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IDENTITY NARRATIVES OF BLACK DOMESTIC WORKERS' ADULT CHILDREN PARTIALLY REARED BY THEIR PARENTS' WHITE EMPLOYERS

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A research report submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Community-based Counselling Psychology

DECLARATION:

I declare that this research report is my own work. It is being submitted in the Faculty of Humanities at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, for the degree of Master of Arts in Community-based Counselling Psychology. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination to any other university.

_____

Kay Curtis

30st day of April, 2015

Dedication

I dedicate this research, with deep gratitude, to my husband, without whom this dream of mine would not have been possible.

Acknowledgements

To my supervisor, Professor Garth Stevens, thank you for picking up the jumbled pieces of this research project over half way through and with your vast knowledge, skill, insight and encouragement, guiding me to a place where I was able to submit. Thank you for going the extra mile for me. I have learnt so much from you, way beyond the scope of this study, and I am extremely grateful to have been afforded the privilege of even just a short time in supervision with you.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The concept of identity is undeniably relevant to the ordinary person and their human experience, and has fascinated humankind since the earliest times. As such, it has been a central topic of study and conversation for decades within the field of psychology, as well as in other disciplines such as sociology, philosophy and linguistic anthropology (Cross, 1991; Erikson, 1950/1995; Gergen, 1991; Klein, Spears & Reicher, 2007; Mead, 1934; Tajfel, 1982; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher & Wetherell, 1987). However, because of the uniqueness of each human being and our continually changing social world and distinctive responses to it, the study of identity seems to be inexhaustible and at times even somewhat elusive.

Traditionally identity was understood within a white male dominated, western epistemological framework of individuality, emphasising the integration of aspects of the self into a fixed, coherent whole (Sampson, 1994). However, the concept has shifted with global socio-political changes to where it is now understood as something multiple, fluid and mutable, occurring inter-subjectively and continually being re-constructed in response to interactions within social spaces at different points in time (Franchi & Swart, 2003).

It was considered important therefore to have an understanding of the larger backdrop in which to frame the identity constructions in this study. It is located specifically within the current socio-political context of South Africa, a country of huge political and social change over the past 21 years (Stevens, Franchi & Swart, 2006). It is a space where much upheaval, not only in the larger socio-political arena, but also on a micro-level, has occurred since the first democratic election in 1994 and the legislated end to apartheid that followed. As the socio-political landscape shifted from one of legalised discrimination and extreme racism to political democracy, it did not necessarily include freedom from discrimination or from the personal consequences of prolonged oppression (Fanon, 1967). Within this changing world, the lives of individual people

were acutely affected (Stevens, et al. 2006). In particular, young black[1] South Africans faced the struggle of forming new identities for themselves, initially in the immediate post-struggle environment (Stevens & Lockhat, 2003), and still today with further globalisation and greater acceptance of western norms and culture.

Within this context, the study focuses in on a fairly unique group of young South Africans, that of black adult children of domestic workers who were incorporated to some extent or other into the households of their parents' or grandparents' white employers. Although the extent of this inclusion varied, it generally involved the growing child spending time, playing, eating and engaging with the white family within their home space. It also often involved some financial support for the child. It is these young adults who were invited to share the stories of their lived experience in order to illuminate an understanding of their lives and thereby the identities they have constructed for themselves within this particular space.

1.2 Rationale

Much research has been done on racially mixed families and the challenges to identity development that the children therein face, but most of this research (Brooks, 2000; Burrows & Finely, 2004, as cited in Hayes, 2008) has focussed on cross-cultural adoption of black children into white families. Research has also looked at privileged white children being raised by their black domestic workers (Fineman, 2011; Van der Merwe, 2009).

There is also a wealth of exploration around identity development in adolescence and young adulthood (Erikson, 1980; Marcia, 1980; Phinney, 1990), as well as research into the particular difficulties of identity formation experienced by black people in the face of white hegemony (Bulhan, 1980; Cross, 1971; Fanon, 1967). Added to this, further studies have thrown light on the particular challenges faced by black adolescents who struggled for an identity in post-apartheid South Africa (Stevens & Lockhat, 1997).

[1] This document uses the terms 'black' and 'white' in the understanding that they are socially constructed labels whose use has the potential to constitute and reproduce racialised categorization and ways of thinking, but that none the less have, and continue to, reflect and impact on the nature of social relations in South Africa today (Stevens, et al., 2006). Their use in no way indicates any endorsement on behalf of the researcher of the racial stereotyping implied in the labelling of people based on the colour of their skin.

However the researcher found limited existing investigations into the fairly unique South African situation where the children of economically disadvantaged black domestic workers have been reared to some extent or other in their comparatively wealthy white employers' family home, while at the same time continuing to retain their connection to their biological family and to parent(s) or grandparents, who live in the domestic quarters attached to the employer's home. Although incorporated to varying degrees into the intimate spaces of the white family, these participants are still regarded first and foremost as children of their biological domestic worker parents / grandparents.

Identity formations emerging from within this complex, racialised context do not appear to have been specifically explored - where the still disadvantaged black domestic worker's child, through unusual circumstances in their home environment, was propelled in some way or other into a white world of economic advantage and privilege by the employers of their domestic worker parent(s) / grandparent. The question this study then seeks to explore is how these domestic workers' now adult children, in light of the context in which they were reared, construct identities for themselves today.

This is a significant question in that these types of domestic kinship relations seem to be increasingly common, and also because it mirrors important questions that need to be engaged with around the possibilities for new identity positions for young black adults within the complex context of today's democratic South Africa. This is a country still entangled in its apartheid past, facing instances of strong anti-racist actions, such as the removal of the Rhodes statue, and at the same time struggling with issues of violent xenophobia. Added to this there seems to also be a growing colour-blindness. This is a space at a point in time where socially constructed racialised identities can be openly contested, and yet these new identity potentials are inescapably and inextricably linked to our difficult past.

This particular research project was informed by an interpretive, phenomenological perspective (Smith & Osborn, 2007). Its aim was to explore how these young adults make sense of and give meaning to their personal world as well as the social world in which they live and function. It sought to uncover how they might be engaging in different, or creating new ways of expressing their identities as young South Africans today. By furthering an understanding of the challenges and processes of identity that this specific group of young black people express, it

also hoped to add to the store of knowledge that already exists regarding identity in the South African context. The study potentially adds another dimension to the literature on identity formation of South African children who grew up in home environments that were in some way racially, culturally and socio-economically mixed.

Some explanation is required regarding the concept of race as distinct from ethnicity and culture, as used throughout this study. 'Race', as understood in terms of a categorization according to skin colour has been discredited as being a scientifically invalid means of distinguishing different groups of people (Jones, 1993; May, 2001). However, Omi and Winant (1993) contend that despite this fact, this means of social categorization has, over time, become a fundamental principle informing social organization and the formation of individual identities. In South Africa it continues to be a significant social marker (Stevens, et al., 2006) and the researcher acknowledges the need to use this social and political construct to facilitate understandings of difference and the contexts of privilege and oppression in this still highly racialized society.

1.3 Scope of the Present Study

This study investigated the identity constructions of young black adults who were reared by their domestic worker parent(s) / grandparents but also, to a greater or lesser extent, by those parent(s)/ grandparent's white employers. It investigated the impact on their sense of self of the different spaces occupied and relations experienced by these young people during their formative years. The study includes a brief exposition of the social and political context of South Africa and some exploration of the participants' sense of belonging in the home space in which they were reared by caregivers from very different cultural milieus and at opposite ends of the pre-apartheid socio-political spectrum. It took cognisance of the possible power dynamics inherent in the interactions between those caregivers and their white employers, and includes an investigation into the participants' experience of the social world and the impact of racism still evident in South Africa's social landscape. The combination of all these factors were seen to have influenced the participants' values, attitudes and beliefs, and thus the construction of their identities as young adults living in South Africa today.

The exploration was undertaken using narratives because, as Riessman (2008) articulates, "most obviously, individuals and groups construct identities through storytelling" (p. 8). Their stories

are accepted as being potentially contradictory and "fluid" (Squire, 2012), meaning there is always the possibility that those stories might have been different if told at a different time, in a different setting and to a different person.

1.4 Chapter Organisation

This report is comprised of five chapters. These include an introduction and rationale for the study; a literature review; research methods used; the report and a conclusion. Chapter one provides an introduction to the research, which includes a brief overview, the background to the present study, the rationale and the scope. Chapter two offers a review of some of the relevant literature, situating the study within the South African socio-political context and discussing concepts of power, racialism, domestic work and parenting, together with selected traditional identity theories, a brief explanation of identity and subjectivity, a view of post-modern narrative, a consideration of identity as performance, as well as a discussion on racialized identity.

Chapter three engages with the methods used in the study, including the research design, selection of participants, procedure, and means of data analysis. Ethical issues and reflexivity are also discussed in this chapter. Chapter four presents the report, detailing the narrative forms and themes garnered from the participants' stories, and an interpretation of the identities they were understood to have narrated. Finally Chapter five offers a conclusion, relating the significance as well as some of the limitations of the study, together with future areas of study that could be pursued as an outcome of this research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This study has concentrated on exploring identity through a post-modern narrative lens and therefore as being embedded within "overlapping networks of relations that shift over time and space" (Somers, 1994, pg. 607). It therefore recognises the importance of the socio-

political landscape of South Africa over the past 70 years or so, that has formed the backdrop and suffused the context into which the participants of this study were born and in which they grew up. It is a larger space and time that is believed to have profoundly influenced conscious and unconscious attitudes and ways of thinking, relating and behaving for the caretakers of the research participants, both the biological black parents and their white employers, as well as the participants themselves.

Also, because these aspects of relationality, space and time are incorporated into the concept of identity when approached from a narrative perspective, the focus then shifts from this larger socio-political framework, and all that it brings with it in terms of power and hierarchy, into the more intimate space of the home environment. The negotiation of identity is invariably constructed through processes of unequal power between different groups and individuals (Franchi & Swart, 2003), and so some insight is provided into the possible dynamics at play within this particular home setting in which the participants grew up. It is one in which their caretakers lived and functioned as adults in their roles as parents and caregivers to these young participants, as well as in their roles as domestic worker employee and employer. It is believed that these aspects would in all likelihood have influenced the experiences, internalised belief systems and thereby identities of the participants.

The theoretical approaches to identity formation that have informed this study are then presented. It was considered relevant to begin by providing some information on traditional psychological theories that, despite holding to a categorically fixed and rigid idea of identity, have added invaluable insights to the understanding of the complex topic of identity. This is augmented by a brief discussion of identity and subjectivity.

A post-modern narrative approach is promoted as the means towards reaching a more nuanced understanding of identity desired for this study. Expanding on this is a discussion around the performance of identity, examining specifically the performance of language and accent. This chapter also includes some theoretical explanations of the specific difficulties encountered in identity formulation for people when race is foregrounded in a society characterised by white hegemony.

Through this review of theory and literature, it is hoped that a picture will emerge of how complex and multifaceted the concept of identity is, and how it is made all the more so for

these particular young people by the complicated context of their unusual upbringing in pre- and early post-apartheid South Africa.

2.1 South Africa - the Larger Socio-political Context and the Construction of Difference

This section traces a brief historical progression of some of the key social and political forces at play from apartheid to post-apartheid times in South Africa, with the view to providing some insight into the particular contextual backdrop framing the lives and experiences of these participants.

Racial division and attitudes of superiority of 'whiteness' over 'blackness' have been a part of the psyches of the people of South Africa since colonial times (Hook, 2003). It is also well known that from 1948 to 1994, South Africa was a country governed by a brutal, discriminatory system called apartheid which worked to destroy the individual, social, cultural, educational, economic and political aspirations of black people, and to control and censure all aspects of their lives.

As a result of apartheid-capitalism, including inferior education, forced removals and job exclusions directed specifically against people who were not regarded as white, a huge 'downward economic pressure' (Stevens & Lockhat, 1997, p.253) was exerted on black people during these apartheid years. Through this system, particular roles, labels and identities were delineated for black people, which then determined their path in life and limited their access to political, economic, cultural and social resources (Sonn, 2006).

During the apartheid era, children of all racial categories were exposed to the political ideology of white supremacy through the school system (Dawes & Finchilescu, 2002). Christian National Education (CNE) guaranteed that white culture and history were instilled in all children, validating and perpetuating the political order. Together with this, racial segregation in residential areas, schools and sports effectively ensured minimal contact between different racial groups (Dawes & Finchilescu, 2002).

There was one area in which this minimal contact was somewhat different from the norm, and that was in the arena of domestic work. The domestic worker was allowed into the intimate space of the white home through an employment opportunity that was often the

only option open to black women (Cock, 1980, 1989; Fish, 2006). However, this did not mean that she/he was not segregated within that space or that she/he benefitted greatly from that inclusion. It was most often an exploitative relationship in terms of long working hours for very little pay, within a live-in situation that resulted in the domestic worker being largely isolated from her/his own family. A discussion around domestic workers will be further elaborated on later in this chapter.

By the 1970's and 1980's, a time when several of the parents of these research participants were likely to have been teens or young adults, young blacks were at the forefront of the struggle against oppression. After 1976 and the Soweto uprising, a protest headed by high school learners in response to their inferior education and the use of Afrikaans as the medium of instruction, the political struggle intensified. This was accompanied by increased violence, killings, imprisonment and the torture of black people (Dawes & Finchilescu, 2002). In the face of this oppression, black people were more united in their resistance against a common enemy and, as freedom fighters, they had a purpose and an identity that was often crafted in relation to apartheid (Stevens & Lockhat, 1997).

White people on the other hand, through the media and their school syllabus, were presented with the view of black people as a violent, angry enemy poised to usurp their privileged lives and the opportunities offered to them by their political power and white 'superiority' (Dawes & Finchilescu, 2002).

By 1989, after the succession of F.W. de Klerk as Prime Minister, the political leadership showed signs that real change was truly possible. Anti-apartheid marches were allowed and some political prisoners were released, the most significant of which was Nelson Mandela in 1990. By 1992 the majority of the white electorate was in favour of reform (Steyn, 2001).

Despite the fears of whites and the traumatic violence experienced by blacks, the final end of apartheid brought with it a Bill of Rights, democratic freedom, and opportunities for education, employment and social integration like never before (Norris, Roeser, Richter, Lewin, Ginsburg, Fleetwood, Taole, & Van der Wolf, 2008). Officially, segregation and racism were now against

the law in South Africa and reformist policies such as Black Economic Empowerment (BEE)[2] and Affirmative Action were implemented in an effort to redress the economic, social and political disparities between whites and blacks. This assisted in the development of a black economic and political elite as well as a black middle-class (Durrheim & Mtose, 2006).

It also provoked an often complicated and difficult process of redefinition of self for many young black South Africans (Stevens & Lockhat, 1997). Young people started to adopt symbols of western ideology, such as ways of dressing and language usage, which now became an acceptable part of their socio-political landscape. However, the long term social impact of racist legislation, the close relationship between racist policies and capitalism, inferior education and poverty had far reaching effects that did not end with the end of apartheid. Generation X, the 'struggle' cohort that fought against apartheid, found themselves challenged now to find an alternate space for themselves in this new society. The renegotiation of identities became one of the most profound actions that South Africans, both black and white, with varying levels of willingness and success, began engaging in (Steyn, 2001).

With post-apartheid South Africa's new political freedom and efforts at economic empowerment, fundamental changes to the social fabric of the country occurred (Stevens & Lockhat, 1997). It heralded in many complex social shifts between various population groups in their relationship to one another, one of which was the change in minority and majority groups. Mynhardt, Baron, Branscombe and Byrne (2009) explain that, particularly pre-1994, despite black people being in the majority in the country in terms of their population size, this majority functioned as a minority group because of the limiting, oppressive legislation of the ruling party's system. The political power and economic status of white South Africans allowed them to function as the dominant group. Being a member of the majority group gives one a certain legitimacy within the social system (Mynhardt et al. 2009) and the change in status

[2]Black Economic Empowerment or BEE is a South African government programme that attempts to redress the economic injustices of apartheid in the working environment, by aiming to assist previously disadvantaged groups of people comprising all those not classified as white under the apartheid system, by affording them preference in employment procurement, socioeconomic and skills development, and ownerships and management of businesses (Department of Trade and Industry, 2003).

from being a member of an oppressed 'minority' to a rightful majority opened up possibilities to entertain alternate identities.

Nuttall (2004) explains that, as with other global cities, Johannesburg, post-1994 and continuing into the 2000s, became a site for 'the remixing and reassembling of racial identities' (pg. 431). New media cultures in the form of soap operas, magazines, billboard advertising and talk shows blossomed, embodying a language of desire and aspiration. Generation Y, or the young people who came after the struggle generation, embraced a new space in Johannesburg. This was signified by an innovative youth township culture that crossed the borders of class, education, language and conventional forms of race and culture, transforming spaces and opening up options for new identities. Nuttall (2004) suggests that these new identities appropriated a South African uniqueness and disclosed the preoccupations of a growing middle-class of young, self-stylizing black people. These ways of self-making were marked by continually remixed versions of race containing promises of "vectors of relation rather than of sameness or of difference" (Nuttall, 2004, p. 450).

Just as for black people, so too did white people need to reassess their old versions of selfhood in light of new possibilities now open to them. Their demographic minority, the dismantling of former power positions and the contestation of Euro-American privileging of whiteness in the context of 'a country redefining itself as African' (Steyn, 2001), required considerable renegotiation of identities. Particularly for liberal, open-minded white people, the dismantling of hegemonic whiteness and racialized ideologies freed up subject positions and possibilities for connections across racial lines. It allowed, among other things, for the rethinking of their relationship to domestic workers, something which made possible the act of rearing a black domestic worker's child. It also provided spaces for making reparations and engaging with feelings of guilt and shame in relation to the unearned position of privilege that whiteness had brought them (McIntosh, 1989, 2009).

2.2 Context of Production – domestic workers, their children and employers

The dominant white and politically 'minority' black groups (Mynhardt et al, 2009) within the context described above, are the ones to which the caretakers of the participants in this study

were confined by the apartheid system. They are the social categories that demarcated the lives of the domestic worker parents, and as well as their employers, when they themselves were growing up. It is also the world in which they functioned as adults and even caregivers before the participants were born. The interactions between these adults, and the roles they performed in relation to each other and to the young participants, created the space of the home environment.

Within the home environment, family structure is important in providing the setting in which identity development occurs (Waterman, 1982). In the case of these participants, the 'family' structure was slightly unusual in that the caregivers of these children were from different races and different cultural milieus, but more significantly, they were from distinctly different socio-economic status's and power positions, based on race within a racially segregated country and on the roles of employer / employee in the known to be exploitive context of domestic work (Cock, 1989; Durrheim, Jacobs & Dixon, 2014; Fish, 2006; King, 2007).

Added to this, the caregiving role of the white employer appears to have grown organically after the birth of the participant, rather than it having been a mutually agreed upon parenting arrangement between equal partners as one might expect between a couple of different ethnic backgrounds who have chosen to become parents. These undefined parameters around the parenting role of the employer allows for undefined expectations, the possible presence of a sense of indebtedness on behalf of the domestic worker, the potential of uninvited interference and impotency in the face of it, all diffusing the boundaries of the employer / employee relationship (Durrheim, et al., 2014).

This home space then is presumed to have been one naturally fraught with tensions around different dimensions of power and authority in terms of parent, adult, child and employee/employer relations. These dynamics are likely to have underlain all the conscious and/or unconscious modelling of each adults' values, and personal and cultural belief systems to which the young participants were exposed (Bourdieu, 1984). These factors, together with the caregivers' parenting styles and practices were considered to have influenced virtually all their interactions with the young participants.

To facilitate a deeper understanding of the complexity of this context, it was considered important to discuss aspects of the general dynamics involved in domestic worker / employer

relationships in South Africa; some discussion around aspects of power, authority and racism that could have impacted on the space and relationships within the home environment; as well as some information on the role of parenting in children's identity development.

2.2.1 Domestic Workers and the Space of their Employment

The 1970's and 1980's in South Africa was a time when the biological parents of these children were themselves teenagers or young adults, possibly looking for work or already working as domestic workers in Johannesburg. It was also a time when the nature of relations between domestic workers and their employers, mostly white women, was often one of exploitation (Cock, 1980).

Domestic workers in South Africa during this period of time were, to a large extent, personally, financially and socio-politically oppressed and exploited (Cock, 1980, 1989). This treatment was common place even in homes where the employers, mostly white women, believed they were behaving in an acceptable and 'normal' way in relation to their black domestic workers. With no officially recognised conditions of employment, the average domestic worker's day involved extremely long working hours, virtually no time off over the course of years and a below minimum wage. This appeared to arise out of a seeming disregard for the domestic worker as a real person with a family, dependents and a life outside of their job (Cock, 1980, 1989).

While some white employers expressed regarding their domestic worker as a member of the family, there was definitely no sharing of resources or power, as one might expect with a family member, in this one sided relationship (Cock, 1980, 1989). As a result of socio-political prohibitions, lack of education and the inferior status of black women in South Africa, domestic workers had virtually no alternatives for employment. In this space, they were often left feeling dependent and powerlessness (Cock, 1980, 1989).

Despite changes in so many areas on so many levels in post-apartheid South Africa, the arena of domestic workers is still one in which racial, class and gender divisions are obvious (Fish, 2006). As they have been historically, domestic workers continue today to be mostly black women. These women often still have low levels of education and little options for alternate employment in a country where 24.3% of the labour force is unemployed (Statistics South Africa, 2014). This

serious lack of alternate employment options and fear of losing one's job continues to exacerbate the sense of powerlessness and dependence in the face of exploitation that is still evident today within the private space of the home in post-1994 South Africa (King, 2007; Durrheim, et al., 2014).

Attempts to unite and organise domestic workers into a trade union failed for many years due to financial constraints, large locational distances and the private nature of the space of domestic employment (Fish, 2006). However, in 2000 the South African Domestic Service and Allied Workers' Union (SADSAWU) was launched, finally beginning to make the voices of domestic workers heard. Notwithstanding this progressive movement, just one example of the continued devaluation of domestic work and how domestic workers are discriminated against, was their specific exclusion from the basic legislative protection of unemployment insurance in the third draft of the Unemployment Insurance Fund Bill in 2001 (Fish, 2006). This is significant because it, once again, highlights the vulnerability and limited possible exit routes for a domestic worker defenceless against the whims of an unfair employer.

So despite improved conditions after 2000, including a minimum wage, more reasonable working hours, and therefore some acknowledgment of family and commitments outside the domestic space (Fish, 2006), domestic workers are still regarded as among the most vulnerable and exploited sectors due to their lack of legislated employment rights (COSATU, 2011).

One of the biggest problems in effectively implementing the regulations that do exist is the resistance, or even simply indifference, on behalf of employers to practice them (Du Toit, 2010). What seems to undo or override whatever improvements there have been, is that fundamentally the issue of domestic work is based on a personal interaction and relationship between two people in the private space of one of their homes. Thus the usual boundaries between employer and employee become blurred within that space. The domestic worker can be like a friend for the lonely housewife as well as/or alternatively her/his means of escaping boring household duties to a more fulfilling and financially rewarding occupation (Cock, 1980, 1989). The domestic worker is also sometimes a surrogate mother for the employer's children. As such, this is no ordinary working relationship but a complicated interconnection fraught with power imbalances and emotional investments.

This aspect will be discussed in more detail below, bearing in mind that all except one of the participants in this study were born in the years just before the end of apartheid, and in all cases, in direct contrast to the exclusionary and discriminatory practices still evident at that time (Fish, 2006), the employer incorporated the child of their domestic worker(s) into their home and their 'white lives' in some significant way or other.

2.2.2 Power and Authority and the Perpetuation of the Social Order

Why the white employers chose to adopt some of the parenting responsibilities of the domestic worker's child, and to whatever greater or lesser extents, is an area of interest that is outside of the scope of this study. Whether this appropriation of parenting duties was willingly acquiesced to or not by the domestic workers, is also for further study.

However, what is relevant to this study is that these actions and the conscious or unconscious thinking behind them, which culminated in the sharing of some aspects of the parenting of these children between domestic workers and their employers, give rise to questions around issues of power, authority and inequality and the possible impact of these processes on the identity development of the domestic workers' children.

Research has shown that children not only learn their attitudes towards different groups from their parents or significant others, but very young children can pick up environmental cues regarding the significance of social groups in very subtle and indirect means (Patterson & Bigler, 2006). Even when explicit evaluative messages are completely absent regarding different groups, young children can still show preferences for groups that the adults around them emphasize in some way or other through their behaviour and their language.

There is no doubt that there was a recognition of difference on behalf of the domestic workers' children. As research indicates (Aboud, 2008; Hirschfield, 2008; Patterson & Bigler, 2006), children recognize differences in race from a very young age, and racial biases, which do not automatically reflect those of the adults around them, are evident in children from as early as age three. It can be presumed then that regardless of the direct messages received from the participants' parents regarding their white employers, the young children would have absorbed implicit messages around white status and privilege.

King (2007) argues that, even with legislative changes in the domestic arena of post-apartheid South Africa, the exploitive nature of the relationship between employers and domestic workers has not changed at a fundamental level. It simply appears in the more acceptable guise of "maternalism". So while circumstances for domestic workers have improved, the basic inequities in power and privilege still facilitate domination and exploitation. In the private and therefore fairly isolated space of the home, domestic workers are now deferent and grateful in the face of the employer's "maternalistic kindness", and while this makes for a better working environment than before, it perpetuates discourses of superiority and dependence within the relationship (King, 2007).

Whether these dynamics highlighted by King (2007) in her study in the small town of Grahamstown would hold true in a more contemporary setting like Johannesburg is questionable, particularly for younger generations of domestic workers who have been exposed to more current thinking and are perhaps more aware of their rights. However it is an idea that has been extended by Durrheim et al. (2014) in their identification of the paternalistic practices of giving and helping evidenced between employers and domestic workers. They suggest that these responses serve to reduce, for both parties, the dissonance associated with the unequalness of the relationship.

Durrheim et al. (2014) explored the paradoxical outcome of the contact hypothesis/theory (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006) that has long been considered a successful means of improving relations and reducing prejudice between different groups, and highlighted the unexpected effect of this contact between historically advantaged and historically disadvantaged groups. The paradox of contact is that while it has reduced the outgroup prejudices held by both groups, it has at the same time reduced the motivation of those in the historically disadvantaged group to recognise and contest social inequalities. For example, in the South African situation, black people who experience positive contact with white people, as might occur in a generally fair domestic situation, are disinclined to support policies such as affirmative action and others that look to redress apartheid imbalances.

This paradoxical consequence allows for the narrative of their relationship to be constructed along lines of a generous employer who cares for the welfare of their needy, appreciative domestic worker. The benevolence of the employer engenders an acceptance of the status quo

and a sense of obligation and gratitude towards them by the domestic worker. It also entrenches the position of dependency of the domestic worker. Most importantly, paternalistic acts of giving are seen to be manifestations of the personal generosity of the individual employer and are therefore not really open to negotiation, and also hold the potential of being withheld in the future. This prompts, among other things, compliance from the domestic worker (Durrheim, et al., 2014).

The caution that Durrheim et al. (2014) warn of, is that we should not be blinded by the benign portrayal of this relationship from seeing the truth of "the ideological work it accomplishes" (p. 161). Paternalistic interpretations put to flight any apprehension regarding racial exploitation, and at the same time reinforce existing status hierarchies by reaffirming the dominant group's power to determine the needs of those 'below' them.

The aim in identifying this transmission of ideologies is not to deny the generosity of some employers or to undermine the feelings of gratitude that might genuinely be felt by some domestic workers, but rather simply to highlight how this relational process depoliticizes the relationship between domestic workers and their employers and frames it in a way of thinking that comes to disregard the "institutional form of inequality" (Durrheim et al., 2014, p.162) that this paternalistic way of relating legitimizes.

With regard to these particular domestic workers and their employers, it is not thought that the perpetuation of the social order of discrimination is one that was consciously chosen by either party. However, it is important to be aware that this concept of unconscious reinforcement of concealed, underlying strata of domination is inherent within so many social discourses (Bourdieu, 1984) and is not unique to the context of domestic work. It is therefore regarded as something that would invariably affect the lives of the participants in one way or another, whether in the home space and/or otherwise.

To offer some explanation of this phenomenon, Bourdieu's (1984) exposition of power, racial ordering and social reproduction is briefly explicated. He suggests that power is something that is created, symbolically and culturally, and is then continually re-legitimised through interactions between individual agency and the socialised norms that direct and monitor people's thinking and behaviour. He suggests that society's norms seep into people over time, guiding, structuring and predisposing them to certain tendencies in their thinking, their

feelings and their behaviour. Thus a person develops certain dispositions that then reflect their position within the social space.

Bourdieu (1984) explains that this is how social forms of authority and power over others become legitimized and replicated. They come to appear as self-evident and other options for social practice are not entertained, thereby reproducing social hierarchies and maintaining the social order through generations, despite its arbitrariness. He suggested that this social practice, and in turn opportunity for domination over others of lower status, is located within the know-how of the person to practice in a competent way within the social world.

Similar ideas with regard to power positions within the social order have been picked up by other theorists. Yuval-Davis, (2006) suggests that when talking about individuals belonging to a particular race or class, or any other category into which people get divided, it is social and economic locations that are being discussed. These have a particular position on an axis of power in relation to other categories and are not fixed, but vary with different contexts and at different times in history (Yuval-Davis, 2006).

So to be a black person, particularly a black woman, in the position of a domestic worker in a white household in South Africa before or even at the end of apartheid had enormous implications in terms of the power positions available to them. The employer's home could therefore easily become a space that fosters maternalistic or paternalistic relations (Durrheim, et al., 2014, King, 2007) between adults attuned to the inequalities of the positions they find themselves in and trying to find ways to manage it, but unable to extricate themselves from the dominating hierarchical social positioning created by so many axes of power. The danger of course is that this then perpetuates that asymmetrical social ordering making it difficult for the domestic worker to adopt any other position but one of acquiescence (Durrheim, et al., 2014).

2.2.3 The Role of Parenting

Parenting is a fundamental, although not guaranteed, feature of family life all over the world. It is a part of everyone's autobiography, one way or another, despite its variance across different cultures, different points in time and different social contexts (Harkness & Super, 2002). Not only do parenting styles affect the development of a child's sense of self, but these styles are in turn

influenced by cultural norms (Berk, 2009). The aspect of parenting was therefore regarded as a vital consideration in providing insight into factors that would have affected the value systems, attitudes and social positioning of these participants.

Berk (2009) explains that a child learns to value and repeat some behaviours and downplay or ignore others, in accordance with the differences in emphasis and value placed on certain behaviours in a culture as a whole and also by the parents within that culture. Some of these processes of socialisation taught by parents are intentional and deliberate, while others are simply implicit and inadvertent (Harkness & Super, 2002). Either way, parenting plays a significant role in the enculturation process, which in turn becomes a reflection of identity (Grusec & Hastings, 2007; Harkness & Super, 2002).

For the participants in this study, growing up within a space containing two very different cultural norms offered a much larger range of values and behaviours being modelled to them, consciously or unconsciously. This in turn could potentially have opened up more identity options and alternate possibilities for positioning themselves in the social world that might otherwise not have been easily accessible to them. On the other hand, it also holds the possibility of creating confusing or conflictual feelings for the participant with regard to the differences between the two; or they could develop a preference for the norms of one cultural milieu over another with the potentiality of creating conflict with the biological family if it is different from their own.

Harkness and Super (2002) emphasize the importance of the cultural beliefs systems of parents as the link through which fundamentals of the larger culture are filtered and which form the basis of the parenting practices and the daily routine of the child and family. In most black communities prior to urbanisation, the extended family were strongly relied upon in the responsibility of raising a child, (Meyiwa, 2011). Essentially, mothering was a community-shared practice. With domestic workers living in Johannesburg during the apartheid era, many older siblings of the participants were raised in the rural areas amongst extended family, becoming enculturated in those spaces. This created not only physical distance from siblings and other family for the participants, but also differences in the absorption of their family's cultural heritage.

The participants, growing up in Johannesburg experienced a more intimate kind of mothering with their biological parent(s)/grandparent, a more contemporary way of mothering (Meyiwa, 2011). However, it was in many ways not a reflection of the larger white western cultural milieu surrounding them and so the transmission of cultural values could have seemed out of sync to the larger culture (Harkness & Super, 2002). Added to this, was the influence of another caregiver, in the form of the employer, whose way of being in the world did reflect the larger cultural milieu. The influence of the white caregiver could then have had a powerful influence of enculturating the young child into a way different from their parents.

Accepting that the socialization of children by their parents cannot but be embedded within the larger social context (Hamm, 2001), another factor for consideration is that within this space children receive important messages about what it means to be black or white from the ethnic modelling they receive. These messages influence their opinions and feelings regarding race, including cultural and racial pride, and/or an awareness of racial difference, bias and discrimination (Hughes, Rodriguez, Smith, Johnson, Stevenson, & Spicer, 2006).

Virtually all parents prepare their children for life by socializing them to the world around them, but African American families (and making a link here, so too would black South African parents), have the added task of including issues of race into their efforts at socializing their children (Sanders Thompson, 1994, cited in Elmore & Gaylord-Harden, 2013).

While the racial issues faced by black South Africans cannot be equated to those of African Americans, these parents are all faced with the task of how to educate their children in dealing with issues of racism and prejudice. Therefore studies looking at these concerns in relation to African Americans parents and their children were considered relevant and applicable in relation to black South African parents and their children.

Hamm (2001) offers some understanding of the racial socialisation messages given by both white and African American parents to their children when they anticipated or faced their children's cross-cultural experiences within ethnically diverse schools. From the African American parent's perspectives, some messages suggested an ideal of colour-blindness, i.e. teaching their child to be respectful towards and engage with all peers and expect similar treatment in return, without mentioning colour or race; while others focussed on preparing their children to cope with situations in which race might become an issue. Virtually all the

African American parents however, regardless of their approach, agreed that their own interactions with others of a different colour/race was the most important factor in influencing their children's attitudes towards people of a different race.

The option of teaching an ideal of colour-blindness for the domestic worker parents might have proved the most viable option in light of their particular relationship to the white employer, i.e. one that might have involved aspects of gratitude and certainly unequal power relationships, as described in section 2.2.2 (Durrheim, et. al., 2014). Whether through a colour-blind narrative, or instruction and modelling on how to deal with acts of prejudice and discrimination, the way each of the biological parents of the participants prepared their child for encounters with members of other races is considered to have been influential in how they position themselves and how they interact with others today.

Despite the cultural and racial differences in parental socialisation, an interesting point that is also relevant for this research, is that the white parents in Hamm's (2001) study suggested social economic status (SES) as the main barrier to cross-race relationships for their children. This was cited as causing a lack of common interests and language between their children, and they used their children's acceptance of African American children who had been adopted into white middle-SES families as proof that is was not race but class that prevented social integration.

Due to their immersion into the lives and homes of their parents' white employers, the participants in this research share cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1984) in the form a common language and accent, education, tastes in food, etc. with their white South African counterparts. One would therefore expect these participants to fit fairly easily into the white circles they encounter in their social world.

2.3 Identities and Subjectivities

The concept of identity, how the self can be described and understood, is a vast and multifaceted subject that has been approached over time from many diverse viewpoints by several different disciplines. Within the field of psychology it has long been considered a central topic of research (Erikson, 1950/1995; Marcia, 1980; Phinney, 1990).

However, it is important to recognise that many of the widely accepted theories of identity development have emerged largely out of an American or Eurocentric value system (Franchi & Swart, 2003). They have therefore originated within a white, western, male dominated frame of reference. Added to this they have given primacy to an individualistic and often fixed view of a self that develops at specific periods in response to societal and internal processes, into a mature adult, able to distinguish themselves from, and identify themselves with, others (Franchi & Swart, 2003). Theories and paradigms of understanding from research within this European/American framework were previously assumed to be universally applicable.

However, postmodern thinking has challenged this ideological dominance, acknowledging subjectivity and relativism in all aspects of life. Within a context like South Africa, clear asymmetries based on gender, class and particularly race that are embedded within the structures of society, render such a bounded perspective of identity inadequate (Franchi & Swart, 2003). The recruitment of markers of self-identity, such as race, culture, gender, language, class and so on, are seen to be variable and alter in line with changes in what the definition of an individual's identity might mean in a particular context at a certain point in time. Thus identity within this study is viewed instead as a dynamic, complex, multifaceted, context dependent construct.

2.3.1 Traditional Approaches to Identity

No single approach was thought to be adequate in fully describing the very complex concept of identity. However, an important foundational theory that has informed the understanding of identity development for decades and is still deemed relevant today despite its limitations, discussed below, is Erikson's (1950/1995; 1968; 1980) model of psychosocial development.

Erikson's theory encompasses an understanding of personhood that is distinctly western with the emphasis being on integrating aspects of the self towards a coherent, ideal whole (Sampson, 1994). It has originated within a white, male dominated western epistemological framework of individuality and will therefore be discussed below with this caveat in mind. It is presented with the understanding of its limitations in identifying stages that are not always applicable to young people growing up in world contexts different from the presumed norm of a hierarchical, western worldview (Slugoski & Ginsburg, 1994).

Erikson (1980) postulated a model comprising eight stages of ego development over the lifespan of an individual. These stages involve a dynamic process of internal psychological development evolving in relation to the realities that the person faces in their particular world. His fifth stage, which he identifies as the time of adolescence and early adulthood, is when he argued that the exploration of one's identity becomes salient for the individual.

This pivotal period is described in terms of a crisis where the adolescent or young adult is primarily concerned with connecting their internal feelings of who they are, with who they seem to be on the outside and how they are perceived by others. The context they find themselves in plays a large part in influencing the choices available to them and the choices they make as to how they position themselves in the adult world. Erikson (1968, 1980) also identified the possibility of exclusion of those perceived to be different, whether in something as seemingly small as gestures or taste, to larger issues of skin colour or cultural background.

James Marcia (1980) extended Erikson's model, describing the adolescent's 'crisis' rather as a process of exploration during which the adolescent examines and evaluates the values, beliefs and goals of their parents. The outcome of which is then a commitment to an identity based on this exploration. He proposed four statuses in this process: identity diffusion – where the adolescent is not attempting or is unwilling to explore and commit, passively moving through life reacting to situations as they arise; identity foreclosure – where the adolescent fails to question and explore their options and simply conforms to the views and values of family and society; identity moratorium – where the adolescent is currently exploring various choices but has not yet made a final commitment; and finally identity achievement - where the adolescent, having gone through the process of exploration prompted by various developmental crises, reaches a point of commitment to a particular identity of their own choosing. These statuses are not viewed as sequential stages, but rather there can be multi-directional movement between them as events cause the individual to re-evaluate and integrate new information.

It is evident that an individual's identity is firmly anchored in and cannot be understood separately from the society within which it exists (Deaux & Burke, 2010; Mead, 1934). This social aspect of the self was expounded in Tajfel's social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) where the self is understood to be reflexive, that is, as being able to name and classify itself in certain ways in relation to other different social classifications. Here, an individual's identity is regarded

as the part of the person's self-concept that comes from them knowing they belong to a specific social group. This knowledge, together with all the value that the person attaches to that and the significance on an emotional level that that membership has for them, is what gives the individual their social identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1986).

The concept of the group is possible only in relation to other groups, each of which are perceived to have certain characteristics, e.g. skin colour, that define them as different (Tajfel, 1982). When an individual compares themselves to others and finds those others to be similar to themselves, they categorize them as the in-group, together with the self. Those that are perceived as different are labelled the out-group. The result of this categorization is that perceived similarities to other in-group members and perceived differences from out-group members become accentuated, allowing for the division of the social world into 'us' and 'them' (Turner et al., 1987). These groups then coexist in relation to each other, with differing levels of power. Identification takes place therefore not as an individual act within a person's psyche, but as a social process within a particular historical context at a particular point in time.

Social identity theory today, or the social identity approach (Hogg, 2006), links the conception of the self, with societal/group processes and social interaction into an integrated, non-reductionist theory. However, as various theories of identity have developed in the fields of both psychology and sociology, researchers have argued for the advantages of integrating sociology's identity theory and psychology's social identity theory in order to establish a more wholly cohesive picture of the self (Deaux & Burke, 2010). Social identity theory proposes that it is the group that forms the basis for identity, i.e. 'who one is', as understood through membership of various groups and how one categorises oneself as a member of a group; whereas identity theory views 'what one does', i.e. one's role, as forming the basis for identity. However, both these features are fundamental aspects of a person's identity (Stets & Burke, 2000).

Within a postmodern society, it is almost inevitable that people will have multiple identities (Deaux & Burke, 2010). Markus and Kunda (1986) note that within diverse social contexts the self can appear to be on one hand, a stable, unitary entity that is consistent over time, and yet alternatively, it can seem to contain aspects that are changeable, active and flexible. These dual characteristics are recognised by the majority of comprehensive theories of the self.

2.3.2 The Relationship between Identity and Subjectivity

As understandings of the self shifted away from the idea of a fixed subject, they moved towards one that was regarded rather as a position, created discursively through ideological, psychic and semiotic processes (Blackman, Cromby, Hook, Papdopoulos, & Walkerdine, 2008). These processes, or subjectivities, provide a continuum containing the potentiality of all the social positions one could possibility hold. Identity then becomes a momentary point on the continuum of subjectivity that gets elicited at any given moment in time. Within this understanding, the possibility of a constantly shifting identity becomes plausible.

Butler (1993) suggests that the subject only gives the impression of being fixed because it constantly repeats the gestures of various subjectivies, thereby reconstructing itself, for example as black, South African, woman, and so on, in accordance with prevailing prescriptions of what that involves. Socially constructed ideals get internalised and come to be felt as truly our own, experienced not as an imposition from outside ourselves, but as deeply, genuinely ours (Gill, 2008). These subjectivities then invariably influenced the identity positions adopted by the participants during the interview process of this research.

2.3.3 Identity Formation from a Post-modern Narrative Perspective

As this study is focussing particularly on the narratives of these participants in order to glean an understanding of their identity constructions, some detail with regard to how narrative allows for the creation and negotiation of identities will be discussed below.

Within a postmodern world, Gergen (1991) proposes that there are, in fact, multiple narratives rather than just one story in any person's life. Through interactions and relations in society and through online media, people are provided with so many different potentials for expression, for connection and thereby for being. These allow for multiple possible selves that can even be at variance or in competition with each other. It is therefore impossible, he says, for there to be just one narrative that amalgamates all the different and constantly changing aspects of a postmodern life.

However, while acknowledging the challenges involved, McAdams (2001) proposes that stories have the ability to unify the conflicting features of a life into some sort of integrative whole. Despite there not being a single, ultimate, one and only narrative that is able to make sense of a

person's life, identity is captured through the many larger evolving, yet integrative stories that a person tells.

Larger narratives or 'big stories' involve a looking back on the past and therefore lack the immediacy and realness of 'small stories', i.e. the type of social exchanges found in every day encounters (Bamberg, 2004). They involve interpretation on the part of the narrator and so are inevitably in some way artificial and constructed. Also, because they are reflected on from a distance, what is included and/or left out, the manner in which it is ordered, smoothed out and reorganised, can be quite far from the truth, or potentially even completely false.

However, despite these issues, this study has selected 'big stories' as its focus. While acknowledging the value of small stories, 'big story' narratives are valid for gaining an understanding of identities because it is the reflection that occurs during their recounting that opens up a level of understanding and reworking that is not available in the flush of the present moment (Freeman, 2006). This in depth reflection will be viewed as adding fuller meaning to the data collected in this study, rather than providing distortion and untruths.

Stories assist in making sense of and giving purpose to our modern lives (McAdams, 2001). This sense making is achieved when individuals create a plot by connecting parts or single events that are in relation to each other, into a narrative which is situated in a context. This construction of a plot is what turns events into a significant narrative rather than just a chronicle (Somers, 1994).

Somers (1994) explains that a plot naturally has themes, and the importance the person gives to certain themes will determine what they take from the world around them and how they evaluatively arrange those happenings. Sarbin (1986) adds to this by saying that the individual narrating their story smooths out their narrative ensuring that the self is safeguarded, justified or even elevated.

However, it is not just the narrator that unilaterally selects the aspects that make up their narratives. This is because culture provides frameworks of meaning in which people's identities are embedded (McAdams, 2001). Bearing in mind the co-constructed nature of narratives then, the personal stories obtained in this study need to be considered in the light of the researcher's own initiation of and participation in the inquiry and the telling thereof, as well as the researcher's own age, gender, race and cultural leanings. Therefore the narratives that have

emerged from this study are considered to be co-constructions of a contextual reality, rather than objective recordings; a mixing of the two worlds that Ricoeur (1991) describes as an inescapable constitutive feature of narrative.

2.3.4 The Performance of Identity

This study has focussed extensively on the socially constituted nature of identity and therefore, acknowledging that all identity is a performance affected by its visibility to an audience (Klein et al., 2007), a brief discussion regarding identity performance was considered appropriate.

Two broad functions are fulfilled via identity performance. One serves to persuade the audience into assuming particular behaviours, which is a mobilizing function; and the second, a consolidatory function, affirms or strengthens the identity of the individual or group (Klein et al., 2007). This performance can take several different forms, purposefully expressing (or suppressing) behaviours and verbal expressions of attitudes regarded as normative for the in-group.

People perform their identities in ways that ensure acceptance for themselves as a group member, which then in turn consolidates their social identity. This recognition of themselves by the group is particularly significant for those whose social identity is not clearly secure, such as those individuals who want to shift between different groups or who feel they have conflicting identities, as is the case with the participants in this study (Klein et al., 2007).

However, if validation from the group is required for group membership, it becomes difficult to sustain several identities if the groups sustaining them see the identities as incompatible. Even if the individual's internal cognitions manage the incompatibility fairly easily, the audience's reactions to that person's claim for a particular social identity may not support it (Klein et al., 2007). These audience reactions provided a real area of struggle for the participants, and will be covered in more detail in Chapter 4.

2.3.4.1 Language and Accent

While there are many different ways identities are performed in different spaces and at different times, the researcher has chosen to privilege language and accent in a more in-depth discussion here because they were the two aspects presented by every participant as being *the* most

significant markers of their identity in both in the social world as well as within their families. Added to this, they are of particular significance within the South African context due to the strong association between race and accent/language, and all the suggestions of privilege and oppression that go along with those. Language as a visible marker of identity is also highly susceptible to change within our rapidly changing socio-political environment.

Language use creates and shapes the course of social relations and the judgements and assumptions people make about one another (Anderson, 2007). It is often spontaneous and involuntary, but it is seldom simply about imparting information. The assumptions linking language and identity are evident in social and linguistic evaluations which are made possible moment by moment, based on the appraisal of a person's speech. As Anderson (2007) says "speech is an inescapable emblem of identity, both real and perceived" (p.193).

Recognising someone's race based on their speech, whether viewed as discriminatory or not, is something that is a global and ancient phenomenon (Baugh, 2000). There are many ways in which social meaning is garnered from a person's accent, including the use of stereotypes about groups which are then applied to the individual. Pronunciations become indications of education and opportunity, and judgements in light of accent can even extend to verdicts about an individual's personality and physical attributes (Kinzler, et al., 2012).

The impact of our colonial and apartheid past is reflected in the fact that varieties of spoken English among South Africans have come to be associated with racial identification (McKinney, 2007). Of particular relevance to this study is "White South African English" (WSAE) and "Black South African English" (BSAE) (McKinney, 2007, p. 8). This does not imply that all black people or all white people speak English the same way, in fact, there can be considerable variation depending on the speaker's mother tongue. However, the accents and different varieties of English spoken result in judgements being made regarding an individual's racial or ethnic belonging, as well as class. White South African English (WSAE) implies a certain amount of wealth and privilege, and yet this implication has now become problematized by the act of labelling black people who talk like this as 'coconuts'[3].

[3] Coconut is a derogatory metaphor used against black people who are considered to be 'black on the outside but white on the inside', i.e. those who are regarded as betraying their race by pretending to be something they're not (Matlwa, 2007).

Louw-Potgieter (1991) suggests that it is the people who hold the power, legislatively and through the media, who decide on these linguistic divisions. Within the South African context, pre-1994, it was the whites who held this power, but while the English accent still appears to represent status in some cases, there also appears to be a backlash now that the dominant group, the ones with the legislative and other power, are black. The white accent can now be openly rejected without fear of recrimination and a black person speaking with an English accent can be discriminated against and regarded as other, despite their black skin. Township youth, who have generally been regarded as disadvantaged and comparatively powerless, now feel empowered by being able to exclude and label these others (McKinney, 2007).

Despite this, speaking fluent English in a way identifiable as WSAE, is still a form of cultural and linguistic capital in South Africa and is identified with upward mobility (McKinney, 2007). It appears as if there is a new kind of cultural or linguistic capital now, linked to African languages (Louw-Potgieter, 1991). However, the problem is that all these evaluations of styles of speech are bound up in ideological practices of separation, in-group and out-group, us versus them, thus perpetuating racial stereotypes based on language (Anderson, 2007).

The speech of all the participants in this study was unequivocally that associated with middle and upper class WSAE, so with no explicit mention of race, their 'white' accents invite an association with superior education and all sorts of potentially unconscious deep seated biases against them. As Mynhardt et al. (2009) explain, when a group has the perception of relative deprivation in relation to another group, it gives rise to prejudice.

2.3.2 Racialised Identity

It was considered important for a study set in South Africa, to explore the particularly racialized nature of identity for a person with a black skin in this country. This is because South Africans are undoubtedly embedded in their past and while the country and its population does now enjoy freedom from institutionalised racism, it is acknowledged that one of the key areas of transformation that is yet to be accomplished, is freedom from the 'continued presence of racialization within South African society' (Stevens, Duncan & Bowman, 2006, p. 51).Ongoing experiences of racism have, through generations of colonialism and their crystallisation in apartheid, had far reaching effects on the psyche of black people. This is because within the

social and political context, identities for black people are always being founded on and emerging from their relationship to not-whiteness (Fanon, 1967).

The struggles associated with this are not specific to South African blacks alone. The challenge faced by minority or racially oppressed people to reconcile their own blackness with a dominant white culture was discussed back in 1903 by William Du Bois and later in the 1950's and 1960's by Frantz Fanon (1963, 1967) via the idea of what Du Bois called 'double consciousness' (Moore, 2005, Black, 2007). Moore (2005) explains Du Bois' description of this 'double consciousness' as arising from a 'veil' that prevents whites from seeing a black person other than as their black skin, and which then requires the black person to view themselves through the eyes of this white other, a view that is different from the one they have of themselves from behind the veil. This veil, arising from the structures of colonialism and racism, leaves them 'split in two', with their sense of self being constantly informed by a hegemonic other.

The ideas of Du Bois are strongly echoed by Fanon (1963, 1967) in his description of the particular challenges faced by colonised black people in Africa. Fanon (1963) highlighted the struggle of people torn between two conflicting views of themselves, for example, as the 'barbaric' black man seen through white colonialist eyes or, as the human being that he/she is. The difficulty of having two views of the self and this constant reminder that you are somehow being found lacking in that difference from a hegemonic white people and their culture, creates a terrible mental conflict for the black person. It leaves them with an internalised sense of inferiority virtually impossible to escape in the face of white racist attitudes of domination (Fanon, 1967).

Coming closer to home and agreeing with this idea of an internalised sense of inferiority, Durrheim and Mtose (2006) recall the idea proposed by Steve Biko back in 1978 that being black is more about a mental attitude, than about the colour of a person's skin. This mental attitude is one of internalised inferiority which developed out of lifetimes lived under the oppressed conditions of slavery, colonialism and apartheid.

The view of blackness as being inferior and whiteness as being superior was shown empirically to have been internalised in very young children through the now well-known doll tests (Clark & Clark, 1939, 1947) where young black children in America were shown to prefer and self-identify with white dolls rather than darker skinned dolls. This preference for and self-identification with whiteness was shown to extend even to other contexts and in other

countries amongst children who found themselves categorized as minorities in the face of white hegemony.

The struggle for identity that emerges from this conflictual duality was explained by Bulhan (1980) in his Dialectical Theory of Cultural In-Betweenity. His stage process reflects the struggles young black South Africans face by highlighting the psychological tension experienced by previously oppressed people when they find themselves trying to reconcile two very different worlds to which they now have access.

This idea is explored by Eng and Han (2000) through the idea of racial melancholia. In the past and still to a certain extent today, fitting in with mainstream (white western) culture in South Africa, requires black people to adopt norms and ideals of whiteness that, by default, are closed to them. The failed ability to integrate these ideals results in a melancholia as the 'lost' white ideal remains forever unattainable and thus the loss, unresolved. At the same time the ideal of the original culture, blackness, is also lost because the view of the self through the eyes of the dominant other is one of inferiority and rejection. The 'socially disparaged object' then lives on in the psyche, giving rise to melancholia, as what is lost, often unconsciously, cannot be recovered. If the mourning of the lost connection to the original culture and the value it held, has not been achieved by the previous generation, it can be transferred on to the next, who then absorb and become saturated by it (Eng & Hann, 2000).

Bulhan's (1980) theory proposes three patterns or stages of identification in relation to a dominant white western world. He called the first pattern Capitulation, where the black person relinquishes their own culture and attempts to ingratiate themselves into the dominant culture, never quite making it by mere virtue of their black skin. The identification with a racist, dominant other results in the destruction of pride in one's own indigenous culture and heritage, culminating in a sense of alienation. This in turn leads to feelings of powerlessness and a lack of meaning (Bulhan, 1980).

The second pattern is Revitalization**,** which involves a defensive rejection of the dominant culture and a return to and romanticized rededication to the original one. There is a reactive adoption of traditional communalism, including attitudes around kinship, hospitality and folklore wisdom. This is combined with high race-consciousness and contemplation around issues of identity, and is regarded as an essential transitional phase in the moving away from white western influences.

Finally the transformative phase of Radicalization is reached. It involves a clear commitment to socio-political transformation, generally involving the adoption of a socialist world view. Class consciousness rather than racial criteria form the basis of social engagement. Each of these three phases reflects a duality involving a simultaneous process of responding to the original tradition implied in the reaction to white western culture (Bulhan, 1980).

William Cross (1971) also developed a model aimed at understanding the uniqueness of black identity development in the face of white hegemony. His Nigresence model proposed five stages involved in the process whereby a person 'becomes black'.

His first stage, Pre-encounter, is the period before a black person encounters a social environment in which their race is negatively foregrounded. At this stage they generally hold an identification with whiteness and a vilification of blackness. The second stage, called Encounter, brings about the re-evaluation of these attitudes due to an adverse social event in which the individual is in some way brought face to face with racial prejudice. This stage is followed by Immersion /Emersion which is a reaction to the Encounter and begins a passionate interest in all that is black together with an attendant rejection of all that signifies whiteness. This stage can show a progression from the initial, completely defensive immersion into everything black towards a later emersion from that oversimplified and sometimes emotionally anti-white racist framework.

This more open view leads to the fourth stage of Internalisation where acceptance of the self as a black person evolves together with an acceptance of good and bad co-existing in all people regardless of their skin colour, racial heritage and position in society's structural hierarchy. Finally stage five, Internalisation/Commitment, involves the continued commitment to and interest in blackness, but which has now become more consolidated into a sense of comfort in the individual's own racial identity, acceptance of others, as well as extension into political action towards social justice and equality for blacks and all oppressed people (Cross, 1971).

Cross (1991) later updated his initial theory reducing the number of stages to four, but expanding each to include a number of identities within them. This update also brought to light an important finding relevant to this study which is his reconsideration of the relationship between self-esteem and a person's racial identity. He identified that whether someone regarded race as

important or not was not a reflection of their self-esteem. This raises interesting possibilities interms of understanding young black people in South Africa today.

Just as recent doll studies have shown the results are now unable to be replicated since considerable changes have occurred in the political, social and economic arenas, so too have the socio-political changes in South Africa impacted this identification of blackness with inferiority. These changes have provided "the foundation for changing identity" (Durrheim & Mtose, 2006, p. 155).

Whiteness is no longer the only model for young black people in South Africa to aspire to (Nuttall, 2004) and their dismissal of race as a central marker in terms of their identity does not necessarily imply any sense of low self-esteem (Cross, 1991). Therefore possibilities now exist for young black people to bypass these processes of comparison and devaluation of the self that was struggled with by previous generations.

The traditional theories proposing fixed categories of identity are not presented to foreclose the agentic ways that these participants construct their identities, and notions of in- and out-groups are not necessarily viewed in an essentialist way as stable and material realities (Butler, 1993), but rather they are all used to inform a general understanding of the complexity concept of identity. They are intended to provide a foundation for understanding what often seems to be an intangible, abstract and too fluid idea.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

3.1 Introduction

This chapter undertakes to explain the methodological framework in which this study is situated. It provides a brief discussion of the paradigm and research design, followed by an explanation of the participants and the procedures utilised in the process of data collection. The method of data analysis is then explained. Finally the ethical considerations will be delineated, followed by a note on the reflexivity considered important for this study.

3.2 Paradigm

Prior to the middle of the 20th century, the positivist approach to psychological study held prominence (Henning, 2004). Scientific methods were used to prove the truth of something, to explain and predict phenomena. Describing cause and effect through observation, manipulation and measurement of data, in order to obtain 'objective' verification were the focus of empirical study.

Within this framework, the feelings and thoughts of an individual would therefore not be considered subjects for study. Added to this, personal insight would be excluded from positivist studies. One of the biggest criticism therefore of this approach is its lack of consideration of how people, both the observer and the observed, are influenced by their culture, their gender and a multitude of other factors that contribute to how they make meaning and interpret the world (Henning, 2004).

The move away from the positivist approach ushered in a new way of looking at phenomena, opening up novel possibilities for different methodologies and subjects of inquiry. "The way in which people make meaning in their lives" (Henning, 2004, p.20) was now considered worthy of study.

An important aspect of the post-positivist or interpretivist approach was that the researcher themselves became recognised as a co-creator in the process of meaning making. The fallibility of observation was now accepted and finding 'the truth' of something was no longer the objective of research. Instead, 'uncertainty' is now a central principle and knowledge is constructed through descriptions of the values, intentions, beliefs, self-understandings, and meaning making of people. Most important is the consideration of the key aspect of context and how discourses contain social meaning (Henning, 2004).

Such a post-positivist approach, in the form of an interpretivist, phenomenological paradigm, was chosen to define this research. It is a paradigm in which the speaker is privileged, and their values, intentions, beliefs and self-understanding are all believed to contribute to knowledge (Smith & Osborn, 2007). An interpretivist, phenomenological paradigm is concerned with the lived, subjective experience of the individual (Smith & Osborn, 2007) and

as such was considered an appropriate paradigm in which to situate the analysis of individual identity narratives.

3.3 Design

The design of this research has been undertaken from within a qualitative framework. As such, it refrains from quantifying defined variables from large samples of data into measurable statistics for predictive purposes, but instead uses smaller samples aimed at providing descriptions and interpretations of the feelings and experiences of individuals (Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter, 2006). This qualitative approach provides thicker, more nuanced information than one is able to gain through, for example, surveys and questionnaires used in qualitative studies. There, much experiential detail can be lost.

The aim of this study was to access the participants own experience of their lives and to try and understand their own personal meaning making through these stories. Because a qualitative approach is effective in bringing a person's own perceptions to the fore, it was deemed most suitable for a study which would be accessing a small sample of individuals with the view to capturing the narration of their personal, unique experiences.

There are many different qualitative approaches that can be used in research, but this study considered narrative analysis as the most effective means of gaining insight into the individuals' life stories (Elliot, 2007). Both the form of the narrative, and the content, using a thematic analysis, were examined.

Individual, semi-structured interviews were deemed an appropriate means of accessing the identities narrated. In line with narrative, identity was seen as something relational, changing and potentially contradictory, while at the same time, with an acknowledgement that our lives need to make sense to us (Ricoeur, 1991). Although nothing can be proved to have an ultimate truth, stories of individuals are plotted in time and space, so that who they are becomes accessible in some way (Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach & Zilber, 1998).

Reflexivity was regarded as an essential part of the design because in narrative research, the co-construction between the narrator and the listener, the participant in the study and the researcher is an important consideration (Squire, 2008). This will be discussed in section 3.9.

3.4 Participants

The method of attaining participants for this study was by means of snowballing. This is a method whereby the researcher gains access to further potential research participants via introduction by an initial participant. The next participant then introduces the researcher to other people who might be willing to take part in the research, and so the sample grows. This method, although slightly different from the mainstream way of obtaining participants, facilitates access and a measure of trust because new participants have been personally introduced to the researcher via a known other (Bernard, 1999).

The process of snowballing with regard to this study began with two initial contacts: one is the daughter of a friend of the domestic worker who is in the employ of the researcher, and the other contact had grown up in the home environment of a friend of the researcher. From these initial two contacts, the snowballing process grew. Two contacts who were initially willing to be part of the research moved away to other parts of the country during the months prior to the start of the interviewing process, and so were lost to the study.

All the participants were over the age of 18, which was regarded as important from an ethical point of view in that they were then adults in the eyes of the law and therefore in a position to agree to participate in the study of their own accord. Added to this they were then regarded as being mature enough to make their own personal decision regarding their willingness and choice to be interviewed. The oldest participant was 28.

The participants were young black adults, male or female, who had spent the majority of their childhood years living in the care of their domestic worker parent(s) or grandparent together with that parent(s) or grandparent's white employer. These early years of a child are considered significant for their psychological development and thus their identity development, because it is during this time that, through negotiation between their own needs and the demands of the environment, the young child develops a sense of self which in turn enables them to make healthy choices for themselves and to cope with life, or not (Erikson, 1950/1995, 1980).

In terms of relevance for this study, the white employer was one who had supported and incorporated the participant as a growing child into their home to some extent or other. This

would have involved the young child playing, eating and/or spending time in the employer's home during the day and/or night, interacting with the employer and their family. It could also have involved the employer playing a role in the education and financial support of the child. Whatever the white employers' involvement, it was regarded as significant enough to have notably affected the child's attitudes, values and sense of self in the world. Eight participants, three males and five females, took part in this study.

Either from birth, or very shortly afterwards, all of the participants were permanently residing with their domestic worker parent(s) or grandparent at their place of work in the northern suburbs of Johannesburg. Two of them did move away to other parts of the country for a period of years: one moved at aged 9 with the employer to another province and the other was sent, also at aged 9, by her domestic worker parent to a rural area to live with extended family for the remainder of her primary school years. However, both of them moved back to Johannesburg; one to the home of his father in a Johannesburg township after finishing school and the other back once more, at the start of high school, to live with her domestic worker parent and the parent's employers in Johannesburg. At the time of this study, all the participants were currently living and working, or studying, in Johannesburg.

During their formative years, these young people lived with one or both of their parents or grandparent in the domestic quarters of that parent(s) / grandparent's employers home. Two of the participants did however, due to different circumstances, move into the employer's house during the course of their childhood.

All but one went to what are considered former Model C[4] schools in the northern suburbs, while the other went to a private school. Three of them are current university students and five are working, two of whom have already completed their university degrees. Three of the participants are still currently living 'at home' with their domestic worker parent(s) and the employer.

[4] Model C schools are government run/public schools that were formally reserved for whites only under the apartheid system. They enjoy superior resources and facilities when compared to government schools in the townships, as a result of their white legacy (Roodt, 2011).

3.5 Data collection

In terms of data collection, in-depth, semi-structured individual interviews were selected as the best method in which the participants might be given the opportunity to narrate their stories. Individual interviews were chosen over focus groups for several reasons. Firstly, because the study is a narrative one, it was considered important to give each participant the time and space to tell their own story. Not only do focus groups limit the amount of time each participant is able to have their voice heard but it was also felt that group dynamics could influence the selection and telling of stories and so risk possible conformity to group norms within the narratives. Focus groups also hold the possibility of inhibiting the sharing of more sensitive material which might otherwise arise in the stories of these participants.

Although these young people share some similar experiences generally, the assumption was that their experiences would each be unique and that some of this uniqueness would be lost through any other process of group data collection. Conducting individual interviews also allow for a greater depth of information to be obtained in the time available. It was decided to conduct these interviews in a semi-structured rather than structured manner (see Appendix 4 for the interview guide) to allow for the articulation of the multiple stories and personal expression that naturally occur in an interview, without being overly restricted (Elliot, 2007).

3.6 Procedure

The participants were identified through snowballing, as explained above in section 3.4. Each participant was contacted by telephone and invited to be part of the study. Although the tone was informal from the beginning, the processes and procedures of the research were plainly clarified. The research purpose was explained and the individual was given the opportunity to ask questions regarding the study itself and their participation therein.

Each participant was given an invitation letter, some via email and others by hand, detailing the study, their rights and the ethical obligations of the researcher. They were required to sign two consent forms, one regarding being interviewed and another regarding being audio-recorded.

An appointment time and place for the interview, convenient to both the participant and the researcher, was then set up. These appointments took place in various locations in Johannesburg, such as a neutral office space at Wits University, the place of work of the participant or alternatively, a coffee shop in the northern suburbs. In-depth, semi-structured individual interviews were conducted. The interviews were approximately an hour long and were audio-recorded.

Contact details of counselling services were provided in the Participant Information letter (See Appendix 1), in case it might be deemed necessary. The majority of the participants however appeared to have no problem with the process and their attention was only briefly drawn again at the end of the interview, to the counselling information available should their feelings change over the course of the following days/weeks. One interview was considered by the researcher to have been quite challenging for the participant. However, the participant related that they had experienced the telling of their story as an ordering and clarifying process, and felt satisfied at having been able to share their story. Another interview was deemed by the researcher to have perhaps been a personally painful process for the participant, in that the discussion brought to the fore some childhood memories that appeared difficult for them to discuss without eliciting tears. This participant was debriefed at the end of the interview and advised to seek counselling.

The audio-recorded interviews were then transcribed verbatim.

3.7 Data Analysis

The data analysis was undertaken using narrative analysis, drawing a distinction between narrative form and narrative content. The structure or form of the narratives was regarded as being helpful in providing information as to the views and values and thereby the identities of the participants. It was used to reveal the way each participant constructed their personal story about their changing life experiences (Lieblich, et al., 1998) and so was considered a principle means by which they could portray themselves (Gergen, 2005). Examining the narrative form added insights beyond those that could be gleaned from the content alone (Reissman, 2008).

In terms of the content, Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest that analysis of content, or thematic analysis is a foundational and flexible method of qualitative analysis that can provide a rich account of data. It was therefore used to identify, analyse and report themes or patterns of meaning that were repeated within the data. Care was taken in the consideration of what constituted a theme so as to ensure its relevance to the overall aim of the research in presenting the participants identity narratives.

One of the fundamental features of narrative form is temporality, events arranged in a particular order in relation to some element of time (Elliot, 2007). Squire (2008) adds that narrative research that is centred only on events rather than experiences can neglect talk that, while not about an event, is noteworthy and essential to an understanding of who the narrator is as a person (Squire, 2008). Therefore, participants' narratives were examined in terms of how they progressed from a recounting of elements from their childhood experiences through to present day.

Closely linked to this quality of time, is the idea of plot. Using the presumption that time moves in a linear direction, signalling a past, present and future, a plot links events in a cause and effect way signalling some kind of change in conditions or circumstances for the protagonists. While not always recognised as a necessary aspect of narrative, causality adds coherence to a narrative and is often inferred even when an explicit causal link in not made within the story (Elliot, 2007). Causal links, inferred and otherwise, provided important information as to changes in the trajectory of the story of each participant, whether positive or negative, and thereby provided some understanding of their views in relation to their life experiences thus far.

A minimum requirement suggested for a narrative, to prevent it from being merely a description, is that it should have some sort of complicating action (Elliot, 2007), i.e. something that happens, the evaluation of which provides the meaning or the point of the story. This act of participant evaluation was valuable in many respects when analysing the data in that it provided insight not only into the participant's interpretations of the events they related, but also which events or outcomes they considered significant enough to report. This afforded an appreciation of the participant's views regarding their experiences of their

contexts both at home and in the social world, as well as the value systems that evolved from those.

The temporal element, imposing beginnings, middles and ends to a series of events, highlights the importance of closing the narrative because it is the ending that determines the meaning of what happened in the narrative (Elliot, 2007). The notes on which the participants ended their narratives were in fact uniformly positive. These 'endings' provided essential material towards determining each participant's sense of self, as well as an understanding of their beliefs and own understanding around future possibilities in their lives.

Even at the level of form, the stories were quite unique and so while the initial intent was to cluster the stories in some way, this was not done in order to preserve some of the uniqueness in the forms themselves.

In relation to the content of the narrative, the process of the thematic analysis was undertaken according to the steps outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). An inductive thematic analysis was selected, one that is data driven and therefore not tailored specifically to a prescribed coding frame. This also meant that the themes that were eventually identified were not necessarily related to the questions asked.

Using a semantic approach, the explicit meanings of the data were organised into themes and described, together with an attempt at interpreting the significance and implications of these patterns in the data. The approach presumed that meaning and experience are articulated through language and therefore the participants' motivations and the meanings they gave to their experiences could be theorised by the researcher (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

It began with several readings across the data set, noting possible areas of interest and repeated configurations of meaning. Initial codes were identified and recorded, to be later refined and developed during the course of the analysis in a recursive process. These codes were sorted into possible overarching themes and sub-themes, and the data extracts relevant to each were grouped together under these themes. Some themes were collapsed, others discarded or refined, and data extracts were checked for relevance and coherence. Finally, these themes and sub-themes were assessed to determine whether they were still applicable to the data set and the aim of the research as a whole, after which they were named.

They were then examined in an attempt to determine what the assumptions might be that underpinned them; what the possible conditions that gave rise to them might be; and what the implications of these themes were. Questions were asked as to why the participants narrated their experiences and feelings in the particular way they did. A final consideration was interpreting how the themes together revealed the identities narrated by the participants. Some literature was gathered prior to the analysis, but it was extended and expanded on as and when necessary during the course of the analysis and write up, in keeping with the inductive approach.

3.8 Ethics

All participants invited to be part of the study were over the age of 18 and in their private capacity and therefore did not need parental or organisational permission. Participants were given an information letter (see Appendix 1), and the purpose of the study was verbally explained. It was made clear that there would be no gain or foreseeable disadvantage to their participation in the study and that their participation would be completely voluntary. They were entitled to refuse to answer any question if they did not feel comfortable to do so. They also had the freedom to withdraw their participation and any information already obtained, at any time during the course of the interview.

Confidentiality and anonymity were explained to the participants as being limited due to the personal nature of the interview process and the use of extracts in the data analysis. However they were provided for as much as possible by eliminating all identifying information such as personal and place names; keeping the data on a password encrypted computer; keeping the printed transcripts under lock and key; and making all data from the interviews accessible only to the researcher and her supervisor.

Consent was verbally explained in detail to the participant and then requested via the use of two consent forms (see Appendix 2 and 3). The participant was required to sign the consent form agreeing to be interviewed (see Appendix 2), which outlined the rights of the participant on agreeing to the interviewing process. The participant also signed a consent form agreeing to be audio-recorded and to having a transcript made thereof (see Appendix 3). The participants were informed in their participant's letter that these audio recordings and their

transcripts would be stored for a period of five years, after which they will be destroyed in order to ensure the future confidentiality and privacy of the participants.

The permission to use the participant's direct quotes in the research report, while still continuing to make every effort to ensure their confidentiality, was included in the consent form. The quotes were sanitized, i.e. any possibly identifying information was removed as much as is possible without compromising the meaning of the quote.

An ethical consideration was the potential impact on the participant of their own narration due to the thoughts and feelings that could potentially arise as a result of the interview. Therefore, as deemed necessary or requested by the participant, the researcher provided information regarding counselling and support. The contact information provided was for the Emthonjeni Centre at the University of the Witwatersrand and for LifeLine (who both offer a free counselling service). The contact details of the counselling centres were included in the Participant Information letter.

The participants were told that they would be offered a one page summary of the results on request, once the study has been completed. They were also informed in the participation letter that the results of the study could possibly be published in a journal article and may be presented at a conference, but would ultimately be available as a research report in the library of the University of the Witwatersrand upon successful completion.

3.9 Reflexivity

The initial choice of this research topic was based on the fact that I have witnessed, over many years, just such an inclusion of a young child of a domestic worker into the home of a personal friend. During the course of those years, on observing her at my friend's children's' birthday parties or being around in the house when we visited, I often wondered how she was feeling, being the only black child, and one whose parent was the domestic worker, amongst a group of privileged white children. It was these ruminations that led me to want to undertake this research project.

Bearing in mind the fact that "talk among speakers is interactively (dialogically) produced and performed as narrative" (Reissman, 2008, p.105) I was very aware that what I, as the

interviewer, said, did and represented, as well as our context, socially and historically, would influence the participant and the telling of their story.

I was very aware of being a white female, of an age much closer to that of the parents of the participants, than the participants themselves. As such, and despite every effort to the contrary, I was aware of potentially occupying a maternal position in relation to the participants. Added to this, as a white, older woman, I was constantly aware of potentially providing a representation, within the context of the research interview, of the white employer that was involved in initiating their inclusion into the white home they grew up in. As such, there was a need to take cognisance of the interviewee's response to me on many levels. Notice was taken of this at first contact, as much as possible during the process, and whether any difference in attitude was evident at the close of the interview.

My whiteness and therefore my position as someone who still benefits from apartheid's legacy and the privileges of whiteness (McIntosh, 1989, 2009) also needed to be considered. At times it was difficult to disengage from my subject position or recognise my own white world view because, despite much learning and reflection over the years, my thinking still evidences often unconscious influences of my past and so needs to be considered as a potentially influencing factor in the interaction between the participants and myself as the researcher.

An assumption that the listener/researcher is completely objective and neutral disregards the problematic influence of the interviewer and their impact on the interviewee within the interview setting. Also, the understanding of the listener, both the interviewee and the interviewer, needs to be recognised as the product of the impression the spoken word makes on them and how they interpret what is being said (Parker, Georgaca, Harper, McLaughlin, & Stowell-Smith, 1995).

To assist with all these issues, a personal reflexive journal was considered invaluable in maintaining my awareness. It was used to record my responses to the interviewees, feelings that arose in response to the particular issues raised in the interview, and reflections as to why these responses and feelings arose. An effort was made to note my personal biases and positioning, the interviewees' performative responses and their positioning in relation to me, as well as providing a record of the process.

During the process of analysis, the question of whether my interpretations reflected the world view of the participants or my own as a white woman in the context of South Africa, was reflexively engaged with during supervision. It was recognised that my responses to the information shared by the participants and my particular focus on different aspects of the data were at times influenced by my own positioning. This needed to be continually born in mind in the reading and interpretation of the data during analysis.

Also worth bearing in mind is Reissman's (2008) reminder that in a dialogic approach, you, the reader, will bring your own interpretation to the reading and so the perspective is one that is constantly changing.

CHAPTER 4

THE REPORT

In order to acknowledge the uniqueness of each individual narrative as well as provide some insight into general themes drawn out from the texts, the analysis in this chapter is divided into three parts and approached first through the lens of narrative form and then narrative content, after which a concluding discussion will be provided. The analysis of the form involves looking at the orientation and progression of each participant's story with its evaluative shifts, plot and characters. This will be followed by a thematic content analysis illuminating some of the key tropes that were evidenced within and across the narratives. The final section will draw these two sections together, highlighting their different subject positions and illuminating identities that they presented during their narratives.

To facilitate understanding for the reader and to preserve the anonymity of the participants, the brackets [ ] have been used in the quotations to indicate where the researcher has replaced a personal name, pronoun or exact place name with an explanation or clarification of who/what/where the participant is referring to. Three dots have been placed inside the brackets, e.g. […] to indicate when some of the text has been excluded from the quotation.

4.1 Introduction

The stories people tell about their lives, and the verbal accounts they give of their experiences, provide a clear route towards learning about their inner worlds. As such, these narratives "provide us with access to people's identity and personality" (Lieblich, et al., 1998, p. 7). In fact, Gergen (1991) and McAdams (2001), among others, suggest that the form and the content of personal narratives *are* people's identities. They are the stories people create and tell repeatedly, revising and retelling them throughout the course of their lives. They are a means by which individuals discover themselves and divulge their inner reality to others. As such they are naturally subjective (Gergen, 1991).

Lieblich, et al. (1998) suggest that interviews, such as those conducted in this research, cannot provide us with a full and accurate account of someone's identity. This is because, as alluded to above, the captured narrative is just one telling of a life story. It must also be remembered that this telling was done in response to the particular questions asked by the researcher, in the particular relational space of an interview situation and the researcher themselves (Reismann, 2008). Lieblich, et al. (1998) explain that "when a particular story is recorded and transcribed, we get a 'text' that is like a single, frozen, still photograph of the dynamically changing identity" (p. 8).

These narrated stories are constructed within greater contexts than simply the interview situation. As discussed in the literature review, the dimensions of history, geography and society, with their prevailing attitudes and belief systems, combine to influence an individual's experiences as well as the way they think of and then talk about these experiences (Harnett, 2010). Where and when an individual happens to be born therefore, has an undeniably significant consequence in terms of their life and the identities they construct and narrate through the opportunities open to them in those spaces (Harnett, 2010). It should therefore be remembered that the articulation of these narratives need to be considered in relation to the current socio-political context in which they are shared.

All these factors will have combined to influence the selection of the events chosen by the participants in the telling of these particular stories at that particular point in time (Gergen, 2005). Despite these limitations, through the analysis of the form and content of these

captured texts, the researcher will attempt to provide some insight into the identities these young adults shared through their narratives at that moment in time.

4.2 Narrative Form

The particular form that a narrative takes, for example a tragedy, comedy, or a happily-ever-after story, is one in which the protagonists, and perhaps antagonists, play out their lives as heroes or villains in the emplotment of the story. Thus a story, from the outset, usually has some sort of goal which dictates the events to be included in that story. These events are then ordered in a temporal sequence, moving through two-dimensional, evaluative space, often causally linked, towards some valued endpoint, desirable or otherwise (Gergen, 2005). This movement often indicates a transformation of sorts, whether that be positive or negative.

As a story line progresses towards the goal, the evaluative shifts in the plot permit the identification of three basic forms of narrative: a stable narrative, where the events are linked in a way that allows the trajectory to stay basically the same throughout as the story moves towards the goal or outcome. Alternatively, events can be linked in such a way that the plot progresses along a positive trajectory where things seem to be getting better and better; or instead, where there is some sort of deterioration over the course of time and the narrative takes a downward turn, reflecting what can be called a regressive narrative (Gergen, 2005; Gergen & Gergen, 1983; Lieblich, et al., 1998).

These three formats can then combine in various ways to create the complex plots that become evident in people's life narratives. It is with this complexity in mind, that tensions can emerge within the narrative, as will be discussed in more detail in the individual stories below.

None of the narratives in this study begin at a distinctly low point and follow a gradually improving positive trajectory, which could then be described as a progressive format. However, this does not imply that the narratives do not have a sense of moving towards a positive sense of future. Those narratives, whose stories at times appear to decline in terms of plot, do not necessarily indicate a regressive narrative when other elements like character development and a sense of future possibilities are considered.

There were eight participants in this research and each of the eight stories presented below is the narrative of a separate individual. Despite there being certain overlaps, rather than a story being collapsed into another, each was considered important and distinct enough to warrant its own classification. Each narrative reflects a different kind of story of how young people have negotiated and continue to negotiate their incorporation, or not, into white and black spaces in South Africa today and how they make meaning in terms of the identities that emerge from that process.

4.2.1 A 'lucky' life

This story reveals a man who has experienced his particular upbringing as a positive and productive experience for himself. He considers his close affiliation within the space of the white family home, including an absorption of value systems, together with the bond he still has with his influential domestic worker mother and extended family in the rural areas, to have combined to give him a strong foundation for a successful life in the world (Berk, 2009; Erikson, 1950/1995; Harkness & Super, 2002). He has a robust sense of self and feels he has been given access to a world filled with resources and opportunities that he, as a domestic worker's child in apartheid and even post-apartheid South Africa, would never normally have had access to. It is this world of opportunities, together with his powerful personality and a discourse of meritocracy that he has then made the most of.

His narrative followed a fairly stable format, having a sense of constancy and continuity running throughout, despite minor fluctuations. Gergen (2005) explains that in order to successfully negotiate social life, one needs to make oneself "intelligible as an enduring, integral or coherent identity" (p. 108) and that a key way to ensure this is through the stability narrative. This participant uses this sense of enduring through time in a consistent manner which allows others to believe that he is who and what he seems. This, says Gergen (2005), is conducive to ensuring successful relationships and engendering faith in the individual as trustworthy. This participant's narrative serves him well in presenting this identity to the world (Klein et al., 2007).

He experienced a real sense of belonging in the context of his childhood home environment:

> *"I lived with my mum and guardians as one big family […] so we have been very close."*

This sense of comfort within spaces of mixed social strata and different races permeates this narrative. As Hamm (2001) explains, the modelling given by parents in their own interactions with others of a different colour/race can be considered as a key factor in influencing their children's attitudes towards people of other races.

> *"…so if my mum thinks my guardian's wrong, she'll say, 'no, actually that's wrong', and they'll thrash it out and then four o'clock in the afternoon they're taking the dogs for a walk together."*

Some processes of socialisation taught by parents are intentional and deliberate, while others are simply implicit and inadvertent (Harkness & Super, 2002), and this participant clearly learnt as a child, from all his caregivers, that the colour of your skin and your position in the social hierarchy does not have to limit your voice or your autonomy.

> *"I definitely knew she was the domestic, and helped and worked, but I was never made to feel that she was in any way inferior."*

While taking cognisance of the comparatively unique and sometimes difficult experiences encountered by this participant and others with similar home situations as his own (Anderson, 2007), they were shared in such a way that they did not appear to be defining features or turning points altering the stable form of his narrative (Elliot, 2007).

> *"I was very fortunate that I had good mates at primary school because I have seen it with people in my situation, that if their guardians don't explain it properly or their parents don't explain it properly, they are very embarrassed and they are very shy about it at school. When you arrive you have all this wealth around you and it's 'what does your dad or mom do?' 'Oh he's an accountant or a CEO, so what is your mom?' 'Yes, she is a domestic'. It's quite hurtful for a lot of people I have seen.*"

So despite this acknowledgement, which is expressed as coming from personal experience, his awareness of difference while growing up is portrayed as having been a relatively minor hurdle to overcome for him, due largely to his caregivers' mediation. Any discomfort

experienced with regard to his home situation and the fact that his mother was a domestic worker in relation to his comparatively wealthy white peers, was dismissed as unmemorable:

> *"I must have, once or twice, but I can't recall any incidents where I was like 'Oh jeepers, like I'm so embarrassed' or, you know. Things just got on."*

Overt racial socialisation messages given to children by their parents has been shown to be helpful in preparing children to cope with the challenges they are likely to encounter in their social interaction with other races, particularly if the child is from a racial minority rather than the "culturally defining" one (Hamm, 2001, p. 88). So rather than adopting a colour-blind ideal (Hamm, 2001), which allows for the perpetuation of racial inequalities by ignoring their continued presence and professing their irrelevance in today's society (Neville, 2007), this participant's unique home situation was discussed openly with him, preparing him for what he might encounter in the social environment.

> *"I think the crux of this matter with people like, such as myself, is that the guardian and the mother, biological, or father or whoever it is, they need to chat. They need to make everything open."*

However, whether due to the way the adults in his world, both black and white, helped him make meaning of these circumstances, or whether it is simply a result of his personality and natural talents, is open to question. Either way, his narrative reflects a stability in terms of him feeling comfortable within his space in the world.

As with other participants, he also experienced more challenges from black people than white people, but his position of strength within the social context and school environment, due largely to his personality and personal achievements, created a buffer of protection against rejection:

> *"If I ever got teased a little bit, it was from black people. But I was the stereotypical jock and prefect and all that kind of jazz. So people kinda were either too scared to say anything, or they'd kinda layoff [...] I have just been very lucky."*

With a feeling of belonging, a clear moral compass, and a strong sense of self as being someone of value in his home, school, university and now work spaces (Erikson, 1968), he is

moving through his 20's with a feeling of having access to the cultural capital required to enjoy what the world has to offer (Bourdieu, 1984).

"So I have been very fortunate, also born under a lucky star."

This participant's narrative reflects his refusal to define himself within discourses of victimhood or limiting racialised notions of being (Cross, 1991; Bulhan, 1980; Fanon, 1963, 1967). Through a discourse of meritocracy he defines himself as a fortunate person, almost as if through destiny, as someone who has a place and a role to play in the world despite the obstacles it might present him with (Stets & Burke, 2000). Positive past experiences allowed for the construction of a positive present and the possibility of a positive future, creating a focus on opportunity rather than difference.

4.2.2 Living on the outside, looking in

For this participant, the narrative was quite different. Although the story has strong elements of tragedy, there is a slight glimmer of hope provided by her resilience at the end of the narrative which could perhaps be the result of some fundamental trust in the world that developed through her initial bonding with her mother, and/or possibly the employers family, early in her formative years (Erikson, 1950/1995).

There does appear to be a fairly firm sense of security and belonging in the optimistic beginning to this story, where for nine years the participant lived with her mother and the employer's family in Johannesburg. However, a heartfelt sadness emerges after a turn of events which leaves the participant living on the outside of a rural black world, looking in and feeling as though she does not belong. This experience is then repeated a few years later when she finds herself back in Johannesburg, now living on the outside of a white world, again looking in and still not finding a sense of belonging. This need to belong, to form and sustain lasting interpersonal attachments, is a fundamental motivating factor for all human beings and is virtually as strong as the need for food (Baumeister & Leary, 1995).

As a little child, there was initially a real sense of being accepted and included in the employer's family:

"…like I actually did feel like I was one of their kids."

"I'd be in their house, like we'd play, I'd eat with them sometimes."

While there might perhaps have been a vague awareness of being somewhat different filtering through the narrative of this participant in her early years, there was a sense that she belonged in her home environment, evidenced through the closeness with her biological mother and the family of her mother's employer. However, a turning point at age nine altered her life circumstances dramatically. Due to her domestic worker mother's lack of funds for schooling in Johannesburg, she was sent far away to extended family in a rural area of the country. This completely changed the previous trajectory of her narrative, marking the start of a more difficult reality.

"it was the first time like I was separated from my mom, so, it was like, very like, I was so confused, like, 'why is my mom like making me go?' and things like that."

Thereafter, the plot follows a distinct decline into more and more separateness. As her position on the outside becomes more real, her life reflects the challenges and the sadness of finding oneself not really belonging anywhere. As Baumeister and Leary (1995) suggest, "the desire for interpersonal attachments may well be one of the most far-reaching and integrative constructs currently available to understand human nature" (p. 522).

This participant was wrenched away from these attachments when she was sent to a distant rural area where extended family lived. There, being alone and experiencing loss and difference on every level, the feeling of isolation crystallised:

"There everything is, like, so like rural in a sense where like we had to wake up in the morning, you make sure everything's fine, you clean, you do everything like. Whereas here like, I just wake up in the morning and my mom gives me breakfast […] like there, when you're hungry you make yourself food. You do your own laundry. You're in charge of everything like, for yourself."

The experience was not only the painful loss of her mother with whom she had lived with daily for the first nine years of her life. It included the familiarity of her whole way of life and the security and childhood freedom from responsibility she was used to. The loss also included her place of belonging within the household of the employer's family and the kinships she felt towards those children during her early years. Added to this, the different cultural ways of being and behaving in her new home environment were also experienced as

alienating and othering. A sense of Bulhan's (1980) cultural in-betweenity is reflected in the duality she experiences in making sense of and responding to the traditional ways of extended family in relation to the white western culture she originally grew up in.

> *"Like the way you address people, the way you dress, like, the way you express yourself type of thing like, you need to be more reserved, whereas here, like, you know like, you're free, you let go, type of thing ja. So there like, you have to make sure like, okay, there are elders around you, do this. You stay in check, type of thing."*

Constructions of belonging are more than just aspects of identity narratives; they reveal emotional investments and a longing for connection (Yuval-Davis, 2006). This narrative is permeated with a sense of longing for that connection.

At the start of high school, after four years away, the return to Johannesburg and her life with her mother in the previously familiar space of her mother's employer's home, did not bring with it a renewed sense of belonging. Rather, the feeling of being on the outside was re-experienced intensely, highlighting a gap of difference in race, privilege and cultural practices which seemed to have grown wider.

> *"So they [the employer's family] were still like…but it wasn't the same. You could tell that like, we'd kind of drifted apart. They [employer's children] grew up, like they carried on. I wasn't there, so. But they were still nice because like [mother's employer] would take me to school, she'd pick me up. When they'd go out, they'd let me come with if I wanted to. Like, so it was still there, but like, I don't know how to explain it, like, it wasn't the same as before*"

This sense of being on the outside was also experienced in the social context. Her identification and positioning of herself appears not to be first and foremost as a person of colour, but as a person on the outside:

> *"I got to grade eight, we were in a class and there were only black kids. There was one white girl, so I mean, funnily enough, even though I felt like I was the outsider, she felt like she was the outsider. Because I remember like, we'd be like, 'aren't you scared, like you're the only white girl in this class? And she's like, 'I'm very scared'. I'm like, 'Don't worry, I'm also scared, I'm the only one like from [province name] here and I don't know anyone'."*

The expected dilemma then around experiences of being black in a white world were not the focus of the challenges encountered here. Rather, the repeated loss of parental figures,

family, friends and lifestyle is what marked this identity narrative. This loss manifested for the participant around issues of poverty, and cultural milieus. While these issues are clearly linked to skin colour in the context of South Africa's racialised past (Stevens & Lockhat, 1997), this participant's challenges were most often not directly explained as being about having a black skin, as in some of the other narratives.

These challenging experiences left their mark on this participant's self and her story. Having a sustained sense of connection and belonging impacts on one's cognitive and emotional functioning, behaviour, health and wellbeing (Baumeister & Leary, 1995) and, by implication then, being without this has impacted on the expression of this participant's identity, as reflected in the uncertainty in her self-description:

> *"I don't know how to describe myself, because like, I think I'm like, not a little bit of everything, but like, there are times where like, I'm reserved, where like, you know like, I'm scared to do things, because, I don't know like, I'm scared. What's this world like? Kind of scared of failing you know, because like, when you've, like when you go through things in your life, you're like, 'Oh my gosh, no, I don't want to go back there'."*

Despite this fear and sadness resulting from a journey of multiple losses and a sense of living much of life on the fringe, a personal resilience and an ongoing desire to cope and find acceptance, spurred on by the pressure of responsibility, marks the form of this narrative and lifts it from one of continued decline.

> *"I'm a hard worker. Like, everything I do, I try to do it as best as I can, because I feel like, everyone in my family is like, looking at me. Like, 'okay, you went to varsity, you grew up with mom, you went to the kind of better schools', because it was better than theirs. So 'you went to the best school, so, you know, like try and make it well in life. Try and make it.' So, ja, life pressure."*

This narrative reveals an identity that has been distinctly marked by the cruel effects of the apartheid legacy, one of familial fracturing, poverty and marginalisation (Durrheim & Mtose, 2006; Stevens & Lockhat, 1997). There is a feeling of racial melancholia (Eng & Han, 2000) where the losses experienced by generations of blacks, originally in the external world, seem to have become internalised, shifting the sadness of generations to the personal domain and masking the recognition of its source as lying within political and social inequities of racism. The

narrative reveals struggles for positioning and acceptance, and the pressures arising out of the promise of opportunity in the new South Africa.

4.2.3 Wrestling with tensions

This narrative is one in which the difficulties of navigating the different spaces of blackness and whiteness came strongly to the fore. It reflects the participant's continual struggle in identifying himself in either space and traces his journey through several of Cross's (1971, 1991) stages towards 'becoming black'. Through the course of this ongoing process he has engaged in much questioning and re-evaluating of society's discourses connecting race, poverty and privilege (Terre Blanche, 2006).

Although the story is very different from the previous one, it follows a similar form involving numerous losses and a critical turning point marked by a move away from Johannesburg, also at age nine:

> *"I think that was the biggest shift for me because the [province name] is very different, or especially at that time. I was the only black student in this Afrikaans school, in this Afrikaans town in [province name]. So it was a shock. Up until then you know, the identity thing within my family wasn't an issue."*

While the researcher has selected this extract to begin discussing the form of this participants narrative, it is relevant to note that he took pains to give an accurate account of family details going back to before he was born, and leading the story chronologically through to the present day. Andrews, Squire and Tamboukou, (2008) explain that "narratives are the means of human sense-making" (p. 43) and it was clear that it was through the telling of his story that this participant was attempting to find meaning and make sense of his life up to that point, and of his resultant identity struggles.

The significant change in location for this participant, unlike in the previous narrative, was not away from the white employer's home resulting in being more fully engaged with extended biological family, but instead it involved a move away from biological family and friends in Johannesburg, thereby isolating this participant from his roots. The several struggles within this narrative, due to personal losses and a sense of isolation, seemed to be consolidated after leaving Johannesburg into a matter of racial identity.

Up until that point, it seems as though, as a black child in an often largely white world, his experiences of warm acceptance within the white environment and his continued contact with his black biological family in the township, had allowed him to take on Cross's (1971, 1991) Assimilation (identifying with whiteness) identity, characteristic of the Pre-Encounter stage. His sense of belonging within the white environment, a fairly liberal and accepting one in Johannesburg, only became debatable once it was threatened (Yuval-Davis, 2006).

After leaving Johannesburg, this participant began to recognise the many questions around his affiliations and his identity, bringing him sharply into the Encounter stage (Cross, 1971, 1991). Being so incorporated into the still very segregated white world of [province name], yet having a black skin, began the Encounter process in earnest:

> *"…so obviously when you become a teenager you start getting crushes and falling for people and it was, there, it was like love across the colour lines was still a big no, no. So it really impacted me, I had like, real issues you know. I felt like I was unattractive."*

This participant came face to face with the Du Boisian double consciousness (Moore, 2005) of having to continuously look at himself through the eyes of an other, that is, through the eyes of white peers and their parents within a racist society with preconceived ideas of the possible 'inferiority' and 'danger' of black people. Having a kind of dual identity, trying to reconcile one's blackness with a dominant white culture and being constantly reminded that one is somehow being found lacking in one's difference (Black, 2007, Fanon, 1967, Moore, 2005), posed a difficult challenge for this participant.

This highlighted racial difference within his social environment did not dissipate, as one might expect, on returning to the more cosmopolitan Johannesburg as a young adult after school. Rather it continued, with him still feeling different even though his skin colour was now more the norm.

> *"Now when I live in [township in Johannesburg], it's been, I've been hit with the same thing from black women that 'Yo, he's too white! He's so white. He's such a coconut!"*

With this ongoing cognitive and emotional dis-ease, this young man appears to be moving towards the following stage of Immersion-Emersion. However, because of his strong attachment to what he calls his 'white family', he does not adopt the Anti-White identity described by Cross

(1991), despite being so negatively judged by society in terms of both his skin colour and his ways of being in the world:

> *"And then I would get angry with them [black friends] and defend, because it's like, I have white family. This family of mine is white and it's like, those are people I love and you can't possibly judge them."*

This participant's sense of exclusion at times in both black and white social circles continues to be a core identity struggle for him. Added to this, as a young adult, his exposure to many different types of black people living in Johannesburg brought into question his internalised belief systems and stereotypical racial perceptions, and so in turn society's limiting narratives around blackness:

> *"So I always felt: ja, if you are black, obviously because of apartheid and whatever, you are poor and you are disadvantaged.And then when I went to [a private university in Johannesburg], then I met black guys who went to private schools, black people who grew up in suburbs, with black families who could speak English fluently, because they went to Model C schools or private schools or whatever, and it was the first time I realised that actually, race has very little to do with your advantage. So I don't think that anymore now."*

He contests society's narratives that equate blackness with poverty and lack of education, yet appears to be doing so using western cultural standards, that is, from a perspective of whiteness (Durrheim & Mtose, 2006). He is however, continually challenging the restrictive ways of thinking of blackness reminiscent of apartheid, and there is a recognition of the possibility of agency for himself on a personal level regardless of society's limiting discourses.

> *"When I was in [university name] there were so many people, black people that are from such, you know, like really impoverished homes. They were worse, you know like really poor, than even my dad. And they were like, they did so well, and some of them did better than me. And that's when I really started feeling that this is actually, it's got nothing to do with your, or it does, but I mean your success isn't all hinged on how you are raised and your circumstances."*

The narrative appears to lift towards the end, as if he is coming to a clearer sense of himself despite finding no resolution as yet. It will, in all likelihood, be a process of negotiation that will undergo continual delineation and redefinition throughout his lifetime as his inter-relational

experience grows (Oyserman, 2001). In the interim he resorts to rationalisation and a discourse of meritocracy.

> *"So I realised that I am actually not the only person with identity issues. And I used to always think, you know, I always thought about stuff like: 'I am struggling, I am struggling with this all by myself', and obviously what I've come to realise is that there's lots of people with identity issues, but they get away with it because it's not, the identity jump, is not extreme It's just because, just simply because of a language thing and the skin colour thing, that's why I'm seen, or my situation can be seen, as more extreme, but it's not really."*

A continual tension is exposed in this narrative, as multiple positions and layers of identities wrestle for recognition and validation: his black skin, his internal sense of whiteness, and his sense of cultural inbetweenity (Bulhan, 1980). Most significant however is how this is clouded by his immersion within the invisible normativity of whiteness, creating difficulties for him in trying to reconcile his allegiances and affiliations to different families and cultures, and how to position himself as a person in a still racialised South Africa (Stevens, et al., 2006).

4.2.4 Negotiating complexity

While this narrative also involves tensions between white and black spaces, both western white and traditional black cultural milieus, this participant's strong sense of self-worth, developed perhaps through a trust in the world garnered from all her caregivers in her formative years, has allowed her to focus more on the potential of drawing these worlds together into a more integrated future for society and for herself. This sense of acceptance of her blackness together with an activism which she expresses through membership of a political organisation, indicates her positioning in Cross (1991) final Internalization stage. While she is focussed on empowering her community, it is not just for black or oppressed communities as indicated in Cross's (1991) model, but rather in what seems to be an effort to create a new space for multicultural young South Africans like herself.

A sense of agency seems to overlay the key tension between the secure base and comfortable identity that she has developed within the space of her home environment, and the challenges to that identity that she is continually required to confront in the face of society's limiting and racially tainted assumptions.

Her white 'family', as she calls them, and her biological domestic worker parents together have created a family structure which, Waterman (1982) explains, is important to the environment in which identity development occurs. This strong, secure base has facilitated the exploration and individuation needed to develop her own identity:

> *"All my life my dad has lived with us and my mom, because my dad and my mom worked for my white mom."*
>
> *"I have never really seen it another way because, I mean, I call her mom [parent's employer], so basically I have got two moms."*
>
> *"My white mom actually delivered my other sister, which is number three […] so everyone, I mean even my other siblings do see her as mom because she has always been a part of the family."*

However, despite this, remnants of society's apartheid past rear their head in many social contexts to challenge that secure sense of self and belonging:

> "W*e [white mother and participant] don't even notice until it is like brought to our attention. So even when someone asks me the first time, 'how long have you been working for them?' I am just like 'what are you talking about?' and then I am like 'oh, is that what you're talking about?'"*

It has been noted that an individual's identity depends on how they are defined and treated by others, in particular members of the in-group (Barreto & Ellemers, 2002; Deaux & Ethier, 1998, as cited in Klein et al., 2007), and that it is the respect from others in the in-group that provides the sense of belonging and feeling of acceptance from that group (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). While this participant engenders absolute acceptance and respect within her white home environment and family, her black embodiment, which is what is seen by the social world, constantly separates her as other from a space she totally identifies with on an internal level.

Connecting one's internal feelings of who one is, with who one seems to be on the outside and how one is perceived by others is a crucial step that is described by Erikson (1968, 1980) in his fifth stage of identity development. This period of adolescence and early adulthood requires a perception of the continuity and sameness of the self within space and time, which also involves the recognition of one's continuity or sameness by others.

Her skin is black, but her life experience in a privileged white home does not necessarily allow for a comfortable fit within many black circles, privileged or otherwise:

> *"I have become very uncomfortable sometimes with other black people, because the scary part is that the average black person from a normal background or even middle class black people, you know, don't like black people like me and I know that […] it is hard for me, because they are the people that have responded negatively to me more than other races or other people."*

There is a clear awareness that difference is more than simply about skin colour, yet rejection from those of the same skin colour feels very real. As race becomes an unavoidable determinant in this participant's social world (Fanon, 1967), her experience of herself in a social context highlights the complexity of society and the threats to her own identity therein. She thus reframes this challenge in the language of class and socio-economic status, and grapples with experiencing privilege, but not being privileged, black but not privileged black:

> *"There's the black kids who were fortunate, where their parents were fortunate enough to be middle class at the moment, so they have money, so they are the private school kids. So a lot of the time it's more like I will be friends with them because I get along better with them, but a lot of the time there are things that we don't relate on […] because the thing for me is that, yes I grew up in a privileged situation, but my family doesn't have the money you know […] So sometimes I can relate with those who were necessarily not privileged."*

Within some white circles there is also a sense of difference:

> *"The funny thing is, I actually have only got two white friends and a lot of people would think that I would have a lot more white friends and I…it just never happened."*

Despite the difficulty of possible otherness present in both white and black worlds, there is, at the same time, a level of understanding of both. This potentially allows for an easier transition from one to the other than might be possible for many of her black or white contemporaries who lack the exposure to and experience of having grown up within both contexts.

> *"Sometimes it is easier for me, I can fit into both worlds, it just depends what type of people in those worlds I come across."*

Refusing society's categorisation then, she looks to 'the type of people' she meets rather than boxing herself and others through the use of limiting identity markers such as accent or race.

> *"especially living in South Africa, I just think that in the next ten years there will be, not even a lot more people like me, but the whole accent thing, the whole opportunities thing, those lines will be blurred, so I don't think, for me it was just an advantage that I got ahead of all of that […] our country is just so complicated for you to be anything else you know. I mean these days you have multi-cultural relationships. I mean those kids, what do they say they are? You know, you have multi-racial […] yes those lines are going to be blurred very quickly, so I just happen to be the first batch."*

Using the complex multiplicity of the South African population, she then constructs a possible future where the ambiguity of everyone grows more obvious, blurring distinguishing markers and creating the possibility of her positioning being less unique and therefore less isolating. Thus emerges the contemplated possibility of a future where the different roads can meet, the possibility of pursuing new identities within a changing South Africa (Nuttall, 2004).

4.2.5 Living in 'both places'

Raised with a fair amount of independence of thought, together with ongoing support at home from both her mother and her mother's employers, this participant's narrative reflects a continuity and stability, despite regular life struggles and her dilemma of living in both places. She exemplifies Marcia's (1980) stage of identity moratorium, where she is in the process of exploring and evaluating the beliefs, values and goals of her white caregivers and of both the cultural milieus of which she has been a part.

She has felt very comfortable and totally incorporated on a daily basis within her mother's employer's family while growing up, a situation which she still experiences today as a young adult:

> *"There's quite a nice dynamic in the house, everyone's really relaxed."*

There is also a recognition of advantages that would not have been accorded to her had she not had access to the white world of privilege offered by her mother's employers:

> *"I don't think I would have loved computers if I didn't [live with mother's employers] 'cause where would I have got a computer from? A*nd *ja, to fall in love with science."*

As Erikson (1968) says, it is the context in which a young person finds themselves that plays a large role in influencing the choices available to them when they look at the potential roles they can play in the adult world. However, this exposure to a white world of privilege has not alienated her from her roots, which going back more than one generation seem to also have been one of status and privilege, albeit in a different form to that of a western cultural milieu.

Through her biological parents, mostly her mother, she has maintained the connection to her extended family, her language and cultural traditions. She is proud of her cultural heritage and 'her' peoples' harmonious and refined nature. Throughout her narrative, she uses the words 'my', and 'we' in relation to black people and 'them' in relation to whites, showing a clear alignment with her embodiment as someone with a black skin. Her strong affiliation to her blackness grounds her:

> *"I am black, I love being black, I love our culture, […] I love being around, like, my own people."*

Added to this, this participant has a sense of pride in and great admiration for her mother and her mother's independence, financially and otherwise.

> *"She's phenomenal, like she's amazing, [...] I'm really lucky and I think most of the things that I have is mainly because of her."*

> *"[mother's employers] have helped, but if they didn't, I would still be ok."*

The positive slant of this narrative might give an impression of someone clouded by an idealist view of certain things. However, a strong rootedness seems to have granted this participant the space to question, which Erikson (1980) says is the core task at this fifth psychosocial stage of life. Having had the opportunities of a top quality education and economic stability, she is able to articulate her questioning position with strength:

> *"I'm very critical of, especially females, not just black people in general, but also females, 'cause I think in terms of feminism, we also have a long way to go."*

And she has an awareness of the current, socially constructed, power based narratives pervading her world:

> *"I do think we live in a white world."*

Taking cognisance of what Yuval-Davis (2006) points out, that her identity is not unitary, but rather constituted along several different axes that constitute each other, that is, as a woman, a person with a black skin, someone who is well-educated and a young person born towards the end of apartheid in the country of South Africa, she articulates:

> *"I'm probably gonna have to work four times as hard, number one because I'm female in engineering and number two because I'm black."*

She is aware of the tensions she is called on to negotiate and identifies one of her struggles as being:

> *"Me being taken seriously […] 'cause I think, I think, one of the things that we don't want, and I think that a lot of my friends feel the same way, is that 'uh, the only reason you got a job is because…um…"*

She is also cognisant of the internal effects long term domination has had on black people (Fanon, 1967) and the power relations still evident in post-apartheid South Africa today (Durrheim & Mtose, 2006).

> *"I do think that we [black people] do sort of have this, sort of, inferiority complex when it does come to who we are as a people, um, and I think that's what we need to fight with before we can start doing anything."*

Yuval-Davis (2006) explains that 'belonging' can arise as a result of self-identification or through others doing the identifying. It is not something fixed, but rather a dynamic process that is constructed by power relations. Despite her secure home base within both white and black cultures, and her continued confident alignment with her blackness, the tension of her 'dual' upbringing surfaces as a struggle none the less:

> *"I kind of, maybe, I always feel like I'm on the fence, so I don't belong to…anyone, sort of thing."*

As several of the participants have described in one way or another, despite the tension of feeling other at certain times in both black and white contexts, the particular space offered by her unique situation does, at the same time, provide a vantage point which potentially allows for a greater understanding and acceptance of both.

"I'm far less judgemental when it comes to both ways. As like, so there are lots of black people who hate white people […] like there's lots of black people, even specially the ones that come out of private schools, who leave just hating white people because they think a certain way. And I can't, I just can't, can you imagine? I just can't, that just doesn't make sense! Um, especially the history that we've had as well, um, I think because I've lived with them [white people] and I sort of understand where they're coming from, even though I might not always agree."

"I kind of understand where both parts are coming from 'cause I live in both places"

This participant's narrative shows someone searching for alternatives, aware of the challenges to creating new alternate identities for herself and willing to engage in complex questions of identity and subjectivities. Class allows her to navigate the spaces, integrating aspects of both a black and white world. A secure foundation and strong sense of self allows her to contest existing racialised and gendered discourses and look for freedom from the society's still limiting identity narratives for young black women in South Africa today.

4.2.6 A double life

While the previous narrative acknowledges and accepts, with all the complexity and challenges, the two worlds of which she is so clearly a part; this narrative shows a resistance to that conflict. It is a tragic story of someone wishing on some level to denounce their connection to blackness and its association with poverty and deprivation, and escape to an idealised world of white privilege. It portrays the suffering brought about by the struggle of being undeniably part of two worlds and yet being unable to reconcile them. It is a tension that echoes Bulhan's (1980) description of the pattern of capitulation adopted by a black person in the face of white cultural domination when they relinquish their own culture, yet their attempts to incorporate themselves into the dominant culture never quite makes it by mere virtue of their black skin.

The narrative begins with a contented life and a childhood marked by a real sense of belonging within the family of the domestic worker mother's employer:

"So literally Monday through Sunday, we [employer's children and he] played together after school, we went to movies, we did everything together. We went to the arcade together, yes, it was pretty cool."

However, the bubble burst and the narrative took a distinct downward turn when the employers of the domestic worker parent moved away from Johannesburg. Already in his mid-teens and so much a part of the white family, an offer was extended to him and his parents, or alternatively to just him alone, to accompany the family to their new destination in another part of the country. However, the choice of his parents to keep him in Johannesburg with them because of the proximity to the family's older children and extended family, marked a very clear turning point in this narrative:

"My world was turned upside down."

He then began a tightrope walk between two lives: on the one hand with family in a township in Johannesburg where he feels out of place and alienated:

"…so I am the outsider who rocked up there."

And on the other, with his world of work and white social circle, including old school friends, with whom he identifies:

"I act, I think, I speak the same as my white friends, and their, and that society."

Tajfel (1982) describes an individual's social identity as the part of the person's self-concept that comes from them knowing they belong to a social group. This knowledge together with all the value that the person attaches to that and the significance on an emotional level that that membership has for them, is what gives that individual their social identity. This participant clearly aligns himself with a white social group.

Klein, et al. (2007) add that "successfully defining oneself as a member of a social group generally requires confirmation of this identity by other in-group members" (p. 7), a confirmation that this participant seems to have experienced from his white friends:

"I would go for weekends to my friends' houses."

Klein et al. (2007) also state that if validation from a group is required for group membership, it becomes difficult to sustain several identities if the groups sustaining them see the identities as incompatible.

> *"At the end of the day there is no way that you are going to please everybody because you are going to think and practise, um, the one aspect, or the one tradition or the one culture, and your other half of your life (sic) that you know is going to look at you and say "what are you doing? Are you nuts"? […] like I said, there's things that I do with my white friends and my white society that my black society and my family wouldn't understand, they don't understand […] and vice versa."*

The audiences' reactions, which in this case would be the reactions of both his white social circle and his black family and people living in the townships, therefore are essential in maintaining this conflict (Klein, et al., 2007). This deep tension leaves this participant needing to juggle two worlds where it seems he can find no common ground:

> *"It definitely impacted me as a person because it almost felt like I was living a double life."*

Within the social space of the township, it is not his skin colour that is marking him as an outsider, but rather the way he talks:

> *"In townships, you get judged, as I've said. Ja, it's a heavy criticism. People ask, 'Why the hell are you speaking English?' You know what I mean? 'Do you think you're better than us? Are you a coconut?', that kind of thing, and it's just so judgemental"*

> *"Why would I want to be part of a community in which I get judged 24/7?"*

Mckinney (2007) explains that a speaker's linguistic features will affect the conclusions that others reach regarding their identity. Explicit racial distinctions are made based on pronunciations as indications of education and opportunity (Anderson, 2007), which makes it possible to position someone, like this participant, as other within the black township environment, despite the colour of his skin. At the same time, whether he openly acknowledges it or not, the tension between what he sounds like and the colour of his skin also brings a tension into maintaining an identity within a white social circle.

The self is understood to be reflexive, that is, as being able to name and classify itself in certain ways in relation to other different social classifications, a process that leads to the formation of

an identity (Turner, et al., 1987). However, the self-categorization of this participant appears to be out of sync at this point in time with his reality of struggling financially in the townships:

> *"It just seems like the suburban life, or the white life if you may, or the westernised life just seems an easier and more acceptable way of living. For me, not for everybody, for me."*

> *"So to them [biological family] and others around my family, it seems as though I am a lost soul"*

Klein et al. (2007) explain that the recognition of oneself by the group is particularly significant for someone whose social identity is not clearly secure, such as those individuals who want to shift between different groups or who feel they have conflicting identities. The tragedy in this narrative is that, despite his sense of faith in his white social circle not to judge him, he doubts his acceptance within the white world were his current home situation in a black township to be revealed:

> *"There is just certain things that I have always thought if people don't necessarily have to know, then that sort of thing, it will hurt them more, or me, if they did know. Or they would judge me more. So yes I just prefer to keep the two [worlds] separate, and I just think there is no way that the two can coincide. It is just impossible."*

This narrative reveals someone who has absorbed the western individualistic view of selfhood, embodied in the perceived 'superior' position of whiteness and a splitting off of the perceived 'inferior' parts of himself (Shulman Lorenz & Watkins, 2001), that is, the poverty and stigmatisation of blackness (Durrheim & Mtose, 2006). This isolates him from biological family and relationships with people in the townships. It also limits the internal space for acceptance of himself and the possibility of the adoption of more nuanced identity positions. These binary opposites leave him in a troubled subject position.

4.2.7 Looking to the future

This narrative is marked with what appears to be a fairly positive beginning, followed by a change in trajectory at age eighteen, precipitated by the death of the participant's domestic worker grandmother. This event brought into sharp focus her unique situation as a young black adult who was raised in a white world of privilege, yet whose biological family occupies a very different social space outside of that world. Her enforced immersion into her township

roots due to her change in circumstances has required her to begin finding a way to integrate her blackness with who she feels she is in the world, and to make sense of the space she now finds herself in. The narrative has an aspirational quality which draws her towards the decision to create for herself a path forward of her own making.

Despite some difficulties and a significant loss, the trajectory of the narrative does not slip into a decline, but instead is propelled forward towards a desired future, by the seemingly easy going confidence of the participant. As Gergen (2005) explains, while society values stability, it also recognises the importance of change. The possibility therefore of progressive transformation within a person's narrative is viewed by many as important and a means of showing how whatever is undesirable in themselves or their circumstances, is changing and improving over time.

Despite being separated from her mother at an early age, this participant had a secure base to start with through the strongly supportive parenting she received during her formative years from her domestic worker grandmother and the family of the grandmother's employer. This supportive type of parenting has been evidenced in many different cultural contexts, all of which are positively related to a range of adaptive child outcomes such as competence, self-regulation and other pro-social outcomes (Barber, Stolz, & Olsen, 2005). This participant claims a confidence at having been accepted for who she is, as she is, by all her caregivers during her childhood:

> *"I was very naughty. I gave them [employer's family and grandmother] a little bit of stress, quite a bit of stress! But they never ever turned around and said, 'Okay!' They honestly took me as their own child. […] They have honestly made me."*

She felt and still feels confident of her acceptance in privileged white social circles, regardless of her home situation:

> *"I haven't experience racism before. Like growing up in school, […] a lot of my white friends would come and stay in the cottage with me, and their parents would just be like: 'if you guys are friends, then you're friends, its ok. It doesn't matter if [grandmother] is a domestic worker. It doesn't matter if we're millionaires."*

With an appreciation for her domestic worker grandmother's sacrifices and the opportunities and financial support of the white family she grew up with, she feels she has the social capital to make the most of her life in all areas, particularly the world of work:

> *"I don't think I have many disadvantages to be honest with you, um, because with work and stuff, if we go for interviews you know, if you're well spoken, you're presentable, you know. I mean, you studied what you did, they think you can do the job. I think for me I'm just like, I've had those. I'm privileged in that way."*

Language cues are socially significant indicators in terms of how people appraise the identity of the other in a dialogical interaction (Mckinney, 2007). While having a white English speaking accent has often made social interactions with other black people more difficult for many of the participants, in relation to white people it has generally been presented as an asset. The social identity of the other in relation to the listener, is constructed around the expectations that inform people's interactions, which include the listeners' perceptions of race and all the assumptions of privilege or disadvantage, or otherwise, that go with their construction (Mckinney, 2007). As a result, this participant finds herself easily accepted within the white world of employment opportunities as well as other social interactions, by virtue of the assumptions made about her by whites in light of her accent.

The reality of the matter is however, that her circumstances changed considerably. The narrative therefore navigates the tension between opportunity and loss. The death of her grandparent (her mother figure) and the coming of age of the participant, while not signalling a total decline, required her to begin balancing the legacy of affiliation with her white suburban upbringing and her current life in the townships living with her extended biological family. She feels out of place in the space of the townships, but rather than just feeling alienated, she challenges their family value systems and cultural traditions around significant events like marriage and death, as well as what she views as their lack of aspirations, in wanting to retire to the homelands[5]:

[5] The 'homelands' were certain areas of land that were designated, by the apartheid government in South Africa, for ethnically homogeneous black people to live in. This was supposed to be a basis for justifying keeping ethnic groups apart and thereby preserving the main economically viable areas of the country for white people only. The black people were then expected to have their homes in these areas and only be 'visitors' to the main white cities.

"Her [participant's aunt] whole thing is 'how can you want to go buy a car or rent from someone when you should go build a house in the homelands?' […] We [participant and cousin] would never go live in the homelands!"

"…they are just like 'no, no, no, you need to start having children and...' Never! I don't want to have a child now."

"So, I haven't lost out on knowing the traditions and all of that. I know it quite well, I just don't follow it"

She does not allow her current situation to overwhelm her and draws on her resources both internally and externally to manage the tensions in her life:

"I'll adapt to what I have to."

"I've been very lucky to have friends that don't judge me […] so that's why I feel comfortable. I don't have to lie to my friends."

Together with empathy for her family in the township,

"It's very sad that we have to see all the things that people go through in [township]"

And holding a sense of family based in both worlds, she is able to own the space she now finds herself in, without it compromising her sense of self:

"Where I live doesn't make me who I am."

While she is unequivocal about what she wants for herself in her life, she navigates the tension with a certain amount of laissez-faire. Her clear affiliation with a western way of life, the language, ambitions and life goals that tend to accompany that path, as opposed to a more traditional black or a township way of life, keep her with one foot out the door and a view to getting herself back to the space she felt comfortable in growing up, a space that would now be of her own making:

"I see myself going places. I do not see myself just, you know, being in [township], earning that R4000 […] It's not something that I see myself ever accepting, and for me, I am like, '[domestic worker grandmother] did not work hard and send me to all the white schools and you know, go through a lot of stuff so I can sit in [township]'."

The focus of this narrative then is on the creation of a personal future, free from constricting narratives of poverty and marginalisation still associated with blackness (Durrheim & Mtose, 2006). The participant defines herself as someone with agency and options. With determination and a clear goal aimed at escaping the confines of limited ways of thinking, she constructs the possibility of claiming a place for herself and being part of a new community of young South Africans (Nuttall, 2004).

4.2.8 It is what it is and it's ok, I think!

A narrative that displays a tension between what appears to be stability and yet is underlain with contradictions and potential decline, is that of the youngest participant. The tension in the narrative is mirrored in the disparity between, on one hand, a strong admiration and affiliation for her biological parent, which in turn engenders an appreciation for the traditional culture that this parent powerfully affirms; and on the other hand, a clearly expressed preference for a suburban western way of life and a desire to be part of a privileged world to which she doesn't quite belong. The underlying feeling is one of someone struggling to deny the contradictions in her world.

Once again, as with the other participants, this participant's parents' employer has been involved in her life for as long as she can remember:

> *"Like growing up, she has always been there. She like, school things, anything for school, she would come and collect my report and all that stuff. She was very involved in my life from the go."*

Added to this, she lives with both her domestic worker parents and has a special closeness with her father:

> *"My dad and I have another relationship. He is just funny, and gets me and stuff […] yeah, I like my dad."*

However, this participant seems slightly on the fringe of the employer's family now that she is older:

> "[white employers] are very busy, they never like, they are very busy. But previously they weren't as busy, but now they are very busy."

The sense that she is no longer as included generally in the employer's family as she used to be as a child, is countered with long stories about the employer's family and her connection to the employer's young daughter:

> *"The youngest daughter, she is very, very fond of me, so we have like play dates and stuff like that. So every Friday night we will play Monopoly or some board game or watch TV and she will tell me about Justin Bieber."*

It also includes un-interrogated discourses of white privilege (McIntosh, 1989, 2009) that are possibly not hers, and yet she owns them completely:

> *"People who find race a problem, have a big problem."*
>
> *"They [black people] still worry about race when they don't have everything else to survive."*
>
> *"…hopefully people, like more people, think like me one day. I don't know, [employer's elderly parent] thinks like me, yeah."*

Her absorption and adoption of 'white' behaviours and attitudes has facilitated her incorporation to a certain extent into that other world of perhaps idealised western white privilege. However, it has come at a price. It is accompanied by a degree of isolation through her feeling or separation from or disassociation from other young black people:

> *"I have always been, I don't know, people call me a larney[6], I don't know, yeah. But there were a lot of children, like African children, who didn't…I was more westernised if you can call it like that, I wasn't, like I didn't relate to what they knew."*

However, this capitulation to whiteness (Bulhan, 1980) sometimes sounds like a defence against possible rejection from black peers:

> *"Some of them were from townships and stuff like, I was not like that so they always thought I was better in life, so I was like 'okay'. But it didn't get to me and I never even thought about it. Like I knew it was happening and I knew when I got there that these people aren't gonna accept me the way I am, so, whatever."*

[6] Larney is a South African slang word generally used to refer to a rich person, or something expensive and upmarket.

She describes having found a balance between her different cultural attachments and making personal choices:

> *"I am very westernised, very like. That, I have just come to terms with. Like, I like the western world, but I accept that I am like African and stuff like that. I have like, I will always be Zulu and I like being Zulu […] but I am a westernised Zulu, like I would not see myself married to someone who is married to like four other people, it's just not me."*

Her story thus concludes with an expression of acceptance and understanding of her unique situation:

> *"I have accepted what I am about and that I am from two different worlds."*

Despite the light-hearted tone in the telling of the story and the expressed agency and seeming recognition and acceptance of her 'situation' in life, the unaddressed contradictions point to a story of of some avoidance and denial. This narrative has the potential of a tragedy. It hints at a life lived just on the margins of privilege, allowing the pretence of belonging, but lacking the substance. It begs further interrogation into the white discourses she has clearly internalised (Bourdieu, 1984), that leave her looking at herself through the eyes of another with the possibity of being found somewhat wanting (Fanon, 1967; Moore, 2005).

4.3 Narrative Content - Themes

The content of a person's narrative contains numerous intertwined themes, sometimes conflicting, that illuminate the many layers that make up their often multifaceted and complex identities. Analysing these themes or patterns of meaning can provide a rich account of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Together with the form of the narrative, the content of a person's life story assists in giving us insight into who they are (Lieblich, et al., 1998).

Several themes within the interview narratives of this study were identified as relevant to the identity constructions of the participants. These were grouped within two overarching ideas: that of the impact and influences on their identity development of the 'reconstituted family' of which they were a part growing up, and the effects of the social world and their encounters therein on their identity development. These were then viewed together as giving insight into

the meaning making and sometimes paradoxical identities that emerged from these experiences.

4.3.1 Reconstituted 'Families'

This research identifies two separate familial contexts: a white, generally middle to upper class, English speaking family together with a black, generally financially constrained, domestic workers family, fractured in some ways largely because of apartheid's migrant labour laws. However, due to their physical proximity in the intimate space of domestic life, these separate and very different entities have become reconstituted as a family unit of sorts, bonded in a unique way. As such, although the discussion is perhaps more broadly about kinship relations, the word family was specifically selected here because the way the participants articulated their lives within this space, was through the discourse of family. The emergent tropes that are uncovered here support a relatively integrated way of understanding these kinship relations in terms of 'family'.

4.3.1.1 Complicated power relations and parental roles

While the concept of power was not an obvious theme discussed by the participants or ever even openly referred to, it was considered important to address as something that would inevitably have been playing out continuously, if unconsciously, in the home situation during the participants' formative years. The presence of this tension then is to a large degree speculative.

This speculation is based on an understanding of Bourdieu (1984) views of power as something that is created, symbolically and culturally, and is then continually re-legitimised through interactions between individual agency and the socialised norms that direct and monitor people's thinking and behaviour. As such, the interrelationship between a domestic worker and their employee in apartheid and even post-apartheid South Africa would be one in which the considerable imbalance of power on every level would in all likelihood be a constant.

When the society is one that has been dominated for decades by apartheid legislation, and before that by the white supremacy thinking of colonialism, it is not difficult to guess that this

influence would have been persistently shaping the interactions within the home context between the black domestic worker employees and their white employers, whether the individuals themselves chose to openly act on or acknowledge them or not.

The commonly accepted conditions and patterns of exploitation of domestic worker employment approximately twenty five years ago (Fish,2006), which invariably involved separation of domestic workers children from the lives of their mothers and fathers in the cities, do not in many respects, seem to have applied to these particular domestic workers. However, society's norms are believed to have still influenced the power dynamics between the parental figures and as such, would have impacted on their roles as caregivers, biological or otherwise, to the participants.

The scope of this study unfortunately did not allow for the inclusion of interviews with the biological parents/grandparents of the participants in order to gain their perspective of the parenting process they acquiesced to under these exceptional circumstances. It also did not allow for the interviewing of the employers regarding their feelings around their role and positioning in the life of the child. However, it can be assumed that the biological parent(s) / grandparents would have needed to compromise their positions on various aspects of parenting in regard to their child at different points in time in order to facilitate that child's position of privilege within that context.

Harkness & Super (2002) explain that the role parents perceive as their part to play in the life of a child varies across different cultures, at different points in time and within different social contexts. There is no doubt that the biological parent(s)/grandparents of these participants were in an unusual social context, in a difficult historical period in time in South Africa, and of a cultural background diametrically opposed to that of their employers, who appeared willing and able to offer their child and themselves some unique possibilities.

> *"so I mean it was very weird how the parenting worked at our house because it was like, I mean, I remember the first time that I started going out, and my dad is very like 'no, you, you can't go out for long, you can't dress like this, you can't do that' you know, and my white mom is like 'no man, she is at the right age, let her go out', and oh gosh, every time I went out I would have to go and ask my white mom, my black mom and my dad if I could go out, and each of them would*

ask me if the other person said yes."

(Participant 4)

This same participant later added,

"Over the years by dad has obviously, well I wouldn't say teach, but has told my white mom like 'you know, this is our culture, this is...', so she is very aware of that kind of stuff. She knows and 'oh ok cool' she won't do this because of this, or whatever."

(Participant 4)

"*…being a boy, you try one thing with your black mom, like 'Mom, can I go out?', 'No [participant's own name] of course you can't go out', and then I would go and ask my white mom!"*

(Participant 5)

This same participant later added,

"But [emplyer's name] was very wary not to overrule my mom."

(Participant 5)

"In terms of the actual parenting of what you can and cannot do, they shared it, because my dad was very like – 'she is my daughter at the end of the day'"

(Participant 4)

It appears that whatever struggles the biological parent(s) / grandparents might have encountered in the enactment of their role as parents to their children, some of them at least, were able to exert their parental authority over their white employer at the end of the day. It is possible that some sort of mutual respect between the caregivers allowed for this, but it is worth noting the unusual nature of this reversal of authority in light of a myriad of imbalances in power that existed in that space - black/white relations of superiority, domination, and power, both subtle and overt, within the South African context (Stevens, et al., 2006), domestic worker status generally (King, 2007; Durrheim et al., 2014) and the fragility of alternate employment possibilities (Fish, 2006), together with possible processes of internalised oppression (Fanon, 1967; Hook, 2003), to name a few.

Even when there was an awareness on the part of the child of the obvious distinctions between the roles of their various caregivers within the home, as well as a difference in the level of

inclusion into the employers' family life between their biological parent(s) / grandparent and themselves, there seems to have been a kind of acceptance on the part of the child that this was simply how things were.

> *"It was obviously different between me and per say my mom, um, 'cause obviously she was on the job so she was, she treated it as a job and um, ja, um, it was always just slightly different, kinda the same. So I did everything that I wanted to there [in the employer's house]. They obviously didn't , my parents, 'cause they were always seen, or regarded themselves, or my mom regarded herself as an employee, kind of thing you know, ja, but everyone was very close to one another at the time."*
>
> *(Participant 8)*

> "W*e [employer's family and participant] would always have Sunday lunch together, mom was serving, it's the weirdest thing."*
>
> *(Participant 5)*

It is speculated that the biological parent(s)/grandparents' careful balancing act of maintaining their role as a domestic employee in the household, while their child clearly embraced much more status and resultant power in that space, seems to have assisted the child in being able to make sense of the differences.

> *"I think when I was younger I was just, it didn't really matter, it's kind of, you know, it's always just your life."*
>
> *(Participant 1)*

> *"It was what it was and I didn't think anything of it really."*
>
> *(Participant 5)*

One of the possible reasons for this could have been, in some of the cases, a sense that the biological parent(s)/grandparents and their employers' relationships were on a more personal basis that could normally have been expected from employee/employer interactions, particularly the more common relationships between domestic worker and employee.

"…then four o'clock in the afternoon they are taking the dogs for a walk together. They were more mates and companions than helper and employer."

(Participant 5)

"He [biological father] is like part of that house, it's like she [employer] trusts him with everything, like my dad knows everything and yea, they are very close, [employer's name] and my dad are very close."

(Participant 6)

Another possibility is that, where the relationship between employer and domestic worker was perhaps not necessarily so familiar, it was accepted on some level by the domestic worker parent(s)/grandparent on witnessing the inclusion of their child into that space of privilege, that it came at the price of compromise on their part in terms of allowing another into their parental space, in return for the provision of opportunities for their child that would not otherwise be available due to their own social and financial constraints.

"I don't know if it was hard for my parents really you know, and I mean, obviously my parents knew that the things or, yes, the things that my white mom was doing for us, they would never be able to do, so they were like, just like, 'ok, do whatever you want to do', you know, like schooling and all that kind of stuff."

(Participant 4)

It is evident in the encounters described above, that three forms of authority are in play here: that of parental authority; that of adult/child authority and employer/employee authority, which in this context is raced and classed as well. There are times when these various authorities support each other and appear to be in alignment, and times when they don't, resulting in various tensions and concessions needing to be made by all concerned.

Whatever power dynamics and personal sacrifices might have played out between the participants' parental figures, in their attempts to raise and support these young children into adulthood, will have to only be guessed at, at this point in time. From the participants perspective however, it seems that the sharing of parental roles was largely well managed and can perhaps be summed up again in the words of one of them:

"I think what has been nice is that they [both sets of caregivers] haven't made it complicated, you know, they have never made it complicated."

(Participant 4)

An unavoidable imbalance of power existed between the caretakers of these children simply through the fact of one being an employer and the other an employee. Added to this were other more nuanced imbalances present in the space of domestic work (Durrheim et al., 2014, Patterson & Bigler, 2006), reinforced by racialised discourses still present within the greater context of South African society (Stevens, et al., 2006). These factors confounded the issue of the very personal and intimate task of raising a child. On the one hand, the close relationships between the different caregivers and the ability of some of the biological parents to stand up to the employers in matters to do with their children, could have created confident identities. At the same time, the thinking and perceptions of the participants would most likely have been given a strong positive bias towards whites (Patterson & Bigler), which could result in a colour-blind worldview and a resultant unwillingness within them to contest continued racialised social imbalances (Durrheim, et al., 2014; Neville, 2008).

4.3.1.2 A sense of belonging

Whatever was happening on the parental level, the experience of the domestic worker's children within these reconstituted families was one of genuine psychological bonding and the development of an authentic sense of belonging.

All the domestic workers who are parent(s) or grandparents of the participants in this study, began working for their employers either before the participants were born, or at such an early time in the children's lives that the children don't remember any life before that. What they do remember is a childhood where they felt at home in the employers' house, some to such an extent that they felt like they were, and still are, family members themselves. They experienced this sense of belonging within a socio-political context where this was, at least initially, bordering on illegal in light of legislation such as the Group Areas and Separate Amenities Acts of the apartheid government.

At the time of this study the youngest participant was 18 years old, the rest were all in their 20's, the oldest of whom was 28 years of age. As such, all but one of these participants were

born before 1994 and the official demise of apartheid, an era where children of all races were exposed to the political ideology of white supremacy, and where racial segregation in residential areas, schools and sports effectively ensured minimal contact between the different racial groups (Dawes & Finchilescu, 2002). While their later childhood did occur mostly during the early years of South Africa's first democracy, people's long entrenched attitudes, beliefs and daily living conditions do not change overnight with the changing of a government and a new constitution.

The discriminatory relations between domestic workers and their employers that were common in the 1980's (Cock, 1980, 1989) and still in evidence today (King, 2007), do not seem to be the ones that prevailed in the home environments in which these participants found themselves. Whatever long hours the domestic worker parents did work or whatever other demanding domestic duties they might have endured, the one clear concession they were afforded was not only the opportunity of having their child grow up together with them at their place of live-in work, but also having the child welcomed or at the least included in that space.

> *"What I've heard like from my other friends who've grown up like, in families like, well the same situation that I have […] the white people, like they like weren't allowed in their houses. Like it was one of those things where, 'okay now, your mom works for us and that's it, so you're not allowed in our house'."*
>
> *(Participant 3)*

The participants' sense of comfort and belonging as young children within their parent(s) /grandparents' employers' homes, can be assumed to be in large part due to these particular employers holding attitudes and value systems outside of the general white norm of the time. While unfortunately the scope of this study, as mentioned previously, precluded interviewing the employers or the domestic worker parent(s)/grandparents of the participants, there is a sense that the employers' attitudes and value systems must have resulted in a certain lack of sanctions being imposed on the inclusion of the domestic workers' child into their home.

As a result, these children integrated themselves seemingly unconsciously into the lives of their parent(s)/grandparents' employers, with little regard for race, class or socio-economic

status and all the power relations inherent in those categories. It was within this space of belonging that the participants narrated their early experiences.

> *"We'd [employer's children and participant] bath together, because you know like when you're still growing up, like we'd bath together, like, we'd lay in bed together and then my mom, like later on when she, like, finished with work, she comes and she gets me and then we go sleep in her room."*
>
> *(Participant 3)*

> *"If they [employer's children] had a birthday party, it was more treated as our party and vice versa. So if I had a birthday party then it would basically also be their party."*
>
> *(Participant 8)*

> *"My white siblings helped me a lot with my homework."*
>
> *(Participant 4)*

> *"Ja, I was just always there [in the employer's home]. Their kids looked after me, um, I watched movies with them, I went out with them…"*
>
> *(Participant 1)*

This feeling of belonging for some of the participants seems to have extended to other members of the employers' family, indicating that despite structural inequalities, real psychological bonds were formed.

> *"…yes, I call my mom's employer mom, so basically I have got two moms, but I technically have three moms, because of my dad's second wife, he is traditionally married to two."*
>
> *(Participant 4)*

> *"…and then [employer's mother] calls me [name of employer]'s first daughter and stuff like that.'*
>
> *(Participant 6)*

It appears that some of these children and the employer's family formed more than a casual relationship. Regardless of age and skin colour differences, some children formed strong interpersonal connections with the other children and sometimes the adults in the household. This could have been due simply to the fact that they were all living on the same property, a possibility suggested by Baumeister and Leary (1995) who say that proximity plays a large part in relationship development and that race or age differences seem to diminish in importance

in the face of extreme proximity when it comes to bonding closely with others. Yet this argument does not always hold, as evidenced by the participant's earlier comment.

It has also been suggested that people are naturally motivated to form interpersonal connections, and that a sense of belonging is so essential to one's physical and mental well-being that it can be regarded as a need, not a want (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Yuval-Davis, 2006). So perhaps this innate motivation to connect to others and to belong is what facilitated the bonding that so clearly took place.

With the added dislocation from kin and biological siblings, it makes sense then that given the opportunity, these children would have connected strongly to the people who seemed like family in their immediate surroundings. This family connection, with the acknowledgement of skin colour difference, was clearly felt and expressed by the participants:

> *"I am very comfortable with my white family."*
>
> *(Participant 4)*

> *"This family of mine is white and it's like, those are people I love."*
>
> *(Participant 2)*

> *"…so that is why I have always just thought, you know, they are, like, they are family to me, they are treating [name of employer's child] and I all the same, it was never anything different."*
>
> *(Participant 7)*

> *"I love them [parent's employers] I do. I really, really do. They're my family."*
>
> *(Participant 1)*

Acknowledging the possibility that these participants would, in all likelihood, have picked up subtle positive biases towards the white people in their home, even in the absence of explicit evaluative message (Patterson & Bigler, 2006), it is still recognised that, as the children grew up through their teenage years and into young adulthood, the feeling of belonging within the employers' families remained for most of the participants.

> *"...so I never ever felt excluded in, in the upbringing, ja, part of the family, ja..."*
>
> *(Participant 7)*

"We're [participant and employer's mother'] even on this diet together, but it's not working because [employer's mother] cooks so much."

(Participant 6)

"I think day to day I'm a part of the family. I sit in the family room, I, um I eat supper with them, it just kind of depends, like sometimes when they have dinner parties, sometimes I'm there, sometimes I'm not."

(Participant 1)

"My white siblings are a lot older than me, so like they are married at the moment and have kids and everything, and so my white nephews and nieces, they all call me Aunty [participant's own name]."

(Participant 4)

Every one of these participants, at least for the early years of their lives, enjoyed a clear sense of belonging within the space occupied by their biological parent(s)/grandparent and the white employer and their family, a situation conducive to the formation of a secure sense of self in relation to the world (Erikson, 1950/1995, Waterman, 1982). At the same time, the positive bias towards whiteness that was most likely formed (Durrheim, et al. 2014) created alignments that would undoubtedly influence their identity positioning in future.

4.3.1.3 A sense of familial separation

One of the most devastating and far-reaching repercussions of apartheid was that of the migrant labour system, made possible by the establishment of 'homelands'. Black people were supposed to have their homes and families in these rural areas, away from white people, with only the economically productive ones being allowed to come to urban areas in order to provide a migrant labour force (Dawes & Finchilescu, 2002). These people would then be expected to return to their homeland once they were no longer needed or able to work. It was against the law for their families to live with them in the white urban areas, unless they were gainfully employed. This resulted in huge disruption within family structures, with most children being raised by their grandparent(s) or other family members in the rural areas or homelands, while their parents left to seek work in the cities (Dawes & Finchilescu, 2002).

Due to the fairly unique circumstances discussed earlier, the children of these domestic workers were allowed to stay with their domestic worker parent(s) or grandparent, in the domestic quarters on the property of their white employer in the northern suburbs of Johannesburg. As a result, several of these children ended up growing apart from their siblings and other family members who, by law or circumstances, were required to stay behind in the homelands.

> *"So my oldest brother and then my sister, so the first two, they grew up at home [in the rural area] with my Gran because my parents had just moved to Jo'burg to start working."*
>
> *(Participant 4)*

> *"[my siblings are] 39, 40 and 41 and then I am 22, so me and my siblings had a totally different growing up. At the time when my siblings were growing up, they grew up in the homelands with my gran."*
>
> *(Participant 8)*

> *"It would have been nice, but I know it wasn't plausible or viable, to have my biological brother and my biological sister stay with us, and raised like I was."*
>
> *(Participant 5)*

Despite the loss of that particular familial connection, unlike their siblings, the participants received the benefit of ongoing close proximity to their parent(s)/grandparent in Johannesburg, providing them with a greater possibility of establishing a strong bond with those parents and developing the secure base and sense of trust in the world in the very early years of their life (Erikson, 1950/1995; Waterman, 1982).

It also brought with it the opportunity of access to better schools and educational opportunities compared to their siblings, which in turn opened a greater possibility of accessing university education, and so better jobs. While these factors provided opportunities for exploring different roles to play in the world and therefore alternate identity positions for these participants, they also widened the social gap between themselves and their siblings through aspects like language, accent, education and social positioning (Anderson, 2007; Klein et.al, 2007; McKinney, 2007). This came with its own pressures as these participants were often then regarded as privileged within their biological family:

"so you feel the pressure where, because like, in my family I'm the only one, my mom has three kids, I'm the youngest. I have two older brothers but she had them before she came to Jo'burg, so they grew up in [province name] with my gran. They went to school there and they worked there […] they've never stayed with my mom."

(Participant 3)

"My siblings didn't grow up with me, so I definitely have had better opportunities than my blood brother and sister, and I feel bad sometimes, guilty, and also with that comes a lot of pressure "

(Participant 5)

"…'cause my brother couldn't do maths 'cause the school didn't offer maths as a subject when he was younger. Like now things have changed, but he didn't do maths and he wished he did, but he didn't, and I got to do maths and I got to do AP maths."

(Participant 1)

The gap between these participants and their siblings and other family members therefore became so much more than just a physical one. It was one that carried with it all sorts of tensions that served to create distance from their cultural roots and family through the manifestation of their very different identities in the social world (Anderson, 2007; Klein et.al, 2007; McKinney, 2007). Thus the fracturing of families during the apartheid past now takes on the possibility of a new form of family fracturing in the context of this study, through an alienation of familial relationships based on a social, cultural difference.

4.3.1.4 Navigating diverse socio-cultural milieus

The participants in this study had two distinct cultural milieus to navigate, both situated within a larger distinctly westernised social context, including an English westernised schooling system. On the one hand there was that of their biological family, with ties to their particular African heritage and traditions, with its values and expected ways of being and behaving; and on the other hand, that of the white family and their generally westernised way of being in the world.

Acquiring the values and behaviours that are required and considered appropriate within a particular culture is achieved via the process of enculturation (Grusec & Hastings, 2007; Harkness & Super, 2002). Parents, together with others in society, play an important role in

this process, deliberately or otherwise, by directing, limiting and shaping the child. This process is then reflected in the child's identity (Harkness & Super, 2002).

To a greater, or in some cases much lesser extent, the participant's biological parents attempted to instil their heritage and language into their children. It is not known whether those who didn't, bowed to the dominance or pressure felt from the white social hegemony of the time, or whether it was simply through not regarding it as a priority, either for themselves or for their children, during the child's formative years.

> *"My dad, because he's a traditional healer, besides him being a traditional healer, he is very traditional and very like, 'you have to know where you come from, you have to know your home language."*
>
> *(Participant 4)*

> *"All the time I spent with you [father/biological family], you never taught me any of this and now you expect me to just know it. And not even know it, now I must follow it loyally'. So that was, so that is the big thing that I am still actually grappling with right now. "*
>
> *(Participant 2)*

Different cultures emphasise and place different values on certain behaviours (Berk, 2009). The difficulty comes in, as in the case of these participants, when the values and behaviours of the wider socio-cultural context are not the same as those of the culture of the parents. Added to this, the values and behaviours of the wider culture are reflected in those of their other caregivers, the westernised employers.

> *"And like they [biological family] were saying, 'when you get married, like the lobola[7]…'. Ag, I don't care about that."*
>
> *(Participant 7)*

> *"I don't see myself slaughtering a cow because I have an ancestor, like I don't even believe in ancestors and all those things."*
>
> *(Participant 6)*

[7] Lobola or a bride price is a custom among different groups of people in Southern Africa, for example Zulu or Xhosa people, whereby the families of two young people about to marry, will engage in a negotiation and agree on a payment to be made by the groom to the bride's family in order to be allowed to marry her. Traditionally this was made in the form of cattle, but today it is more often in the form of cash.

"I don't think I would teach my kids, and if my parents had to pass on, I don't even know if I would carry on with all those family rituals and that kind of stuff."

(Participant 4)

"If I were to look to the future, the way I would raise my kids, would be more towards the westernised side."

(Participant 8)

"I think black culture is hard in this world because it [the world] is so western."

(Participant 4)

Having a largely western upbringing on a daily basis within an English speaking suburban social setting including home and school, yet needing to know and understand the often very different traditions of their biological family was not always an easy task for the participants. Not only not knowing practices around important social events, but not engaging in or being exposed to cultural traditions and practices as part of daily living, had the potential to foster alienation from biological family and their heritage.

"*Funerals are very traditional still, so that was when I wasn't following through with the tradition of Gogo[8] [name]'s funeral the way that I should have, then he [father who lived in a township] started to get angry with me and impatient. He was like, 'ja, because you grew up with white people'."*

(Participant 2)

There are not only clear differences in traditions around significant social occasions like births and deaths, but also contradictory expectations regarding the respectful ways of interacting with older people and parents within the different cultural milieus. There was generally evidence of a more hierarchical positioning of children and young people in relation to their elders in the traditional African families when compared to a more liberal attitude towards interactions between children and adults in the urban, English speaking, westernised families:

"…because in black families it is definitely, it's seen more as a dishonour because you cannot be drinking as a boy growing up when your father is the man of the house kind of thing. It shows disrespect […] so no, definitely not with my parents, no. […] of course, I would definitely ask

[8] Gogo is the isiZulu word for grandmother.

[name of parent's male employer] for a beer. Ja definitely, without a doubt."

(Participant 8)

"Like the way you address people, the way you dress, like, the way you express yourself type of thing, like you need to be more reserved. Whereas here [in Johannesburg], like you know like, you're free, you let go, type of thing ja. So there, like, you have to make sure, like, okay there are elders around, you do this, you stay in check."

(Participant 3)

[Township] kids, you do chores in the house and you don't questions […] you get sent to the shops and you clean all the dishes and you do everything. […] I didn't like the fact that I just was expected to do everything. So I would fight with my dad a lot about that. And he obviously didn't know how to cope with that because it's how he grew up. It's how everyone is there [in a township], it's the way of life there. So there was quite, there was a lot of friction in the respect thing. So he feels like I don't respect him, and I feel like he doesn't understand the true meaning of respect."

(Participant 2)

A point worth noting here is the way several of the participants regularly conflated racial and cultural terminology, a practice that has seeped through from apartheid into conversation today (Stevens, et al. 2006). It has become part of these young people's narratives, often unwittingly perpetuating racist discourses and social separatism that is racially constituted. It also impacts on their identity formulations because by using race and culture interchangeably, they create the possibility of conflating their social group identifications, creating possible future problems if they choose to reject one of these conflated aspects.

The part of the person's self-concept that comes from them knowing they belong to a specific social group or certain social categories is what creates their social identity (Tajfel & turner, 1986). By denouncing the traditional cultural practices of their parents and making personal choices around preferences for more urban westernised ways of being, they unwittingly create the potential of denouncing their race, which, still being aligned to the colour of their skin in society today, means denying an essential aspect of themselves.

With regards to the idea of unquestioning respect for one's elders within more traditional African families, was the large discrepancy between parental attitudes and value systems within these families and those of westernised English speaking ones around dating and the drinking of

alcohol. These differences obviously came to the fore as the children reached their teens and young adulthood:

> "*This is another thing with black families, is you can't really mention your relationship status or whatever the case may be. Again, that's too disrespectful. That's not accepted. I mean you can't go home in most black families and say, 'Hey guys, this is my girlfriend'."*
>
> *(Participant 8)*

> *"…like my white mom is just, she wants to meet every guy that I date, and oh my word, my dad, the only person he wants to meet or hear about is the guy that I am going to marry."*
>
> *(Participant 4)*

> *"It's a no-no to go, like, to have a drink in front of someone, like to talk about certain things, like I cannot go talk to them [biological family members] about a guy that I like, you know, but whereas with [employer] and [domestic worker grandmother] you know, [employer's daughter] and I would come home and it would be like 'oh this guy…'or invite them over. But they [biological family members] don't even want to hear about it!"*
>
> *(Participant 7)*

> *"…you get home and you could speak about what happened at the party with my friends parents because they would be intrigued, you know, like 'how was your night, what did you guys do?' But if I would get home to my place [biological parents], then, you just wouldn't go there."*
>
> *(Participant 8)*

Differences in types of food eaten by the different caregivers seemed to be clearly culturally linked (and possibly economically related too) and therefore enlist presumptions around different social categorization. Preferences and choices in food reflect a judgement of taste (Bourdieu, 1984) and therefore choices around it are an act of social positioning. This was one area where most of the participants seemed to be able and willing to adjust their positioning relatively easily in response to the differences between their different families' eating habits:

> *"I like both [types of food] and equally. I don't mind if I get to a place and all they have is pap and I have to eat it with milk, I can do it."*
>
> *(Participant 1)*

"so if I was eating pap then I would use my hands, but if I was sitting down for curry and stuff, I would use a knife and fork.., either way it made no difference"

(Participant 5)

"We eat a lot of meat because my dad is very Zulu and my parents are Zulu"

(Participant 6)

"My mom cooks typical black food, you know, pap and meat and cabbage and rice, but obviously my mom, then my white mom, obviously cooked very differently. I do feel a lot more comfortable with my white mom's cooking.

(Participant 4)

"Basically mealy pap, yes, was the daily routine, and obviously as opposed to the [name of employer's family]. So I obviously preferred the more westernised diet because it just had more of variety to pick from".

(Participant 8)

Some of the differences requiring negotiation emerged as a direct result of the different cultural backgrounds of their biological parent(s) / grandparents and that of the employer's family, others were simply differences that might occur between any families regardless of their cultural backgrounds. One area such area was that of discipline. In some instances the different caregivers seemed to be on the same page regardless of cultural backgrounds:

"Everyone's really relaxed and they haven't really shouted at me a lot, but when I have, I get shouted at by everyone. Like once I went out and I told no one where I was going, and I came home really late. When I woke up in the morning, I got shouted at by [female employer], I got shouted at by [male employer] and I got shouted at by my mom, so it's like having three parents."

(Participant 1)

Sometimes, perhaps in response to different children's personalities, the area of disciplining was less of an easy task, with different expectations and attitudes to transgressions evident across different cultures:

"I think it was a cultural thing, I was able to get away with murder with the western front, or with my mates"

(Participant 5)

> *"Black culture is a lot stricter. I'd say, very close to how Afrikaans people are actually brought up, very strict, you respect adults, no matter what, whether they are right or wrong. […] I remember if I was with my mom's side or mates, black aunts and cousins or whoever, her mates were not scared to give me a hiding if I did anything wrong, ever, but when I am with my white mates, it was like 'go sit in the corner and think about what you did'."*
>
> *(Participant 5)*

Another aspect of difference experienced was around the expression of feelings, in this instance particularly related to gender identification and requiring clear choices to be made around male identities:

> *"Like in our family [employer family] we always felt like you always express your feelings, so that is how I was raised, but it's not like that in my blood family, especially for men, that men don't cry."*
>
> *(Participant 2)*

The enculturation process for these participants was strongly influenced by their exposure within their 'reconstituted families' to a very different set of cultural norms from those of their biological family (Grusec & Hastings, 2007; Harkness & Super). Added to this, the larger social context within suburban Johannesburg did not support the enculturation process provided by their parents. This allowed for a gulf to develop for all the participants between the cultural affiliations of their biological families and their own understandings and practices in a contemporary western world. The many ways they perform their identities is reflected through attitudes, belief systems and even food preferences that are distinctly western. However, it is evident that the cultural capital gained (Bourdieu, 1984) for these participants in white western settings, is not necessarily viewed as an advantage for them within a different cultural setting.

4.3.2 Negotiating the Social World

While the participants enjoyed a sense of belonging within the home environment, their encounters in the social world were often experienced as judgemental and alienating. It is in these social spaces that their particular differences from their peers were highlighted, invariably impacting on their perception of themselves and influencing how they present and experience themselves in the social world, and how others experience them.

"The identity thing within my family [biological and employer's family] wasn't an issue. They didn't make a big deal out of it. It wasn't a, you know, it was just like 'you are my son', you know, it was just integration, but whenever we met other people, then you always had to define yourself for them."

(Participant 2)

4.3.2.1 Noticing the differences

Establishing an identity for oneself in the social world requires defining and aligning oneself with various groups, successful membership of which requires validation and confirmation by other members of that in-group (Turner, et al. 1987). One of the most obvious delineators of a group membership, certainly in the South African context, is the colour of one's skin. However, although this is a visible marker, it is an incredibly complex criteria. Society's expectations of behaviours, norms, values, language, etc, needing to be in alignment with the colour of a person's skin has created many unique challenges for these participants because the social process of becoming aware of their blackness has been confounded by them having to become aware of their whiteness too.

Klein et al. (2007) explain that difficulties arises when the individual tries to sustain several identities that appear incompatible to the members of the group that are sustaining that membership, even if the individual's internal cognitions manage the incompatibility fairly easily.

The essence of this is captured in one of the male participant's explanation of his difficulty on reaching puberty in a school where he was the only black learner. Finding that although he was experienced within the social space of his high school as 'white on the inside' and therefore similar to his peers in many 'essential' ways; one key aspect, that of his black skin, precluded him from the love relationships his peers were beginning to explore:

"so obviously when you become a teenager you start getting a crush and falling for people, and it was, there it was like love across the colour lines was still a big no, no, so it really impacted me, I had like real issues, I felt like I was unattractive."

(Participant 2)

This is not an isolated story or a new struggle for people with a black skin seeking to seen as a person, rather than simply as someone with a black skin and therefore in some way inferior

in a world of white hegemony (Fanon, 1967). However, an interesting counter to this issue was experienced by the same participant in a different context. It is one which is perhaps unique to the new social spaces available to young black South Africans within a democratic South Africa that allow for an about-face against the hegemony of whiteness (Louw-Potgieter, 1991, McKinney, 2007) On leaving school, and finding himself in the more cosmopolitan Johannesburg and his father's township home, his social challenges took on a different face, this time in a rejection of his 'whiteness':

> *"I've been hit with the same thing from black women that 'yo! He's too white, he's so white. He's such a coconut'."*
>
> *(Participant 2)*

For another participant, these aspects of difference were explained in just a few lines describing fitting in with primary school peers. Like the experience above, while skin colour here was a common denominator, it appears as if everything else was experienced as different:

> *"I was more westernised […]. They knew stuff that I didn't know, like they, what they do, some of them were from the townships and stuff, like. I was not like that, so they always thought I was better in life."*
>
> *(Participant 6)*

Here, placing the participant in the out-group of 'better in life' whiteness possibly implies a reactive rejection of whiteness due to its links with the past and apartheid (Louw-Potgieter, 1991).

Differences along lines of poverty and opportunity were concretised into physical spaces of rural versus city life, and township versus suburban life, with the possibility therefore by default, of blackness versus whiteness, due to the socio-political construction of South African society still today (Steven, et al. 2006):

> *"I can't really relate to the people there [in rural area], I mean it is a very different world you know. I mean most of the girls there my age, I am 22, most of the girls there my age probably have two or three kids by now and it is very like 'ok I am going to school, I go to high school, you know after high school it is time to have children'."*
>
> *(Participant 4)*

"most of them now, they have kids, they dropped out of school, so I'm thinking to myself, if my mom never came to Jo'burg […]I could be one of them. So I feel where, whereas here, I was at least surrounded by people that, I don't know, like, had a vision of going further in life"

(Participant 3)

"…because for them [people living in township], if they get a salary of R4000, they're over the moon, they are so happy with that and I know you can get so much better."

(Participant 7)

Sometimes the differences were very difficult to traverse:

"When my family and I moved to [township] there were just things that I was then exposed to that I had never thought imaginable. You know, just the way the people live, the way they think, the way they do things, certain things. I had never been exposed to that, so it was, it was and still is to this day more of a shock."

(Participant 8)

The participants bumped up against several binaries in their social world. Their childhood enculturation and white western influences created unexpected dualities in their identity performances that at times invited judgements against them and excluded them from possible in-groups amongst their peers (Turner, et al. 1987). These identities, that embody western privilege also created gulfs of difference between themselves and extended family and friends in areas outside of suburban Johannesburg (Louw-Potgieter, 1991; McKinney, 2007). It provides them with a different vantage point to consider their blackness in relation to other kinds of blackness, and points not only to the difference between blackness and whiteness, but also to the difference in the potential for blackness (and whiteness) itself to be stratified and heterogeneous internally.

4.3.2.2 Accent and language as identity markers

Perhaps the clearest theme that emerged during the examination of the data was the participants' seemingly contradictory identities as narrated by themselves through their

imposed identification with whiteness in the social world, by virtue of their accents. Their accents were all clearly identifiable as those of English speaking white South Africans.

It is not surprising that the participants ended up speaking with these accents rather than those of their biological parents because children of parents who have different accents from the norm in the area where the children are growing up, usually end up speaking with the accent of that area, rather than with the accents of their parents (Hirschfeld, 2008). This occurs possibly because of children's natural inclination to absorb and acquire the social and cultural norms that will assist them to function optimally in the society in which they find themselves. Not only did these participants spend a large part of their day in their early years within the white household, but also went to school in predominantly white suburbs, engaging with English speaking teachers and peers at their 'previously white' Model C or private schools.

However, these accents then created opposition for the participants when faced with blood family and other black members of society who had contrary expectations of them in terms of their speech patterns.

> *"People do make jokes a lot, like apparently I sound white on the phone."*
>
> *(Participant 1)*

> *"So they're like, 'why do you talk like that? Are you trying to be white or something?' And I'm like, 'no', like, 'this is how I've always talked'."*
>
> *(Participant 3)*

> *"…and then I opened my mouth and then they noticed my accent and it was just like everybody just turned around and stared at me like, where does this person come from?"*
>
> *(Participant 4)*

> *"…and it's like, 'oh my gosh, you guys are such cheese-girls!' Do you know like (sic) the term 'cheese-girl'? Like black girls trying to be white type of thing, like, 'the way you guys do things, the way you talk, the way you dress', but like, I don't know, it's not like I'm trying to be like anyone else."*
>
> *(Participant 3)*

This judgement of the participants in response to their accents is not something peculiar to the South African context or arising from black/white dichotomies. The judgement of someone based on their language use and accent is an ancient, universal phenomenon (Baugh, 2000), and its use creates and shapes the course of social relations and the assumptions people make about one another (Anderson, 2007). So despite more and more black people speaking with 'white' English accents, the participants' speech is still considered outside the norm. Expectations around their speech patterns inform how others think and behave towards them and affects the conclusions drawn about them by others, with the potential of eliciting prejudiced expressions and discriminatory behaviour (Anderson, 2007; Kinzler, et al., 2012). This makes it possible and even justifiable to position the participants, once they begin speaking, as other.

The problem with judgements being made about them on the basis of their language or accent, is that these can then extend to judgements about their personalities and physical attributes, applying stereotypes of whiteness to them as individuals (Kinzler, et al., 2012).

Bearing this in mind, it was not surprising then that the participants did not find the same kind of rejection from white people when they spoke in their South African English accents. While their accents become exclusionary criteria for them amongst their black skinned peers, as could possibly be expected, this was not the case with their white counterparts. In fact, having the same accent as white people seems to have engendered a feeling of us rather than other, despite the obvious difference in skin colour. It also enables white people to stereotypically position them as well educated.

> *"My accent never actually shocks a white person, they might be like 'oh you speak well, which high school did you go to?' [...] it's a very different kind of response to my accent."*
>
> *(Participant 4)*

Linguistic cues have become salient social indicators within the dialogical contexts of these participants, aligning and identifying them with white racial groups. Their identities become racially constructed according to their speech patterns (Anderson, 2007).

> *"Obviously because I act, I think, I speak the same as my white friends, and their, and that society, ja, so I wouldn't, I'm never, I'm never judged [by them]."*
>
> *(Participant 8)*

The challenges arising from other black people towards the participants 'different' accents, appears to be exacerbated when the participant only speaks English or was/is not able to fluently speak their mother tongue:

As a child…

> *"I was teased a lot in [township], I mean, they used to call me English boy, or American, because that is the only kind of, at the time, the only people who could speak English fluently were the people on TV […] and then there is my family, and I couldn't really speak [mother tongue] like they can, fluently. I mean I always knew I was different."*
>
> *(Participant 2)*

And as adults…

> *"In townships, you get judged, as I've said, ja, it's a heavy criticism, people ask 'why hell are you speaking English?' You know what I mean, 'do you think you're better than us? Are you a coconut?' that kind of thing, and it's just so judgemental."*
>
> *(Participant 8)*

> *"Blacks, they just get a bit funny because I speak English or, and then they start getting nasty and they start saying "you think you're white, you think you're better than us, you know, go to your white people'. There are, but it's not very often, but you do get those silly people."*
>
> *(Participant 7)*

Kinzler, et al., (2013) observed that Xhosa children showed a preference for English as a high-status language over their own first language, a feature that was also noted with lower status language children in other countries. This hangover from white hegemony and the subsequent association of English with high status possibly explains the accusation of 'you think you're better than us' from black peers who don't speak with an English accent.

It appears that the potential for negative responses from other people in relation to mother tongue speech was anticipated by some of the parents:

> "*They [caregiver and parent] both said they made a conscious decision for my mom to speak [mother tongue] so that I don't ever forget my, you know, natural tongue, mother tongue, which I think is so important. It kills me, kills me, kills me when I see African, not African because you're African, but black children and all they can speak is English, because then you*

are just setting them up for failure. You are setting them up to be isolated and it's horrible. You are getting called names like 'you are a coconut'."

(Participant 5)

Speaking English and having a white accent becomes a very relative asset within the South African social context. The recognition by some of the participants of the importance of being able to communicate in their mother tongue as being a crucial factor to having a sense of belonging in their different social spaces motivated some of the participants to learn their language, even though they had not done so as a small child:

"I would speak, you know, English to my white mom, it was just one of those things, and then my parents just got into a habit of speaking English to me, so it was just one of those cycles where it just never happened and then one day I decided that no, I had to learn it [mother tongue] because I couldn't speak to my gran, I couldn't speak to most of my cousins, it was just like, going home was, I felt very alienated,"

(Participant 4)

"My brother was actually learning [mother tongue], so then I just started learning [mother tongue]. I think his friends dissed him a lot about me, about his English speaking sister, so he was like – 'you're learning [mother tongue]'."

(Participant 1)

Despite whiteness and English still being regarded as high-status commodities in the social space, there is anecdotal evidence to suggest that whiteness and English have lost some of their standing as more and more black people feel free, in post-apartheid South Africa, to express pride in their cultural heritage (Dawes & Finchilescu, 2002). The increase in awareness of enhanced power positions of black people in South Africa since the 1980's, has created the possibility that black South African adolescents' own group preference has also increased (Dawes & Finchilescu, 2002). Therefore, as the participants have grown older and the years of democracy have altered the face of the supremacy of whiteness in the country, having a black accent and speaking a black language carries increasing status.

The language and accents of these participants are profoundly defining identity markers, putting them in an 'in-between' space in the social world (Anderson, 2007). Associations of power, status, education and privilege that accompany their language and accents become

racialised within the South African context, eliciting prejudiced judgements against them (Kinzler et al., 2013; Louw-Potgieter, 1991; McKinney, 2007). Language becomes a proxy for group membership (Finchielescu, et al. 2007) placing them clearly as members of the out-group for many blacks. Their skin colour however potentially marks them as members of the out-group for whites too, creating a duality that needs to be constantly negotiated.

4.3.2.3 Experiencing racism and prejudice

Racist ideology and prejudice are still evident in South African society today despite them no longer being acceptable or regarded as politically correct in a democratic country focussed on nation-building and unity (Stevens et al., 2006). All the participants, to varying degrees, experienced some form of racism and prejudice in their social encounters. This often manifested in an overt negative form in response to their accent and language use (as explicated in section 4.3.2.2), and was experienced mostly from black people. However, racism and prejudice were not limited to this aspect alone and appeared in subtle and presumptive ways from white people too.

Within the school environment, racism from white people seems to have been minimal, or at least certainly not evidenced. While this example below was articulated in terms of race, it also implies some sort of non-judgement of social class and hierarchy as well:

> *"I haven't experienced racism before. I, growing up in school, I would always be able to go to a friends' house, white friends, and the family would be okay with it. A lot of my white friends would come and stay at the cottage with me, and their parents would just be like 'if you guys are friends, then you are friends, it's okay.'."*
>
> *(Participant 7)*

Tajfel (1982) points out that when one's group identity is secure, one is able to be more tolerant. It is possible that despite losing their political power after 1994, having largely still maintained their economic superiority, the continued privileged space of white people in many settings in this country allows their group identity to remain secure and offers them more freedom to ignore difference. Also worth considering is Pettigrew and Tropp's (2006) argument that intergroup contact reduces intergroup prejudice and so white people, finally having opportunities to engage with black people as equals since 1994, especially black

people who sound and act just like them, are able to reconcile other differences into an easier acceptance of the other.

However, despite these positive experiences within the shielding context of school, as well as instances of more intimate engagement with white people within the home space, in the larger social environment apartheid categorization and presumptions of white supremacy were still evident among white people. One participant discussed her experiences of the racist deduction that if a black woman is seen accompanying a white family, whether this is at the supermarket or a holiday location like the beach, then the black woman is automatically presumed to be a domestic employee of some sort:

> *"…and she was telling my white mom how she was struggling to find an au-pair and you know, it is so nice to see how, you know, there like my white mom's au-pair is like on holiday with them and the kids seem so happy with her and blah, blah, blah, and my white mom was like 'what are you talking about?' Because for me, we don't even notice until it is like, brought to our attention."*
>
> *(Participant 4)*

> *"like if I go to the shops or whatever, they will ask me, 'oh so how long have you been working for them [white family]?' and I'm just like, well I haven't, and I don't even know where to start […] so only recently have those things come up. I think when I was a child it didn't really make a difference."*
>
> *(Participant 4)*

Du Bois's double consciousness, that is, having one's sense of self constantly informed by a hegemonic other (Moore, 2005, Black, 2007) is still in evidence for black people in the northern suburbs of Johannesburg where white culture predominates and the positioning of a black person in the company of a white family still holds the possibility of them automatically being allocated an inferior status. Some white people still seem to hold to an ingrained sense of white supremacy and a unilateral consciousness (Black, 2007) and so to be totally unaware of their own race as other, and of their position in the eyes of those who were not white, as not only other, but as others who are oppressors.

These racist socialized norms demonstrate the tenacity of prevailing discourses around race still in evidence today, twenty years after the demise of apartheid (Stevens, et al., 2006). This

is because what it means to be black is still talked about using the language of white hegemony and is strongly linked to stigmatised, negative stereotypes of blackness, while whiteness on the other hand is still correlated with success and all that is western (Durrheim & Mtose, 2006).

Although not expressed in racialized terms, the possibility of experiencing prejudice as a black person in the work place, where white people still hold the majority of senior positions, was alluded to. In this space a white English accent and mannerisms were perceived as possibly reducing that prejudice:

> *"I think if you don't speak and act a certain way, people don't think you are as intelligent and what not, so I think my accent does help. I think it will help."*
>
> *(Participant 1)*

> "*Whereas some of my family, they have gone for a couple of interviews, but because I mean they don't have the accent, or they would not be able to communicate with people properly, or I don't know, they don't have the kind of advantage over someone that's grown up with a white family."*
>
> *(Participant 7)*

Over time, constructions of axes of power within society, like those of sex or race, come to be accepted as normal (Bourdieu, 1989). Although these would have initially been externally enacted, they eventually become internalised, continuing to manifest in the person's life as a form of internalised oppression. It is likely that after decades of apartheid following on from colonial oppression, many black people in South Africa have internalised a mental attitude that encompasses an internalised sense of inferiority as a result of the prejudices that have been piled against them over such a long period of time (Durrheim & Mtose, 2006).

The participants expressed a recognition of this internalised oppression and sense of inferiority, but also voiced a rejection of it:

> *"I think it's, you know, our turbulent history and apartheid thing, and a lot of black people still have a mentality of putting white people on a pedestal. Whether they know it or not, they still have that mentality."*
>
> *(Participant 2)*

> *"I do think that we do sort of have this, sort of inferiority complex when it comes to who we are as a people, um, and I think that's what we need to fight with before we can start doing*

anything. So you'll find, um, a black person who has a really top job and you'll find that a lot of, like the black people under him won't respect him, or look up to him. It's weird like that. Or you'll find, we call it, 'the only black person at the dinner table' syndrome, where you want to be the only one. You don't want to bring others along with you, I think mainly it's an age thing. I think because I am slightly younger, attitudes are starting to change, but you can definitely see it with a lot of older, lot of older people."

(Participant 1)

"Or they think white people are superior to them or whatever, they want to conquer like. This whole vibe of like we are still oppressed and stuff like that, and still try to prove themselves that 'I am not part of apartheid' and stuff like that, like people like that are still stuck in those mind frames. I am not."

(Participant 6)

The contestation by the participants of the self-limiting beliefs black people can still hold, was strengthened when it was experienced as a rejection of themselves as embodying this lowliness:

"[Coconut] it's a very judgemental word. I think it's as bad as the K word. To me it is. It's kind of, 'how do you think you're educated but you're still black?', and it's like, 'but I can be black and educated!'"

(Participant 1)

Most of the overt prejudice expressed against the participants from black people appears to have been in relation to their acquisition of white markers like accent and language, but education, particularly in higher institutions, has also been racialized and linked to whiteness (Soudien, 2008). These factors, and perhaps mannerisms or attitudes associated with white people, appear to have placed the participants firmly in the position of other in relation to black people, despite their similar skin colour. This has been experienced as rejection by the participants from those who could perhaps have been viewed rather as us.

"Someone has actually told me that I must be careful that I don't become, I don't become angry towards my own people because of the way they respond to me, but it's hard for me because they are the people that have responded negatively to me more than other races or other people."

(Participant 4)

"I think, actually my opinion, black people are the most racist. I think they are more racist than white people and I know that there's no way to actually prove a statement like that, but that is actually what I really feel"

(Participant 2)

The participants do seem to have experienced more open criticism and rejection of themselves by black people:

"I found more black people would generally chirp another black person, as opposed to it being a white/black think I think, when it comes to that coconut thing, but I think it did happen both ways."

(Participant 5)

"[White girls] they're more accepting. Like I've never, like the white friends that I've had, it's never been like, 'oh my gosh, your hair is na-na-na [….]. Black girls they're always going to try and find something wrong with you."

(Participant 3)

It is possible that the more accepting attitude from white people is a result of their fear of being politically incorrect and their understanding of the potential social risk involved in being labelled racist; or it could simply be their desire to forget about apartheid (Finchilescu, Tredoux, Mynhardt, Pillay, & Muianga, 2007).

The participants themselves have adopted a normative of whiteness that at times they seem unaware of, problematizing their identities in the changing context of South Africa since majority rule (Finchilescu, et al., 2007; McKinney, 2007). For many black people, mixing with whites represents a disassociation with their own group, something which then opens those blacks up to rejection and denunciation as 'coconuts' (Durrheim & Mtose, 2006). Their accents and language use elicit negative responses from blacks and positive responses from whites, reflecting the importance of these delineators seen as critical barriers to interracial mixing by both black and white young people (Finchilescu et al., 2007). The prejudice the participants experience from white people recalls apartheid thinking and contests their internal comfortable identification with whiteness. At the same time they are marked by black South Africans as embodying rejected hegemonic whiteness, shifting them into a no man's land of inbetweenity.

4.4 Paradoxical Identities

"I think I am a product of the new South Africa, but what is that again?"

(Participant 2)

This section will draw together the narrative form and content sections, and provide a discussion of how the participants variously construct themselves as managing duality, struggling with racialization, feeling privileged and expressing agency, positioning themselves in complex and sometimes seemingly paradoxical ways.

The hegemony of whiteness has prevailed in this country for so many generations that it presents a master narrative (Steyn, 2001) to which so many others are seen in relation. The struggle for freedom from white dominance, in all its aspects, has been an ongoing powerful narrative for black people for a prolonged period of time (Fanon, 1963, 1967).

Within this framework, subject positions for these participants are sometimes difficult to establish. They appear to be only on the fringe of the type of 'Loxion Kulcha' of modern young city blacks (Nuttall, 2007), in all likelihood by virtue of the strong influence of their white suburban childhoods and, for the large part, their general disconnection from township culture. At the same time they are excluded from a firm alignment with whiteness by simple virtue of the inescapable colour of their skin. Life in the westernised northern suburbs of Johannesburg's has also, on several levels, distanced them from their family roots and cultural heritage.

The influences of their home environments, together with the impact of the social world bring to the fore ever present binaries that require them to negotiate places of belonging in spaces of persistent duality. These contradictions invite the emergence of what could be termed paradoxical identities. While all major theories of identity acknowledge the presence of multiple identities enacted in different times in different contexts (Deaux & Burke, 2010), the paradoxical nature of these identities appear to be due largely to South African society's still complicated racial discourses (Hook, 2006) and the othering of those who enact identities outside its dominant narratives.

While not denying that the narratives of these participants are generally positive stories of basically successful lives, the following words articulate the challenge of this duality:

"I have never had fitting in issues, but if someone had to ask me, where do I fit in, I would say 'I don't know'."

(Participant 4)

"It's sort of like being mixed race, you're not really black, you're not really white […] sometimes you don't feel like you belong anywhere."

(Participant 1)

.

Their indefinable social categorisation, seemingly neither black nor white, brings an undeniable awareness for them of their "in-betweenity" (Bulhan, 1980). Their varying subject positions are strongly related to how they accept or contest the binaries of race and racialised cultural affiliations.

"I know a lot of girls who have, sort of, rejected being black, like, who have even, didn't learn how to speak their own language, and who kinda regret it, as they get older. Um, I'm glad I was never like that. So I think, for me, because I chose not to reject any part, I think that's kinda made it, like, better."

(Participant 1)

Some of the participants consciously engage with and contest discourses of blackness and whiteness:

"I just think that I am a black South African, and the only reason I would put black in is just because I think it is just a point of reference."

(Participant 4)

Having to claim her blackness acknowledges society's prescriptive identifications, but while submitting to this label, she contests this essentialised view of herself.

The contexts and experiences of these participants' upbringings have exposed them to different ways of being which, although complicating their world, have at the same time opened up possibilities and options for alternate identities. These identities incorporate a sense of privilege and opportunity that are seen to outweigh the added pressure and racism that they have brought with them:

"It has been an advantage because I have seen how other people live. I have learned things that I would not have learned if I didn't live with them [parent's employer's family]."

(Participant 6)

"Definitely because of the schooling and because of socialisation here, just everything, and also the people I have contact with, um, the opportunities I might have got through mates. I don't know, there's just so much more on offer."

(Participant 5)

"It's an advantage in the sense that I know, growing up with them [mother's employer's family], it gave me a new concept of life, and a whole new, I was just exposed to more you know, I knew that there was better out there.."

(Participant 8)

Having experienced two sides of several coins: privilege and poverty; black and white; western and traditional African cultural milieus, the participants have all, to varying degrees of success, attempted to integrate the different contradictory pulls in their lives into some sort of integrative whole (McAdams, 2001). Most of them subscribed to a discourse of meritocracy. It is a discourse asking that race not be the determinant of their social positioning but rather their attitudes, abilities and personal attributes. It is also one perhaps more easily adopted coming from their place of privilege, and possibly evidencing the internalisation of white discourses (Shulmann & Watkins).

"I know I'm not going to be in [township] forever, I know that. I have to work hard and get myself out."

(Participant 7)

"I don't think anyone in life, you know, like, wants to, like, end up doing nothing you know. Like you want to be somewhere, you want to be someone, you want to go somewhere".

(Participant 3)

"My core belief is that you've got to do the best with what you've got."

(Participant 2)

In the face of prejudice, often emerging in response to the unexpected identities they present to the world, most of them display resilience and sometimes defiance in the face of society's limiting narratives:

I think it would be [difficult] if I really cared what a lot of people thought, I don't. Like sometimes I think I do, but I just don't. I've got other stuff to worry about. That stuff is tiny."

(Participant 1)

"People think I'm a larney and a coconut. I don't even take it to heart, it's just like, 'okay, that's what you think, that is your opinion', so no, it doesn't bother me."

(Participant 6)

"It doesn't really make much of a difference for me, I don't notice it […] and I actually think it's quite funny sometimes because also, I mean, growing up in South Africa with what happened previously, people are so like diplomatic and tip toeing and, 'ooh if I say this…'."

(Participant 4)

Their investment in hybrid identities incorporates a desire to connect and an acceptance of difference in others, as they wish for themselves:

"…so whether you are dark skin, light skin, Xhosa, Indian, Afrikaans, whatever, like, we'll be friends, like we'll talk, we'll hang like, I really don't mind.'

(Participant 3)

"People are people, you just, it's hard to hate them once you realise they are a person."

(Participant 1)

There is an appeal then to a more inclusive overarching identity of being South African that acknowledges the past, but allows for inclusions and connections that express new possibilities for identities free of the burden of racist ideologies, a desire for a uniquely South African identity. Fanon (1967, p. 18) states that "A man who has a language consequently possesses the world expressed and implied by that language", and incorporating his difference and thereby his universality, a participant shares his perception of himself in the context of this country:

"I think I am the most South African African you can ever meet. I say to my mates, or whoever asks: I grew up with an older [of European origin] guardian so I identify with that generation, had my black mum, I can speak English, I can speak [African language] well, I can speak [different African language] quite well, throw me in any environment and I can blab my way through it, I have the gift of the gab and I am fortunate."

(Participant 5)

In a more restrained portrayal, but still expressing the complexity of identity positions:

"[I am] firstly a South African. So that is it. I just, because I think that also, I mean our country is just so complicated for you to be anything else, you know."

(Participant 4)

The participants draw on an array of identities and subjectivities in their narratives, some fitting more comfortably than others, all reflecting the dualities of being caught between two worlds. Their performances straddle the divide between their attachments to different cultural milieus, between their black skins and white affiliations, their 'Du Boisian double consciousness' (Bulhan, 1980; Moore, 2005) and their refutation of victim identities of blackness (Fanon, 1967). They negotiate very complicated spaces, sometimes with a degree of meritocracy and colour-blindness, sometimes with a degree of denial or cultural alienation, not always recognising the invisibility of the normativity of whiteness, but at times embracing all or trying something new. They reflect the very complex nature of South African society and the need for new and different subject positions outside of old, racialised ways of being.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

5.1 Concluding Comment

This study has explored the narratives of a group of young black adults who were raised by their domestic worker parent(s) / grandparents and who were, at the same time, to a greater or lesser extent, incorporated in some way or other into the home space of their parent(s) / grandparents' white employers. It has taken into account the multifaceted, complex backdrop of South Africa and its racialised history, as it applied to these growing children and their caregivers.

The research has achieved its aim of shedding some light onto the unique challenges experienced by the participants in trying to negotiate and integrate the influences of the two very different worlds they inhabit. Their close affiliation with whiteness has opened doors to

privilege, education and other opportunities, yet it is also what has created difficult subject positions for them as young black people in South Africa today.

Reconciling different physical spaces, positioning themselves in relation to rural and city living; poverty and privilege; and the often vast differences between life in the townships and the suburbs, has not been simply a question of preference. These places embody so much, and making personal choices with regard to what they symbolise involves negotiating and reconciling their connection to their roots, to extended family, to value systems and cultural heritage. They have struggled with a sense of cultural alienation, cultural inbetweenity and with notions of colour-blindness and meritocracy.

Identifying with two different cultural milieus has created conflict for most, requiring them to make a choice between the disparate values and behaviours of each, or attempt somehow to adapt to both (Phinney, 1990). There are times when the invisibility of the normativity of whiteness has influenced these choices. The study has evidenced that even the participants who value and feel proud of their heritage, seem unlikely to carry on its practices if it were left up to them in the future.

All the participants performed identities sympathetic to whiteness, even those who recognised the continued presence of racialised thinking among whites. Their identity positions that reflect 'white' advantage, such as education, economic privilege and the sophistication of the city, are those that are preferred (Durrheim & Mtose, 2006). Their language use and accents are strong social markers of difference creating a divide between themselves and other black South Africans. Yet they all profess a sense of personal advantage, largely in the form of academic opportunities, but also for some of them, bonds of 'family' gained through their inclusion into their parents' employers' family home.

The study has evidenced some of the ways in which these young people are trying to negotiate and create new identities for themselves different from those prescribed by and for, previous generations. New options and new narratives are emerging for young people in this country (Nuttall, 2007). While the contexts and experiences of their upbringing have brought with them many challenges, these young adults have a unique understanding of both sides of the racial divide that still haunts this country. They are searching for ways to negotiate balance between their conflicting worlds with varying degrees of agency and acceptance. For

the large part, they contest social narratives that limit the expression of themselves as unique, relevant individuals today. Their subjectivities entail resistances to discourses victimising blackness and, at the same time, a reluctance to accept race as a marker of their identity. They express ideas of acceptance of difference and integrating diversity into the emergence of a new version of an inclusive 'South African African'.

This study has provided insight into personal identities constructed in contextual and relational ways that are undoubtedly complicated (Blackman, et al., 2008; Franchi & Swart, 2003). At the same time it has mirrored the very complex nature of identity formulations for young black people in a democratic, yet still racialised South Africa today.

5.2 Significance of the Study

This study is significant in that provides a window into the identity narratives of a unique group of young black South Africans that have not previously been focused on in research studies. It allows access into the kinds of challenges and conflictual identity positions that arise for black domestic worker's children who find themselves in reconfigured kinship relations within the domestic space. At the same time, it highlights the dualities of the South African social context: black and white, wealth and poverty; power and oppression; African and western; traditional and contemporary. Through it's explorations of these particular individuals' identity formulations, it has contributed to existing knowledge with regard to racialised idenitity constructions in post-apartheid South Africa. The study confirms the strong influences of the home environment and the social context in crafting identities that are complex, relational and sometimes paradoxical.

5.3 Limitations of the Study

It has not been possible within the constraints of this study to present all the features and layers of meaning that were evident within the identity narratives of these participants. The study has also been limited by the aim of the research to answer a specific question regarding how the dualities in the participants' upbringings have affected their life stories.

As such, this study provides a small view into the arena of identity for this specific group of young people within the South African context and therefore provides only an introduction to some of the many facets of influence that this type of upbringing might have had on the identity formation of these young adults. Due to the limited space within this study, a more in depth discussion of race and class, and alternate options for subject positions for young black people in South Africa today was not possible.

The study was limited in terms of the number of participants, which in turn restricted its ability to draw broader conclusions regarding identities of persons exposed to these kinds of influences and experiences.

5.4 Future Directions

Several areas for further research became evident through this study. One is an investigation into the practice of white employers of incorporating the children of their domestic workers into their households, something which seems to be becoming more common in South Africa in recent years. Their understanding of, reasons for, and expectations around this practice would provide interesting insights.

The second area worthy of investigation would be one into the perspectives of domestic workers who find themselves in a position where their child(ren) become appropriated into their employers homes and lives in significant and meaningful ways. Their thoughts, views and understanding around this process and its implications for themselves, their families, their children, and the future of their culture, would be worthwhile.

A third area of possible research would be an examination of the continued fracturing of families in post-apartheid South Africa through the practice of retaining live-in domestic workers.

Finally, investigation could be conducted into the intersection of race and class, how class can be a mediating factor in experiences of race, but can at the same time, obscure the analysis of race.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION LETTER

Dear Participant

My name is Kay Curtis and I am doing a research project for the purpose of gaining a Master's degree in Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand. The study I am doing aims to find out about the lives and selves of young adults who grew up living with their domestic worker parent(s) and who were, at the same time, in some way or other, partially raised in the homes of their parents' employers.

You are hereby invited to participate in the research project. In order to take part you will be required to agree to be interviewed at a time and place convenient to you and the researcher. The interview will be approximately an hour, to an hour and a half, long. It will be audio-recorded, transcribed and the information used to write a research report. Confidentiality will be ensured by keeping your name and personal details out of the transcript. All data received from the interview will be kept safely in a locked cupboard and/or on a password encrypted computer and will only be accessed by the researcher and her supervisor. The data will be retained by the researcher for a period of 5 years, after which it will be destroyed.

Should you agree to participate, you will be required to sign two consent forms, one agreeing to be interviewed and one agreeing to be audio-recorded (see attached).

There are no foreseeable risks involved and there will be no benefits, financial or otherwise, accrued as a result of your participation in this study. You will be free to withdraw from the study at any time. You will also be free to refuse to answer any particular question that you feel uncomfortable answering. Both these options may be chosen at any time during the interview and will not incur any penalties to yourself as a result. It is not anticipated that any harm will result from the research.

Should you feel after the interview that you would like someone to talk to about any issues that arose for you during the interview, you may consult with the researcher and she will refer you for counselling to the Emthonjeni Centre at the University of the Witwatersrand (contact number 011 717-4513); or for free counselling, to Life Line (contact numbers: Johannesburg - 011 728-1331, National share call number - 0861 322 322).

A one page summary of the results at the end of the study can be made available to you, if you so request it. The results of the study might also be published in the form of a journal article and may be presented at a conference.

You are welcome to contact me or my supervisor should you need any further information. Your participation in this study will be greatly appreciated.

Yours faithfully

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Appendix 2: **CONSENT FORM 1**

Informed consent to be interviewed

I…….. hereby give consent to be individually interviewed by Kay Curtis for the purpose of her research report for Masters studies in Psychology. I understand that:

- My participation in the study is completely voluntary.
- I may withdraw from the interview process at any time.
- I have the right to refuse to answer any questions that I do not want to answer.
- There will be no penalty incurred to myself should I choose not to participate in the study.
- There will be also no financial or other gain to me for participating in the study, and no foreseeable risks involved.
- The interview(s) will be confidential; therefore pseudo names will be used in the report.
- The researcher has the right to quote me directly in her research report, but no information that could identify me personally may be included.
- The interview(s) will be audio-taped.
- The interview will be approximately an hour, to an hour and a half long.
- All data from the interview will be kept safely in a locked cupboard to which only the researcher and her supervisor, Dr. D. Alexander, will have access.
- The data will be retained for a period of 5 years, after which it will be destroyed.
- A one page summary of the results will be made available on request.
- The results of the study may be published in a journal article and may be presented at a conference.
- It is not anticipated that any harm will result from the research.

…… ……

Signature Date

Appendix 3: **CONSENT FORM 2**

Informed consent to be recorded

I……. hereby give consent for my individual interview with Kay Curtis to be audio-recorded and for a transcript to be made thereof.

I understand that:

- The information from my audio recording and transcript may be used by the researcher, Kay Curtis, to write a research report.
- No information that may identify me will be included in the transcript or in the research report.
- Bearing in mind the above, I give permission for my direct quotes to be used in the research report.
- The recording and transcript will be kept safely in the possession of the researcher or her supervisor, Dr D. Alexander in a locked cupboard and/ or a password encrypted computer.
- The recordings may be kept for up to 5 years, after which they will be destroyed.

…… …….

Signature Date

Appendix 4: **SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW guidelines**

1) Tell me about when you first came to live with your parent's employer?
    a) How old were you?
    b) Were they living in this same house, or did you move with them?
    c) Do you have any early memories that particularly stand out for you?

2) Can you describe an average day for me of when you were growing up, as a child and then as a teenager, if anything changed?
    a) Where did you eat your meals?
    b) Where did you play?
    c) Where did you sleep?
    d) Would you describe yourself as being happy then? Please explain.
    e) What did you enjoy?
    f) What did you dislike?
    g) Did you ever go out / away with you parent's employers? Tell me about that.
    h) Did your mom go with you at those times?

3) Tell me about any ways you were raised by your parent that were different from the way you were raised in their employer's house?
    a) What sort of things were different?
    b) Were there different house rules?
    c) Were there differences in the ways you were disciplined, the employer's children?
    d) Were there different ways of eating, and differences in what you ate?
    e) Were there any differences in attitudes to homework and study?
    f) Were there any differences in attitudes to visitors / strangers?
    g) Were there any differences in demonstrations of affections?
    h) Were there different rules about dating, members of the opposite sex, marriage?

4) How do you feel this influenced you / affected you?
    a) Do you do things now mainly the way your parent does them or the way your parent's employer does them? Describe how and which things?
    b) Did you ever feel confused about these things growing up?
    c) What values and beliefs have you taken from either set of adults?

5) Tell me about how you see yourself as a young person in South Africa today?
    a) Can you describe any ways that you feel your unique upbringing has given you an advantage?
    b) Can you describe any ways that you have struggled in particular as a result of your upbringing/that it has been a disadvantage?
    c) How would you describe yourself?
    d) How do you think other people describe you?
    e) How do you feel about yourself?
    f) How do you see your life going forward?