as professionals unfold, and whether this kind of learning can ever amount to the value of teacher education and teacher specialization in a subject.

Teaching expertise in ensuring that the purpose of teaching and learning objectives are met, and that the status of the teaching practice be improved should be at the centre of the framing of the teachers work. Yet it is evident that for established teachers in this study, the importance of the formal acquisition of knowledge for teaching in a subject is not the priority. These comments do not only implicate the epistemological concerns but compromise the idea of a professional teaching practice since anyone who has an interest in a subject can teach. The suspension of knowledge expertise for teaching reveals that established teachers valorize the integrality of a teacher. As a result, the constellation downplays the precondition of having subject knowledge for teaching. It reveals an axiological charge since established teachers rely on the community of practice to ensure that there is success in that role.

Heads of academic departments in schools carry a huge responsibility for guiding both new and established teachers by offering expertise in developing strategies for teaching, assessment, and developing teachers in their subjects. In responses to the question about whether, when asked to do so, established teachers would lead a department that falls outside their subject specialization, established teachers' comments reveal that knowledge is not essential in heading up a department. Established teacher B vehemently claims that "*leading the department*" for a discipline one is not trained for is doable. And established teacher A said that "*management has to do with working together*" so if offered the opportunity he would do it. Established teachers' responses to the vignette was not concerned about the amount of work they would have to do, the complexity of the job, or the full job description. Instead, their focus was on the collective nature of the teaching practice, learning, and what they thought management meant.

Similar to the disregard of expert knowledge for teaching, established teachers regard the management role as not being an intellectual duty. The participants' comments position management as though it is a generic leadership pursuit which does not require any specific knowledge-base. The established teachers regarded subject expertise to be irrelevant in leading an academic department. Rather, a set of generic management skills was needed for the role. The intellectual leadership such as expertise in the subject content knowledge, moderation of the teachers' work, development and review of subject policies, training the teachers under the department, module design and assessment designs were not considered as part of what a subject head could (or should) do. All of the aspects listed above require the head of the department to possess expertise in the knowledge to ensure that all decisions and actions are informed.

Established teachers hold the view that managing other professionals is easy, and this is probably due to the different dynamics in teaching itself and leading the department. One can be tempted to analyze the established teachers' understanding of the management role as having to do with the accountability structure in schools and the matter of shared responsibility. Established teacher A expressed that any teacher can 'learn leadership skills' because it has to do with 'managing other professionals' and that it is easier to 'manage adults than teaching learners'. Unlike teaching the learners where the performance of the learners predominantly falls on the shoulders of the teacher, the management of teachers seems to promise a safer place as teachers in the department also bear some degree of responsibility and accountability in the performance of the department. It could be that established teachers are more

inclined to leading a department compared to teaching learners because of the lack of expertise in the knowledge required for teaching reflects on their incompetence, while the lack of expertise in the managing role falls on every professional member of the department.

Deducing from the comments such as that of established teacher A who says “so if there are people that we need to manage or lead that I would do it”, it would seem that management is seen as a technical day to day running of the department, which includes a checklist or tick box and keeping tabs on teachers’ work in general. If this is how the established teachers conceptualize the management role, it would be fair to assume that this is a prevalent practice in their school - what they have had to learn about people who lead the departments and what their work entails. Moreover, it would seem that in the running of the department, the knowledge aspect is less emphasized, and the heads of the departments do not display the attributes of knowledge expertise in their management roles. For this second part of the constellation, which shows that established teachers do not take a management role as an intellectual one, the constellation is axiologically charged. The constellation is concerned about relations amongst members of the practice rather than the complexities of the role of management and the many aspects this involves.

## **IMPLICATIONS FOR NEWLY QUALIFIED AND ESTABLISHED TEACHERS’ WORKING RELATIONS**

Knowledge is the fundamental underpinning of the teaching profession when one considers policy developments regarding the requirements for teacher education qualifications. But the manner in which knowledge is perceived and embraced in practice bears a different relation to professional requirements. The newly qualified and established teachers in this study both work under the new dispensation of policy, but the views they hold about the relationship between knowledge and teaching practices appear to be fundamentally different. NQT participants tended to position subject knowledge as a precondition for whomever becomes a teacher and that expertise in subject knowledge results in the offering of quality education and consequently social justice. Established teachers in the study tended to believe a teacher can learn subject expertise on the job. Furthermore, leading a subject department is not an intellectual or necessarily subject-specialist work, therefore it requires the Head of Department to possess only generic leadership skills. On the issue regarding teachers’ relation to knowledge for practice, we can draw from the consolidated responses that different dispositions, values and beliefs inspire the basis from which teachers position their understanding about the importance of knowledge in practice. Consequently, these teachers embrace different clashing mandates in the profession. If we

draw closer to the construct of these comments about personal attributes, these seem to reflect the constellations that emerged from both newly qualified and established teachers, respectively. The purpose of the link drawn between the constellations discussed above is not to create an impression that there is causality between personal attributes disposition and constellations but the hope in exposing some underlying values that may be of guidance.

The constellations that emerged from both the newly qualified and established teachers vary in the way in which they are constructed, but both are strongly axiological. Common in both the newly qualified and established teachers' constellations is the centralization of the object of service - a learner. The learners hold the highest status in how they construct the work teachers do and obligations that they must fulfil. For the NQTs, the emphasis was placed on the issues of social justice, citing the background the learners came from and positioning the school or education as the only hope to counter the effects of injustices. One of the NQT participant's describes the particular relation he has towards the learners by saying *"I happen to be coming from the same society as well, I grew up in the same society that these kids come from and I can relate to a lot to them."* Such a comment reveals the underlying influences of the dispositions NQTs uphold, which reveals the special privileges of shared experience with the learners and the context in which they teach.

By positioning the society as the common ground, NQTs valorize a privileged gaze that can only be assumed by members of the practice who have experienced similar challenges in the referred to society (township). Consequently, the constellation on the issue of the importance of knowledge or a knowledgeable teacher, emphasizes the fulfilment of the requirement of expertise as a way to achieve social justice. Therefore, for a newly qualified teacher, redressing the issues imposed by socio-contextual challenges from where the learners come from requires a knowledgeable teacher who through teaching from expertise, can offer quality education. Commonly, the established teachers also position the learner as the most important person in the school community and in their work. However, for the established teachers, the way to render service to the learner is not strictly regulated and therefore, anyone who possesses the will to teach, can learn on the job.

Established teachers do not explicitly ground their decisions in their work on social justice or any social agency issue but recognize that processes of the school must run regardless of contextual challenges and policy regulations. In contrast, the newly qualified teacher allows for exceptions in terms of the aspect of operational functions. Standards and strict regulations can only be compromised when the



school has explored a range of options. Therefore, while established teachers believe any teacher can learn on the job, NQTs believe any teacher is better than no teacher only in extreme cases where all options have been exhausted. There is a strong sense of professionalism that emerges from the NQTs' epistemic concerns, and this is backgrounded in the established teachers' axiological concern that also possesses a degree of an epistemic ideal. There is an obvious difference in stances in that NQTs valorize knowledge as part of the attributes of a teacher over operational functions while established teachers valorize operational functions over the requirements of knowledge as specified by regulatory policies. The clash is located in established teachers' legitimacy that resides in the collective of the social community, against the NQTs' more principled theoretical and policy insights – with stronger epistemic relations (ER+). If the clash in aspects both newly qualified and established teachers valorize cannot be reconciled, there are potential tensions that arise in the working relations of these teachers. The important part to note also is the established teachers' poor understanding of what management and leadership entail. This could result in NQTs getting frustrated with the leadership by established teachers who are heads of departments if their leadership does not provide the intellectual leadership that they would expect. Also, it could lead to established teachers thinking that NQTs are rebellious if they refuse to teach subjects they have never specialized in. The following section discusses the relations to power, authority and control.

### **5.3 Relations to Power, Authority, And Control**

Teachers act from different grounds, and the comments about the issue of authority revealed that newly qualified and established teachers' actions and decisions are informed by different reasons. In response to a case describing a situation where teachers had to make decisions or act in the context of the classroom, newly qualified teachers expressed an authority which was informed by policy, and established teachers expressed an authority which was informed by personal discretion and the role of policy was underplayed. The discussion of both teachers' relation to power, authority and control are significant to establish similarities or differences in the manner in which newly qualified and established teachers act and what informs their actions. Addressing this concern takes us a step closer towards addressing the objectives of this research study in terms of understanding the struggles between the teachers.

#### **AUTHORITY INFORMED BY POLICY: NQTs' POSITION**

The discussion in this section will look into the NQTs' constellation on their stance on policy which reveals their call for radical policy transformation, their questioning of existing school policies, and their call for an authority that is informed by policy. The subsequent discussion will focus on the established teachers' views which take on more conservative stances regarding policy transformation, and where they argue that policy change must be triggered by major events. They emphasise personal discretion and drawing legitimacy from the collective nature of practice.

The findings reveal that NQTs face challenges in the schooling system, and the manner in which they address these challenges is fundamental in establishing the aspects that inform their actions. The NQTs' sense of authority in making decisions and taking actions in their classrooms seems to be informed by school policies and the existing regulatory policies. In their expression of the importance of school policies and its powers, NQTs begin by calling for a review of the school policies for the purposes of using the policies to guide the school community members. Evidence will reveal that NQTs' regard for policies is grounded in the inherent nature of the policies. That is, these policies serve as guiding documents.

NQT-C strongly argues that *“we must change the school code of conduct and the policy”*. This position is charged with a claim that the existing school policies are *“nonsensical”*. Additionally, NQT-C and -A emphatically argue that in terms of controlling and regulating the learners, the current school policies are *“oppressive and patriarchal”* and they are not *“relevant to time”* and that the school needs to *“move with time”*. In proposing policy change, NQT-A reveals that the transformation of policy has been stagnant and that teachers have to sit in *“meetings that are not progressive”* in attempts to address the concern. Informed by a transformation agenda, NQTs' actions can be understood as being a political act. NQT-B and -C were consistent with the call for policy change, arguing that *“policies are outdated”* and that the policies must not be reviewed or revisited, instead, the school should *“ban all of them and start afresh”* and that there is a *“need to change everything”*. The call for the transformation of the policies at school level is proposed as a way to deal with the current societal norms and culture that permeates, and informs the school order. These policies are labelled *“outdated”* because of the current societal status quo, which determines the boundaries within which every member of the society can act.

NQTs noted the limits of the authority of the teacher and school policies in the determination of what learners can or cannot wear at school. The call for the transformation of the policy valorizes and

recognizes policy as a way of ensuring the freedom of expression of the learners and works as a guideline for school members' actions. NQTs' expressed principle moves away from collective experience and wisdom of the community as a basis on which decisions must be made. Clearly, there is a clash between ensuring that the constitutional rights of learners are protected and ensuring that there is some kind of authority in the school. This reveals that the NQTs' dispositions foreground epistemic relations in terms of the position of school policies. These are viewed in light of the learners and other members of the school community. NQTs in the study express a strong position in relation to existing oppressive, patriarchal and sexist systems in the school policies. Newly-qualified teachers believe that schools should have specific policies that align the way in which the school is run to current social orders.

Building on the argument of the limitations of authority, NQT-A asserts that *'you can't in 2019 tell kids...'* what and what not to wear. The reference to the year suggests that the practices in the schooling system must meet the demands of the societal trends by adjusting policies to meet the current realities in society and the school. Therefore, although schools are historically considered as places for building discipline and that the use of school uniform is part of the aims to address this aspect, NQTs want this order destabilized for the sake of the new social order where self-determination takes precedence. However, by foregrounding school policies as guiding documents, NQTs recognize that 'self-determination' must be exercised within the confinements of regulation.

NQTs raise pertinent questions and concerns about the policies of the school, but this is not just questioning the policy or raising concerns. NQTs appear to be delegitimising the existing policies of the school. By posing the question *"Are the policies that we currently call the school policies of this school"*, NQT-A's use of the phrase *"we currently call"* suggests that existing policies hold no authority. NQT-C affirms the de-legitimization of the existing policies by citing a contextual shortcoming of school policy in the *"regulation of haircuts at the school"*. Although this is a case in point, it is worth noting that NQTs put into question the entire school's policies, and by so doing, NQTs seem to think about the other imminent dilemmas that may need resolutions and consistent guiding documents such as policies.

In the earlier suggestion, which stated that the process to review the school policies was underway, the NQTs felt that the entire process was all talk and no implementation. Here we see the valorization of pragmatic work and accountability in the transformation of the school policies and the push for much-

needed action such as implementation. The NQTs; consideration of and patience for existing policies prove to be running out, to the degree that NQT-A exaggeratedly suggests that *“the school policies are over four decades old”*. The exaggeration highlights the urgency that NQTs are placing on the process of transformation. Although there have been efforts to discuss the much-needed changes in the school policies without materialization, the NQTs make a bold declaration about the existing school policies which require a radical transformation. NQT-C says that the school must *“ban all of them and start afresh”* and change everything about the current policies. NQT-C here is calling for a total overhaul of the existing policies, arguing that reviewing or revisiting the existing ones is not helpful.

The call for a completely fresh start is evidently influenced by the lack of progress from the standing discussions in the school about the policies. NQTs believe that the total termination of the existing school policies and developing new ones will fix the situation. Therefore the call for a transformation of the school policy is not a moderate or conservative call but a radical move on the transformation of policies. Although the NQTs call for a radical transformation of school policies, NQT-C goes on to cite a famous saying about their calls for transformation: *“freedom without responsibilities is a key to self-destruction”*, but in so doing, the message is that the statutes that form part of the transformed school policies must be regulated. The regulation of transformation efforts is meant to keep order in the school. The advocacy for a radical transformation of the school policies to inform the practices in the school and knowledge is foregrounded in the argument, but it is in relation to the members of the community. NQTs’ constellation takes a strong epistemic relation and is axiologically charged.

Building on the argument about the transformation of the policy, NQTs’ call for the radical transformation of the school policies is for the purpose of guiding the actions of learners, teachers and parents and eliminating marginalizing behaviours. NQT-C and -A believe that transformed school policies are *“hundred per cent guiding and they are supposed to be followed”* as long as *“they don’t go against what is in the constitution”*. Additionally, NQT-A extends the powers of school policies to the regulation of parents’ involvement, arguing that parents *“need to listen and follow policies”* and that schools *“are ungovernable”* because of the stakeholders' failure to follow policies. Referring to the authority located in the policies, the superiority of school policies can be deduced from bold statements such as *“policies are hundred per cent guiding”* (NQT-C), which highlights the highest regard placed on the guiding documents. These views imply that teachers and learners have some degree of autonomy to act in the school, but the actions must be in line with the school policies in place. In this case, the

NQTs' constellation speaks to the issue of adherence to the school policies and here their comments are concerned about how the actors in the field position themselves in relation to the school policies. By centralizing the actors in relation to the school policies, the constellation maintains an axiological charge.

NQT-B says that school policies will be beneficial in determining the "*admission criteria*". NQT-B also suggests that even though policies must be in line with the current social views and culture, the school can use the "*policy to protect itself from external influences*". NQT-B seems to adhere to the historical view of the school, that even though schools reflect the society or community, the school must build discipline structures. Consistent with this view, NQT-A suggests that school policies should not be compromised to "*accommodate the changes*", but changes must be recontextualized to fit into the existing school policies and order. The robust call for parents to adhere to policy suggests that the parent's involvement in the school affairs has been that of uninformed interference and therefore, the updated school policies would ensure that parents know their boundaries. The findings in the study also suggest that there have been efforts that seek to address the parents' interference, but the efforts have not materialized. Comments such as "*Parents they also need to listen and follow policies, and read them and understand them*" (NQT-C) is the deliberate suggestion that there are parents acting outside existing policies, but another hidden dimension of this comment reveals that some of the parents may be using those very policies to get involved.

The criticism of the school policies and NQTs' calls for radical transformation appears to be motivated by a need to have a functional school where no teacher acts on his/her personal discretion, and that the same standards regulate everyone's authority and powers. The NQTs' location of authority in the school policies intends to standardize the function of the actions of school community members.

#### AUTHORITY INFORMED BY PERSONAL DISCRETION: ESTABLISHED TEACHERS' POSITION

Established teachers' constellation regarding the teachers' authority in the school is grounded in the personal discretion of teachers as individuals and in some instances as a collective. Established teachers in this study expressed a strong sense of personal reliance in making decisions and acting in the school. A myriad of factors informs the personal discretion that underlie the teachers' authority in the school, and in this case, established teachers draw on various aspect to justify their actions and decision.

One of the major highlights of the established teachers' position on the transformation of the guiding

statutes done at school is the one that claims that *“people who have managed to be very conservative in this life are the most successful people”* (established teacher C). Established teacher A argues that *“rather than changing the policy of the school”* when there are dilemmas, efforts should be put to *“find out if that is accepted by everybody”*. The consideration of every actor in the school community explicitly foregrounds social relations. Established teacher A concedes to the call for a transformation of policies but maintains that change must be triggered by a major event, then the school can *“review it, change if it’s necessary”*. Established teacher A says that it depends on the school and *“the people within”* meaning that *“if there are teachers”* like the ones participating in the study, change can be actualized.

The established teachers’ position to change displays the outright moderate view on the transformation of school policies, which is fundamentally different from the NQTs’ stances. The discussion of the two constellations will come later. Established teacher A begins by saying *“rather than changing the policy”*, and this statement somehow indicates a cautious approach to matters relating to the policy transformation. The change or transformation of the school policies is considered as a last resort in fixing issues that happen in the school. The position on the cautious change of policy proposes that instead of changing the policy, teachers are the ones who are supposed to change.

The idea of waiting for *“something that triggers it”* (established teacher A) is used as a flag for action, and established teachers still do not see the currently existing challenges as a warrant for changing the school policies. The condition can only leave one wondering about what events could warrant a change in school policies. There is an acknowledgement that school policies do change, but this also reveals that the change in school policies is not normalized, and therefore, something significant must happen for the school to undertake this process. The argument comes up from the comment *“but the facts remain we need to look on the policy of the school, review it, change if it’s necessary”* (established teacher A), which still emphasizes that the review or the change of school policy must be undertaken only when it is necessary. Commonly, the concern still arises as to what could warrant ‘necessary’ and who judges the merits of changing the school policy.

In consideration of what warrants the change of policy, the established teachers view the stagnation in the transformation of school policies as attributed to the lack of a collective will from teachers in practice on raising the issue. Therefore, the call here is that teachers in the school must collectively

desire to change the school policies for the policies to actually be changed. However, in as much as the declaration by the established teachers suggest that it is possible to change the school policies, one must take cognizance of the fact that there can never be a hundred per cent commitment to a cause and therefore this view suggests that the majority of teachers in the school do not want school policies to be changed. Evident to this argument is the way in which the established teacher positions the teachers in the discussion by saying “*if there are teachers that are stimulus like the teachers you are talking to now*” (established teacher A), which means that other teachers may not express the position of the teachers involved in the study which can set back the intentions of transforming the school policies.

Debunking the notion of reliance on the school policies, Established teacher B argues that teachers cannot ‘wait for the policy of the school’ to exercise their authority. The suggestion is that teachers must begin by finding other ways to address the problem without touching the policy. It is further suggested in the comment “*don’t wait for the policy because really the situation says now, you are facing a situation*” (established teacher B), that the authority of transformed school policies can take effect at a later stage, which means that teachers must make their decisions based on the standing situation. It is evident that even though the school policies are referred to as ‘guiding documents’, the established teachers lack this kind of relation towards the documents. Instead, the authority and action must come from the teacher who is facing a problem at hand, and is expected to construct the best way possible for addressing the problem. The challenge with this type of approach is that the authority placed at the hands of the teacher’s discretion can create inconsistencies in practice.

On the other hand, the established teachers’ constellation on collective and individual personal discretion proved to be limited by the principles that reflect the society. Established teachers recognize the importance of considering the social order that exists in the society, of which the school is reflective, in the decisions taken in the school. In the analysis of the limitations, the arguments show that personal discretion is not as autonomous as it is framed. Established teacher C argues that “*gone are those days*” when certain things were allowed in the school based on gender-classification, and this comment is in relation to the degree of authority a teacher has. Established teacher C suggests that everything “*should be decided in line with the constitution of the country*”, meaning that if a teacher or the school exercise their authority, it must not trample on the rights of the learners.

Although personal discretion is positioned as important, this part of the analysis reveals that personal discretion is tightly controlled. There is a display of the consideration of the existing social norms that

dictate how a teacher or school must exercise authority. There is an idea that schools or teachers cannot trump existing social norms and orders, and therefore a teacher's authority must subject itself to the ruling social norms. This also means that schools cannot run independently of the existing social orders and norms, which creates a complex terrain for constructing the school culture through school policies because every aspect of the schooling system must reflect the consideration of such norms. Hence the reference to modern life and the way in which a teacher cannot just impose rules' changes the schools may construct. Established teachers data in relation to the issue of the authority of a teacher in the classroom reveal that concerns about policy and the authority of a teacher being grounded on personal discretion are both strongly axiological.

Instead of making reference to the micro regulation mediums like school policies, established teachers' concerns make reference to subjecting the authority of a teacher to the macro regulation mediums like the constitution of South Africa. The constitution of the country contains a myriad of stipulations and specifications of different pillars of the country. Although the constitution informs the South African Schools Act, established teachers' comments do not make reference to that component, instead theirs revolve around the general stipulations such as rights. The understanding of the constitution, therefore, becomes a general consideration which may require a commission of inquiry or a court case to understand the implications of the statutes mentioned in the constitution in relation to the problems teachers face. Established teacher A's call for the consideration of the "*right to expression and all that*" displays the way in which established teachers understand the constitution. There is a surface understanding without an indepth comprehension of the implications within the school context. The right to expression as stipulated in the constitution bears formidable consequences for the authority of the school and the teacher over the learners' conduct in the school premises, but this factor seems to be under-considered in the established teachers' arguments.

The authority informed by personal discretion poses a significant challenge for the teachers because of its limitations and the non-specificity of the manner in which it is ought to be carried out. If we consider established teacher C's assertion "*you must follow the right channel, uyabona, if it's only that child there must be a person who is going to contact the child, talk to the child nicely to find out why?*", there is a reference to a 'right channel', but no specification of the 'right channel'. This means that there is no specific and acceptable conduct so every teacher must second-guess themselves based on the experience to determine the right way to act in the situation and they must make reference to social



norms, which may be affected by the personal values, which leaves a considerable gap of inconsistencies and unaccountability. There is an emphasis on authority as resting with the teacher and school policies as a last resort, leaving a range of possible responses to situations based on who is facing them. The following discussion draws from both the NQTs' constellation and the established teachers' constellation to expose the code clashes and matches.

## **IMPLICATIONS FOR NEWLY QUALIFIED AND ESTABLISHED TEACHERS WORKING RELATIONS**

My analysis of the constellations that emerged from newly qualified and established teachers indicates that they fundamentally differ in the manner in which they are constructed and the implications that they carry. NQTs' constellation on the transformation of school policies foregrounds epistemic relations, which emphasizes the regulation of the teachers' authority through school policies. On the other hand, the view of the transformation of school policies by established teachers is more conservative and foregrounds social relations as they emphasise personal discretion in the exercise of authority. Due to these contrasting ideals from both the analysis of newly qualified and of established teachers' comments, the constellations appear to be clashing in terms of what each group valorizes regarding the issue of teachers' autonomy in the classroom.

The fundamental difference that results in the constellation clash is the radical transformation of school policies called for by NQTs, and a more conservative approach to policy transformation by the established teachers. Furthermore, the constellation indicates a clash between NQTs' principled position that valorizes knowledge and protocol and policy and established teachers that valorize the collective wisdom gained from experience. Within the policy transformation, the second level of the analysis was the implication it has for informing the authority of teachers in the classroom, where established teachers seem to move from the basis of work experience, which could be the reason for their actions towards particular cases being grounded on personal discretion. Work experience affords individuals within a field a privilege to use the past experiences of similar cases, as a point of reference and therefore their reference to 'the right channel' could signify the framework they have developed through interaction with different situations. From this point, it can only make sense that established teachers prefer cementing the authority in the discretion of teachers rather than documents such as the school policies.

The authority of teachers which is informed by personal discretion may run the risk of escalating dilemmas that could emerge from the idea that any teacher can act in accordance to his/her assessment of the situation, and thereby compromising accountability in practice. Therefore the suggestion of teachers having to change must be informed by some form of guideline and the school policies act as a step towards that form of a guideline. The suggestion of affording individual teachers the autonomy to act from personal discretion seems to hang on the hope that teachers can establish consensus in the school community such that their methods do not trample on other members of the practice's methods.

In contrast, NQTs being new in the field and bearing minimal work experience, call for the transformation of policies to be able to better deal with challenges they face at work reflects their reliance on a consistent framework which they can use to respond to situations. It bears consideration that NQTs ground the authority of the teacher on school policies as guiding documents because as new actors in the field, there is little they can use as a benchmark for their decisions. Therefore the constellation clash reveals that established teachers' views are driven by the work experience they have gathered in the field, while the NQTs are driven by the consistency of knowledge (loosely used) contain the guiding documents. Quite evidently, for NQTs, school policy documents serve their inherent function, which is to guide. In the case of established teachers, there is little guidance they seek from school policies.

The dependence on school policies as guiding documents is also reflected in how NQTs frame the roles of every other actor in the field. For NQTs, the reliance on the school policies do not help in terms of the authority of the teacher in the classroom but keeps boundaries in terms of the limitations parents and learners have. Unlike the NQTs, established teachers speak about limitations in relation to ideologies that exist in the society and regulation mediums such as the constitution. In this case, a clash may bring to the fore the struggles the newly qualified and established teachers face in terms of reconciling their differences in situations where they must both act on a single issue. The evidence of the findings reveals that if newly qualified and established teachers find themselves in a situation where they must make take a collective decision on a particular issue, then tensions between these two teaching groups will escalate. The subsequent and last part of the analysis looks at the final constellations, which draws even closer to the way in which both newly qualified and established teachers respond to situations that require them to assume particular roles in terms of a community mandate.

## 5.4 Relations to Teachers' Responsibilities

The final part of my analysis focuses on newly qualified and established teachers' relation to teachers' responsibilities. The analysis uses a case study that describes a child who has learning challenges and is also disruptive in class. It is used as a foundation for the discussion and making sense of the extracts from the data. Two constellations emerge from the data: For NQTs, the role of a teacher is primarily one of being a learning mediator, which is so time-consuming that teachers can barely focus on other teacher roles. Established teachers in this study, on the other hand, overwhelmingly legitimised their role as a teacher based on the provision of pastoral care to learners in need.

### ROLE OF A TEACHER AS A LEARNING MEDIATOR: NQT's POSITION

NQTs conceptualize their role as learning mediators, which places an emphasis on the fundamental objective of being in the classroom and teaching some subject content. The emphasis on the role of a teacher as a learning mediator is due to the demands that the contextual challenges require from teachers, which NQTs believe fall outside the roles that they must assume in practice. Some extracts from the data make reference to the need to delink the duties of a teacher as learning mediators from the duties of the teacher as a pastor, a counsellor or any other role. There is a utilitarian approach in the NQTs' decision of what their role as teachers entail and this can be seen in the following extract:

*“you won't be an effective teacher, it means that you will be putting 50 learners at risk trying to solve problems of five learners with bad behaviour”* [NQT-B]

Another NQT expresses a consistent view by saying that he cannot “*take [on] parental duties*” and that “*there are 50 learners that [he] must deal with*”. NQTs' view on effective teaching is grounded in maximizing contact teaching opportunities over assuming other roles such as pastoral care. There is a very firm position on the scope of duties that NQTs believe must be fulfilled by a teacher and therefore, anything that falls outside those duties, is to be cast aside. For NQTs, pastoral care duties or *in loco-parentis* roles are not a priority when you have multiple learners depending on a single teacher. Therefore, to ensure that priorities such as the actual teaching of learners are upheld, other issues must be given less attention. The NQTs are adamant about their role as learning mediators and this reveals that the constellation is more concerned with the knowledge work of the practice rather than roles that

focus on other issues outside the scope of content teaching in the classroom.

The focus on roles such as pastoral care is interpreted as a waste of time, which teachers are then required to make up for, which is often difficult because of time constraints. NQT-A expresses dissatisfaction at the current state of affairs by making reference to a teacher who *“always has to make up for time by providing extra classes”* and has *“to dig up time”* and has to find time to recover the time lost while disciplining learners. NQTs’ view on the focus of pastoral care role has negative implications on contact teaching time, and therefore a teacher must go the extra mile in ensuring that the rest of the learners recover the time lost. As a result, NQTs position their work in the actual teaching class and nothing outside the boundaries of the classroom. Notice the manner in which the following teacher expresses his strong view of his role as a teacher.

*“as a teacher I have a duty to teach and I can’t focus 100% on his behavior because its going to take my teaching time and other admin stuff.”* [NQT-B]

The issue of disciplining learners falls outside the scope of the teaching role in the analysis offered by NQTs. Quite clear from the analysis of their concerns, one can deduce that for NQTs, the role of being disciplinarian or assuming a pastoral duty must never affect the time allocated for a teacher. Hence, the analysis of their comments shows that they valorize time on the teaching task and devalorize the compromise of the required undivided attention in the classroom. However, there is a significant problem with this interpretation of their roles as teachers because being a teacher is an amalgamation of various aspects, such as ensuring that a conducive environment is created for teaching and learning. Creating a conducive environment often entails ensuring that the learners in the class maintain discipline at all time.

An implicit factor behind the dispositions expressed by the NQTs is the possibility of being overwhelmed with contextual challenges as new members of the practice, and therefore their struggle is disguised as being focused on specific roles when in actual case a lot is going on for them. NQT-A maintains that learners *“must come with one objective, learn”* and if they cannot live up to this objective, *“there is nothing more [teachers] can do”* because they are *“already overworked”*. Expressing the same concern, NQT-C said *“teachers overwork”*, which means that they are aware of the problems that fall outside the scope of mediating learning but they are under pressure and overwhelmed with the

number of learners in their classes.

Contextual challenges that come in the form of work demands seem to be an underlying aspect that drives NQTs in their decision to prioritize actual teaching over any other role. The extracts of the data show that there is a fixed position by the NQTs that suggests that learners must play the role of “*learning*”, and not become a burden to teachers. It is quite a paradox, though, looking at the realities of the classroom environment and the learners being the central client of the work that teachers do. It is therefore quite probable that the reason NQTs maintain this fixed position is because of the overwhelming expectations and demands that the teaching job exerts on the incoming cohort of teachers. NQTs feel that the teaching job is inherently congested with many responsibilities and to prevent a further impact on the practice of teaching other responsibilities such as pastoral care duties should not be entertained. The constellation that views the role of a teacher as a learning mediator foregrounds epistemic relations but maintains an axiological charge as it explores the roles a teacher must play.

#### THE ROLE OF A TEACHER AS PROVIDING PASTORAL CARE: ESTABLISHED TEACHERS' POSITION

It is important to note that the constellation does not mean that this is the only aspect established teachers are concerned with, but it is indicative of the leading stance that came out strongly from the data under the issue of teachers' responsibilities. Established teachers' data indicate a strong idea of a teacher as having to provide pastoral care. This means that even though the teachers are there for teaching, their job goes beyond the confines of the subject matter. Established teacher A suggests that a teacher “*needs to understand that there is a need to allow*

*[a] child to settle in*” in the classroom and the teacher must ensure that a learner “*adjusts and fit in*”. Established teacher B further asserts that teachers “*need to fit into*” the lives of learners and they “*must avoid chasing learners away*”. Instead, teachers must find out “*where the problem comes from*”. Established teacher A maintains that “*teaching is a mixture of everything, policy, pastor, everything.*”

Evidently, the extracts from the data indicate the strong stances that established teachers hold in relation to the roles teachers must fulfil. There is an empathetic attribute that established teachers seem to possess, and which guides their priorities in practice. For established teachers, the classroom challenges attributed to the misbehaviour of learners require time and understanding. Misbehaving learners can be

a thorn in the flesh and often push teachers to the edge and make their jobs difficult. However, mindful of the impact of misbehaving learners on teaching and learning, established teachers still call for a linear and considerate approach when it comes to dealing with the learners. The idea behind the position that the established teachers take seems to suggest that learners will eventually change with time and teachers' understanding. The established teachers propose that every teacher should try and relate to the learners by means of fitting into their lives. The conclusion we can draw from the established teachers' position is that teachers need to take that extra mile to understand the lives of the learners they teach. Therefore, the call for all these attributes reflects the established teachers' leaning towards a more pastoral caring role.

The pastoral care role is not assumed as a replacement of the actual teaching in the classroom, but drawing on the established teachers' data, one can deduce that in the case of abnormal classroom situations, established teachers prefer trying to understand some underlying factors that may affect the way in which learners learn. Established teacher B says learners take time to "*acclimatize and adjust*" in the school setting and hence there is a need for a teacher to "*mould*" the learners. The established teachers' valorization of many roles a teacher must play and the foregrounding of the pastoral role establishes their constellation as axiological because the constellation is more concerned about the manner in which the teacher relates to the learners. There is also a strong sense of a teacher going the extra mile in their involvement in the learner's life beyond academic work.

The analysis of the situation faced in the classroom is an essential aspect of the established teachers' mandate, such that, instead of taking the easier way out by chasing a learner out of the classroom, they are more concerned with the root of the problems they are facing with regards to the learner in question. Established teachers refuse to see learners as attached to their ill behaviour. Rather, they view the behaviours as something acquired and therefore tracing it back to the root can reveal what the problem is. All these efforts are employed towards ensuring that learners are offered an opportunity to learn. Established teacher A believes that underplaying the role of pastoral care has implications at a later stage – that learners who are neglected will "*hit back*" at the teachers. These positions expose the many roles that established teachers consider in the work that they do, and these roles inform the approach they take in dealing with the arising contextual challenges.

When drawing from the data extracts, there is an evident attitude that established teachers carry - that

is, working with contextual possibilities rather than seeing challenges as a dead end. Therefore, with this attitude, established teachers are able to meet the demands of their work beyond the subject-matter and pedagogical demands. However, it must be highlighted that the issue that may arise from this *modus operandi* is having to compromise certain aspects of the work to fulfil a more understanding, considerate, pastoral caring role. Having analyzed the established teachers' constellation in relation to the teachers' roles, the subsequent subsection is a discussion of the two constellations to establish similarities and differences in the constellations.

### **IMPLICATIONS FOR NEWLY QUALIFIED AND ESTABLISHED TEACHERS WORKING RELATIONS**

It is quite evident from the analysis of the two constellations of newly qualified and established teachers that the constellations are located in different camps in terms of what is valorized and the foregrounding of certain aspects. NQTs take a strong position in their role in the classroom and what it entails: the role of the teacher is fundamentally that of a learning mediator regardless of contextual challenges in the form of ill-behaved learners. In contrast, established teachers believe that the primary role a teacher must play is to understand the children in his/her classroom and be involved in their lives. By so doing, established teachers believe that before any other duty can be fulfilled concerning academic objectives, the teacher must find ways to bridge the gap between the world of the learner and the teacher's world. In the analyses, it can be gathered that NQTs foreground learning as the most critical aspect in the classroom, while established teachers foreground the wellness of the learner as the most important.

Arising from these constellations, the working relations between NQTs and established teachers face a clash in terms of the time committed to servicing the needs of the learners. It is essential to note that NQTs' concern is that as much as discipline issues must be addressed, the urgency is instead attached to fulfilling the actual teaching of the subject-matter than providing pastoral care. On the other hand, established teachers acknowledge that learning must take place, but for them, no learner must be left behind. Therefore, they prefer addressing issues relating to pastoral care to establish the problem and remove it as a barrier to the child's learning. It is clear from the valorized stances, that newly qualified and established teachers come from different positions. Therefore, there is a match on the end goal of interactions with teacher and learner, that is, teaching and learning, but there is a definite clash in terms of what newly qualified and established teachers prioritize as the fundamental devotion.

These clashes are likely to create tensions between newly qualified and established teachers, especially

in cases where teachers must account for the work they have done in class. Newly qualified teachers being overwhelmed with the demands of the work may feel unsupported or further burdened when they are required to account for other roles they are expected to play. There is a potential negative impact that may be faced in the academic throughput and the success of the newly qualified teachers, if the established teachers do not offer enough support to ensure that newly qualified teachers can navigate between all their responsibilities.

## **SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER**

The purpose of this chapter was to offer an analysis of the central points of contention between newly qualified and established teachers. The findings picked up three crucial issues that reveal the dispositions, and inclinations that both newly qualified and established teachers possess with regards to their teaching practices. The essence of the findings is that on the issue of the teachers' relation to the knowledge for practice, it is revealed that NQTs valorize knowledge as an integral attribute of a teacher, and established teachers underemphasize the importance of expert knowledge in teaching and academic department management. The analysis shows two levels into the constellation of NQTs; first, an unwavering call for a knowledgeable or expert teacher to realize social justice and secondly, the compromising of the first level only in extreme and exceptional cases. In contrast, the analysis of data from established teachers indicates a decentralization of the importance of knowledge in both teaching and leading a subject department. In this regard, newly qualified and established teachers' constellations reveal a clash in dispositions and what the two groups valorize in their work.

On the second issue regarding relations to power, authority and control, NQTs centralize their dispositions on the total dependence on school policy for the regulation and guidance of teachers' authority in the classroom. The analysis revealed that NQTs' prioritization of school policy and the call for its radical transformation could be attributed to the fact that they are new into the profession and therefore there is no privileged gaze attached to work experience from which they can act. Moreover, their dispositions revealed their lack of confidence in the existing school orders as embedded in the school policies - hence their call for an overhaul of school policy. In contrast, established teachers took a conservative approach to policy, stating that personal dispositions must inform the authority of a teacher, and this could be linked to their experience in the profession. Also, findings regarding established teachers reveal that school policies' transformation should be the last resort - where a



teacher has exhausted all available options. For these constellations, the findings indicate a clash in the aspects that newly qualified and established teachers valorize in relation to authority, power and control.

On the last issue explored in the analysis - relations to the teachers' responsibilities - NQTs' findings indicate an unwavering position on the view that a teacher is a learning mediator and therefore teachers should not be bombarded by other roles that add to the work they have in classroom teaching. NQTs' constellation displays a strong epistemic relation, which centralizes the teaching of content as the fundamental role of the teacher. But the constellation is axiological because the teacher remains at the centre of the debate. In the analysis, NQTs devalorize taking up the role of pastoral care in their work, labelling this role as time-wasting and a workload burden. The findings indicate that even though established teachers still upheld the role of learning mediator as the goal, their concern was that learners must be in a good state of behaviour before they can teach. As such, established teachers preferred offering pastoral care to the learners to ensure that no learner is left behind in their work.

The constellations on the last issue reveal that there is a match in as far as the end goal of the work of a teacher is concerned, but the ways of eradicating obstacles that stand in the way of the teacher and the goal were different. NQTs were adamant that their work was to only teach and not take up parental duties, whereas established teachers thought taking up parental duties was essential to ensure that every learner gets a chance to learn. A conclusion that was drawn from the analysis was that NQTs could be overwhelmed by contextual challenges and the demands of the practice hence their natural disposition towards foregrounding epistemic relation in their work. On the other hand, established teachers seemed to be informed by the experience they have in working with learners, hence their approach was embracing contextual possibilities and working through them. As a result, the constellations indicated a clash on the roles newly qualified and established teachers deemed as necessary.

In the next chapter, the findings are discussed in light of relevant substantial theories and the explanatory framework - LCT. Through the subsequent chapter, I will further establish the implications of the research findings and set out the way for further research on the topic.

# CHAPTER 6

## RE-IMAGINING THE STRUGGLES BETWEEN NEWLY QUALIFIED AND ESTABLISHED TEACHERS

### 6.1 Introduction

This research study set out to explore whether there are differences on the basis in which newly qualified and experienced teachers in township schools legitimize their teaching practices. Moreover, the research study sought to explore whether there are epistemological or ontological principles underlying the practices of the established group that are significantly differences with those underlying developing practices of NQTs entering the practice. The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the key findings of the study in light of the issues raised in the literature review, together with the conceptual framework outlined in Chapter three. The first part of the chapter will draw from various sources of the substantial theories and components of the explanatory framework to discuss the findings and their implications. In order to do this, the main research questions will be tackled separately to ensure that the central objectives of the study are addressed. The final section will determine the direction for future research by outlining the limitations of the study which will then be followed by the reflections.

### 6.2 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings are used to address the main research questions under two headings: First, teachers' priorities in practice and valorized stances on key issues; and secondly, the implications for divergence or convergence of stances which reveal potential areas of struggles between established and NQTs. The findings indicated that stronger social relations characterized the constellations of both groups and were focused more on the teachers' personal relation to the practice. Stronger epistemic relations which were foregrounded when teachers responded to some of the dilemmas. Before the discussion of these aspects, the following table summarizes the constellations according to NQTs and established teachers.

### *Clustered NQTs and Established Teacher's Constellations*

NQTs Constellations	Established teachers Constellations
<p><i>Relations to the knowledge for practice</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Teachers' expertise subject knowledge</li> <li>- Knowledgeable teacher as a matter of social justice</li> <li>- Knowledgeable teacher needed subject head management.</li> <li>- Decisions and leadership must be informed by expertise</li> </ul>	<p><i>Relations to the knowledge for practice</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Teachers' expertise subject knowledge is irrelevant for teaching</li> <li>- Teachers can learn subject knowledge on the job</li> <li>- Management is operational, no knowledge expertise required</li> <li>Management role is non-intellectual</li> </ul>
<p><i>Relations to Power, Authority, and Control</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Radical Policy Transformation</li> <li>- Questioning of the existing school policies</li> <li>- Authority informed by policy</li> <li>- Principled and consistent authority reference point</li> </ul>	<p><i>Relations to Power, Authority, and Control</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Conservative/Gradual Policy Transformation</li> <li>- A major event must trigger policy change</li> <li>- Authority informed by personal discretion</li> <li>- Legitimacy resides in the collective nature of the community of practice</li> </ul>
<p><i>Relations to Teachers' Responsibilities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Learning mediator as a priority in teaching</li> <li>- Teachers are too overworked to take on other teacher roles</li> </ul>	<p><i>Relations to Teachers' Responsibilities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Role of a teacher as pastoral care</li> <li>- Ensuring the well-being of the learners for teaching</li> </ul>

#### **6.2.1 Teachers' Priorities in Practice: Valorized Stances**

Teachers valorize different aspects that are related to teaching practices in their particular context. Drawing on the findings, this discussion will look at the importance of knowledge in teaching practices, explicit boundaries of teachers' autonomy in the classroom, and responses to contextual challenges.

## I. RELATIONS TO THE KNOWLEDGE FOR PRACTICE

Knowledge is a fundamental underpinning of teaching practice, but there is a contention relating to the manner in which teachers position themselves to knowledge in practice. The importance of knowledge in the qualifications of upcoming teachers has also gained the spotlight with the revision of the MRTEQ, which positions specific knowledge pillars for teacher education. There is a strong epistemic relation (ER+) in the manner in which MRTEQ positions knowledge for teacher education and that is attributed to the knowledge aspects specified in its mandate:

*disciplinary learning* (which includes [theoretical educational] knowledge, as well as subject content knowledge and its associated skills), *pedagogical learning* (including general pedagogical knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge), *practical learning* (knowledge acquired from observing, analyzing and reflecting on one's own teaching and the teaching of others), *situational learning* (learning about the diverse contexts in which education exists) and *foundational learning* (the generic knowledge and competencies that are not teacher-specific, but might be useful in the day-to-day work that teachers do) (DHET, 2015, p.10).

In Chapter two, it was shown that the MRTEQ policy espouses different kinds of knowledge for teaching qualifications. The findings of my study show that established teachers who qualified many years ago, before the introduction of the revised version of the MRTEQ, indicate that their 'teacher-training' or how they were prepared is fundamentally different.

### UNDERSTANDING TEACHER KNOWLEDGE EXPERTISE

NQTs' valorizing of the importance of knowledge in the teaching practice and its implications on social justice foregrounds stronger epistemic relations (ER+), while the established teachers' positions devalorizing the importance of knowledge in teaching and leading the subject departments foregrounds relatively weaker epistemic relations (ER-). The dispositions NQTs hold in relation to the importance of knowledge in their teaching practice demonstrates stronger epistemic relations by more frequently emphasizing knowledge and protocols as informing the resolution of a dilemma. The findings reveal that for newly-qualified teachers subject matter expertise is a fundamental pre-condition for the work they do as teachers and that taking up a position in a subject for which one is not qualified is to be avoided. Consequently, the findings

align with Lancher et al's (2016) argument, which states that an expert in the teaching profession is signified by the teacher's possession and demonstration of vast knowledge capital in their work.

However, unlike Lachner et al. (2006), the idea of an 'expert' as relating to the organization of knowledge in relation to the contextual practice experience, differs from NQTs' understanding that an expert teacher is an individual trained in a particular subject matter. In contrast with Lancher et al (2016, p.198) position established teachers as expert teachers, and state that as teachers "gain experience in teaching, they tend to organize their knowledge around encountered cases and experiences, which may result in more elaborated and coherently organized knowledge structures", NQTs indicate a strong position in their call for knowledgeable teachers in teaching positions. Their position is informed by the notion that teacher education programmes afford the teacher some knowledge.

The findings reveal that NQTs' understanding of an 'expert teacher' is ascribed to knowledge acquired in a teaching programme, which is deemed necessary for teaching or taking up leadership roles in the school context. As expected, without reference to work experience, the grounds from which NQTs position their argument is based on their experience in teacher education programmes. By contrast, the established teachers' findings are similarly consistent with Lachner et al's (2016) attachment of work experience in teaching to expertise, which indicated weaker epistemic relations (ER-) and stronger social relations (SR+) as they advocated for learning on the job through experience rather than through acquisition of a specialist body of knowledge. However, it must be stated clearly that Lancher et al. (2016) do not advocate for teachers to teach a subject for which they were never trained. The point is essential because, for established teachers, the development towards 'expert' status applies for a teacher who has no foundational knowledge in the subject. The knowledge component in the established teachers' findings is backgrounded (ER-), while a teacher is foregrounded (SR+) as an integral factor in the teaching practice, and 'expertise' in teaching is seen as something that can be acquired, not something a teacher starts with.

The views held in relation to knowledge by established teachers and NQTs reflect the distinction underpinning the knowledge base teachers have, that is, developed curriculum scripts for the former and isolated knowledge for the latter (Lancher et al., 2016). For established teachers, a teacher can legitimately learn on the job, which is reflective of the possession of curriculum

scripts which are developed over years of experience. However, the findings do not reveal the extent to which these curriculum scripts are developed since literature expects the scripts to entail “higher-order knowledge structures which integrate the subject-matter knowledge to be conveyed together with pedagogical content knowledge” (Lancher et al., 2016, p.198). The established teachers’ ‘learn on the job’ slogan can only be warranted in a case where a teacher has foundational subject-matter knowledge from which they can build on. The NQTs’ understanding of ‘expert’ teacher also comes under fire, assuming their view positions a newly qualified teacher as an ‘expert’, as they are still new members of the practice and possesses isolated knowledge which can be “gradually integrated and organized into curriculum scripts” with work experience (Lancher et al., 2016, p.199). Therefore teachers can only claim ‘expert’ status after years of practice when they have developed rich curriculum scripts. NQTs’ call for expertise in teaching is in the right place, but the expertise should be understood to signify subject-matter content knowledge that is integrated with higher knowledge structures over a long period of practice.

The second part of the teacher expertise debate is the purpose it serves in the schooling system. NQTs argued that a knowledgeable teacher enables social justice in the context of disadvantaged communities. Education is viewed as the vehicle for changing the conditions and the lives of the learners and their families. For that reason, a teacher must be knowledgeable to ensure that the quality of education he/she gives to the learners is rigorous and robust—and they see this as a matter of ensuring educational and social justice to communities which have been marginalized by poor educational opportunities under apartheid. The essence of the findings from the NQTs’ data foregrounded the epistemic relations to a greater extent than that of the established teachers, and their stance reflects Freire’s (1993, p.22) disposition on education practice, which says the education practice’s “directive nature, the objectives, the dreams that follow in the practice—do not allow education to be neutral as it is always political”. Therefore, education practice for NQTs takes consideration of the nature of educational issues and contextual challenges in communities to ensure that education helps eradicate the present plight.

The concern for social justice and the use of education practice to actualize justice reflects some degree of critical pedagogy in NQTs’ views of their work and education as a whole. Also, the NQTs’ concerns on the aspect of social justice can be seen as a political act, whereby NQTs

think more in-depth about the social structures in the community and how they help alleviate the conditions that exist. NQTs' inclination towards social justice, by foregrounding the importance of knowledge in practice to achieve this ideal, positions them as progressive or activist teachers. The findings also indicate that NQTs' call for knowledgeable teachers for social justice disrupts prevalent practices because established teachers expressed a dominant stance, which advocated for teachers' acquisition of subject content knowledge through learning on the job.

Therefore, the advocacy for social justice through a knowledgeable teacher is not just for learners, but to reimagine the teaching profession in relation to its professional status. Being reflective of the issues affecting the community from which they come from, NQTs reflect the social category from which they belong, and this identity constructs their professional status. As a result, the only case that NQTs deem is warranted for waving their strong position on the importance of knowledge in teaching is the circumstantial constraints that force a school to settle for an incompetent teacher. The findings on NQTs reveal that having teachers with inadequate subject knowledge does hurt not only the learners' education but also has negative consequences for the professional standing of the work of teachers and how the schools are managed.

## **II. Relations to Power, Authority and Control**

The autonomy of a teacher in the classroom is one of the significant aspects of a teacher's work as it defines the boundaries of authority (both professional and personal authority). The findings positioned two types of authority at play in the work of both newly qualified and established teachers - authority as informed by policy and authority as informed by personal discretion, respectively. As such, NQTs called for the transformation of school policy in order to inform teachers' authority and other stakeholders in education, while established teachers placed a greater emphasis on personal discretion in the exercise of authority in the classroom and expressed a conservative approach to school policy transformation. The former indicates a foregrounding of stronger epistemic relations (ER+) and a weaker social relation (SR-) in defining the practices. It is governed by a knowledge code. The latter foregrounds a weaker epistemic relation (ER-) and a stronger social relation (SR+), which emphasizes the personal attributes of the teacher as the basis of defining authority. It is thus governed by a knower code.

## POLICY TRANSFORMATION FOR DEFINING AUTHORITY

There is a robust valorized stance that emerged from the NQTs' findings regarding existing school policies and the purpose they must serve. The essence of the findings reveals that NQTs regard school policy for what they indeed are, guiding documents. By so doing, the stance foregrounded stronger epistemic relation (ER+) with less space for persona; discretion (SR-). NQTs frame school policy in terms of the principles contained in the documents. As established in the discussion on the teachers' relation to knowledge, new teachers come into the profession with isolated knowledge and the isolated knowledge is attributed to the lack of work experience. Therefore, it is expected that newly qualified teachers would place a great emphasis on school policy for the definition of boundaries of authority, and for defining a way for acting in practice. However, before the reliance on school policy in the definition of authority, NQTs call for an overhaul and transformation of the school policies in place, stating that these policies are outdated. NQTs seem to turn to policy for supporting their stance as legitimate teachers in the face of possible marginalization from the established teachers.

Once again, NQTs display an agenda of disrupting existing orders in the school. The conservative culture on dress code embedded in some of these policies was brought into question citing the invalidity of the rules against the current social orders. Hence, NQTs believe the school's existing policies do not have grounds to be even defined as policies. There is a downplaying of the authority of the existing school policies with claims that the existing school policies are outdated (ER-). There is an expectation that school policies should be used as a reference point in addressing emerging issues in practice, but NQTs feel that current school policies cannot be utilized to achieve this goal. Therefore, as positioned by literature and policy, NQTs are the future of the teaching practice and their preparation to become successful in the early years is important (Beck et al., 2007; Arends & Phurutse, 2009). Hence the positioning of their roles in the teaching profession requires a well-informed framework which they can work with to navigate the challenges they face in the school. NQTs' call for radical policy transformation is motivated by the lack of experience and the need for a consistent reference point, which they can use to address challenges. They thus draw on their beliefs to question and transform school policy (SR+).



In the literature review, it was shown that when a newly qualified teacher “enters the workplace, she is confronted with a new system of activity, and her role as an actor in this system is as new” (Whitelaw et al., 2008, p.27). If we take into consideration the weight that rests on NQTs’ shoulders upon entering the profession, it is understandable and warranted for NQTs to centralize school policies in the provision of guidance for exercising authority and working within a new system. It is easy to be overwhelmed by the demands of the work of the practice, and without experience, it can be challenging to act in particular instances. Therefore, school policies act as a safeguard for NQTs’ actions. One of the basic expectations of the NQTs, as shown in the literature review, is ensuring that they adjust to the “work they are required to do and the environment in which they must work, as well as the colleagues and learners with whom they must interact” (Steyn & Schulze, 2004, p.235). Therefore, although the argument is on the interactions amongst the members of the school community, the NQTs’ centralization of school policy to guide these interactions foregrounded stronger epistemic relation (ER+).

The call for radical policy transformation does not advocate the purpose of guiding teachers’ authority in the classroom but ensures that any other stakeholder knows the boundaries of their actions and involvement. The findings also indicated that NQTs experience interference from other stakeholders, such as parents because the policies are centralized as a guiding tool. While the call for the transformation of school policies and the purpose they must serve is justified, findings indicate that established teachers take instead a conservative approach in the need for school policies to be changed. The following discussion takes a closer look at the findings to establish the alternative that established teachers propose in place of school policy transformation.

#### CONSERVATIVE VIEW ON POLICY TRANSFORMATION AND PERSONAL DISCRETION

According to established teachers, the transformation of school policies can only be initiated when the school is faced with a huge dilemma. However, the established teachers do not describe the type of dilemmas that warrant a transformation of policy, making it difficult for an explicit understanding of their conservative stance towards policy transformation. Nevertheless, one can deduce that the established teachers’ argument is driven by the conservative nature of the teaching practice itself. Also, the established teachers’ relation to school policy is a world apart, as they view policy as something far removed from the realities they face in the classroom

and the school community. The deemphasis of the role of the school policies in practice foregrounds a weaker epistemic relation (ER-). Instead of a radical transformation of school policies to inform the actions of the actors in practice, established teachers offer an alternative to the regulation of the authority of teachers in the classroom. The essence of the findings reveals established teachers' practices are predominantly legitimized by a knower code. This is evident in the established teachers' preference of the use of personal discretion in addressing arising issues in practice (SR+) over education theory and policy (ER-). The positioning of the teachers' judgements as an integral factor in the exercise of authority indicates a stronger social relation (SR+) and reveals that established teachers rely on what they have learnt through the work experience they have accumulated over the years to legitimize their decisions.

A problem with the attribution of teachers' authority to personal discretion is that there are inconsistencies that can emerge from the way in which individuals' teachers address issues in practice. The idea that every single act based on personal discretion will lead to a teacher making the right decision is a big gamble because no one can be guaranteed that the imminent challenges will be well-known cases. Therefore, if epistemic relations are backgrounded, then there are no principled grounds on which the practice can be anchored (Shalem, 2014). Consequently, a knower code position emerges where the individualised, personal preferences of teachers are what counts as legitimate. Therefore, a situation where anything can be legitimized because it "feels right" from a particular stance, even if that position is fundamentally flawed, against principles of the constitution, or lacks empirical evidence, will create an extremely relativist practice. This is why a set of professional teaching standards are important in setting up a progressive view of teaching which can help counter a relativist view of teaching. The axiological reasoning displays the established teachers' sense of deep acclimatization of the environment and prevalent challenges.

Although established teachers propose personal discretion to inform teachers' authority, there is still a reference to 'following the right channels', and that suggests some procedure but the knowledge of what is the right channel is contested. One would expect the 'right channels' to be well defined in the policy, but established teachers seem to place that weight on an individual teacher. The stance on the 'channel' reflects the established teachers' reliance on the gained

experience in teaching, which helps them “organize their knowledge around encountered cases and experience” (Lancher et al., 2016, p.198). Although the point is addressing the aspect of organizing knowledge, it is evident from the findings that established teachers indeed have some cognitive constructs that are informed by the encountered cases and the work experience, and that they use these cognitive constructs to inform their authority and decision-making in the present day. It is safe to assume that organized knowledge is the ‘right channel’ that they refer to, and therefore this being some knowledge foregrounding, the findings indicate a strong epistemic relation (ER+).

In conclusion, established teachers’ findings can be summarized on two levels: the first level is their conservative view of transformation of school policies, which is only warranted in the case of a worthy circumstance. The second level is their proposition that suggests that teachers should use their personal discretion to exercise their authority in the classroom. The problem with personal discretion is the inconsistencies involved, and it does not help define the boundaries for other members of the school community. Therefore, if anyone can act using their personal discretions, this leaves an unequal ground as individuals with more social status can trample on members with lower social status. School policies are therefore not far removed from practice. Rather, school policies are the best tool to ensure that every member of the school community knows what their role entails and that there are boundaries in place. There is, therefore, a need for a progressive set of professional standards to avoid ultra-relativist positions between NQTs and established teachers.

### **III. Relations to Teachers’ Responsibilities**

NQTs enter the practice with a developed vision and idea of the kind of professionals they envisage becoming (Malm, 2009). As a result, NQTs express strong stances about certain prevalent practices in the school, either aligning themselves to those practices or distancing themselves from them. However, in some cases, the stances are a camouflage for the challenges they face in practice and therefore, as a way of safeguarding their position in practice, NQTs often prefer to grapple with their views under the radar. Responding to contextual challenges requires teachers to assume particular roles, and in this case, the findings focused on the roles teachers assumed in challenges that arise in the classroom. NQTs prioritized the role of a teacher as a learning mediator, while established teachers acknowledged that teaching and learning is

the ultimate goal, but prioritized pastoral care.

#### TEACHER AS A LEARNING MEDIATOR

In terms of the roles a teacher must assume in the schooling system that faces challenges every day, the crux of the findings reveal that NQTs conceptualize their role in terms of learning mediation. NQTs hold an adamant position that valorizes the process of teaching and learning, over any other role in the school (ER+). As teachers they feel they should “cultivate the tools and disposition to learn about students, their families, communities and to build on this knowledge in teaching and learning” (Feiman-Nemser, 2001, p.1018). The argument valorizes the work of the teacher beyond teaching and learning and argues that understanding the learners can be used as building blocks to enrich the process of teaching and learning. However, NQTs’ findings reveal that the priority in the school should be given to the actual teacher rather than fulfilling roles that do not revolve around the subject matter (ER+, SR-).

NQTs acknowledge the need for teachers to fulfil the role of pastoral care, but their concerns indicated that the role did not enrich teaching and learning processes. Therefore, their stance discouraged the idea that a teacher must play a pastoral care role, classifying the role as time-wasting and as a burden to the demanding work they are already subjected to. Part of these concerns can be attributed to the NQTs' experiences with the demands of the work, which is to say, that NQTs are overwhelmed with the demands of the practice. Therefore, their preference is the limitation of responsibilities to focus on what matters - the actual teaching and learning (ER+). The NQTs’ experience of the demands of the teaching practice is consistent with an argument that strongly suggests that “every experience should prepare a person for latter experiences of deeper, more expansive quality” (Feiman-Nemser, 2001, p.1015). The argument advances the idea that every experience that goes into the preparation of newly qualifying teachers should prepare them for the extensive demands of the practice.

Therefore, although the NQTs valorized the prioritization of the role of a teacher as a learning mediator, the underlying implicit message in this call is the NQTs’ struggle with the demands of the new system. Although NQTs may have been exposed to some preservice teaching practical programmes, the experience in actual practice is too much to bear and “it is always

when they are responsible for learners in their own classes that the reality sinks in” (Gravett & Henning, 2012, p.125). Hence as a way of self-preservation, NQTs would instead focus on one aspect they know best - to teach than take up roles that add on to the heavy burden they already experience. Moreover, due to the unsupportive nature of the teaching practice, NQTs are “unable to communicate honestly when their need to adapt to the workplace requires them to be either silent, or perform a desired identity” (Whitelaw et al., 2008, p.33).

In sum, NQTs’ prioritization of the role of a teacher as a learning mediator indicates a stronger epistemic relation [ER+]. However, this should not be seen in isolation as it is connected to the overwhelming experience of the demands of the teaching practice. The following discussion looks at the established teachers’ priorities.

#### TEACHER AS PROVIDING PASTORAL CARE

Established teachers’ findings take a different shape, although the goal of teaching and learning is essential, the analysis shows that this aspect is backgrounded, indicating a weaker epistemic relation (ER-). For established teachers, as much as teaching and learning are essential, they valorized the role of pastoral care in cases where a learner misbehaves or struggles to adjust in the classroom. The rationale behind the established teachers’ valorization of the role of pastoral care is to ensure that a learner in class is given individual attention and this is motivated by the idea that no one must be left behind. Established teachers see the focus on the learner’s needs (not learning needs) as a way of preparing the learner to benefit from the teaching that takes place in the classroom. Again, we see established teachers using their work experience, and acclimatization to the demands of the practice to navigate around the issues arising in the school. The ease in the navigation of the problems in practice indicates that established teachers have acquired scripts of how to deal with different situations.

One can deduce from the established teachers’ findings that their valorization of the role of pastoral care is not a glamorous position as this may indicate the prevalent ideals of what makes an effective teacher. In the literature review, it is shown that while “many characteristics of an effective teacher exist, most of these dwell on the teacher’s management of the classroom” (Shulman, 1987, p.1). The classic traditional concern about the behaviour of learners and getting class management right still finds expression in what defines the success of a teacher. Therefore as much as one would like to take established teachers’ findings at face value, the underlying

message is that established teachers are concerned with doing what is right, and in this case, it is going an extra mile to ensure that every learner in the classroom benefits from the processes in the classroom.

In sum, established teachers' backgrounding of the process of teaching and learning and the prioritization of ensuring the well-being of learners foregrounds a weaker epistemic relation and a stronger social relation (ER-, SR+). In the subsequent final section, the discussion consolidates the findings to establish their meaning for the research study objectives.

### **6.2.2 The Convergence of Priorities: Revealing the Basis for Potential Struggles between Established Teachers and NQTs.**

There is a considerable amount of literature on NQTs' transition into the schooling system, and as outlined in the literature review, the literature reflects prevalent insights that exist in the teaching research field. The contribution of these studies is essential for the reimagination of some of the challenges NQTs face in the transition between teacher education and the school system. For this reason, the study's contribution is to give an alternative view in the manner in which researchers view the challenges of NQTs' integration in the schooling system.

## **I. UNDERSTANDING COSMOLOGIES AND THE CHALLENGES OF COMPETING CONSTELLATIONS IN PRACTICE.**

The integration of NQTs into the schooling system and teaching practice has been widely addressed by many research studies. Most of these research studies are correct in part about the challenges around NQTs' integration into the practice. However, the factors attributed to the challenges around integration reveal some shortcomings and inadequacies in expressing the underlying challenges. In short, previous studies underestimate NQTs as knowers whose practices are legitimized more often by movements between knowledge codes and knower codes than those of established teachers. This research study was an attempt to strive towards exposing some underlying principles that may not have been considered in research on NQTs. Therefore, this section aims to draw from the discussion of the findings together with prevalent views in research, to expose the underlying legitimization principles that contribute to struggles for legitimacy between newly qualified and established teachers. However, this section will not draw on all the prevalent views, but views related to some of the findings established in this

research study.

The findings revealed that NQTs are often overwhelmed with the work demands and integrating into a new system, and this is supported by the view that NQTs' initial preparation is limited and that they are not fully ready for the demands of the workplace by the time they graduate (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Gravett, 2014). However, the claim cannot be interpreted in isolation bearing in mind that there are various factors at play in how NQTs interact with the field of work. This includes professional relationships and clashing teaching practices within the school. The proposed view suggests an overarching negative view of NQTs as having not been sufficiently prepared to deal with the demands of work. It also shows that NQTs gravitate towards the valorization of knowledge work in practice, which is driven by their knowledge possession of the subject-matter. Therefore, instead of blanketing the challenges, there is a need to consider the missing puzzles in the narrative. The findings reveal that there is a valorization of principled structures of knowledge, which is an aspect NQTs graduate with. This means that in aspects of practice that require subject-matter knowledge, NQTs are more likely to thrive as they bring along with them a strong foundation of a knowledge base from their teacher-education programmes.

The existing recent research suggests that NQTs are 'marginalized' and the field of practices they enter are 'pseudo-communities' where they are expected assimilate cultural values, existing attitudes and school orders. The reality of the clash between what is expected and that which exists is grounded on the insight of what it means to assimilate into the practice. As supported by the findings in this study, NQTs are not in a mission to assimilate into the teaching practice. Instead, the findings reveal the transformative agenda NQTs bring with them. This means that instead of subscribing to the existing value and culture systems in practice, NQTs' agenda is to disrupt and replace the existing order with a principled and systematic order. Therefore, marginalization of NQTs in practice cannot be attributed solely to the lack of assimilation by NQTs, but that these teachers enter the practice with knowledge constellations and agentic visions that are clashing with existing knowledge constellations.

In the literature review, it is shown that NQTs are knowledge-practitioners who carry pre-developed capital of visions into the profession, which act as a navigating tool for understanding

the existing dynamics of knowledge and experiences they encounter (Feiman-Nemser, 2001). Evidence in the findings shows that NQTs hold strong views based on the acquired trained gaze from teacher education on what the teaching practices should look like and their roles as newcomers in the profession.

Therefore, instead of identifying NQTs' challenges as only linked to assimilation, which is a naïve view, findings reveal that NQTs hold differing dispositions and understandings of the teaching practice and the roles of actors in the schooling system. The clash in the stances held by NQTs and established teachers will often result in challenges of integration for NQTs. For instance, the findings show that on the issue of the importance of content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge for teaching, NQTs and established teachers fundamentally hold opposing views, and the clash indicates the fundamental point of contention in their priorities in the teaching practice.

Findings indicate a gap between NQTs' knowledge gained from teacher education and the teaching practice expectations that often require working experience. The knowledge that NQT teachers enter the practice with is not often recognized and acknowledged as a starting point. Instead, expectations require them to be experts in most spheres of the practice. Although some views in literature and government policies position NQTs as carrying an agentic agenda, and this has become evident in the findings of this study, the agenda is not entirely welcomed in practice. For instance, the NQTs' call for a radical transformation of school policies for guiding the roles of the members of the school community is at loggerheads with the established teachers' conservative approach to policy transformation.

The difference in established teachers and NQTs' constellations reveals and emphasizes the different bases of legitimation. On the one hand, established teachers, being experienced in the field, have developed a cultivated and social gaze from which they draw to inform their stances about the teaching practice. Hence, their reference to the existing school orders that work, such as teachers taking up subjects of non-specialization. On the other hand, NQTs bring to the field a social, cultivated gaze (from their experiences as pre-service teachers, practicum experiences and as learners), and a trained gaze, which they use to set up their legitimacy in practice.



It is therefore unsurprising that established teachers' legitimacy resides in the collective nature of the practice, while NQTs frequently use a knowledge code to position themselves in relation to a dilemma. Coming from different dispensations of teacher-training and education, established teachers have come to rely more on experience, while NQTs rely heavily on the knowledge-base acquired from their teacher-education programmes.

Therefore, instead of focusing on the aspects that revolve around interactions of different actors in the field, the focus should be invested in understanding NQTs and established teachers differing bases of legitimacy when positioning themselves in relation to a dilemma. The study has shown that the underlying conflicting principles can be attributed to the knowledge constellations about the practice and what ought to be done. The study revealed that clashes are underpinned by differences in views about teaching, processes in the school, and what the purpose of teaching and learning is. In addressing the research question, the study has shown that NQTs and established teachers' positioning in relation to dilemmas in practice can be attributed to the constellations these teachers valorize in practice.

The teachers' possession of different gazes gives rise to different ways of addressing dilemmas in the profession. NQTs who enter the profession with knowledge advocated for consistency (through policy) in the schooling system and in the manner in which members of the school community address challenges. In contrast, established teachers advocated for individual discretion and autonomy, which is heavily dependent on work experience. Understandably, the findings justify the gazes from which both newly qualified and established teachers draw their views. For NQTs entering a new system, the best way to interact and integrate into the system is by way of an organized, consistent framework which can be offered by the policy. For established teachers, dilemmas that arise must be handled by the teacher involved, which the study links to the cultivated gaze of established teachers. There is evidently an existence of some kind of agency, but the newly qualified teachers' agency requires a framework which legitimizes their status as teachers in practice, while that of established teachers is the personal agency, which can be attributed to work experience.

To establish a will to consensus would require that both NQTs and established teachers develop an understanding of the individuality of stances, those they valorized, and where they forged an

integration of these ideas to inform the practice. However, as findings of this study stand, the clashes in the constellations of teaching practice outweigh any common ground. This reveals the challenges that arise in the convergence of newly qualified and established teachers in practice. Although findings reveal that established teachers believe they have something to offer the NQTs, they still acknowledge that NQTs come with a unique body of knowledge into the practice. Since the constellation clashes reveal the aspect of knowledge constellations as the underlying leading factor, the struggles between established and NQTs can be understood when we shine a light on this issue. In sum, the struggles for legitimacy between established teachers and NQTs are driven by the differences in practice knowledge constellations and the gazes that inform the manner in which teachers respond to dilemmas.

#### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS: LEGITIMATING PRINCIPLES AND LEGITIMACY PRINCIPLES IN THE TEACHING PRACTICE.

This chapter focuses on the interpretation of the findings to understanding those findings in light of substantial theories and LCT principles. The constellations were discussed with regards to teacher responses to dilemmas that they face. Three central themes emerged from the findings: teachers' relations to the knowledge for practice; relations to power, authority and control; and relations to teachers' responsibilities. These were explored concerning the views teachers hold about the importance of the knowledge component in practice, how teachers understand their authority and its boundaries, and the roles teachers assume in the face of challenging contextual situations.

The findings showed that NQTs' constellations were dependent on the experience gathered as a learner but mostly dependent on the experiences and the knowledge gained from teacher education. Established teachers' constellations indicated that they drew on work experience gained over the years of teaching and relating to the social context in which they teach. The discussion has revealed that NQTs and established teachers are informed by different codes. The former's constellations make shifts between the knowledge and knower code, while the latter predominantly resides in the knower code. The evidence is stipulated in the aspects of the teaching practice that NQTs and established teachers valorize.

## 6.2 Implications of The Research

The study has shown that there are differences in the underlying principles that legitimate the priorities held by established teachers and NQTs. This is how they might position themselves differently in relation to the dilemmas that commonly arise in classroom practice and school life. Now I am going to examine the implications of the findings of the study.

### I. IMPLICATIONS FOR DILEMMAS THAT ARISE IN SCHOOL SETTINGS

Part of this research study was to gain access to the constellations of meaning that newly qualified and established teachers hold with respect to what is good, right and works in their teaching practices. While investigating teacher agency directly is not the study's objective, there is indirect access in how the teachers situate themselves in response to several dilemmas that teachers commonly face. The findings revealed that teacher agency is at play in how teachers respond to prevalent challenges.

The findings indicate that teachers' agency, gazes of teachers, and constellations teachers hold about their teaching practices are interlinked: newly qualified and established teachers respond to the dilemmas according to their knower gazes and constellations about the practice.

The NQTs' constellations revealed their awareness of the challenges in practice and how to address them through the development and implementation of school policies that will ensure consistency. The NQTs' struggles in adjusting to a new role and context are legitimate - but the fundamental issue is that NQTs are resisting assimilation into some aspects of the practice because they valorize fundamentally different stances on what matters for quality teaching compared to the stances of many of the established teachers. On the other hand, established teachers' constellations indicate that they feel there is no need to regulate the manner in which teachers address challenges. A teacher's discretion should rather be trusted. In light of the clashes, it is essential to consider the role of professional teaching standards as an important feature to potentially give legitimacy to a more progressive view of teaching than the currently existing view prevalent in South African schools. By so doing, professional teaching standards could potentially provide means to eradicate the ultra-relativist nature of the teaching practice. In sum, teacher agency can be regarded as an integral component that can further provide a window into the struggles for legitimacy between newly qualified and established teachers.

### **6.3 Limits of The Study**

The study undertaken here is a small-scale case study that sampled a small number of participants, and therefore, the research cannot make generalizations about the data generated from the investigation. However, this limitation does not translate to a superficial or misleading analysis of the research data collected. The study employed the textual (using content analysis component) analysis to describe and interpret the data collected through audio-recording. Through the content analysis aspect of textual analysis, the researcher could qualitatively explore “meanings associated with messages than with the number of times message variables occur” (Botan, & Kreps, 1999, p.2) Further development of the study through vast data collection is required at PhD level to ensure that interpretations reflect a broader scope and context.

Secondly, purposeful sampling should have taken account of the different initial teacher education programmes offered in different institutions. NQTs for this study were drawn from two, fairly conservative universities, and I suspect that the difference in constellations clashes may be much more pronounced with graduates from more liberal universities with students who were actively involved in student politics and the fallist movements. For future research, the selection of participants must take into consideration different factors to ensure richer data. Thirdly, the collection of the data through the focus group was carried out over a single long session, and this factor might have contributed negatively to the participants. Therefore any further study should compartmentalize the session to ensure that there is enough time for teachers to interact on an issue.

Fourthly, an underpinning guide for the researcher was a need to avoid leading participants to give responses that form the hypothesis of the study. Therefore the data collection instruments used were able to solicit the views and opinions of teachers without conveying an expectation of a preferred answer, and to ensure that there were fair and genuine participation and responses. Researcher bias in the direct intervention in the interactions between newly qualified and established teachers can manipulate the research outcomes. Therefore, in the collection of data through a focus group, vignettes were used to represent real dilemmas that exist in their school

contexts.

Fifthly, due to time constraints attributed to the nature of the study, the NQTs and established teachers' focus group could not be conducted separately, which could have provided exclusive views from each group without the overcasting of each group's stances. Consequently, the research finding could only reveal the stances as shared in a mutual discussion between the NQTs and established teachers.

Lastly, the nature of the research topic was focusing on knower gazes, which has provided a window to understanding the underlying principles in the struggles between newly qualified and established teachers. The analysis suggests that the findings are a tip of an iceberg and therefore, a further inquiry should include a direct interest in the semantic issues that exist in the struggles as well as a direct focus on the agency of teachers. Drawing a closer look into the issue will ensure that conclusions drawn have covered the ground and therefore, generalizations across different aspects in the profession can be possible. Moreover, the initial hypothesis intended to establish a link between the NQTs' experience in the fallist movements and their realities in practice. However, the lack of valuable data from data collected compromised this aspect. Therefore, drawing a conclusion along the lines of fallist movements and the NQTs' constellation would have been premature. To address this, the following study will be deliberate in the collection of data to explore this aspect of NQTs' identity.

#### **6.4 Recommendations for Future Research**

The focus of this research study was on knower gazes in understanding the struggles for legitimacy between established teachers and NQTs in township schools. For future research, it is worth recommending that a researcher explores aspects other than knower gazes to ensure that insight about other factors are developed. Focusing on NQTs' integration should understand that there is a depth of research on the topic, but most of these studies have not focused on the knowledge component of the practice. Therefore, as a way of contributing to the studies, knowledge should be centralized because the teaching practice is a knowledge field. The existing research can be used as a foundation from which to build on, but researchers should desist from reproducing the existing findings.

The second recommendation addresses the need to research on more significant samples of participants and schools to understand the consistency of the research findings in different contexts. Therefore, research in the future should take into cognizance the potential of this research interest and invest more time to ensure that validity of the research findings is further improved. Thirdly, the consideration of NQTs in light of the recent fallist movements has a potential of enriching the research in the field, and therefore research should not shy away from the types of NQTs entering the practice now. Lastly, future research can also look at a broader context than focusing on a single context to ensure the possibilities of establishing a general perspective.

### **6.5 Closing Remarks: Reflections**

Undertaking this research study was driven by the need to contribute an alternative view to the existing body of research knowledge about how NQTs are integrated into practice and the struggles that exist between them and established teachers. By so doing, the contribution would help inform the ways in which South Africa approaches the induction of NQTs into the schooling system and the teaching practice. The findings of this research study revealed that there is indeed an alternative way of thinking about the struggles between newly qualified and established teachers. The consideration of the consequences of gazes and the held constellations (which are grounded in knowledge) revealed that there is more to the integration of NQTs into practice than just assimilation. Under the new policy on minimum requirements for teacher education qualifications, teachers are required to be degreed in order to practice and in the four years they undergo a knowledge-intensive teacher-education programme. Regardless of these new developments, established teachers reconcile recent regulations with their rich experience as teachers. Understanding the underlying principles is integral to ensure that the objectives of teacher education programmes in different universities begin to take into consideration other factors that contribute to the challenges faced by NQTs in their early years of adjustment in practice. The wedge between established and NQTs is not a glorious phenomenon and therefore, to ensure the success of the vision of education practice, the relationship between these members of the school community must be improved. The teaching practice cannot afford to normalize a narrative that suggests the marginalization of NQTs. Instead, research should dig more to ensure we improve these conditions of practice. The research reveals that there is more to the problems

that some research studies have explored regarding NQTs, and that knowledge practices are a thin layer that require further exploration. Through this research study, we understand that understanding the underlying legitimating principles and the legitimacy struggles between NQTs and established teachers will help inform the manner in which they approach teacher education, teacher induction and the development of communities of practice. Although many efforts have been made to explain the problems that exist in the integration of NQTs into the teaching practice, this research study offers an alternative view towards defining a new research path for NQTs' research studies and contributes a fundamental missing puzzle in the knowledge base regarding the struggles between NQTs and established teachers.

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# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

### PRE-FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR NEWLY QUALIFIED AND ESTABLISHED TEACHERS:

1. Why did you choose to become a teacher? Would you choose teaching again?
  2. Do you think anyone can become a good teacher? What does it take for someone to become a good teacher in the context of this school?
  3. What is your mission as a teacher / What do you hope to achieve in your work as a teacher?
  4. What personal experiences, knowledge, relationships with others, interests, teacher-education theories were influential in shaping your view of teaching? Please elaborate with instances within these aspects.
  5. What qualities are the most important characteristics of an effective teacher? Range these from most to least important.
- [1. Knowing your Community; 2. Subject Knowledge 3. Knowledge of the policies and what the district expects; 4. Being a hard worker; 5. Having a kind, caring nature; 6. Working well with others; 7. Having Resources]
6. To what extent do the current conditions of practice enable/do not enable you to be the ideal teacher you hope to be?
  7. If you could change something about the way in which teaching is done in this context, what would it be? Why is this change necessary? What would you rather see implemented? Have you made suggestions? To whom or why not? What was the response to your suggestion/s?

## APPENDIX 2: FOCUS GROUP VIGNETTES

**Vignette 1:** The Head of the Economic Management Sciences Department teacher needs to go on maternity leave. The principal cannot find a suitable replacement. He comes to you, as the Life Science teacher and asks if you can please pick up a Grade 9 Economic Management Science class for the next term because the class fits into your timetable. He also needs you to lead the department, checking planning and assessments. What might your answer to the principal be and reasons?

**Vignette 2:** A female student who refuses to wear a skirt to school, even though it is part of the school uniform for girls. Your colleague will not allow her into her class wearing pants. What would be the best response to this situation?

**Vignette 3:** There is a learner who is struggling to cope with the academic work in a colleague's class. Her parents have just arrived in South Africa, and the child is also disruptive. The colleague believes that the child does not fit into this school. What advice do you give the teachers and parents?

### APPENDIX 3: WITS ETHICS CLEARANCE



Research Office

**HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)**  
R14/49 Hlatshwayo

**CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE**

**PROTOCOL NUMBER: H19/11/18**

**PROJECT TITLE**

The Knower Gazes of teachers: Investigating struggles for legitimacy between established and newly qualified teachers in South African Schools

**INVESTIGATOR(S)**

Mr P Hlatshwayo

**SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT**

Education/

**DATE CONSIDERED**

15 November 2019

**DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE**

Approved  
Permission letters required before data collection can commence.

**EXPIRY DATE**

15 January 2023

**DATE**

16 January 2020

**CHAIRPERSON**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Knight'.

(Professor J Knight)

cc: Supervisor : Professor L Rusznyak

#### APPENDIX 4: GAUTENG DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PERMISSION



### GAUTENG PROVINCE

Department: Education  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

8/4/4/1/2

### GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

Date:	09 October 2019
Validity of Research Approval:	10 February 2020 – 30 September 2020 2019/289
Name of Researcher:	Hlatshwayo P
Address of Researcher:	51 Central Road Linden Randburg 2195
Telephone Number:	071 251 5814
Email address:	670477@students.wits.ac.za
Research Topic:	The Knower Gazes: Investigating Struggles for Legitimacy between Established and Newly-qualified teachers in South African Schools.
Type of qualification	Masters by Dissertation
Number and type of schools:	Five Secondary Schools
District/s/HO	Ekurhuleni North

#### **Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research**

This letter serves to indicate that approval is hereby granted to the above-mentioned researcher to proceed with research in respect of the study indicated above. The onus rests with the researcher to negotiate appropriate and relevant time schedules with the school/s and/or offices involved to conduct the research. A separate copy of this letter must be presented to both the School (both Principal and SGB) and the District/Head Office Senior Manager confirming that permission has been granted for the research to be conducted.

*[Signature]* 09/10/2019

The following conditions apply to GDE research. The researcher may proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met. Approval may be withdrawn should any of the conditions listed below be flouted:

*Making education a societal priority*

#### **Office of the Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management**

7<sup>th</sup> Floor, 17 Simmonds Street, Johannesburg, 2001

Tel: (011) 355 0488

Email: Faith.Tshabalala@gauteng.gov.za

Website: www.education.gpg.gov.za

## APPENDIX 5 A: Participant information sheet and informed consent form for the teachers



Information sheet for participants completing the questionnaire only.

January 2020

Dear Colleague

My name is Philip Hlatshwayo, a Masters by Dissertation student registered at the Wits School of Education. I am currently conducting my research: *The Knower Gazes: Investigating struggles for legitimacy between established teachers and newly-qualified teachers*. Teaching communities of practice are integral to the improvement of schools in South Africa, and the research is committed to open a new conversation to enable the transformation of these communities. The research findings will contribute to the development of a national strategy for the induction of newly-qualified teachers in South Africa. My research project is being done with ethical clearance from the Wits Ethics Committee and the full support and permission from the Gauteng Department of Education.

I would, therefore, like to invite you to take part in this research study. An outline of the specifications and parameters of your participation in the study are;

As a participant, you are going to be asked to complete a questionnaire during the course of the research study at a convenient time. The first part of the questionnaire requires you to choose a particular response using a tick and the second question consist of questions that require short responses. In all publications arising from this study will ensure anonymity and confidentiality, which means a pseudonym (false name) will be appropriated to each participating teacher. There are absolutely no negative consequences to you or the school for taking part in the research instead, the research data gathered will be a contribution to an existing knowledge base.

Participation in this research is entirely voluntary. Therefore no form of coercion will be used to force the teachers to take part without their full consent. If you chose not to grant permission for the research, there will be no negative consequences implicated in your decision. There are no direct benefits to you, but we expect that our research findings will be used to inform and contribute to the ongoing research on building the professional practice and the successful induction of newly-qualified teachers into South African schools.

All research data (electronic and material) will be kept securely in locked offices at the University of the Witwatersrand and will be destroyed five years after completing the project. The findings of the research will be used for academic purposes (including my book chapters, journals and conference papers). A summary of findings will be made available to participants on request and submitted to the Gauteng Department of Education. Confirmation for permission to conduct the research can be verified with a signature and contact details for confirmation. If you have any queries regarding any aspect of our research, please do not hesitate to contact me;

my research supervisor, Professor Lee Rusznyak or the Human Research Ethics Committee (Non

Medical).

Philip Hlatshwayo  
[670477@students.wits.ac.za](mailto:670477@students.wits.ac.za)  
071 2515 814

Prof.Lee Rusznyak  
[lee.Rusznyak@wits.ac.za](mailto:lee.Rusznyak@wits.ac.za)  
011 717 3004

**Human Research Ethics Committee**

---

0117171408  
[Charmaine.khumalo@wits.ac.za](mailto:Charmaine.khumalo@wits.ac.za)  
0117171788

**Appendix 5B:** Participant information sheet and informed consent form for experienced teachers and newly-qualified teachers for Questionnaire, Interview and Focus Group



Information sheet for participants completing all a questionnaire, interview and participating in a focus group

January 2020

Dear Colleague,

My name is Philip Hlatshwayo, a Masters by Dissertation student registered at the Wits School of Education. I am currently conducting my research; *The Knower Gazes: Investigating struggles for legitimacy between established teachers and newly-qualified teachers..* Teaching communities of practice are integral to the improvement of schools in South Africa, and the research is committed to open a new conversation to enable the transformation of these communities. The research findings will contribute to the development of a national strategy for the induction of newly-qualified teachers in South Africa. My research project is being done with ethical clearance from the Wits Ethics Committee and the full support and permission from the Gauteng Department of Education.

I would, therefore, like to invite you to take part in this research study. An outline of the specifications and parameters of your participation in the study are;

There are three data collection mediums that you are asked to engage with, namely, an interview, a questionnaire and a focus group interview. As a participant, you are going to be asked to complete a questionnaire during the research study at a convenient time. The first part of the questionnaire requires you to choose an appropriate response using a tick and the second part consist of questions that require short responses. The individual interview will be facilitated by the researcher in which he will pose a set of questions, and your responses will be recorded to ensure accuracy in data collection. In the participation of the focus group, anonymity cannot be provided during the discussion because of collective participation but at the level of extracting and using the findings anonymity and confidentiality are guaranteed for all the participants in the focus group. During the focus group, the researcher will read a case to the group which concludes with a question, to which the participants will respond in no specific order and then the discussion will be derived from there.

In all publications arising from this study, a pseudonym (false name) will be appropriated to each participating teacher. There are absolutely no negative consequences to you or the school for taking part in the research; instead, the research data gathered will be a contribution to an existing knowledge base. Furthermore, the research will not negatively affect or tamper with your performance duties to the school.

Participation in this research is entirely voluntary. Therefore no form of coercion will be used to force you to take part without your full consent. If you chose not to take part in the research, there will be no negative consequences implicated in your decision. There are no direct benefits to you, but we expect that our research findings will be used to inform and contribute to the

ongoing research on building the professional practice and the successful induction of new teachers into South African schools.

All research data (electronic and material) will be kept securely in locked offices at the University of the Witwatersrand and will be destroyed five years after completing the project. The findings of the research will be used for academic purposes (including my book chapters, journals and conference papers). A summary of findings will be made available to participants on request and submitted to the Gauteng Department of Education.

If you have any queries regarding any aspect of our research, please do not hesitate to contact me; my research supervisor, Professor Lee Rusznyak or the Human Research Ethics Committee (Non Medical).

Kind Regards

Philip Hlatshwayo  
[670477@students.wits.ac.za](mailto:670477@students.wits.ac.za)  
0712515814

Prof.Lee Rusznyak  
[lee.Rusznyak@wits.ac.za](mailto:lee.Rusznyak@wits.ac.za)  
011 717 3004

**Human Research Ethics Committee**

Shaun.Schoeman@wits.ac.za  
0117171408 or  
Charmaine.khumalo@wits.ac.za  
0117171788



## APPENDIX 6: CONSENT FORMS

### Informed Consent Form for Interviews

I \_\_\_\_\_ (participant's full name)

I have read and understood the "Invitation to participate in research and information letter" and will take part in individual interview :

Yes	No
-----	----

Please use a cross to indicate your agreement with the stipulated conditions of the research study:

- Being interviewed for 30 minutes at a convenient time and place

Yes	No
-----	----

If you answered yes to participate in an interview, please indicate your consent and understanding of the following:

- I consent to have my interview audio-recorded for the purposes of accurate data collection and transcription

Yes	No
-----	----

- I understand that I have the right to decline to answer any of the questions in the interview

Yes	No
-----	----

- Allowing to be audio-recorded during the interview

Yes	No
-----	----

- I understand that I may withdraw permission for my contributions in the audio-recorded discussion to be used for research purposes at any time without any negative consequences:

Yes	No
-----	----

- Allowing my audio-recorded contribution to be analysed for the purpose of extracting information that will contribute to the drafting of the research findings

Yes	No
-----	----

If you answered yes to having your audio recorded contribution utilised for the purpose of this research, please indicate your understanding of the following:

- I understand that I may withdraw permission for my contributions in the audio-recorded discussion to be used for research purposes at any time without any negative consequences:

Yes	No
-----	----

- If you answered **yes** to having your audio recorded contributions to the discussion made available for research purposes, please indicate your understanding of the following:

- I understand that my participation is voluntary and that there are no negative consequences for choosing not to participate in this research:

Yes	No
-----	----

- I understand that my responses will be used as research data for academic purposes, and may be published in conference papers, journal articles or books:

Yes	No
-----	----

- I understand that my responses will be used anonymously at all times and I will not be identified in any research publications:

Yes	No
-----	----

- I understand that the data will be kept securely in a locked office and will be destroyed five years after completion of the research:

Yes	No
-----	----

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*The Knower Gazes: Investigating struggles for legitimacy between established teachers and newly-qualified teachers.*

**Informed Consent Form for Focus Group**

I \_\_\_\_\_ (participant's full name)

I have read and understood the "Invitation to participate in research and information letter" and will take part in the focus group :

Yes	No
-----	----

Please use a cross to indicate your agreement with the stipulated conditions of the research study:

- Being interviewed for 40 minutes in a venue that accommodates all the participants.

Yes	No
-----	----

If you answered yes to participate in the focus group, please indicate your consent and understanding of the following:

- I consent to have my discussion during the focus group audio-recorded for the purposes of accurate data collection and transcription

Yes	No
-----	----

- I understand that I have the right to decline to answer any of the questions in the interview

Yes	No
-----	----

- Allowing to be audio-recorded during the focus group

Yes	No
-----	----

- I understand that I may withdraw permission for my contributions in the audio-recorded discussion to be used for research purposes at any time without any negative consequences:

Yes	No
-----	----

- Allowing my audio-recorded contribution to be analysed for the purpose of extracting information that will contribute to the drafting of the research findings

Yes	No
-----	----

If you answered yes to having your audio recorded contribution utilised for the purpose of this research, please indicate your understanding of the following:

- I understand that I may withdraw permission for my contributions in the audio-recorded discussion to be used for research purposes at any time without any negative consequences:

Yes	No
-----	----

- If you answered **yes** to having your audio recorded contributions to the discussion made available for research purposes, please indicate your understanding of the following:

- I understand that my participation is voluntary and that there are no negative consequences for choosing not to participate in this research:

Yes	No
-----	----

- I understand that my responses will be used as research data for academic purposes, and may be published in conference papers, journal articles or books:

Yes	No
-----	----

- I understand that my responses will be used anonymously at all times and I will not be identified in any research publications:

Yes	No
-----	----

- I understand that the data will be kept securely in a locked office and will be destroyed five years after completion of the research:

Yes	No
-----	----

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*The Knower Gazes: Investigating struggles for legitimacy between established teachers and newly-qualified teachers.*

**Informed Consent Form for Questionnaire**

I \_\_\_\_\_ (participant's full name)

I have read and understood the "Invitation to participate in research and information letter" and will take part in completing a questionnaire:

Yes	No
-----	----

Please use a cross to indicate your agreement with the stipulated conditions of the research study:

- Completing a questionnaire at my convenient time.

Yes	No
-----	----

If you answered yes to completing a questionnaire, please indicate your consent and understanding of the following:

- I consent to have my responses to be analysed and used in the findings of the research.

Yes	No
-----	----

- I understand that I have the right to decline to respond to any of the questions in the questionnaire

Yes	No
-----	----

- Allowing my completed questionnaire to be analysed for the purpose of extracting information that will contribute to the drafting of the research findings

Yes	No
-----	----

If you answered yes to having your questionnaire contributions utilised for the purpose of this research, please indicate your understanding of the following:

- I understand that I may withdraw permission for my contributions in the questionnaire discussion to be used for research purposes at any time without any negative consequences:

Yes	No
-----	----

- If you answered **yes** to having your questionnaire contributions to the discussion made available for research purposes, please indicate your understanding of the following:

- I understand that my participation is voluntary and that there are no negative consequences for choosing not to participate in this research:

Yes	No
-----	----

- I understand that my responses will be used as research data for academic purposes, and may be published in conference papers, journal articles or books:

Yes	No
-----	----

- I understand that my responses will be used anonymously at all times and I will not be identified in any research publications:

Yes	No
-----	----

- I understand that the data will be kept securely in a locked office and will be destroyed five years after completion of the research:

Yes	No
-----	----

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX 7: ORGANIZATION OF DATA

Code	Description	Example quote from the data
<b>1. Motivation</b>	<i>The codes establishes the motivation and grounds that determine the mandate teachers chooses to take up in their work.</i>	
a) Social/political transformative motivation	This category codes teachers' responses that capture their deep personal drives in how they position themselves in their work.	<i>NQT-A "I saw the struggles that we were [subjected to] when I was a young learner. While I was studying her, I thought some of the things that my teachers did could be improved."</i>
b) Non-Social motivation	This category codes teachers' comments that describe a more general aspects of their drive.	<i>ET-B "you are covered, you are working for the government so that means work cannot just finish now so you also have some holidays so you can also spend those holidays with your family."</i>
c) Personal ambitions	This category codes teachers' comments that describe their personal reasons.	<i>NQT-A "my passion is in education, I think also has to do with the parents and stuff. I am passionate about education."</i>  <i>NQT-B "I am one person who talks a lot, who likes explaining things you know, so I [thought] teaching will be perfect for me."</i>
<b>2. Points of Contention</b>	<i>The codes establishes what teachers see as problems in the school and the profession.</i>	
a) Rapid Change in the curriculum and other factors that affect work orientation	This category codes teachers' comments that describe the fluidity aspect of the curriculum and work-orientation	<i>ET-B "there is too much complication in teaching now unlike in the beginning. Too much paper work, too much changing of curriculum, the behaviour of these learners are changing"</i>

b) Contextual factors and conditions of work	This category codes the descriptions of context-bound reality.	<i>NQT-C “this environment is difficult whereby overcrowding is a problem in the classrooms, where you have to teach and intervene. Intervention is a problem. Teaching sixty kids and thirty are failing.”</i>
c) The State	The category codes teachers that describes the problems they have with the state or bureaucracy.	<i>NQT-A “Someone in her office that I don’t even know where is making rules on how to teach in my class and when I should teach and how I should do things.”</i>
d) Teaching Practices	This category codes teachers’ descriptions of their teaching practices.	<i>NQT-A “And because I teach history and history is a matter of facts. Facts all stay facts. But history is a multiperspective and so obviously you cannot enforce ideas to people”</i>
<b>3. Mandates</b>	<i>The code establishes what teachers stand for.</i>	
a) Sociological/Political mandate	This category codes teachers’ comments that describe their sociological stances.	<i>NQT-A “That’s the goal that I have, bringing improvement to a black child. I know when I say black child.”</i>  <i>NQT-B “I am hoping to achieve my goalsn to transform the lives of learners, so that they can be better citizens.”</i>
b) Professional mandate	This category codes teachers’ comments that describes their professional stances.	<i>NQT-B “Change the situation in teaching space so that it can be easy, it can be friendly, not only to learner but also those who work on it.”</i>
c) Personal mandate	This category codes teachers’ comments that describes their personal stances	<i>ET-C “I get satisfaction when I see the end results of my teaching so what drives me the most is to see that learner who came in grade 8, looking like he or she knows nothing but we do know that psychologically we know they have something with them.”</i>
<b>4. Views of teaching</b>	<i>The code describes various aspects that form the dominant views of teaching practices.</i>	
a) Knowledge-and Education	This category codes teachers’ comments that relate to the knowledge and education that shapes teachers view.	<i>NQT-C “Theory was just the foundation, so when everything happened at first hand I was experiencing things, at least I could reference whatever happened to the theories that I learned in varsity, at least.”</i>



b) Personal Experience	This category codes teachers' comments that talk into views shaped by teachers' personal experiences.	<i>ET-A "I grew through intervention because you know through varsity you think that teaching is just an easy thing. You know when you go for teaching practice at a school, they will comfort you, you will feel welcome, you will feel eh this profession is easy."</i>
c) Personal Interests	This category codes teachers' comments that describe the views shaped by personal interests.	<i>NQT-A "I think also my teaching is rooted in black consciousness. I'm very black conscious, I love black people, I love Africa. So I want Africa to do good and if you want people to do good, you must teach them. You must educate them. So those are the things that helped me."</i>
d) Associations	This category codes teachers' comments that relate to views shaped by teachers' associates.	<i>NQT-A "Our campus in university was an education campus only even though we would interact with the main campus but we were an education campus. Everyone here is doing teaching, every conversation we would [have] you know. I would like to think that also had [an impact]. I saw different types of teachers as a result and that helped mold me."</i>
e) School Culture and community	This category code teachers' comments that describes the views of teaching shaped by school culture.	<i>ET-B "I found people who already been in the profession. They helped me to develop myself in teaching and to give me support wherever I need because if you are inexperienced there are things that you don't know but through coaching you become a better teacher."</i>
<b>5. Criteria for being a good teacher.</b>	<i>The code establishes implicit criteria for what constitute a good teacher.</i>	
a) Personal Qualities	This category codes teachers' comments that determines the criteria of being a good teacher by personal qualities.	<i>ET-C "anyone can become a good teacher because it's all about intrinsic motivation more than what you get as rewards from the teaching."</i>
b) Knowledge	This category codes teachers' comments that uses knowledge as a criteria for being a good teacher.	<i>NQT-A "I think about the kids, that the only way out especially the poor kids. The only way out for them is if I provide them quality education."</i>  <i>ET-C "I have had learners that have called me from the university to say 'sir here I am remembering what you were saying last year in</i>

		<i>physics' while in a class at UJ or Wits."</i>
c) In relation to the community	This category codes teachers' comments that uses the teachers position in the school community as a criteria for being a good teacher.	<i>ET-A "sometimes you cannot tell yourself ukuthi you are good teacher. It's people who are looking at you who will say that teacher is a good teacher. Adapt and change with times and then you will become a good teacher."</i>
<b>6. Keys for developments and change</b>	<i>The code describes what teachers view as areas that need to be changed.</i>	
a) School-Based	This category codes teachers' comments that locates the aspects of development and change within the school.	<i>ET-A "What I could change for now, is the attitude of the so-called old teachers, jah if it can change because they still believe in chalk, I don't believe in chalk anymore"</i>
b) The State and its institutions	This category codes teachers' comments that locates the aspects of development and change in the state.	<i>NQT-C "I would reduce the number of topics that are involved in the manual (ATP- annual teaching plan), I would reduce the number of topics and make that there is enough time to treat the topics that are there for assessment, for feedback, for intervention."</i>
c) The Society	This category codes teachers' comments that locates the aspects of development and change in the society	<i>NQT-B "I would incorporate the society and the norms of the society. I would infuse certain morals, I would infuse the traditional way of teaching that will instill discipline in learners."</i>

