EXPLORING THE INTERSECTION OF TEACHERS' NEGOTIATION OF PERSONAL IDENTITIES, PROFESSIONAL IDENTITIES, AND CULTURAL EXPECTATIONS

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Abstract

Teacher education and professional development programs need to help teachers develop integrated professional identities (Alsup, 2005). This study identified discourses that are important to teachers' identity development, including teachers' personal identities, professional identities, and cultural expectations of teachers. From a holistic view of teacher identities, this study explored how teachers negotiate the multiple discourses that they engage in by adopting arts-based research practices, including drawing, film elicitation, and narrative inquiry. Six pre-service and six experienced teachers were invited to draw a teacher image, to review school movies, and to recount lived experiences about negotiating personal and professional identities. This study suggests that teachers experience tensions between the dominant discourses of teaching and their personal beliefs and lived experiences. Teachers perform their personal identities to meet cultural and institutional expectations, but at the same time demonstrate a desire to resist or challenge those expectations that conflict with their personal beliefs. This study encourages teachers to learn to respect their personal selves and to question traditional assumptions about teachers instead of passively accepting them. This study suggests that teacher education and professional development programs need to pay more attention to the interrelationship between teachers' personal and professional identities and to how teachers negotiate their personal traits and beliefs and the authoritative discourses of teaching. Moreover, this study suggests that arts-based research practices can be incorporated into teacher education programs to help access the emotional struggles that teachers may have and to provide teachers with opportunities to examine both cultural representations of teachers and their personal beliefs about teaching.

Key Words: Teacher identities; Cultural expectations of teachers; Teacher education programs; Arts-based research; Pre-service teachers; Experienced teachers

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Chapter one: Introduction

This chapter gives a brief introduction to my research. I introduce the background of my study, the research problem, research purposes, and research questions. The significance of my research is also discussed.

1.1 Background of the study

In the field of teacher education, teacher identity is an important concept, and a large body of literature has acknowledged that teacher identities play an important role in teachers' professional development and teaching practice (Danielewicz, 2001; Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004; Alsup, 2005; Rodgers & Scott, 2008; Olsen, 2014). According to Danielewicz (2001), becoming a teacher does not simply mean an individual takes on a professional role; instead, it is a process of identity development. However, current teacher education programs focus more on equipping pre-service teachers with learning theories and teaching skills than helping them build their professional identities (Alsup, 2005). Teachers often struggle with the construction of their professional identities and are not sure how to properly deal with their personal and professional selves (Alsup, 2005).

In order to better understand the development of teacher identities, Alsup (2005) creates "a theory about the intersection of various types of discourse within the process of professional identity development," which is named "borderland discourse" (p. 4-5). She points out that becoming a teacher means to engage in different types of discourse, such as the discourse of cultural definitions of teachers, the discourse of experiences at the workplace, and the discourse of personal lives. She defines borderland discourse as the space "at the borders between the established, status quo

discourse and personal, seemingly conflicting discourses" (Alsup, 2005, p. 39). Alsup's (2005) theory shifts attention to the in-between ground where teachers negotiate their multiple identity positions and to the tensions and conflicts that may emerge in the negotiation process.

In the literature, the tensions that teachers encounter when developing their professional identities have been frequently discussed. One of the main tensions is between teachers' personal and professional selves. This tension occurs when teachers' personal selves conflict with their professional identities and they do not want to give up their personal beliefs (Alsup, 2005). Another tension is between teachers' preconceptions of teaching and their teaching practices in school settings. Pre-service teachers often have preconceptions of teachers and teaching before they begin their teaching career; however, their initial assumptions of teaching are often shattered by the realities of teaching in real school settings (Cole & Knowles, 1993). Pre-service teachers also experience the tension between what they have learned in university and the reality of teaching practices in schools (Alsup, 2005). They may get frustrated when the pedagogical approaches that they have learned at university do not work successfully in school settings. Some of them have to give up their ideal pedagogical approaches and "revert to lifesaving measures that simply keep them afloat in the classroom, such as traditional teacher-centered methods of lecture and closed questioning" (Alsup, 2005, p. 21). The tensions discussed above destabilize the modernist notion of identity, and show that the construction of teacher identities is complex and never without contradictions.

Another important aspect that complicates the development of teacher identities is the cultural expectations that people may hold of teachers. According to Britzman

(2003), "learning to teach is individually experienced and hence may be viewed as individually determined" (p. 31), but in fact it is inevitably shaped by social and cultural factors. The impacts of cultural expectations on teachers are very subtle, but powerful. Teachers are often aware of these cultural scripts and do everything to meet the "expectations of what teachers are 'supposed' to look like and do" (Weber & Mitchell, 1995, p. 2). However, many teachers may not be aware that they can be constrained by cultural definitions of teachers as well. Stereotypes and cultural myths about teachers in society tend to dominate people's thinking about what it means to be a teacher, thus excluding alternative possibilities of being a teacher. Although some previous studies recognized social and cultural influences on teacher identities (Weber & Mitchell, 1995; Reynolds, 1996; Britzman, 2003; Alsup, 2005; Olsen, 2014), only a few of them focus on the cultural expectations placed on teachers and how these expectations impact teachers' professional learning and growth. One of the studies addressing cultural expectations of teachers is Britzman (2003), which reveals three main cultural myths that dominate people's thinking about being a teacher, including *everything depends on the teacher*, *the teacher is the expert*, and *teachers are self-made*. Britzman (2003) argues that these three cultural myths individualize the teaching process and allow student teachers to blame themselves rather than reflect upon social and cultural elements when they face difficulties in teaching. Reynolds (1996) addresses the inconsistency between the "culture scripts" and the "workplace landscapes" of teachers (p. 69). She suggests that teachers, like everyone else, construct themselves in ways that are largely influenced by the dominant culture which surrounds them; however, "extended exposure to a variety of school landscapes confused and conflicted new teachers regarding a number of issues" and many of them begin to "question previously

held beliefs about themselves and about their students" (p. 75). Teachers need to be provided with more opportunities to critically examine the impact of cultural expectations on them.

1.2 The problem statement

Based on previous studies (Alsup, 2005; Britzman, 2003; Reynolds, 1996; Weber & Mitchell, 1995), I identify three discourses that are key to teachers' identity development: teachers' personal identities, professional identities, and cultural expectations of teachers. These three discourses are interconnected with each other, but may also contradict each other. For many teachers, these three discourses do not completely coincide with each other. Teachers not only encounter the tensions between their personal and professional subjectivities, but also experience self-doubts and frustrations when they are not able to meet cultural expectations. Many teachers "find it hard to actually take on [a scripted identity] and simultaneously be true to themselves—they may result in tension, frustration, and sometimes abandonment of the profession" (Alsup, 2005, p. 6). How teachers negotiate their personal identities, professional identities, and cultural expectations is a problem that needs to be addressed in educational research.

This study is particularly concerned with how teachers negotiate their personal and professional identities within and against cultural expectations of being a teacher. Based on the postmodern theories of discourse (Foucault, 1969), representation (Hall, 1997a), and the performativity of identities (Butler, 1988), cultural expectations and dominant presentations of teachers in society play an important role in our understanding of what it means to be a teacher. However, this does not mean that the

dominant representations of teachers are fixed. Instead, they can be resisted or challenged by individuals. According to Greene (1995), there have been historical tensions between dominant discourses and lived experiences, between authoritative perspectives and individual perspectives, as well as between conformity and social change. Education is no exception. Teachers usually experience tension betw een "individual desires to rebel and collective pressures to conform" (Weber & Mitchel, 1995, p. 61). How teachers perceive and deal with the tensions between personal perspectives and cultural expectations is a problem that is addressed in this study.

According to Alsup (2005), teacher education programs and professional development programs mainly focus on equipping teachers with disciplinary content and teaching skills How teachers deal with the relationships among personal identities, professional identities, and cultural expectations of teachers has barely been addressed. Pre-service teachers may not be able to make a successful transition to professional teachers if they do not know how to navigate the inconsistencies among their personal identities, professional identities, and cultural expectations. It is important for both teacher education programs and professional development programs to adopt a holistic understanding of teacher identities.

1.3 The purpose statement

The purpose of the research is to explore the intersection of teachers' negotiation of their personal identities, their professional identities, and cultural expectations by adopting arts-based research practices. Since the personal identities, professional identities, and cultural definitions of teachers do not completely coincide with or are not completely separate from each other, this research aims to address both the

connections and contradictions among these three types of discourses. This study seeks to explore how teachers deal with the inconsistencies among their personal identities, their professional identities, and cultural expectations. The impacts of cultural expectations on teachers are powerful, but this has been largely neglected in previous studies (e.g. Beijaard et al., 2004; Kim & Greene, 2011). This study pays special attention to teachers' perceptions of the cultural expectations and how they negotiate their identities within and against cultural expectations. Since arts-based research practices are employed, this study also aims to highlight the possibilities of using the arts to enhance teacher education programs. Since arts-based research can provide a unique perspective and helps people notice the taken-for-granted, the use of arts-based research practices in this study helps uncover the cultural expectations of teachers.

1.4 Research questions

1. What are teachers' perceptions of the connections among their personal identities, their professional identities, and cultural expectations of teachers?

2. How do teachers perceive and deal with the inconsistencies among their personal identities, professional identities, and cultural expectations of teachers?

3. What are teachers' perceptions of cultural expectations of being a teacher?

4. How do teachers negotiate their identities within and against cultural expectations of being a teacher?

5. What is the potential of arts-based research practices in teacher education programs to help teachers develop their identities?

1.5 Significance of the research

Since this study focuses on the intersection of teachers' negotiation of different discourses instead of one single discourse, this study helps promote a holistic understanding of teacher identities. Taking a holistic understanding of teacher identities helps address teachers' lived experiences, emotions, and the physical embodiment of teacher identities; and helps make teachers' voices heard. Many previous studies are in favour of a holistic view of teacher identities (Danielewicz, 2001; Rodgers & Scott, 2008; Olsen, 2014). However, only a few researchers have conducted studies on the intersection of teachers' multiple identity positions. For instance, Alsup (2005) addresses the intersection between teachers' personal and professional identities. Reynolds (1996) reveals the inconsistency between the "culture scripts" and the "workplace landscapes" of teachers (p. 69). My research aims to provide insight into teachers' negotiation of their multiple senses of self. My study helps raise teachers' awareness of the multiple discourses that they are engaging in, and encourages teachers to negotiate their multiple and even conflicting identity positions instead of adopting single identity position. Moreover, my study helps shift the discourse of teacher education from a discourse that isolates teachers' professional identities into one that addresses the connections and contradictions among teachers' personal identities, professional identities, and cultural expectations.

In addition, my study helps to deconstruct prevailing cultural expectations and encourages teachers to critically examine these cultural expectations. Weber and

Mitchell (1995) emphasize the importance of popular culture and cultural stereotypes to teacher's work and professional identities. Through engaging teachers in drawing, their study uncovers some major stereotypical images of teachers. However, Weber and Mitchell conducted their research more than twenty years ago, and it is unclear whether the images and stereotypes of teachers have changed or not during the past two decades. It has also been over twenty years since Britzman (1991) first pointed out the three cultural myths that dominated people's thinking about being a teacher: a) everything depends on the teacher, b) the teacher is the expert, and c) teachers are self-made. It is unclear whether these three cultural myths still exist in the twenty-first century. This study reveals teachers' current perceptions of cultural expectations placed on them and encourages teachers to resist and challenge dominant and over-simplified representations of teachers in popular culture.

This study also serves as an exploration of using innovative arts-based research practices to study teacher identities and to enhance teacher education programs. In recent years arts-based research practices, such as narrative writing, photography, and drawing, have been used in the field of education. However, there are still many more untapped possibilities of using the arts in educational research. Arts-based research practices can open up new ways of seeing the world and allow us to access multiple meanings and voices (Cahnmann-Taylor, 2008; Leavy, 2009, 2018). They are also believed to be highly effective for investigating peoples' emotional experiences because the arts are emotionally evocative (Leavy, 2009, 2018).

There are several reasons for adopting arts-based research practices in this study. First, the use of arts-based research practices helps uncover the cultural expectations of teachers and unsettle the dominant stereotypes of teachers. Leavy (2018) suggests that

one of the strengths of arts-based research is to "unsettle stereotypes, challenge dominant ideologies, and include marginalized voices and perspectives" (p. 10). Inviting teachers to draw a teacher (any teacher) helps reveal how teacher images may be viewed in society. It also challenges prevailing narratives of teachers by defamiliarizing dominant images of teachers and making alternative images of teachers familiar. Second, the use of arts-based research practices allows me to integrate both image and text, thus gaining a holistic understanding of my research topic. Irwin (2004) highlights that image and text do not duplicate one another; instead, they complement, refute, or enhance one another. Third, arts-based research practices can generate new insights and raise new questions about teacher identities and teachers' professional development. For instance, arts-based research practices can help disrupt body/mind dualism and shift our attention to the physical embodiment of teachers' professional identities that Alsup (2005) suggests. Fourth, compared to other traditional research approaches, arts-based research can be a more useful approach to evoke emotional responses from teachers (Leavy, 2009, 2018). Fifth, through integrating arts-based research practices into my study, the findings of the study are perhaps more understandable and accessible to public audiences, teachers, and teacher educators. As Leavy (2018) suggests, arts-based research is "uniquely capable of producing public scholarship and correspondingly conducting research that is useful" (p. 10).

1.6 Summary

According to Danielewicz (2001), becoming a teacher is a process of identity development. However, previous research on teacher identities and teacher education programs tend to separate teachers' professional identities from other related aspects.

Informed by Alsup's (2005) theory of borderland discourse, this study recognizes that teachers engage in multiple discourses when developing their professional identities. This study identifies three discourses that are key to teachers' identity development, including teachers' personal identities, professional identities, and cultural expectations of teachers. Through adopting arts-based research practices, this study aims to explore the intersection of teachers' negotiation of these three discourses. The research also puts a special focus on teachers' perceptions of cultural expectations of teachers, which has been largely overlooked in previous studies. This study helps promote a holistic view of teacher identities, encourages teachers to critically examine the dominant representations of teachers, and provides insights into the use of arts-based research practices to enhance teachers' professional development.

Chapter two: The review of literature

This chapter provides a review of the literature about teacher identities and cultural expectations of teachers. In the first section, I present some of the postmodern assumptions on teacher identities, and illustrate the reasons why my study focuses on teachers' negotiation of their multiple identity positions. In the second section, I draw attention to cultural expectations of teachers and discuss the impacts of those expectations on teachers.

2.1 Teachers' negotiation of multiple identity positions

Since I position myself within a postmodern view of teacher identities, I present some of the postmodern assumptions about teacher identities in this section. I also illustrate the reasons why my study focuses on teachers' negotiation of their multiple identity positions.

2.1.1 Postmodern assumptions of teacher identities

The concept of identities is complex and multifaceted, and there are various conceptualizations of identities. More than 40 years ago, Epstein (1978), for example, suggested that identity "represents the process by which the person seeks to integrate his various statuses and roles, as well as his diverse experiences, into a coherent image of self" (p. 101). Danielewicz (2001) defines identity as "our understanding of who we are and of who we think other people are" (p. 10), which implies that identities are the ways we relate to and distinguish ourselves in interactions with other people around us. Gee (2000/2001) recognizes the historical, institutional, and sociocultural forces on people's understanding of who they are, defining identity as "being recognized as a certain 'kind of person,' in a given context" (p. 99).

From a modernist view, identity is a fixed and completed condition and each person has one single identity. Erikson's (1959/1980) psychosocial developmental theory is an example of modernist approaches to identity, and his studies assume that each teacher has to pass from one stage to another until an identity is fully achieved (as cited in Breen, 2014). However, this view of identity has rarely been seen in the contemporary literature on teacher education. In recent decades, a large number of studies on teacher identities have recognized that teacher identities are unstable, constantly evolving, never-completed, and multiple (Gee, 2000/2001; Danielewicz, 2001; Alsup, 2005; Rodgers & Scott, 2008). According to Breen (2014), "postmodern identity theories reject linear—and even cyclical or recursive—models of psychologists such as Erikson (1959/1980) and accept more fragmented and discursive processes" (p. 27). I position myself within a postmodern perspective that views identities as dynamic, ongoing, discursive, and complex processes that involve constant conflicts and negotiation.

According to Michel Foucault's theory of discourse, identities are produced within discourses that define who we are and what we should do, and his work encourages us to think about the connections among power, knowledge, and identities (Longhurst, Smith, Bagnall, Crawford, Ogborn, Baldwin & McCracken, 2008). Foucault defined discourse as "an entity of sequences of signs in that they are enouncements (énoncés)" (Foucault, 1969, p. 141). These enouncements or statements construct a particular form of knowledge. Through discourse, people give the world meaning and come to understand it. However, discourse simultaneously allows and limits the possibilities of understanding the world. Discourse defines, allows, and even limits what can be said and who occupies particular positions. For Foucault, discourse

refers to "ways of constituting knowledge, together with the social practices, forms of subjectivity and power relations which inhere in such knowledges and relations between them" (Weedon, 1987, p. 108). A discourse operates "as a set of 'rules' (formal or informal, acknowledged or unacknowledged) which determine the sorts of statements that can be made" (Longhurst et al., 2008, p. 21). For example, "the 'moon is made of blue cheese' is not a statement that can be made within a scientific discourse, but it can within a poetic one" (Longhurst et al., 2008, p. 21). The material world only takes on its meaning within discourse, and discourse regulates what can and cannot be said within certain historical and cultural contexts. Based on Foucault's theory of discourse, there is nothing essential about what it means to be a teacher. In different discourses, there are different meanings attached to teachers, and some discourses become dominant discourses that are privileged over others. Dominant discourses of teaching determine what can or cannot be said or done in the school context. Foucault's theory of discourse suggests that "the ways in which discourse constitutes the minds and bodies of individuals is always part of a wider network of power relations, often with institutional bases" (Weedon, 1987, p. 108). However, it is possible that dominant discourses can be challenged or resisted. According to Longhurst et al. (2008), "one of Foucault's fundamental messages was that power always brings forth opposition and resistance to its effects" (p. 170). In this regard, teachers do not always need to conform to the social norms and institutional expectations. There is a possibility that teachers might refuse to accept the established norms and rules of schools.

Antonio Gramsci's (1971) idea of hegemony is another way of conceptualizing the connection between teachers and power relations. In contrast to domination that refers to ruling the society by direct military force, hegemony refers to "the organization

of consent based upon establishing the legitimacy of leadership and developing shared ideas, values, beliefs and meanings—a shared culture" (Longhurst et al., 2008, p. 73). However, these shared ideas, values, beliefs and meanings only act in the interests of the ruling groups (Longhurst et al., 2008). Gramsci (1971) suggests that "the State is the entire complex of practical and theoretical activities with which the ruling class not only justifies and maintains its dominance, but manages to win the active consent of those over whom it rules" (p. 244). Unlike Marxist theories of ideology that suggest a society's dominant ideology is rooted in economic class relations, Gramsci regarded culture and meaning as "basic to the formation of all social relations rather than something 'added on', the icing on the economic cake" (Longhurst et al., 2008, p. 73). For example, racism is one of the hegemonic ideologies used to "legitimate the social divisions and organisation of society" (Longhurst et al., 2008, p. 73). In terms of education, teachers have also been influenced by cultural hegemony. According to Britzman (2003), "learning to teach is experienced in a context characterized by an unequal distribution of power that acts to constrict people's lives" (p. 33). The context of teaching is never neutral; instead, it is "an ideological context that privileges the interests, values, and practices necessary to maintain the status quo, and ironically, the powerlessness of teachers" (Britzman, 2003, p. 33). Gramsci suggests that hegemony is an ever-changing process, and it is possible that low-class members challenge the existing ruling class by developing their own counter-hegemony (Longhurst et al., 2008). In other words, it is possible for teachers to challenge authority by developing their own counter-hegemony. For example, it is possible for teachers to unsettle stereotypes of how teachers should dress by dressing in their preferred ways and making alternative styles more acceptable in the school environment.

From a postmodern perspective, identities can also be regarded as performances. This idea suggests that identities do not exist independently from what people do. Instead, people are able to decide how to "perform" their identities according to different contexts (Longhurst et al., 2008). On the one hand, people are able to "actively construct their identities through those performances and the props (clothes, hair, make-up) that support them;" on the other hand, those performances can be "shaped (consciously and unconsciously) by the expectations of other people and by the settings in which the performances take place" (Longhurst et al., 2008, p. 132). More than a quarter of a century ago, the work of Judith Butler highlights that gender and sexuality can be understood in terms of performativity. Butler (1990) argues that "there is no original gender identity behind the expressions of gender" (p. 25) because gender is culturally constructed and performatively constituted. In other words, people perform masculinity or femininity based on cultural scripts of what males and females are supposed to be. The differences between males and females, Butler suggests, are "the effects of the disciplining of a multiplicity of bodies into a binary division based on performative styles" (as cited in Longhurst et al., 2008, p. 133). Butler disagrees with the idea that "there is a foundational, natural sex upon which gender identity is constructed" (as cited in Longhurst et al., 2008, p. 82). Butler (1990) argues that gender itself can be "a free-floating artifice, with the consequence that *man* and *masculine* might just as easily signify a female body as a male one, and *woman* and *feminine* a male body as easily as a female one" (p. 6). However, it does not mean that all gendered possibilities are open since "a restrictive discourse on gender that insists on the binary of man and woman as the exclusive way to understand the gender field performs a regulatory operation of power that naturalizes the hegemonic instance and forecloses

the thinkability of its disruption" (Butler, 2004, p. 43). In terms of sexuality, Butler argues that both heterosexual and queer identities are performances, and the only difference between them is that heterosexual identities have been performed repeatedly and people have taken them as natural (Longhurst et al., 2008). Butler (1993) argues that "gender is a kind of imitation for which there is no original" and "the 'reality' of heterosexual identities is performatively constituted through an imitation that sets itself up as the origin and the ground of all imitations" (p. 313). However, the concept of "origin" is problematic since "how can something operate as an origin if there are no secondary consequences which retrospectively confirm the originality of that origin?" (Butler, 1993, p. 313). In this sense, the originality of heterosexuality can simply be an illusion. Critics of Butler's ideas have argued that the idea of performativity downplays the powerful social forces that shape and control us to a certain degree, and this idea might be more suitable for gender identities and sexual orientations than for "identities constructed by class, 'race' or disability" (Longhurst et al., 2008, p. 142). However, I believe that it is suitable to regard teacher identities as performances based on cultural expectations. Teachers are often aware of the cultural expectations that people hold of them and they consciously and unconsciously act in certain ways to achieve those expectations. It is also possible that teachers fail to meet cultural expectations or are not willing to accept the existing norms of schools.

Rodgers and Scott (2008) list four postmodern assumptions about identities, and these assumptions are consistent with many other studies of teacher identities. The first assumption they suggest is that identities are "dependent upon and formed within multiple contexts which bring social, cultural, political, and historical forces to bear upon that formation" (p. 733). In the literature on teacher identities, a number of studies

have addressed the importance of social, cultural, and political contexts in the construction of teacher identities. For example, Cooper and Olson (1996) point out that teacher identities are constructed and reconstructed through "historical, sociological, psychological and cultural influences" (p. 78). The second assumption that Rodgers and Scott (2008) reveal is that teacher identities are "formed in relationship with others and involves emotions" (p. 733). As Alsup (2005) argues, teacher identity does not exist in isolation. The interactions that teachers have with others is a crucial aspect in the development of their professional identities. Danielewicz (2001) also suggests that creating identities is not an individual task, but involves social interactions with others. Rodgers and Scott (2008) cited Zembylas (2002, 2004) that teachers are expected to know which emotions are appropriate within schools and which emotions are not allowed. Rodgers and Scott's third assumption about identities is that teacher identities are multiple and shifting, which is widely recognized in the literature on teacher identities. A large number of studies have recognized that teacher identities are multiple and never fixed (Gee, 2000/2001; Danielewicz, 2001; Alsup, 2005; Beijaard et al., 2004). The last assumption is that identities involve "the construction and reconstruction of meaning through stories over time" (Rodgers & Scott, 2008, p. 733). Rodgers and Scott (2008) suggest that identity is "both interpreted and constructed through the stories that one tells oneself and that others tell" (p. 737). A study by Soreide (2006) also discusses how teacher identities can be narratively constructed and understood.

I have discussed several postmodern perspectives for understanding teacher identities, including Foucault's discourse theory, Gramsci's theory of hegemony, Butler's theory about the performativity of identities, and Rodgers and Scott's four

postmodern assumptions on identities. These postmodern perspectives all capture the complex and fluid nature of identities. In particular, Foucault's discourse theory, Gramsci's theory of hegemony, and Butler's theory about the performativity of identities reveal that teachers have to deal with the tension between the dominant discourses of being a teacher and their lived experiences. Drawing on those theories, I regard the development of teacher identities as complex and dynamic processes that involve constant conflicts and negotiation.

2.1.2 Alsup's theory of "borderland discourse"

My research idea is largely informed by Alsup's theory of "borderland discourse," which is one of the few theories addressing the intersection of teachers' multiple, even conflicting identity positions. Alsup (2005) suggests that "borderland discourse" is the in-between ground where teachers are able to combine their multiple identity positions. Through engaging in this transformative space, pre-service teachers will learn to respect their personal identities while taking on the role of teacher and develop a better understanding of "how to move from being students to being teachers" (Alsup, 2005, p. 37). Drawing on the experiences of six pre-service teachers, Alsup (2005) suggests that borderland discourse "occurred when they (a) did not completely repudiate their own discourses and (b) accepted (in perhaps modified form) some of the discourses of the 'other,' or of the educational community they were entering as young professionals" (p. 9).

The notion of borderland discourse not only reflects a holistic and integrated view of teacher identity, but also reveals the tensions that teachers struggle with when developing their identities. Alsup (2005) points out three main tensions that pre-service

teachers usually experience: the tension between teachers' personal beliefs and their perception of professional expectations; the tension between what teachers have learned about teaching in university and their teaching practices in secondary schools; and the tension between feeling like a student and feeling like a teacher. It is important for teachers to accept the contradictory realities of learning to teach and to engage in an integrative discourse where they negotiate these tensions. Alsup (2005) concludes that:

> When a new teacher can rest in the borderland between multiple subjectivities and express him- or herself through various discourses, that teacher is beginning to understand how such multiplicity, such ambiguity, can be acceptable, comfortable, and even essential to his or her professional identity. (p. 46)

Although Alsup (2005) recognizes the impact of cultural expectations on teachers, her study does not closely examine the participants' perceptions of the cultural expectation of teachers and how the participants negotiate their identities within and against those cultural expectations. My study explores borderland discourse with a particular focus on the cultural expectations of teachers. In my study, I regard teachers' personal identities, professional identities, and cultural expectations of teachers as three interconnected discourses. The extra attention to cultural expectations of teachers in my study helps enrich Alsup's (2005) theories of "borderland discourse" and encourages teachers to critically examine cultural expectations. Moreover, the participants of Alsup's study (2005) are limited to pre-service teachers. However, teaching is a life-long learning process. My study invited both pre-service and experienced teachers and explored how they negotiated their personal identities, professional identities, and cultural expectations.

2.1.3 The tension between teachers' personal and professional identities

From a holistic understanding of teacher identities, the identity development of teachers involves both teachers' personal and professional selves. Many teachers believe that they have to hide or give up their personal selves in order to take on a professional role. However, they are not aware that "this suppression of personal identity is only a sham, a façade, because personal subjectivities and ideologies do not disappear; they simply remain, and even fester, as sites of tension and discomfort" (Alsup, 2005, p. 41). Becoming a teacher does not mean losing one's personal self. Instead, teachers need to learn to transform themselves by integrating their personal and professional selves.

The problem may reside in the fact that teachers' personal selves may not be consistent with their perceptions of professional expectations and they may not know how to navigate the inconsistencies between personal and professional identities. Alsup (2005) interviewed six pre-service teachers, and two of them experienced a great deal of tension between their personal and professional selves. One of the pre-service teachers' academic interests were women's literature and feminist theory. However, she could not introduce these topics to her students since these topics were restricted in secondary school curricula. In addition, she was afraid that she would not fit the stereotypical image of teacher because of her identity as a lesbian. Another pre-service teacher was worried about balancing her role as an attentive mother and as a secondary teacher. Moreover, she had her own beliefs about education, which were largely different from the beliefs of public schools. Therefore, she chose to apply to graduate school instead of finding a teaching job right after graduation. These two pre-service teachers decided not to become teachers after graduation, because they were not able to

"create and express the necessary borderland discourse" to solve the conflicts that they face (Alsup, 2005, p. 71).

The tension between teachers' personal and professional identities can also be regarded as the tension between inner desires and outer conditions. For many teachers, their inner desires are often suppressed by the external forces, such as institutional norms and cultural expectations. They are not willing to give up their personal identities, but they may have to in order to survive within the school context. Danielewicz (2001) points out that teacher identities are "the result of dynamic interplay between discursive processes that are internal (to the individual) and external (involving everyone else)" (p. 11). Teachers have some degree of freedom to follow their inner desires and teach in their preferred ways, but there are also "inescapable constraints operating to construct individuals as teachers according to positions defined by the institution of school" (p. 85). These constraints can vary from school to school. Some teachers have a fair amount of freedom, others have almost none. One of Danielewicz's (2001) participants, Elizabeth, expressed her difficulties in resisting the status quo of the institution of school and becoming the teacher she wanted to be. She hoped that she could teach according to her own teaching beliefs and preferences. However, achieving this goal was not easy for her. Danielewicz (2001) suggests that "there are rewards (in the form of resources, support, acclaim, recognition) for occupying positions in authorized, typical, or expected ways," and there are penalties for resisting institutional norms (p. 87). Elizabeth described herself as a salmon, swimming upstream against the current and she believed that what she had done was worthwhile. She "[privileged] the autonomy of inner self over and above accommodating one's desires relative to external conditions as a better method for becoming a teacher" (p. 85). However, she had to

admit that her teaching practicum made her become aware of these rewards and penalties associated with being a teacher, and she began to realize that it is not easy for an individual to challenge the status quo. Similar to Alsup's (2005) notion of borderland discourse, Danielewicz (2001) regards becoming a teacher as the process of negotiation at the boundaries where inner desires and outer conditions meet.

My study aims to further explore how pre-service and experienced teachers perceive and deal with the inconsistencies between their personal and professional identities as well as between their inner desires and outer conditions. Since teaching is an emotional experience, my study pays extra attention to the emotional world of teachers, which has often been neglected, and seeks to know how teachers are emotionally affected by the inconsistencies between their personal and professional identities.

2.1.4 The tension between cultural expectations of teachers and teachers' lived experiences

There is also a tension between cultural expectations of teachers and teachers' lived experiences. What it means to be a teacher is often culturally defined, but those cultural expectations of teachers may differ from teachers' lived experiences. Teachers tend to see their "faults" as being inconsistent with the cultural expectations of teachers, and they tend to leave the profession when they feel the tensions between their personal beliefs and the cultural scripts of teacher are too overwhelming (Alsup, 2005). Cole and Knowles (1993) is one of the studies focusing on the discrepancies between pre-service teachers' prior expectations of teaching and their actual field experience. The article suggests that pre-service teachers usually have preconceptions of teachers and teaching

before entering the profession, but their idealized images and assumptions about teaching might "shatter against the hard realities and complexities of schools, classrooms, and day-to-day teaching" and their mis-matched expectations of teaching may even lead to their withdrawal from teacher education programs (Cole & Knowles, 1993, p. 459).

According to Alsup (2005), the development of teacher identity can be regarded as the negotiation and integration of multiple identity positions, and cultural expectations of teachers can complicate this negotiation. Alsup (2005) highlights that there are stereotypical expectations of teachers "reproduced and disseminated through movies, TV shows, books, [and] visual images" (p. 6), and some teachers do not see them as problematic. Pre-service teachers may enter the field of education partly because they are attracted by these idealized images of teachers; however, once they become teachers, some teachers find it difficult to fit into the expected role of teachers. In addition, pervasive cultural scripts relating to teachers can also make it difficult for teachers who have marginalized status in society. For example, according to Alsup (2005), "if a new teacher is not a member of the middle class, White, female, and heterosexual, the difficulty of the transition is exaggerated" (p. 7). I agree with Alsup (2005) that we need to see the cultural expectations of teachers as problematic. We need to deconstruct the prevailing cultural expectations of teachers and to explore how teachers deal with the tension between cultural definitions of teachers and their lived experiences.

It is also important for pre-service teachers to understand that they may experience conflicts and struggles when "they work to reconcile long-held teaching expectations with current workplace realities and merge personal self-understandings

with their developing professional identities" (Olsen, 2014, p. 90-91). When teacher educators address the conflicts that may exist in teacher development, "they can better support beginning teachers to be patient, to understand that these conflicts are common but get worked out and to view teaching dilemmas not as problems to be solved but as tensions to negotiate" (Olsen, 2014, p. 91). Since previous studies have shown the powerful impact of cultural definitions on teachers and the importance of seeing cultural expectations of teachers as problematic (Weber & Mitchell, 1995; Britzman; 2003; Alsup, 2005), my study aims to provide both pre-service and in-service teachers the opportunity to critically examine cultural expectations of teachers. Through the use of arts-based research practices, such as drawing and movie-elicitation, this study engaged teachers in discussing the prevailing cultural expectations of teachers and how they negotiated within and against those cultural expectations.

2.1.5 Summary

From a postmodern view of teacher identities, there are two premises for my study: 1) the development of teacher identities is never without tensions and contradictions; 2) teachers need to negotiate their multiple, even conflicting identity positions in the process of learning to teach. Alsup's (2005) notion of borderland discourse draws attention to the integrative discourses where teachers negotiate their multiple identity positions and to the tensions and conflicts that may emerge in the negotiation process. There are two main tensions that teachers struggle with: the tension between teachers' personal and professional identities and the tension between cultural expectations of teachers and teachers' lived experiences. My research recognizes both the connections and contradictions among teachers' personal identities, professional

identities, and cultural expectations, and explores how teachers negotiate their identities in these three discourses. This study helps enrich Alsup (2005)'s theories of "borderland discourse" by paying special attention to the cultural expectations of teachers and the emotional world of teachers.

2.2 Cultural expectations of teachers

Since one of the research purposes is to explore how teachers negotiate their identities within and against cultural expectations of teachers, this section presents some of the cultural myths and stereotypical images of teachers, and then illustrates the impacts of cultural expectations on teachers' identity development and how popular culture contributes to teachers' understanding of their identities and work.

2.2.1 Cultural expectations and cultural myths of teachers

In the literature, a large body of research focuses on teachers' expectations of their students and how these expectations affect students' learning and achievement (e.g. Mendels & Flanders, 1973; Rubie-Davies, Peterson, Irving, Widdowson, & Dixon, 2010; Sorhagen, 2013); however, there are only a few studies focusing on the expectations that people hold of teachers and how these expectations impact teachers' professional learning and growth. Weber and Mitchell's studies (1995, 1996a, 1996b) address cultural expectations of teachers. Through collecting a number of drawings of teachers from students, pre-service teachers, and experienced teachers, Weber and Mitchell's studies (1995, 1996a, 1996b) revealed some stereotypical expectations about school teachers, such as stereotypes about teachers' appearance, dress, race, and gender. For example, this is how a student teacher described her drawing in Weber and

Mitchell's (1995) study: "I drew my teacher very traditionally with glasses, conservative clothing, in front of a chalkboard, [and as] a woman" (p. 29). The drawings that Weber and Mitchell collected indicate that many students and pre-service teachers portrayed teachers "as traditional, usually pleasant, female figures of authority" (Weber & Mitchell, 1996a, p. 122). They suggest that the images of teachers and teaching portrayed in the drawings might be influenced by popular culture and people's past experiences, especially their schooling experiences.

A major stereotypical expectation of teachers uncovered in their studies relates to gender. According to Weber and Mitchell (1995), the majority of school teachers portrayed in the drawings were female, and even a male beginning teacher thought that he might have originally drawn a woman because his unconscious assumption is that a teacher is a woman. The assumption that teaching is a female profession probably comes from people's own school experiences, because "the majority of primary and elementary teachers in North America are women" (Gaskell & McLaren, 1987, as cited in Weber & Mitchell, 1995, p. 44). Moreover, Britzman (2003) suggests that the desired characteristics of teachers are often associated with the images of "good" women, such as "self-sacrificing, kind, overworked, underpaid, and holding an unlimited reservoir of patience" (p. 28). The nurturing image that people commonly hold of teachers may, in turn, contribute to the reality that there are few men planning to teach in primary and elementary schools.

Another cultural expectation uncovered in their studies is that teachers are expected to control the class and maintain order as figures of authority. The drawings of teachers include teachers' desks with neat piles of books and paper, a chalkboard at the front of the classroom, and lists of classroom rules (Weber & Mitchell, 1995). These

"cultural markers of schooling" actually "symbolize teacher authority and control" (Weber & Mitchell, 1995, p. 47). This image of the teacher also matches one of the cultural myths that Britzman (1991) points out, which is that everything depends on teachers and they have to individually control their classes and exert authority. This cultural myth suggests that without the ability to control the whole class, teachers are less likely to be considered "good" teachers.

There are also stereotypical expectations about what teachers are supposed to look like. In some people's minds, dressing neatly and professionally is very important for teachers, because teachers' clothing is "not only a means of identifying oneself as teacher, but it also a pedagogical strategy in itself, a means of commanding respect and order, of establishing a serious working atmosphere, and of exerting control" (Weber & Mitchell, 1995, p. 64). The students' first impression of their teachers might also be based on the appearance and dress of their teachers. Although what teachers wear can be shaped by their own personalities, Weber and Mitchell (1995) indicate that teachers are usually not expected to dress too attractively or unconventionally; instead, they "are supposed to reflect prevailing social standards of middle class respectability" (p. 59). However, not every teacher can meet the expectations of teachers' appearance and dressing. Novice teachers feel the pressure to sacrifice their personal identities in order to create an expected teacher appearance for other people to look at (Howard & Lloyd, 2012).

The impacts of cultural expectations on teachers are profound. Although many teachers attempt to combat the stereotypes that the public holds of teachers, it is hard for them to completely remove those traditional images since those images are deeply rooted in their childhood experiences and cultural backgrounds (Weber & Mitchell,

1995). The contradiction between images from the past and those of the present might create "an uncomfortable dilemma or dissonance in teachers' minds" (Weber and Mitchell, 1995, p. 45). Britzman (1986, 1991, 2003) is another scholar who addresses the cultural expectations of teachers. She points out that the model of teacher education has mainly focused on a joint effort between universities and student teachers themselves, but has "[ignored] the role of the social and political context of teacher education" (Britzman, 1986, p. 442). As discussed earlier, Britzman (1991, 2003) identifies three cultural myths that dominate people's thinking about being a teacher. They include "everything depends on the teacher; the teacher is the expert; and teachers are self-made" (Britzman, 2003, p. 223). Under the myth that everything depends on the teacher, teachers are supposed to individually control their classes, control the students, and control students' learning. However, within the push to control everything, teachers have less power to explore the unknown with students and the pedagogy is reduced to instilling knowledge only. In fact, not everything depends upon the teacher and teaching is not "a unitary and noncontradictory activity" (p. 226). Student teachers tend to regard the teacher's identity as either tyrant or comrade. However, this dichotomous understanding of teacher's identity prevents them from considering the "multiplicity of identities that they in fact embodied and that the contexts elicited" (p. 226). The second myth, the teacher as expert, makes student teachers feel that they have to know everything. They are under pressure from themselves, their students or other teachers. Not knowing and uncertainty makes some teachers feel guilty and also becomes a threat to teachers' authority. Moreover, this cultural myth regards the teacher as the source of knowledge and as someone who has nothing else to learn. As a result, the status quo is never challenged and "the

understanding that all knowledge is a construct and can thus be deconstructed and transformed by the knower is disregarded" (p. 229). The third myth that teachers are self-made makes teacher education and educational theory irrelevant. Under this cultural myth, teachers are supposed to learn to teach based on their own experience and to develop their own teaching styles based on their own personality. From this point of view, student teachers do not have much to rely on and teacher style becomes "an individually determined product" instead of "a dialogic dynamic among the teacher, the students, the curriculum, the knowledge constructed in exchange, and the discursive practices that make pedagogy intelligible" (p. 232). Overall, the cultural myths of the autonomous, self-made, and expert teacher are problematic since they largely individualize the social process of teaching, and "provide a semblance of order, control, and certainty in the face of the uncertainty and vulnerability of the teacher's world" (p. 222). Student teachers tend to blame themselves rather than reflect upon the social and cultural elements when facing any difficulties in teaching. A better understanding of social and cultural expectations of teachers and teaching might help ease pre-service teachers' private struggles as they learn to teach.

Cultural expectations of teachers can also be understood based on the concept of representation that Stuart Hall (1997a) proposes. According to Hall (1997a), representation is "the production of the meaning of the concepts in our minds through language," and it is the link between the "real" world and our imaginary world (p. 17). From a constructionist view, the material world does exist, but it does not convey any meaning. It is human beings who use signs, organized into different kinds of languages, to construct meaning and to communicate meaningfully with each other, and this process is called "representation" (Hall, 1997a). In this respect, the definition of teacher

does not pre-exist. Instead, we use the word "teacher" to represent a group of people who educate young people, and we attach meanings to this word. However, representation does not only refer to the process by which people produce meaning for the material world by using signs and language. It can also be seen as the "product" produced in this process. For example, there are various representations of teachers in popular culture and mass media. These representations in turn become a component of cultural expectations of teachers, which, in turn, might shape our understanding of what it means to be a teacher.

2.2.2 Popular culture and the construction of teacher identities

Popular culture is an important part of people's lives, and is one of the key factors contributing to the cultural expectations that people hold of teachers. According to Weber and Mitchell (1995) and Mitchell and Weber (1999), popular movies, books, TV shows or even games have a profound impact on people's understanding of what teachers are supposed to look like and do, regardless of whether people are aware of it or not. Robertson (1997) also emphasizes the persuasive impact of popular culture on people's beliefs and expectations of teachers and teaching. She argues that "beginning teachers use images of teaching from popular culture (including cine-texts) to help form their identities in complex and unexpected ways" (p. 124). Popular culture largely influences teachers' initial beliefs about teaching, and these beliefs about teaching cannot be easily altered by teacher education programs or later teaching experiences (Lortie, 1975, as cited in Robertson, 1997). Popular culture also helps shape K-12 students' cultural expectations of teachers.

Mitchell and Weber's (1999) notion of teachers and teaching as cumulative cultural texts also demonstrates the connection between popular culture and the construction of teacher identities. They suggest that "the cumulative cultural text of 'teacher' is a massive work-in-progress that embraces the sub-texts and counter-texts of generations of paintings, memoirs, novels, songs, toys, movies, software, stories, photos, and television" (Mitchell & Weber, 1999, p. 167). Based on Britzman's (1986) idea that not only pre-service teachers' personal biographies, but also "their implicit institutional biographies—the cumulative experience of school lives" contribute to their understanding of teacher's work (p. 443), Weber and Mitchell (1995) highlight the importance of the collective biography of the teacher. They claim that a teacher's biography is not only personal, but also "cultural, institutional, and historical" (Weber & Mitchell, 1995, p. 9). For example, the books that people read and the TV shows that people watch during their childhood largely contribute to their preconceptions of teachers, classrooms and schools. Since the images of teachers and teaching in people's minds have been constantly evolving over time, influenced by the changing social and cultural contexts, Weber and Mitchell (1995) suggest that it is important to examine "the contributions of social, fictional, fantasy, and private worlds to the construction of the cumulative cultural text called teacher" (p. 9).

According to Storey (2006), popular culture can be understood as the culture that has mass appeal, the culture that is "left over after we have decided what is high culture" (p. 4-5) or the culture that people make for themselves. However, critics argue that it is hard to make a clear distinction between high culture and popular culture (Storey, 2006). For example, "William Shakespeare is now seen as the epitome of high culture, yet as late as the nineteenth century his work was very much a part of popular

theatre" (Storey, 2006, p. 5). Moreover, the boundaries between so-called high culture and low culture have become blurred under the influence of commercialism (Fisher, Harris, & Jarvis, 2008). Some artists' works become popular after appearing in television or radio commercials. My study recognizes the blurred boundary between popular culture and high culture. However, in order to distinguish popular culture from high culture, my study regards popular culture as the art forms that appeal to large numbers of audiences, such as movies, popular music, popular fiction, comics, and TV shows.

Compared to high culture, popular culture is more accessible to many people and plays a more significant role in shaping people's thinking in the twenty-first century. It is worth noting that the images of teachers and teaching have been largely stereotyped in popular culture. According to Stuart Hall's (1997a) theories of representation, the material world is never represented in an objective way. Instead, it is represented from a certain perspective and angle. Hall (1997b) argues that the representational practice known as "stereotyping" attempts to fix and naturalize the meaning of images and language. Stereotyping, according to Hall (1997b), "reduces people to a few, simple, essential characteristics, which are represented as fixed by Nature" (p. 257). It acts as rigid rules that regulate what is normal and acceptable and what is abnormal and unacceptable. It also serves to maintain the existing social order and to exclude those who have little power in the world. Hall (1997b) suggests that his theories of stereotyping are connected with Foucault's theories of knowledge and power. The groups of people who have power in the world can decide how to represent someone or something through images and language, and these stereotypical images and language produce our knowledge about the world. For example, when we think of

black men, we often think of violence and crime because this is how they are commonly represented in popular culture and mass media. African Americans have been consistently stereotyped "within a certain regime of representation" (Hall, 1997b, p. 259).

bell hooks suggests that there is "a conscious manipulation of representations" in popular culture and mass media although we are often told that certain images in popular culture do not mean anything (Media Education Foundation, 1997, p. 5). For example, filmmakers consciously produce certain representations in their movies and they know that certain kinds of representations will achieve certain impacts (Media Education Foundation, 1997). In the movie *Smoke,* the thief is a young black man although there is no racial identification in the original short story (Media Education Foundation, 1997). The negative portrayal of this young man in the movie undoubtedly reinforces racial stereotypes of African-Americans (Media Education Foundation, 1997). hooks concludes that representations in popular culture are powerful in changing people's perceptions of the world, but we cannot free ourselves from representations (Media Education Foundation, 1997). What we can do is to "be critically vigilant about both what is being told to us and how we respond to what is being told" (Media Education Foundation, 1997, p. 8). It is important for teachers to critically examine how representations of teachers in popular culture manipulate people's thinking about teachers.

2.2.3 The representations of teachers in popular culture

Drawing on the theories of representation, what it means to be a teacher does not pre-exist. The representations of teachers in popular culture are full of illusive

images and ideologies. According to Jean Baudrillard's (1994) theory of hyperreality, "simulation is no longer that of a territory, a referential being, or a substance. It is the generation by models of a real without origin or reality: a hyperreal" (p. 1). The world has become full of simulacra and it is hard to distinguish between the "true" and the "false" as well as between the "real" and the "imaginary" (p. 3). Baudrillard uses Disneyland as an example of this phenomenon. He argues that "Disneyland is presented as imaginary in order to make us believe that the rest is real, whereas all of Los Angeles and the America that surrounds it are no longer real, but belong to the hyperreal order and to the order of simulation" (p. 12). Popular culture and mass media also perpetuate the "hyperreal" that Baudrillard proposed. An example is the American television documentary *The Loud Family,* which is edited down from three hundred hours of the nonstop shooting of an American family (Baudrillard, 1994). It is regarded as a "reality" TV show, but it is actually hyperreal since it selects a "typical ideal American family, California home, three garages, five children, assured social and professional status, decorative housewife, super-middle-class standing" (p. 28). There is also an illusion of filming the family as if cameras weren't there (Baudrillard, 1994). As a result, the TV documentary reflects more the truth of TV than the truth of the family. In this sense, the discussion of what is real is less significant than the discussion of how meanings are reproduced through popular culture. Moreover, we cannot separate the discussion of culture from power relations since culture is interrelated with power. The dominant groups in society use culture as a tool to maintain and consolidate their power and to support their ideologies. Popular culture constructs people's understanding of education and what it means to be a teacher. Through examining the expectations of teachers embedded in popular culture, "it might be possible to avoid disillusion and encourage

good teachers to stay in the profession, accepting relentless and unheroic daily routines while still finding satisfaction in classrooms" (Fisher et al., 2008, p. 44). It is important for us to examine the representations of teachers in popular culture and how these representations affect teachers' identities and work.

From a postmodern perspective, there is no single meta-narrative that can cover all the representations of teachers in popular culture. Teachers are portrayed in popular culture in a variety of ways and each of these portrayals only demonstrates a limited and partial understanding of the complex nature of education. Moreover, one single popular culture text is open to multiple interpretations depending on the viewer's knowledge and experience, and the viewer's interpretations of a movie can change over time (Dalton, 2010). My study attempts to capture the complexity of the representations of teachers in popular culture and to reveal the various or even conflicting values that underpin cultural expectations of teachers in the context of western countries.

Both the book *Education in Popular Culture* by Fisher et al. (2008) and the book *The Hollywood Curriculum: Teachers' in the Movies* by Dalton (2010) closely examine how schools, teachers, and students are portrayed in popular culture, and discuss what we can learn from these cultural representations of teachers and teaching. By reviewing some well-known movies about teachers, such as *Dangerous Minds* (Simpson, Bruckheimer, & Smith, 1995) and *Dead Poets Society* (Haft, Witt, Thomas, & Weir, 1989), these two books have a common finding, which is that teachers tend to be dichotomized into the "good" and "bad" in movies. In other words, teachers have been either negatively stereotyped or positively portrayed in popular culture. Dalton (2010) reveals five main characteristics of "good" teachers represented in the movies. First, "good" teachers are often characterized as outsiders who fight against the status quo in

education. Second, "good" teachers tend to get involved with their students on a personal level, and even take risks to protect their students. Third, "good" teachers are willing to learn from their students. Fourth, these teachers often have conflicts with school administrators over certain issues. Fifth, "good" teachers often personalize the curriculum for their students so that their students find it easier to relate what they learn at school to their real lives. I particularly agree with Dalton (2010) that "good" teachers portrayed in the movies often have an antagonistic relationship with school administrators. In some movies, teachers win the battle against the authoritarian rules in schools, but in others, teachers have to leave their position in the end.

What are the impacts of these portrayals of teachers on real teachers? Dalton (2010) suggests that these portrayals of "good" teachers in movies do present some progressive ideas of teaching, but they may also reinforce teachers' conformity to social norms. For example, in some school movies, teachers make great efforts to help students succeed in certain exams, but they never question the validity of standardized tests. Dalton (2010) suggests that the heroic representations of teachers in movies may make teachers stay "isolated and politically inactive" (p. 43) and prevent teachers from thinking that they might work together with their colleagues and students to fight against the imbalance of power between the individual teacher and school authorities. Dalton (2010) concludes that "the good teacher in the movies may tug a little at the cornerstone of the institutional hierarchy, but this structure is never shaken" (p. 150).

Fisher et al. (2008) also examine cinematic representations of "good" teachers. They suggest that "good" teachers are often portrayed as charismatic and heroic figures or as empathetic and caring figures, in part because "the manifestation of goodness as heroism or saintliness is deeply embedded within Western mythology" (p. 23).

However, Fisher et al. (2008) address another issue, which is that "these cinematic representations do not necessarily bring us closer to defining what a good teacher is because, in the construction of a media text, the demands of drama override those of authenticity" (p. 42). For example, the plotlines of these movies are often about a teacher and a few students in a class; however, teachers need to pay attention to all the students in their classes in real teaching (Fisher et al., 2008). Moreover, the cinematic representations tend to focus more on teachers' charisma and their passion for teaching rather than their professional knowledge and skills. Some other aspects of schooling and teaching, such as "school procedures, curricular demands, assessment regulations and government educational policies," are also largely absent from media representations (Fisher et al., 2008, p. 42). These aspects may not appeal to audiences as much as the charismatic teacher images do and this may be the reason why they are seldom presented in school movies. Fisher et al. (2008) suggest that it is important to examine what is absent and what is present in popular culture.

Teachers are not always cast as heroes in popular culture. They have also frequently been portrayed as failures or evil people. The "bad" teachers are portrayed as those who do not care about students, who suppress students' individuality and personal liberty, or who fail to protect students from dangers (Fisher et al., 2008). Dalton (2010) incorporates Huebner's five value frameworks for curriculum to her analysis of the "good" and "bad" teachers in Hollywood movies. The book suggests that the "bad" teachers are "signified by the absence of the aesthetic-ethical-political value frameworks in the teaching" (p. 64). Most of the "bad" teachers portrayed in popular culture present the technical and scientific values since they aim to control their students and to improve their test scores. However, there are exceptions. Some movies

may portray teachers in an opposite way. Therefore, it is hard to put the different representations of "bad" teachers into certain categories. I agree with Fisher et al. (2008) that "there are various discourses concerning bad teachers and they cannot be brought together to make a single story" (p. 62). Why are teachers portrayed negatively in the movies? Fisher et al. (2008) point out that "repeated images of teachers as evil reflect the impossibility of the job: everyone will have a school memory of being unfairly criticized, feeling victimized, ignored, belittled, irrespective of whether the teacher was even aware of the sense of grievance" (p. 170). The "bad" images of teachers in popular culture draw the audience's attention to the fact that teaching is a highly demanding, but relatively low-status profession in the United States (Fisher et al., 2008).

Apart from the typical "good" or "bad" teachers, there are more alternative portrayals of teachers on screen in recent years. For example, the movie *Half Nelson* (Boden, Walker, Patricof, & Fleck, 2006) tells the story of a charming but flawed history teacher whose drug addiction is discovered by one of his students. This movie focuses on the personal struggles that the teacher has, showing the idea that teachers can be as flawed as anyone else. The TV series *Breaking Bad* (Lyons et al., 2008-2013) portrays a high school chemistry teacher diagnosed with inoperable lung cancer, who begins to produce drugs and commit crimes with one of his former students. The alternative representations of teachers help break the traditional view of teachers and present a more complex picture of the teaching profession.

These representations of teachers are connected to broader issues of gender, social class, race and sexuality. It is evident that discourses about teachers have been highly gendered in both real life and popular culture. Dalton (2010) points out that there have been several constraints placed on female teachers since many decades ago.

Historically, female teachers were not allowed to dress in bright colours and they were not "generally allowed to remain in their teaching position when they became pregnant" (p. 97). In recent decades, there are still inequalities in teaching opportunities for women. In terms of female teachers' public and private life, Hollywood movies play out "the stereotype that women cannot balance a successful career and private life and must, instead, choose one over the other" (Dalton, 2010, p. 104). For instance, in the movie *Freedom Writers,* the female teacher Erin and her husband eventually divorced, largely because Erin spent too much time in helping her students. As Trier (2001) suggests, school movies tend to focus exclusively on the professional lives of teachers with only a few exceptions, and the "good" teachers portrayed in the movies tend to be "devoted solely to their profession, seemingly at the expense of having any kind of personal life" (p. 132). Moreover, teaching young children has often been regarded as women's work historically and currently because caring and nurturing are believed to be women's nature (Dalton, 2010). It is the reason why female teachers portrayed in the movies often teach young children, while male teachers often teach high school or college students (Dalton, 2010).

Overall, there are various representations of teachers in popular culture, and some of them are contradictory to each other. Teachers are portrayed as both saints and sinners, and as both achievers and failures on screen. These contradictory images of teachers also reflect and construct our contradictory expectations for teachers: on the one hand, teachers are expected to follow the rules and regulations prescribed by educational policy and school administrators; on the other hand, teachers are expected to be creative and open-minded, and to challenge authorities and traditional values (Fisher et al. 2008). Fisher et al. (2008) and Dalton (2010) both argue that the

representations of teachers in popular culture not only reflect our fears and desires based on our experiences of schools, but also shape our constructions about what education is and what it means to be a teacher. However, they have slightly different attitudes towards the emancipatory capacity of popular culture. Dalton (2010) doubts that the "emancipatory promises or moments" (p. 61) presented in the movies are able to threaten the "the dominant ideology of social conformity" (p. 62) or create any lasting change to society. However, Fisher et al. (2008) takes a more neutral stance by stating that "popular culture both reflects and constructs our experience of education in ways that sometimes reinforce official educational perspectives and sometimes resist, challenge and undermine these in surprising ways" (p. 168). Like Fisher et al. (2008), I would like to recognize the important role that popular culture plays in challenging the traditional views of teachers and teaching. I believe that popular culture can both reflect the dominant discourses of teachers and offer alternative discourses to challenge the traditional expectations of teachers. It is important for teachers to be aware that the representations of teachers in popular culture are problematic and also to realize that they can be inspired and/or confined by the images of teachers in popular culture. In my study, I invited the participants to view school movies in order to elicit their views and perceptions of the representations of teachers in popular culture. Engaging the participants in the discussion of school movies not only allowed me to examine the participants' perceptions of cultural expectations, but helped me to explore the possibilities of using movie elicitation as a pedagogical tool in teacher education programs. The following section explicitly discusses how the representations of teachers in popular culture affect teachers' understanding of what it means to be a teacher.

2.2.4 Teachers' fantasies of teaching

After problematizing the representations of teachers in popular culture, I would like to discuss some specific impacts of popular culture on teachers. From a psychoanalytical view, Robertson (1997) suggests that there are many fantasies of teaching embedded in popular culture and teachers tend to be "simultaneously served and deceived" by these fantasies (p. 134). For instance, movies are believed to provide a vicarious space through which pre-service teachers can learn about teaching, but at the same time they may captivate teachers because what is shown in the movies is "not so much a lived reality as a desired, imagined reality of classroom life" (Robertson, 1997, p. 126). Robertson (1997) conducted a study to investigate how pre-service teachers make sense of the movie *Stand and Deliver*, which tells a story of a dedicated math teacher. Some of the participants expressed that they dreamed of receiving the love letters from their students. It implies that they dreamed of being teachers who sincerely love their students and who are also loved by their students. According to Robertson (1997), their fantasy of receiving love letters also implies that they had a strong desire for recognition and reward as teachers. However, they tried to hide this desire because the popular images of teachers made them believe that teachers should be selfless. After watching the movie, one of the participants said, "the movie makes me think of how dedicated teachers don't expect appreciation for their efforts because that isn't their goal at all" (Robertson, 1997, p. 128). Inspired by those dedicated teachers portrayed in the movies, teachers may hope that they can commit themselves with selfless devotion to their students. However, they may ignore something important for them as well: "dignity, compensation, and recognition" for their efforts (p. 131).

The fantasies of love and devotion may enable teachers to persist with their passion to teach when they confront difficulties at work, but they may function as enabling metaphors that ignore some important social issues, such as "the lack of teacher prestige in primary education" and the "racialized, heterosexualized norms in schooling" (p. 134). Robertson (1997) argues that these fantasies can simultaneously enhance and mislead teachers' understanding of teaching. Pre-service teachers should be invited to critically examine their fantasies of teaching and to "explore fantasy as a source of possibility and confinement in pedagogy" (p. 123).

Bride (2009) conducted a self-study to examine her fantasies of teaching attached to the movie *Mona Lisa Smile*. She suggests that her attachment to the movie is rooted in an identification with the hero teacher. The heroic image of the teacher in this movie inspires the author to become a hero as well. Bride called this "a rescue fantasy" (p. 93) since the movie portrays a teacher who saves her students from being constrained by traditional social norms. Bride suggests that the rescue fantasy shown in popular culture has "the potential to send the readers/viewers into a space of freedom from their everyday lives, a form of escapism" (p. 93). In the real world, teachers may not be free to do anything they want to do and it may not be easy for them to make any changes to the existing education system. Thus, teachers may vicariously see how movie characters realize their dreams in the imagined world. Bride highlights that there is a discrepancy between hero stories and teaching practices in real life. Teaching practices are much more complex in the real world than what is presented in the movies. She suggests that "all of us fail, falter, struggle, and invest in our students and our teaching for reasons that are not purely selfless, nor always clear to us" (p. 81). Moreover, Bride discusses how master scripts in movies influence teachers' perceptions

of teaching. She argues that "in *Mona Lisa Smile* [the teacher]'s view of education is that it ought to liberate, but the film is fraught with tensions and contradictions in relation to master scripts, pushing normative ideals and disrupting them as the same time" (p. 95-96). For example, the movie both supports and challenges the woman's role as a good wife and mother. In this movie, the teacher Watson encourages her student Joan to further her study at Yale law school, but Joan eventually decides not to go to the school and instead to become a housewife. Watson wants to free her students from traditional female roles, but Joan argues that getting married and having children is something that she truly wants.

Different people have different understandings of the representations in popular culture and they can choose to either accept or resist the master scripts in movies or novels. Stuart Hall's work suggests that audiences do not always accept the messages conveyed by the mass media since they are able to actively "decode" and reinterpret the messages (Longhurst et al., 2008). As a result, the dominant ideology embedded in popular culture is not inevitably reproduced. Teachers, as the audiences of popular culture, are free to accept, resist, or reinterpret the messages conveyed by popular culture. Since my study uses movie elicitation as a method to explore teachers' views of the representations of teachers in popular culture, I will be aware of the complexities involved in their interpretation of movies. I will not simply regard the participants as passive receivers of the messages. Instead, I will closely examine whether the participants accept, reject, or reinterpret the messages conveyed by the movies they watch.

2.2.5 Summary

Drawing on theories of representation (Hall, 1997a), the definition of "teacher" does not pre-exist. Instead, we attach meanings to this word. Teachers are often aware of what they are supposed to do or how to behave as teachers, but they may not realize that they can be constrained by the cultural myths of teachers. They tend to experience self-doubts and frustrations when their personal identities and lived experiences are inconsistent with the cultural expectations of teachers. Popular culture is one of the key factors contributing to cultural expectations of teachers. The representations of teachers in popular culture both reflects the dominant discourses of teachers and offers alternative discourses to the traditional expectations of teachers. It is important for teachers to be aware of the impact of cultural expectations on them and to critically examine their fantasies of teaching. Previous studies have recognized the impact of cultural expectations on teachers, but few of them have explored how teachers negotiate their identities within and against the cultural expectations of teachers. In my research, I would like to do this by exploring the intersection of teachers' negotiation of their personal identities, professional identities, and cultural expectations of teachers.

Chapter three: Methodology

This study adopts arts-based research practices to explore the intersection of teachers' negotiation of personal identities, professional identities, and cultural expectations of teachers. In this chapter, I discuss the rationale for using arts-based research practices, including drawing, movie elicitation, and narrative inquiry, in my study. Then, I elaborate on the recruitment of my research participants, data collection and analysis, as well as related ethical issues.

3.1 Rationale of methodology

In this section, I first briefly discuss the rationale for using three arts-based research practices in my study including drawing, movie elicitation, and narrative inquiry. The details about using these three research practices are discussed in the section on data collection and analysis.

3.1.1 Arts-based research

In recent decades, there has been growing interest in postmodern approaches to educational research, and the ontological and epistemological assumptions about the nature of research have greatly changed (Cahnmann-Taylor, 2008). Arts-based research first emerged in the 1970s, and eventually became a new methodological genre by the 1990s (Sinner, Leggo, Irwin, Gouzouasis, & Grauer, 2006, as cited in Leavy, 2009). Leavy (2018) argues that arts-based research is a new paradigm that is separated from qualitative research. She cites Lorri Neilsen (2004) who says that arts-based research "uses a 'groundless theory' approach, in contrast to the 'grounded theory' approach on which some qualitative research relies" (Leavy, 2018, p. 5). Neilsen (2004) suggests

that using a groundless theory enables arts-based researchers to "work in media and with ideas that cannot easily be fixed, determined, cannot be foundational in the ways that our controlling selves have come to need in education and the social sciences" (p. 45–46). My study acknowledged that art works are ambiguous in nature and addressed the diverse and fluid meanings attached to teachers. There have been various conceptualizations of this newly emerged research genre, such as art-based research (McNiff, 2008), arts-informed research (Cole & Knowles, 2008), image-based research (Weber, 2008), and a/r/tography (Irwin & Springgay, 2008). According to McNiff (2008):

> Art-based research can be defined as the systematic use of the artistic process, the actual making of artistic expressions in all of the different forms of the arts, as a primary way of understanding and examining experience by both researchers and the people that they involve in their studies. (p. 29)

McNiff (2018) noted that the term "art" is "inclusive of every possible form of creative expression and practice" (p. 23) and is compatible with Leavy's (2018) conceptualization of arts-based research. In my study, I call this new research genre "arts-based research" to be consistent with Leavy's (2009, 2018) studies. Leavy (2018) points out,

> Arts-based practices may draw on any art form and representational forms that include but are not limited to literary forms (essays, short stories, novellas, novels, experimental writing, scripts, screenplays, poetry, parables); performative forms (music, songs, dance, creative movement, theatre); visual art (photography, drawing, painting, collage, installation art, three-dimensional (3-D) art, sculpture, comics, quilts, needlework); audiovisual forms (film, video); multimedia forms (graphic novels), and multimethod forms (combining two or more art forms). (p. 4)

Arts-based research invites researchers to explore varied and creative ways to collect data and present research findings (Cahnmann-Taylor, 2008, p. 3). It also allows researchers to "describe, reflect, and evoke emotion, which dry facts or figures and cool

logic rarely do" (Prosser, 2011, p. 488). Arts-based researchers do not regard arts-based practices as being in opposition to more traditional research methods. Arts-based research practices have their own strengths and weaknesses, but they open up new possibilities for us and offer us new ways of seeing the world (Cahnmann-Taylor, 2008).

Sinner et al. (2006) explores the practices of arts-based educational research by examining the dissertations written by the doctoral students from the Faculty of Education at the University of British Columbia from 1996 to 2006. Their article suggests that arts-based educational research has gained great popularity among graduate students and the three pillars of arts-based research are literacy, visual and performative arts. Sinner et al. (2006) note that arts-based research is often practice-based; therefore, the term "practices" instead of "methods" is often used to describe the process of doing arts-based research. Moreover, they note that arts-based research can also be "used in conjunction with other forms of research," such as ethnography, oral histories or autobiography (Sinner et al., 2006, p. 1227). For example, Pink (2007) introduces the use of visual methods in ethnography. Pink suggests that from the 1960s to the early 1980s, there have been controversies concerning the use of visual images in ethnography. Many social scientists resisted using visual methods, arguing that they are "too subjective, unrepresentative, and unsystematic" (p. 9). In recent decades, however, "photography, video, and hypermedia are becoming increasingly incorporated into the work of ethnographers" (p. 1).

Despite the increasing popularity of arts-based research, Eisner (2008a) argues that arts-based research still has "an uphill battle to fight to maintain its place as a legitimate form of inquiry in the educational research community" (p. 19). Eisner

(2008a) points out the tensions that arts-based researchers might experience, such as the tension between the diverse interpretations generated through arts-based research and the convention of producing common understandings, the tension between the desire to raise fresh questions and the need to provide answers and solutions, and the tension between the desire to be novel or creative and the need to ensure its utility and verisimilitude as a form of education research. I think some of the tensions that Eisner (2008a) points out are due to different philosophical stances. From a constructivist stance, I argue that arts-based research is a legitimate form of social research for the following reasons. First, the ontological assumption of constructivism suggests that there are multiple realities instead of a single reality in the world (Lincoln, Lynham, & Guba, 2011). Arts-based research does not attempt to replace scientific research "as the only mode of inquiry that produces human understanding" (Barone & Eisner, 2012, p. 166). Instead, arts-based researchers acknowledge that there are multiple forms of representation of the world and the arts are among them (Barone & Eisner, 2012). Second, the epistemological assumption of constructivism suggests that "we are shaped by our lived experiences, and these will always come out in the knowledge we generate as researchers and in the data generated by our subjects" (Lincoln et al., 2011, p. 104). Arts-based researchers do not believe that complete objectivity can be achieved. They tend to personalize their studies and focus on individuals' feelings and experiences. They do not attempt to distance themselves from participants. Instead, they examine how knowledge is constructed through collaboration with their participants. Barone (2008) suggests that arts-based research adopts a stance of epistemological modesty. Instead of replacing the master narratives with a totalizing counter-narrative, arts-based research encourages people to show an appreciation of diverse interpretations,

understandings, and opinions in the world. Both science and art play a significant role in advancing human understanding. Eisner (1998) argues that "there are multiple ways in which the world can be known: Artists, writers, and dancers, as well as scientists, have important things to tell about the world" (p. 7). Incorporating art forms into research can help us "connect with personal, subjective emotions," thus "enriching our awareness and expanding our humanity" (Eisner, 2008b, p. 11).

Since arts-based research is a relatively new research paradigm, there has been limited discussion on its evaluation. Cahnmann-Taylor (2008) suggests that one of the problems associated with arts-based research is that there is a lack of "critical community to establish what constitutes quality in arts-based research," thus making it impossible to distinguish whether an arts-based research project is excellent or amateur (p. 11). Moreover, arts-based research is diverse in its forms and many new forms of arts-based research are emerging. Therefore, it is impossible to set "one fits all" criteria for evaluating all the forms of arts-based research. Additionally, Diamond (1998) suggests that "arts-based inquiry cannot be governed by predetermined rules and cannot be judged according to predetermined criteria" (p. 392, as cited in Sinner et al., 2006, p. 1229) since each new arts-based research project seeks to extend the possibilities of what previous arts-based research projects have done.

Despite the impossibility of setting predetermined and universal criteria for arts-based research, some general ideas of how to evaluate the knowledge constructed in arts-based research are required. First of all, the postmodern ontological and epistemological assumptions must be considered when judging the trustworthiness of arts-based research. As Leavy (2009) suggests, "traditional conceptions of validity and reliability, which developed out of positivism, are inappropriate for evaluating artistic

inquiry" (p. 15-16). Arts-based researchers reject the modernist assumption that there is one true reality out there for discovery and this reality can be predicted and quantitatively measured by using scientific methods. Instead, they take a postmodern philosophical stance, assuming that we construct our understanding and knowledge of the world and the knowledge that we construct is always partial and contextual (Leavy, 2009). Arts-based researchers do not attempt to achieve objectivity as most realist scientific researchers do. Instead, they tend to personalize their studies and focus on individuals' feelings and experiences.

Moreover, arts-based researchers do not regard generalization as the main criteria for evaluating the external validity of a study. In arts-based research, there is "no comparable set of conditions" and each study is personalized (Eisner, 2008a, p. 20). To what extent arts-based research can provide insights that extend beyond the particular is still problematic (Eisner, 2008a). However, Eisner (2008a) points out that the findings of realist scientific studies may be over-generalized sometimes, and he also addresses the possibility that "great works of literature teach [us] lessons in ways that go well beyond the particular circumstances they address" (p. 21). Although generalization is not the main goal of arts-based research, I agree with Siegesmund and Cahnmann-Taylor (2008) that the generalizability of arts-based research is possible, and it depends on the ability to "understand complexity more fully," to "ask better questions", and to "widen and deepen conversations out of the particular" (p. 236-237).

In addition, arts-based research requires us to understand "measurement" itself from a new perspective. According to Sinner et al. (2006), arts-based research tends to "expand the notion of evaluation as a kind of assessing or grading to attend to the root of evaluation as valuing" (p. 1252). It requires that the question "Is this good arts-based

research?" shifts to "What is this arts-based research good for?" (Sinner et al., 2006, p. 1252). Irwin and Springgay (2008) point out a similar idea that "measurement is not a degree of magnitude," rather "the conditions for measurement (assessment) are contingent upon and exist within the structure itself—an absolute measure" (p. 120). In other words, when evaluating arts-based research, attention must be given to the research project's own values instead of marking it as "good" or "bad" by comparing it with other arts-based research projects. Leavy (2017) suggests that evaluating arts-based research based on the significance of the research and its effectiveness in achieving the research purpose may be beneficial.

Since the strengths of arts-based research have been a major topic in the literature (Leavy, 2009, 2018), one way to evaluate arts-based research is to examine how well an arts-based research project demonstrates the strengths of arts-based research. For example, Leggo (2008) suggests that the evaluation of the knowledge produced in poetic research includes:

> [A] critical investigation of the craft and aesthetics of artistic practices; a creative examination of how art evokes responses and connections; a careful inquiry into the methods that art used to unsettle ossified thinking and provoke imagination; a conscientious consideration of the resonances that sing out to the world from word, image, sound, and performance. (p. 171)

The strengths of arts-based research discussed in the literature include: 1) opening up multiple meanings, 2) unsettling dominant ways of thinking, 3) evoking emotional responses from participants, 4) raising new questions, 5) promoting dialogue and accessing the voices of marginalized people, 6) cultivating awareness and empathy, and 7) being easily accessed by public audiences (Eisner, 2008a; Leavy, 2009, 2018). Arts-based research may be evaluated based on those qualities.

3.1.2 Drawing

As one of the arts-based research practices, drawing has been used to explore people's perceptions of certain issues, their memories, emotions, and lived experiences. For example, in the self-study by Tidwell and Manke (2009), the researchers developed metaphoric drawings to examine their professional experiences as educational administrators. In the self-study by Derry (2005), drawings were used to explore her emotional experiences of being a victim of bullying at schools. In a study by Laren (2011), the researcher used drawings to investigate pre-service teachers' understandings of the integration of HIV&AIDS education in mathematics in South Africa.

A number of Weber and Mitchell's studies about teacher identities (Weber & Mitchell, 1995, 1996a, 1996b) were based on their collection of the drawings of teachers. They asked both pre-service and in-service teachers to draw a teacher (any teacher) to examine teachers' perceptions of teacher images. Weber and Mitchell (1996b) suggest that drawings, as a form of text, can be "read." They "offer a different kind of glimpse into human sensemaking than written or spoken texts do, because they can express that which is not easily put into words: the ineffable, the elusive, the not-yet-thought-through, the sub-conscious" (Mitchell, 1996b, p. 304). The use of drawing in my study is largely informed by Weber and Mitchell's work. In my study, I invited teachers to draw a teacher (any teacher), thus examining teachers' personal beliefs and their perceptions of cultural expectations of teachers.

I have focused on three main reasons for incorporating drawing into my study. First, the use of drawing can help uncover both teachers' personal beliefs and the prevailing cultural expectations of teachers. As Weber and Mitchell (1995) suggest, drawings reflect people's personal feelings and attitudes, and also may mirror the

common values shared by a group of people. Second, the use of drawing enables me to integrate both image and text, thus gaining a holistic understanding of my research topic. Irwin (2004) highlights that image and text do not duplicate one another; instead, they complement, refute, or enhance one another. A number of studies have made use of both images and texts to gain a better understanding of their research topics. For instance, Glass (2011) discusses the use of a/r/tography (drawing, graphing and narrative) as a new possibility to explore how pre-service teachers experience becoming a teacher. The integration of these three approaches allows the researcher to develop deep insights into the multiple contexts in which the participant's teacher identity is being formed and developed (Glass, 2011). Third, the use of drawings as a research tool makes it possible to reveal "unexplored ambiguities, contradictions and connections" (Weber & Mitchell, 1996b p. 304). In Weber and Mitchell's research (1996b), sixty-four pre-service and in-service teachers were asked to draw a teacher, real or imagined, and then to write about their drawings. The most striking finding of the study is that most of the pre-service teachers' drawings suggested traditional rather than progressive models of teaching although their writings indicated that they wanted to adopt a more progressive teaching style. This might suggest that the more traditional images that the teachers drew is more deeply embedded in their consciousness than the more progressive approach they are learning from the teacher education program. Inviting teachers to draw and discuss their drawings can bring to light the tensions and ambivalences in people's views of teachers that may not otherwise be heard or understood.

3.1.3 Movie elicitation

Movies, as a form of the arts, were incorporated in my research to generate participants' thoughts, feelings, and memories. Banks (2001) suggests that "film-elicitation, like photo-elicitation, can be a highly productive research tool for the social researcher, yielding insights and understandings that might otherwise be missed or not be discernible by other methods" (p. 99). The movies used in the study are "school movies" and I adopt Trier's (2001) definition of "school movie", which is "a movie that in some way-even incidentally—is about an educator or a student" (p. 127). Examples of these school movies are *Dead Poets Society* (Haft et al., 1989) and *Dangerous Minds* (Simpson et al., 1995). These movies play an important role in constructing people's understanding of what it means to be a teacher, and they can be used for engaging teachers in examining their perceptions of various educational issues. Robertson's (1997) study investigated twelve white female pre-service primary teachers' viewing responses to the school movie *Stand and Deliver*. The researcher watched the movie with the pre-service teachers and asked them to focus on "the image, character, scene, or event" that evoked intense feelings for them. From a psychoanalytical perspective, Robertson (1997) examines the fantasies of teaching in those pre-service teachers through the repetitions of words, phrases, and ideas in their responses to the movie. In another study by Robertson (2004), she examines "the psychological uses made of the film by twelve white English Canadian women, ages twenty-eight to forty, who viewed *The Second Awakening of Christa Klages* during the final months of their primary teacher certification year" (p. 75). The researcher invited her participants to discuss "their somatic and emotional experience of the film in relation to their imagined futures" (Robertson, 2004, p. 79), and her study implies that films could serve as a

powerful pedagogical tool in teacher education. In the study by Trier (2001), the researcher also incorporated school movies into the practicum courses that his students took. In this study, the researcher engaged student teachers in critical reflections about teachers' personal and professional lives. In the study by Lemieux (2017), the author engaged the pre-service teachers in her course by viewing and discussing the movie *Monsieur Lazhar*. Her study illustrated "how teaching through film has the potential to revitalize empathy and caring in pre-service teacher courses" (Lemieux, 2017, p. 64). Inspired by these studies, I would like to use school movies to engage both pre-service and in-service teachers in discussion about the cultural expectations of teachers and teachers' negotiation of their multiple identity positions. My study also aims to explore how movies can be incorporated into teacher education programs in order to enhance teachers' identity development. I further illustrate the details of using movie elicitation in my study later in the chapter.

3.1.4 Narrative inquiry

Apart from drawing and movie elicitation, narrative inquiry is also employed in this study. According to Leavy (2009), narrative inquiry can be regarded as "an umbrella category for a variety of arts-based methodological practices involving storytelling and writing" (p. 26). Back in the 1980s, narrative inquiry was "still a somewhat questioned practice" (Clandinin, Huber, Huber, Murphy, Murray Orr, Pearce, & Steeves, 2006, p. 18). In the 1990s, however, more detailed guidance was provided on the application of narrative inquiry as an educational research method. Drawing upon twenty years of field experience, Clandinin and Connelly (2000) provided a working concept of narrative inquiry:

> Narrative inquiry is a way of understanding experience. It is a collaboration between researcher and participants, over time, in a place or series of places, and in social interaction with milieus. An inquirer enters this matrix in the midst and progresses in this same spirit, concluding the inquiry still in the midst of living and telling, reliving and retelling, the stories of the experiences that make up people's lives both individual and social. (p. 20)

As Clandinin and Connelly (2000) argue, narrative inquiry is a good way to understand and make meaning of experiences. When people tell stories, they do not simply retell past actions. Instead, they consciously or unconsciously, convey meanings to their listeners. The job of narrative inquirers is to record people's stories and then find out what is behind those stories. Studying the narratives of the participant gives researchers an insight into how the participant "[imposes] order on the flow of experience to make sense of events and actions in their lives" (Riessman, 1993, p. 2). The narratives also enable researchers to "attend to how the story is told as well as what is told or not told" (Munro, 1998, p. 13), and capture the "unseen, and the neglected details of meaning" (Schaafsma & Vinz, 2011, ix). Connelly and Clandinin (1990) suggest that "people by nature lead storied lives and tell stories of those lives, whereas narrative researchers describe such lives, collect and tell stories of them, and write narratives of experience" (p. 2). Teachers, like all other people, have their own stories, and narrative inquiry allows researchers to gain access to teachers' personal experiences and capture their life stories. Moreover, Kim (2015) points out that "in using narrative, educational researchers intend to interrogate the nature of the dominant curricular stories through which humans have shaped their understandings of education and schooling" (p. 19). In my study, the use of narrative inquiry allows me to collect the life stories of participants, to investigate how they make meaning of their lived experiences, and to access teachers' voices that have not been heard.

3.2 Data collection and analysis

I recruited a mix of primary/elementary teachers and intermediate/secondary teachers, including six pre-service teachers and six in-service teachers, as my research participants. The research data were collected and analyzed through drawing, movie elicitation, and interviews.

3.2.1 Drawing

I invited each participant to draw a teacher (any teacher) in his or her mind. The participants could draw themselves as teachers, their favourite teachers, the teachers that they imagine and so on. In order to encourage the participants to draw freely, I reassured them that the focus of study was on the content of their drawing rather than on the quality of it as a drawing. I provided a range of drawing tools for the participants to choose from, such as pens, coloured pencils, crayons, and markers. According to Mitchell, Theron, Stuart, Smith, and Campbell (2011), researchers can provide participants with a choice of drawing tools, especially coloured drawing tools, since "color facilitates richer expression and often affords participants a greater sense of satisfaction, both with regard to the process of creating the drawing and the completed product" (p. 23). I also provided the participants with a choice of the type and size of paper so that they could draw more freely and comfortably. In addition, I asked the participants to choose whether to draw during our interview or at home. In both cases, I made sure that they had sufficient time to produce their drawings. There was no time limit on the drawing activity.

After the participants finished their drawings, I met each of them individually and discussed their drawings with them. Some of the questions I asked each participant

included the following: “Why did you portray a teacher in this way?” and “Do you think your drawing reflects or challenges the cultural expectations of teachers?” In this way, I constructed meaning from the drawings with the research participants in a collaborative way. Drawing is seldom used independently as a research method. The techniques of “draw and write” and “draw and talk” have been widely used in research. Most of the studies have involved participants’ written or verbal explanations of their drawings (Derry, 2005; Tidwell & Manke, 2009; Weber & Mitchell, 1995, 1996a, 1996b; Mitchell et al., 2011). When analyzing participants’ drawings, I paid attention to how the participants interpreted their drawings instead of simply interpreting the drawings on my own. As Stanczak (2007) suggests, “reflexive epistemologies of visual research hold that the meaning of the images resides most significantly in the ways that participants interpret those images, rather than as some inherent property of the images themselves” (p. 11). The shared analysis of their drawings not only helps enhance mutual understanding between researcher and participants, but also helps generate further relevant data from participants (Mitchell et al., 2011).

In terms of ethics issues, I respected participants’ rights to privacy. I kept their drawings anonymous and asked them for permission to present their drawings in my dissertation. I took into consideration the ways in which drawing may lead to uncomfortable or painful memories for participants (Theron, Stuart, & Mitchell, 2011). To minimize this risk, I asked the participants to share the stories that they felt comfortable talking about and informed them that if they felt very upset, I could refer them to a counsellor from the Counselling Centre at Memorial University of Newfoundland. Participants were fully informed about what participation in the research project would entail. In the informed consent form, participants were asked

about whether they would like to make drawings as part of their contribution to the research project and how their drawings could be used and displayed. They were free to withdraw from the study without any negative consequences or explanation.

3.2.2 Movie elicitation

The second arts-based practice that the participants were involved in was movie elicitation. I invited each participant to watch a school movie of their choice and we discussed the movie afterwards. I provided a list of school movies for the participants to choose from, or they were free to choose a school movie beyond the list that I provided. The reason for giving the participants the freedom to choose the movies was that I hoped each of them would watch the movie that he or she was most interested in. In this way, the participants would be more engaged in discussing those movies. It turned out that a few participants chose more than one movie to watch and discuss because they were interested in these movies.

In terms of the discussion of the school movies, I adopted some of the questions that Mitchell and Weber (1999) included for close readings of popular teacher texts, such as "What images or stereotypes are created, contested, or perpetuated?" and "What ideas or popular beliefs are challenged or reinforced?" (p. 173). I also asked the participants to discuss the school movies in relation to their own lived experiences as teachers. Their discussions of the school movies were recorded and transcribed. When analyzing their discussion, the focus was on the participants' perceptions of the teacher images in movies and how these portrayals of teachers related to or contradicted their own lived experiences as teachers.

3.2.3 Interviews

Interviewing is a common method used in narrative inquiry, and it is "a way of uncovering and exploring the meanings that underpin people's lives" (Arksey & Knight, 1999, p. 32). I conducted interviews with the participants to discuss the pictures they drew and the movies they watched, and also to ask more questions about their life stories and lived experiences. I asked questions about the reasons that they chose to become a teacher, how they perceived their personal identities, professional identities, and cultural expectations, as well as the tensions and struggles that they experienced as pre-service or in-service teachers. We also discussed whether they thought drawing and movie elicitation could help them examine their perceptions of teaching and being a teacher. The interviews were semi-structured, and most of my questions were open-ended, such as "Could you tell me some of the tensions and struggles you have experienced as a teacher?" All the interviews were recorded and transcribed. In terms of data analysis, I thematically analyzed how the participants negotiated their multiple identity positions. When doing the thematic analysis, I began with reading through all the transcripts and writing reflective memos in the margins to gain a general sense of the data. After that, I re-read the transcripts several times and marked the stories and experiences that were significant to my research until I identified the themes that emerged from the data. I kept reviewing and revising the thematic categories that I had developed as the analysis progressed. Through engaging in "cycles of analysis throughout the research process," I was able to "reexamine earlier interpretations, and better recognize the point of data saturation" (Tenni et al., 2003, as cited in Leavy, 2009, p. 20). As a narrative inquirer, I paid great attention to the coherence of stories and experiences. I interpreted a story as a whole instead of breaking it up to fit into certain

categories. I recounted participants' experiences through quoting them directly and indirectly. I edited the language in participants' direct quotations for readability. Based on the dialogical narrative analysis that Frank (2012) describes, I recognize that "stories are always told within dialogues" and paid attention to "what multiple voices can be heard in any single speaker's voice (p. 33). Frank (2012) suggests that "a storyteller tells a story that is his or her own, but no story is ever entirely anyone's own. Stories are composed from fragments of previous stories, artfully rearranged but never original" (p. 35). In my study, I paid attention to how the participants' stories were shaped by previous stories and how their lived experiences are situated in cultural and institutional contexts.

3.3 Ethics

I made sure that the participants fully understood the research process and signed the informed consent form before the actual research began. In the informed consent form, I clearly addressed the purpose of the study, and the possible benefits and risks of participating in the research. No pressure was used to persuade any teacher to participate. Moreover, I took every precaution to protect the anonymity of the participants and the confidentiality of data. I gave the participants fictitious names, and safeguarded any personally identifiable information involved in the study. Names of persons and places, and any information from which identities could be inferred, were removed from the narratives and drawings presented in the research paper. The research data, including recorded audio files, transcripts, and participants' drawings were safely stored during the research in locked drawers and password-protected files on a computer.

3.4 Summary

Arts-based research practices, including drawing, reviewing school movies, and narrative inquiry, were adopted in this study. As a relatively new research genre, arts-based research is growing in usage and legitimacy (Barone & Eisner, 2012; Cahnmann-Taylor, 2008; Eisner, 2008a, 2008b; Leavy, 2009, 2017, 2018). Six pre-service teachers and six in-service teachers were recruited as my research participants. I invited them to draw a teacher (any teacher) first and then to review the school movies of their choices. I also conducted in-depth interviews with the participants to collect their life stories and to explore how they negotiate their multiple identity positions as teachers. Related ethical issues were given special attention.

Chapter four: Teachers' drawings and their perceptions of the cultural expectations of teachers

4.1 Introduction

What it means to be a teacher is not fixed or pre-existing; instead, it is socially and culturally defined. The cultural expectations of teachers, which come from the dominant representations of teachers in society, play an important role in constructing people's understanding of teachers and in shaping how teachers develop their professional identities. According to Stuart Hall's theories of representation, "things—objects, people, events, in the world—do not have in themselves any fixed, final or true meaning. It is us—in society, within human cultures—who make things mean, who signify" (Hall, 1997a, p. 61). However, Hall (1997b) also notes that stereotypes fix and naturalize the meaning of images and language. Stereotypical images of teachers also construct people's understanding of how teachers are supposed to act and behave, and exclude alternative possibilities of being a teacher and teaching. For example, people usually hold the stereotype that teachers should not have visible tattoos due to the negative stigma against tattoos, and this stereotype tends to prevent teachers from having tattoos or showing their tattoos to their students. Teachers tend to take cultural assumptions about teachers for granted and they are not given many chances to critically examine how the cultural expectations of teachers impact their identities as teachers. Informed by Weber and Mitchell (1995), I conducted a drawing activity in which participants were invited to draw a teacher (any teacher) and to discuss their drawings. Since drawings not only reflect people's personal feelings and attitudes, but also mirror the common values shared by a group of people (Weber & Mitchell, 1995), I used drawing to explore how participants perceived the cultural expectations of teachers and

negotiated their identities within and against the cultural expectations that they perceived.

The impact of cultural expectations on teachers' professional identities can be understood in terms of Judith Butler's theory of performativity. Butler (1988) argues that gender identity is "a performative accomplishment compelled by social sanction and taboo" rather than a natural fact (p. 520). Since gender identity has been performed repeatedly over time, it has been viewed as being true and authentic (Butler, 1988). In terms of sexual identities, Butler (1993) suggests that "heterosexuality only constitutes itself as the original through a convincing act of repetition. The more that 'act' is expropriated, the more the heterosexual claim to originality is exposed as illusory" (p. 314). Butler (1988) points out that although there are historical conventions that constrain our understanding of gender, it is possible for people to break the conventions through reproducing a sequence of different repeated performative acts. In my study, I apply Judith Butler's theory of performativity to the understanding of teacher identities. There is no "original" meaning attached to teacher identities. Teacher identities have been performed repeatedly and those performative acts create our understanding of what it means to be a teacher. Teachers perform their professional identities based on cultural expectations, and in turn the ways that they act and behave as teachers reinforce the cultural expectations. However, there are possibilities for teachers to resist or challenge those naturalized expectations of teachers. Despite the overwhelming influence of cultural expectations, teachers may not always conform to cultural scripts. When alternative representations of teachers are performed repeatedly and become more accepted, they will unsettle the dominant discourses of teaching. For example, when queer teachers are portrayed in the media more often and people advocate for

queerness by using the Pride flag more commonly in schools, there will be more open attitudes towards queer teachers in the school environment. In the following sections, I first provide an overall analysis of the teachers' drawings that I collected from the participants, and then I discuss two main themes which emerged in the drawing activity, including the teacher's body and cultural expectations of male and female teachers.

4.2 Analysis of teachers' drawings

In this study, the participants were invited to draw a teacher (any teacher). Among the twelve participants, some of them chose to draw their own self-portraits as teachers; some of them visualized a random teacher; a few of them drew the teacher image metaphorically; and one of them drew her own memorable teacher. The drawings of the participants vary from person to person, but common cultural markers emerged, confirming Weber and Mitchell's (1995) argument that drawings can be read as texts of popular culture. As Weber and Mitchell (1995) suggest, "[b]ecause a picture can communicate simultaneously on many levels, drawings are useful not only as iconic images, but also as layered paintings that hide or combine other social, cultural, and personal images" (p. 19). Many of the participants of my study acknowledged that their drawings reflected a combination of their personal experiences and cultural expectations of teachers. Below are the drawings that I collected from the twelve participants, including six pre-service teachers and six experienced teachers.

Figure 1 Drawn by Charlotte, a pre-service teacher

Figure 2 Drawn by Carter, a pre-service teacher

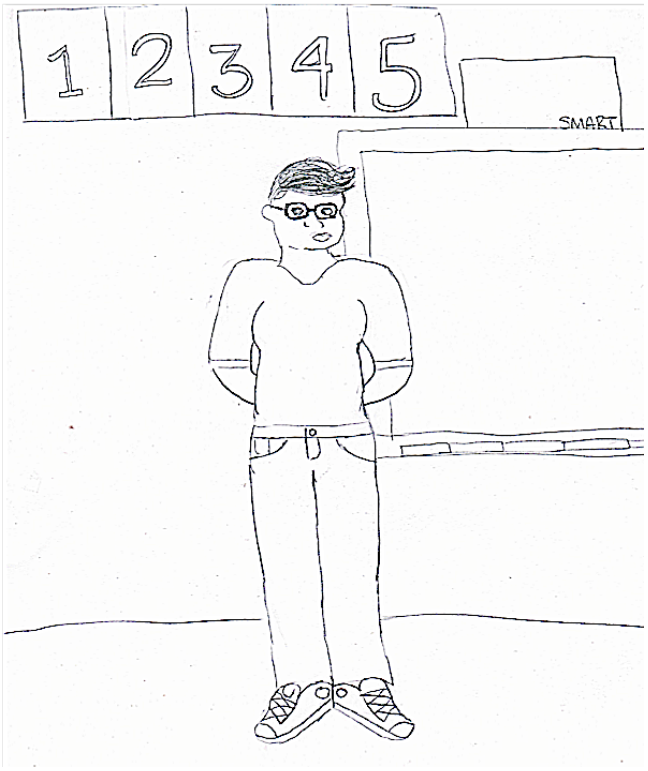

Figure 3 Drawn by Sophie, a pre-service teacher

Figure 4 Drawn by Molly, a pre-service teacher

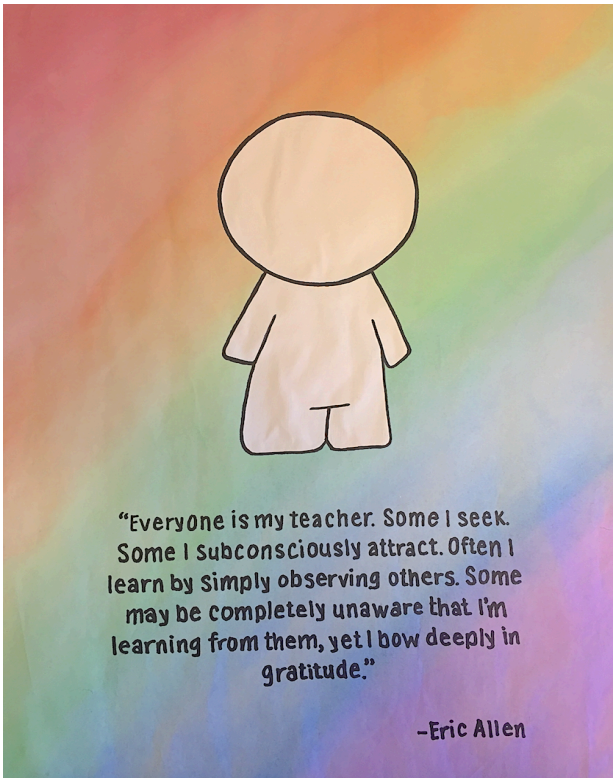

Figure 5 Drawn by Emily, a pre-service teacher


Figure 6 Drawn by Nathan, a pre-service teacher

Figure 7 Drawn by Megan, an experienced teacher

Figure 8 Drawn by Katie, an experienced teacher

Figure 9 Drawn by Grace, an experienced teacher

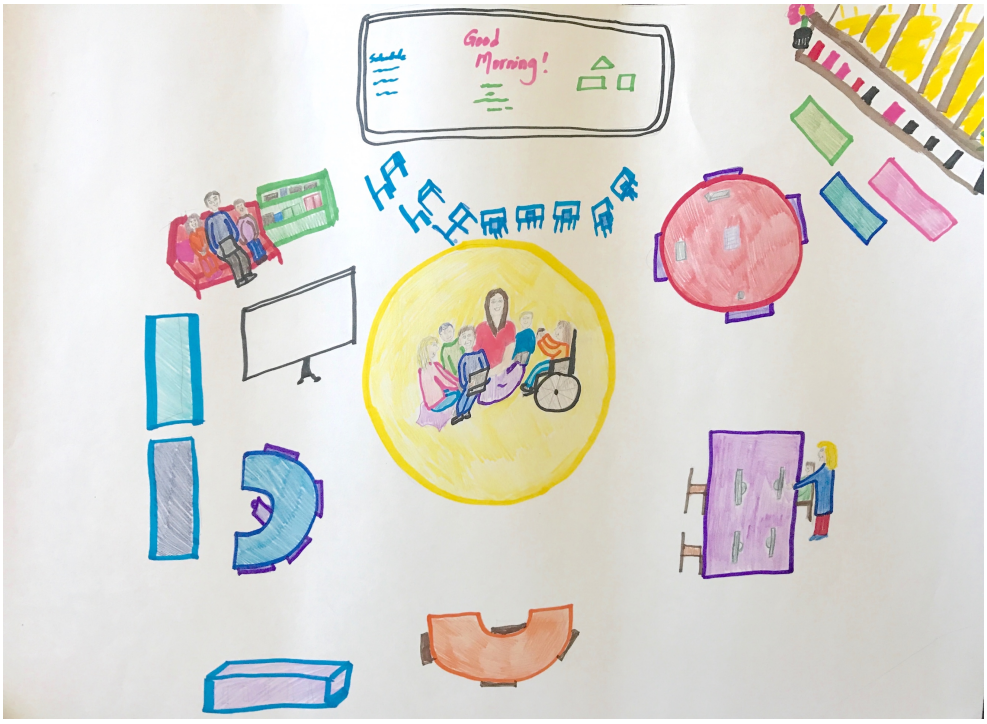

Figure 10 Drawn by Caroline, an experienced teacher

Figure 11 Drawn by Michelle, an experienced teacher

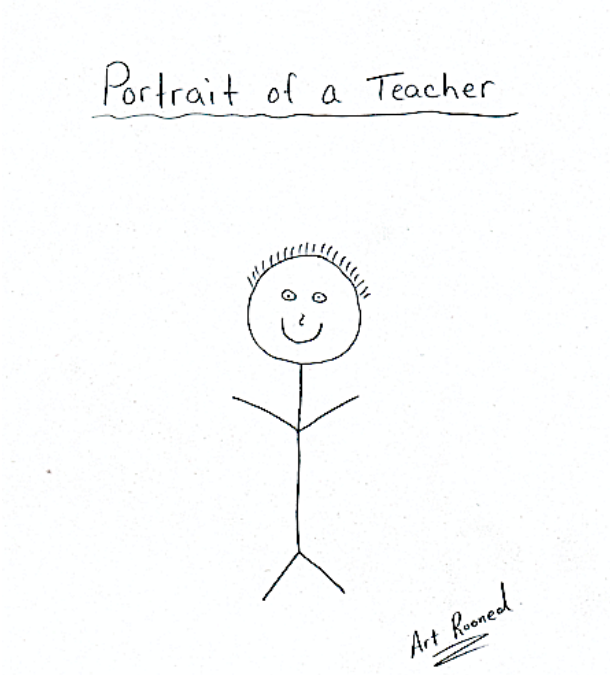

Figure 12 Drawn by Logan, an experienced teacher

Wysocki (2004) offers a framework to preliminarily analyze visual texts and I found her framework useful to preliminarily analyze the drawings of participants in my study. The first aspect that she suggests for looking at a visual text is to name its elements, including naming the size of the page, the sizes of the different visual elements, and how they are coloured. Among the twelve drawings that I collected from the participants, seven of the participants used A4 size paper (8.27 × 11.69 inches) and the rest of them used larger sizes of paper. Caroline's drawing is the largest among the drawings that I collected. However, the teacher and the students that Caroline drew are relatively small compared to the whole classroom setting that she drew. This echoes her teaching belief that creating an accepting and nurturing learning environment for students is her top priority and the curriculum and the content are secondary in importance. Both Charlotte and Caroline drew a very colourful classroom setting, and they used warm colours, such as red and yellow, to create a warm and welcoming

classroom environment for students. Although colour was missing in Sophie's pencil drawing, she highlighted that she would like to have a very colourful classroom when she became a teacher. OWP/P Architects, VS Furniture, & Bruce Mau Design (2010) suggests that "colour has the power to influence a facility's atmosphere and the performance of its occupants" (p. 180) and different colours have different functions. Some of my participants were conscious of the impact of the colours used in the classroom on student learning and they preferred to teach in a colourful classroom.

The second aspect that Wysocki (2004) suggests for examining a visual text is to name relationships among elements. Wysocki (2004) suggests that the viewer can examine whether the visual elements look small and centered or take over the whole page and how his or her attention moves over the page. According to Wysocki (2004), the order in which you look at the visual elements "tells you the order the author/designer wants you to see and hence think about what is on the page/screen, the hierarchical relation between elements" (p. 138). Most participants of my study drew the teacher image in the center of the paper and made sure that the teacher image was big enough to catch viewers' attention. For instance, Michelle drew her own teacher at the center of the paper surrounded by smaller symbols that represented her memorable experiences with the teacher. In contrast to the drawings with the teacher image at the center, the teacher images in the two metaphorical drawings from Nathan and Megan were not centered. Nathan drew a cart full of content including a television, a painting, an oven, and various other things, pulled by a teacher. He wanted to convey the message that what students learn should not be limited to content from textbooks, but rather from a variety of resources besides textbooks. Megan drew herself outside in a vast field to represent that teaching and learning is vast and full of possibilities, and drew a tree to

show that both the teacher and the students are like trees, always growing and being both strong and flexible. The metaphorical drawings enabled both Nathan and Megan to express their teaching philosophy better. In their drawings, they focused more on the metaphorical meanings of their drawings than the teacher image, which was probably the reason why the teacher images in their drawings were not centred. Unlike most of the drawings that took over the whole paper, the teacher and the student drawn in Carter's picture were relatively small. He intentionally left the rest of the space of the paper blank because he wanted to put emphasis on the one-on-one interaction between the teacher and student, which he valued the most as a teacher. He wanted that one student to represent all the other students. His drawing allowed viewers to imagine how the one-on-one interaction is applied to every other student in the classroom.

The third aspect that Wysocki (2004) suggests is to contextualize the visual elements by seeing how the viewer's experience of a page would be different if the visual elements were changed. She suggests that "[s]ometimes imagining a page with a replacement or change helps us see much more clearly what the page is intended to achieve" (p. 139). Grace was an experienced teacher who drew herself posing with one hand on her hip and smiling. She did not draw herself with any cultural markers that implied her teacher's role, such as a classroom setting or formal clothing. She drew herself not in a professional workplace but simply as a person, because she believed that she was the same person inside or outside the school. Her drawing showed her desire to be herself instead of changing herself to meet others' expectations of what she was supposed to do or be as a teacher.

Like the drawings that Weber and Mitchell (1995) collected, there are cultural markers of a teacher image, such as formal dressing, pointer stick, blackboard, student

desks, the apple on the teacher's desk, and math on the board, in the drawings that I collected from my participants, although several of the participants drew a SMART Board instead of a blackboard and pointer sticks did not commonly appear in my participants' drawings. When reviewing their drawings, several participants indicated that they subconsciously drew the cultural markers of schooling that are derived from their own school experiences and/or traditional assumptions about teaching. For instance, Charlotte realized that the whole teaching environment that she drew in her picture, including the board, the SMART Board, the alphabet, the carpet, the teacher in front of a classroom, and the pile of grading assignments, was related to her own memories of school. She realized that she would have drawn a round table and had the students around the table, but she drew all the students sitting at their desks, which she believed reflected an old-fashioned way of teaching that she grew up with. She was the only participant who drew a teacher holding a pointer stick. She believed that it came from her childhood memory because she had seen her own teachers holding pointer sticks and she dreamed of having them herself when she was young. Molly talked with me about her ideas of having pictures of female writers and a LGBTQ flag in her classroom because she is a feminist and an activist for the LGBTQ community. However, the picture that she drew did not show anything about activism. Instead, she wrote "Test on Tuesday" on the board, which reinforced the traditional form of assessment. The cultural markers which appeared in participants' drawings confirmed Weber and Mitchell's (1995) idea that teachers' perceptions of their profession are not only personal, but also cultural, historical, and institutional. In these cases, the participants' drawings did not necessarily represent their personal beliefs about teaching, but reflected the cultural stereotypes of teachers, the institutional expectations,

and their childhood experiences. Although many of the participants intentionally challenged some of the traditional expectations of teaching through their drawings, when they took a second look at their drawings, they found that their drawings still included some traditional and stereotypical elements of teaching that might conflict with their own teaching beliefs.

In the study by Weber and Mitchell (1995), teachers were often portrayed standing in front of a chalkboard. The traditional image of teacher standing in front of a board also appeared in my participants' drawings, but there were some exceptions as well. Katie was an experienced teacher who had been away from the school system for many years. She said that her drawing of a teacher standing in front of a whiteboard dated her because that was the way of teaching when she taught in the school system many years ago. She acknowledged that her drawing reflected a traditional view of what a classroom looked like and she was not sure whether it has changed in today's classroom. Two of the pre-service teachers, Sophie and Molly, drew themselves standing up straight in front of a SMART board, which they believed represented the expectation of school. Sophie said that she wanted to be physically involved in the classroom, walking around and being with students, but she was afraid that she had to resort to a more teacher-centered approach to fit into the ideal of school. Another pre-service teacher, Carter, also indicated that when he went into the real school setting, he found out that lecturing was still a dominant teaching method and there was not a lot of change from how he was taught in school. He had a strong desire to move beyond being a traditional teacher, and that was the reason why he challenged the stereotypical image of the teacher in front of the board in his drawing. In his picture, Carter portrayed the ideal teaching situation for him where he is able to interact with the students on a one-

on-one basis because he believed that he can better connect with each student through one-on-one instruction. However, he did realize that his drawing contained the classic desk, pencil, and paper, which simultaneously reflected the traditional teaching methods. Like Carter, Caroline also portrayed an ideal teaching situation for her. In her picture, the teacher is kneeling down on the mat surrounded by her students, and the students are working in groups with a variety of technical devices and resources. Even the student in the wheelchair has her own device to participate in the class. Moreover, there are different shapes of tables in the classroom and a technology area where caregiver volunteers are helping the students with their projects. There are also yoga mats by the window for students to relax. She believed that the nurturing, collective, and cozy learning environment that she visualized challenged the traditional form of instruction and represented the direction that education is heading to. Carter's drawing of a teacher bending over to help a student and Caroline's drawing of a teacher surrounded by her students challenged the stereotypical image of the teacher in front of the board and the teacher-centred instructional approach. Both Carter and Caroline preferred to take a student-centred approach to teaching, but they were also aware that their drawings represented their ideals of teaching. How they would teach in real school setting might still be constrained by institutional expectations to some extent. The discussions of their drawings revealed the tensions that they experienced between their ideals of teaching and their real experiences.

The drawings that I collected from my study showed some new cultural markers of teaching that did not appear in Weber and Mitchell's (1995) study that was conducted over twenty years ago. Those emerging cultural markers include SMART board, iPads, computer, math manipulatives, different shapes of tables, parent volunteers, yoga mats,

and the teacher bending over to help a student or sitting surrounded by students. These cultural markers not only reflected today's reality that technology has been widely integrated into the classroom, but also represented a more student-centered learning environment and a new understanding of the teacher's authority and power. Weber and Mitchell (1995) suggests that some traditional cultural markers of schooling, such as the teacher's desk and pointer stick, "symbolize teacher authority and control" and they reinforce the idea that "an important part of a teacher's job is to control student behavior and maintain order in the classroom" (p. 47). Britzman (2003) also suggests that one of the cultural myths of teaching is that everything depends on the teacher and that the teacher is responsible for individually controlling the class and student learning. I similarly acknowledge that some traditional cultural markers that symbolize the teacher's power still exist in the drawings of my participants. However, the newly emerging cultural markers showed the trend that the teacher is perceived as a facilitator instead of a controller of the class. In the classroom environment that Caroline visualized, the students are not only learning from their teacher, but also learning from different resources. The teacher portrayed in her drawing is not distancing herself from the students, but rather working with the students. Three participants, Logan, Grace and Megan, also highlighted that they did not consider the teacher as someone who controls students and maintains order. Instead, they believed that the teacher is someone who responds to students' different needs and builds mutual respect with students. Both the participants' drawings and the ideas they expressed indicated a shift from perceiving teaching as synonymous with control to perceiving the goal of teaching as facilitating student learning and addressing student needs.

Weber and Mitchell (1996b) suggest that drawing is an excellent tool for "bringing to light nuances and ambivalences in teaching identities that might otherwise remain hidden" (p. 303). Their study showed that what the participants drew and their actual teaching beliefs could conflict with one another, and that the self-portraits that pre-service teachers drew before and after their practicums could be completely different. The contradictory images and stories of teachers revealed the participants' "own struggles, stances, and ambivalences in relation to the dominant transmission images of teaching culturally embedded in the teaching profession" (Weber & Mitchell, 1996b, p. 307). Since "participants themselves are central to the interpretive process" in visual research (Mitchell, 2011, p. 11), the participants of my study were involved in interpreting and reflecting on their drawings. In several cases, what they showed in their drawings and how they explained their drawings were contradictory. The inconsistencies between the participants' drawings and their explanations of the drawings reflected their struggles when negotiating between their personal desires and the need to perform their teacher identities according to cultural expectations. For instance, both Carter and Katie drew themselves with formal clothing in their self-portrayals, but they both expressed a strong desire to dress casually as teachers. Grace drew herself with tattoos on her arms. However, she said that she usually kept her tattoos covered while teaching because she wanted to keep her school life and her personal life separate. Sophie's drawing presented an image of a queer teacher, which challenges the traditional assumptions of teachers. However, she indicated that she would not reveal her queer identity in the workplace as a new teacher unless she knows there is an accepting school environment for LGBTQ people. She drew herself dressed in casual clothing in her picture, but she believed that she would probably dress more business-

casual because she feared that other people would be confused about her role in school if she dressed too casually. Moreover, the participants' drawings reflected the tension between idealistic images of teachers and what teachers are experiencing. Most of the participants drew the teacher image with a smile to present a positive image of teachers, but several of them admitted that teaching can be a very frustrating job and teachers are not always smiling. The ambivalences revealed in their drawings show that the development of teacher identities involve constant conflicts and negotiation. Teachers do not simply adopt a professional role based on the school norms and cultural expectations of teachers; instead, they constantly struggle with their inner desires and external forces. Compared to the studies of Weber and Mitchell (1995, 1996a, 1996b), some of my participants were more explicit about the ambivalences that they experienced. Part of the reason was that I provided the participants with opportunities to closely examine whether their drawings contrasted with their lived experiences and the cultural expectations of teachers. The detailed discussions on every single aspect of their drawings allowed the participants to express their own teaching beliefs as well as the tensions and struggles that they experienced. Some of the participants also demonstrated a stronger desire to challenge traditional assumptions about teachers through their drawings, but at the same time they were conscious of the institutional constraints and external pressures that impose conservative expectations on teachers.

According to Mitchell (2011), studying the presence of absence in visual images allows researchers to gain a deeper understanding of the issues that they are exploring. In "the photovoice and participatory research projects" that she had been involved in "mostly in Southern Africa and mostly in the context of HIV and AIDs" (Mitchell, 2011, p. 101), the photographs that she collected showed the absence of parents, the

absence of girls and young women, and the absence of students, and the absence of hope. She suggests "the participants themselves go back over the images with the question, 'what's there and what's not there?'" (Mitchell, 2011, p. 115). In my study, I invited the participants to reflect on what was absent in their drawings after they drew their pictures. Several participants said that they would have drawn more students and learning resources in their pictures and would have made the classroom more colorful. Sophie and Molly, who did not draw any students in their pictures, said that the reason why the students were absent in their drawings was because the students would be at the opposite side of the teacher which they found it hard to draw. Sophie wanted to be in the class and down with the students, but she was also aware of the traditional expectation of teachers standing in front of the classroom and establishing their authority over students. Inviting the participants to reflect on what is absent in their drawings helped reveal the complex and even conflicting meanings behind their drawings as well as the impact of cultural expectations and stereotypes on their drawings. Charlotte drew all the students sitting at their desks. When she reflected on her drawing, she identified a couple of things that she could have drawn differently:

> I think the kids being in their desks are not one-hundred-percent today's reality because students are interacting with the SMART Board; they are writing stuff on the board; they are in groups doing projects; they are always moving. This is one of the challenges we need to face today as teachers. We need to get those children up and moving, using their hands and some of them need to learn like that. In this picture, the students are not being up front with the teacher and they are not on the floor doing a project. That's absent from this picture. Also, I think the teacher's desk should not be in the front of the class. The carpet should be left open for students to sit down on the floor or read on the floor. This is something that needs to be modified in this drawing.

Charlotte also realized that she would have drawn a round table and had the students around the table. She believed that there are different sorts of desks in today's classroom, such as round desks, desks that are shaped differently to respond to students'

different learning needs, and desks that have pedals. However, she subconsciously drew traditional desks, which she believed reflected an old-fashioned image of teaching. Charlotte realized that her perceptions of teaching were tightly related to her own school experience. When she was in school, the teacher's desk was in front of the class and students sat at traditional desks. She found that the whole teaching environment including the apple on the teacher's desk, the carpet, the board and the SMART Board was related to her childhood memories. In fact, she thought that the drawing practice was a great learning opportunity for her. She started drawing without thinking too much, but she found out that every single aspect of her drawing had embedded personal and cultural meanings. Grace believed her drawing represented many of her personal teaching beliefs. For example, she drew a very confident self-image because she believed that teachers need to have confidence about themselves instead of showing any hesitation or timidity when going into the classroom. She intentionally did not put a background in her drawing because she did not see herself as a teacher just in the classroom setting. Instead, she wanted to embrace the teachable moments anywhere she could. Grace believed that the drawing activity is a good way for teachers to define themselves and to develop a sense of who they are and what kind of teacher they want to be.

Overall, I argue that the drawing practice is an effective way of examining teachers' negotiations of their personal identities, their professional identities, and the cultural expectations of teachers. The contradictions between participants' drawings and their interpretations of the drawings revealed a tension between their personal beliefs of teaching and culturally expected ways of teaching. Many of the participants intentionally challenged some of the traditional expectations of teaching through their

drawings. However, when they took a second look at their drawings, they found that their drawings still included some traditional and stereotypical elements of teaching, which may contradict their progressive teaching beliefs. Through examining what was present and absent in their drawings, the participants became more aware of their subconsciousness, and of the impact of cultural expectations and school norms on their teacher identities. As Weber and Mitchell (1995) suggest, "our identities as teachers stem from both individual and collective life history" (p. 9). They suggest that the books that we read and the TV shows that we watched during our childhood largely contribute to our preconceptions of teachers, classrooms, and schools. According to Butler (2004), "the viability of our individual personhood is fundamentally dependent on social norms" (p. 2). In other words, we cannot separate our personal identities from the broader social and cultural contexts because our personal beliefs and values are always situated in a social world. The drawing activity used in my study can be integrated in teacher education programs to help pre-service teachers examine how those broader social and cultural contexts impact their teacher identities. In the following sections, I will focus on two specific cultural expectations that emerged in the drawing activity and will discuss how teachers perform their identities within and against those cultural expectations.

4.3 The teacher's body

According to Butler (1988), the body is not a natural fact, but a materiality that bears cultural and historical meanings. Judith Butler suggests that "it is through the body that gender and sexuality become exposed to others, implicated in social processes, inscribed by cultural norms, and apprehended in their social meanings"

(Butler, 2004, p. 20). She claims that "the body has its invariably public dimension; constituted as a social phenomenon in the public sphere, my body is and is not mine" (Butler, 2004, p. 21). I argue that it is through the body that teachers also perform their personal and professional identities, and the teacher's body has been constantly shaped by the cultural expectations that regulate what teachers are supposed to behave and look like. However, there are also possibilities for teachers to challenge cultural norms through the ways that they dress, speak, and behave. As Butler (2004) suggests, the body can be regarded as a process of becoming that "exceeds the norm, reworks the norm, and makes us see how realities to which we thought we were confined are not written in stone" (p. 29). The arts-based practice of drawing a teacher (any teacher) "directs attention to teachers' bodies, and requires decisions regarding adornment, appearance, clothing, and accessories" (Mitchell & Weber, 1999, p. 131), which helped disrupt the mind/body dualism and allowed me to closely examine the teacher's body and to explore how the participants performed their teacher identities through the body.

In terms of dressing and all other kinds of bodily modification, the drawing practice showed that how the participants modified their bodies was persuasively influenced by their perceptions of the school norms. Three of the participants drew themselves wearing formal clothing because they perceived that teachers are expected to dress formally. Megan, an experienced teacher, introduced her drawing as follows: "my appearance would look like traditional. I am a female, and I am white. I am wearing a skirt and a sweater." Although Megan admitted that she drew a traditional teacher image, she did not think that she was a very traditional teacher as she appeared to be in her drawing. She considered herself a creative teacher who adopted innovative approaches to teaching. However, she did believe that it is important to distinguish

herself from the students through her choice of clothing. For her, dressing formally was a cultural marker that identified her as a teacher. Carter and Katie also drew themselves dressing conservatively. Although they expressed their inner desire to dress casually as teachers, both of them felt the need to adjust their dressing based on the expectations that the school system put on teachers. The preservice teacher, Carter, drew himself wearing dress pants, a shirt, a belt and a tie in his picture. He said that he wore jeans all the time, but when he went out to teach, he had to buy new pants. When he was an intern, he felt the pressure to adapt to the school norm and to wear what he was told to wear. He hoped that someday in the future he could find a school that did not require formal dressing and he could wear jeans every day. The experienced teacher, Katie, drew herself teaching both high school English and adult ESL classes. She drew herself wearing a sweater and dress pants with a belt. She had earrings, a watch, and a necklace because she liked jewelry. In this sense, she brought a sense of personal identity to the classroom through the jewelry items she wore. However, she believed that her drawing not only represented herself, but also represented the school culture. She wished to have the freedom to dress in her own style, but she also acknowledged that dressing accordingly made her feel more comfortable and accepted as a teacher.

Sophie, a pre-service teacher, drew herself dressing casually and expressed a strong desire to challenge the traditional teacher image. She drew herself wearing jeans, shirt and sneakers. She liked wearing sneakers and that was something she would like to be able to stick to as a teacher. However, as our conversation went on she began to reveal her worries about dressing too casually:

> When I was drawing, I imagined myself wearing that everyday. I feel comfortable dressing in that way. But I fear I lack a polished look of what a teacher should look like. I look more like an intern, or an older sibling picking up the student. If I wear jeans and shirt and walk around the school, I think

> people are very confused as to what my role in the school is. This is something I fear once I become a full teacher. I will probably have to give up my sneaker dream, but I hope not. I will probably be wearing more business-casual compared to this picture.

Sophie's drawing reflected her ideal image of teacher, and she was also prepared to compromise some of her ideals when needed. As a pre-service teacher, she doubted that she would have the power to challenge school norms. She also feared that people would think she was not able to teach if she dressed too casually. She believed that whether she is a good educator should not be based on what she is wearing. However, it seemed that the expectation of dressing formally had a persuasive influence on her. Her fear came from being different from what she was expected to look like and from not being socially recognized as a teacher.

Not all the participants thought there was still a need for teachers to dress formally. They believed that the school culture regarding teacher dress may vary from school to school. Some of the participants told me that in the schools where they taught teachers could dress casually, but that they all had memories of seeing teachers dressing formally when they were young. Caroline, an experienced teacher, drew herself wearing casual clothing and kneeling down on the mat with her students around her and she said that she usually wore casual clothing when teaching. However, she recalled that her own teachers wore very plain and business-like clothes when she was in school. Molly, a pre-service teacher, drew herself wearing a polka dot dress that came to her knees. She told me that she usually wore colorful dresses, boots and leggings during her internship. She grew up with two teachers as parents and her parents dressed very formally. She recalled that her father often wore dress shirts, blazers and tie, and her mother often wore dressy clothes. She believed that the expectations of teachers' dressing have been changing now although there are still expectations that teachers

should not show too much of their chests or legs and that their clothes should not be too tight. Although the dress codes for teachers may vary from school to school, wearing tight clothes or showing too much skin is generally considered inappropriate for both male and female teachers (Thompson, n.d.). Molly firmly believed that how teachers dress is individually-based because that is who they are and that is what they are comfortable in and she used her dressing as a pedagogical approach. She dressed in her own style because she wanted the students to know her as a person. She also wanted to encourage her students to show her who they were. She found that students had so much teen pressure about looking certain ways and acting in certain ways and that they dressed the same depending on the fad that week. She wanted to encourage her students to dress in their own styles and to be confident in themselves by modeling her style herself. Molly had a physical disability, but she did not think that her physical disability influenced her ability to teach in any sense. She only had one arm, but she said that she would not feel offended or embarrassed if students ask her about it. Instead, she believed that her disability could help her better connect with students with exceptionalities. She said that she was like an open book and she would like to show who she was as a person to her students. She found that the students with exceptionalities were more comfortable around her because of her physical disability. She was modeling through her body image that everyone can achieve their goals and live a happy life regardless of whether he or she has an exceptionality or not.

Charlotte drew a teacher that she visualized in a classroom, and she believed that the teacher that she drew was not dressed in any kind of extravagant way. She thought that a teacher is a normal human being wearing a normal set of clothes that the students could relate to. She drew the teacher wearing comfortable shoes because she

believed that teachers needed to go all over the place as the day moved along. Instead of drawing a still image of teacher, Charlotte's drawing addressed the movement of a teacher. Charlotte drew the same teacher in four different places and the lines described the teacher's movement. The teacher in her picture moved from the front of the class to the teacher's desk, to the SMART Board, and to the student. She also drew the teacher with a fit body because she believed that teachers had to represent the image of healthy lifestyle. However, there is no pre-existing definition of what body shape a teacher is supposed to be. In contrast to Charlotte's drawing, Nathan drew a teacher covered in baggy clothing so as not to reveal too much about the teacher's body shape. McLeod and Stevens (2012) conducted research on pre-service teachers' understanding of teacher dress codes and they suggested that teachers need to set a broader range of examples of appropriate ways to dress. I argue that we also need to unsettle the idealized images of a teacher's body and develop a more inclusive understanding of a teacher's body shape and physical appearance. When reflecting on her drawing, Charlotte was wondering why she drew the teacher's hair so short. She had long hair and she loved long hair, but she felt like teachers have short hair. She thought that teachers are always busy and short hair can help them concentrate on what they are doing and save time. She said that maybe she would get annoyed with her long hair someday after she became a teacher. Charlotte portrayed a dedicated teacher image in her picture and she wanted to become the teacher that she drew, being everywhere in the classroom and putting student learning as the top priority. In contrast with Molly who highlighted that teachers can wear their personalities, Charlotte's interpretation of her drawing implied that teachers need to be self-sacrificing and modify their bodies to suit the busy nature of teachers' work.

Grace was an experienced teacher who considered herself untraditional in terms of dressing professionally or teaching conservatively. She introduced her drawing as follows:

> It is me. Pretty causal. I am just wearing jeans and simple top. I have crazy finger polish on because I usually have crazy finger polish on, usually blue or green. I have tattoos on my arms and that's what I have on my arms. I don't meet or encounter teachers who have a lot of noticeable tattoos, so I am usually able to stand out.

Grace mentioned that she had received comments from other teachers that she was presenting a negative image with the tattoos. In her view, teachers can not teach inclusion if they exclude somebody for purely superficial reasons. She believed that she presented a more positive figure instead of a negative stereotype because she had tattoos and she was smart and well-educated. She thought of herself as a cool teacher, and she thought that what she looked like did not affect her ability to teach. She said that she did not feel uncomfortable showing her tattoos when she taught at a full-time teaching position. However, she emphasized that she usually kept her tattoos covered, especially when she was a substitute teacher. She had her tattoos covered because she did not want to offend anyone, and she would like to keep her school life and her personal life separate. Howard and Lloyd (2012) discussed a novice teacher's experience with her pierced and tattooed teaching body. Because of her modified body, the teacher received a supervisory gaze from the principal, which made her feel very embarrassed. The supervisory gaze was a powerful gaze that "efficiently and wordlessly curbed [her] behaviour and snuffed out the questionable conversation" (p. 42). She decided to hide her piercings and tattoos in order to create an expected teacher appearance for other people to look at. However, she found out that her students never criticized her modified body and they were very curious about her piercings and tattoos. Inspired by her

students, she realized that she did not have to downplay her modified teaching body or to be afraid of the gaze of others. Instead, she needed to be more confident in herself and to "allow body modifications to enter into valued classroom discussions" (Howard & Lloyd, 2012, p. 48). Similar to the experience of this novice teacher, Grace found that her students were not judgmental of her tattoos and sometimes her tattoos became an ice breaker and a good communication starter. Her students also found her relatable because they had similar family backgrounds. Grace was raised in a working-class family and many of her students were like her. Grace found out that exposing her personal identities to a certain degree can help her connect with the students because there was always something about her personal life that her students could relate to.

Michelle was an experienced French teacher and she drew her old French Immersion teacher from Junior High school who had a big influence on her. In her picture, she drew the teacher's face surrounded by many symbols that represented her memories of him. She used the combination of image and text to illustrate her memorable experiences with the teacher. For instance, she drew the fox and rose to represent the experience of performing the play *The Little Prince* in Montreal with her French class. She included a quote from the play in French under the images, "What is essential is invisible to the eye." Moreover, on the left side of her drawing, she wrote "Never again" in French, which was the name of a song that they sang sometimes in class. She recalled that he was an extremely strict teacher, but that language acquisition in his class was wonderful. She admired his high expectations of his students that pushed them to be the most they could be. She used the same attitude when she was teaching. She also found that many of the teaching methods that her French teacher used were very effective and she was using the same teaching techniques in her own

classroom. She drew the picture of the chalk board to represent those teaching techniques. One of the activities that she was using was "Thought of the Day". In her class, she had her students do five minutes of quiet writing every day on the "Thought of the Day". Michelle's own school experience plays an important role in her teaching practice. However, it is not always the case that teachers teach the way they were taught. Cox (2014) suggests that teachers "teach the way they preferred to be taught" (p. 39) instead of teaching the way they were taught. Since Michelle had a positive learning experience, she adopted many of the teaching methods used by her French teacher.

Michelle did not think it was necessary to draw the whole body of the teacher because she believed that what she had learned from her teacher was more memorable to her than the teacher's physical appearance. People tend to pay less attention to the teacher's body because the teacher's body is often not considered as important as his or her mind. Alsup (2005) argues that teaching is not simply an intellectual act. It also involves "the body where thoughts and feelings are housed" (Alsup, 2005, p. 92). George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (1999) challenge the mind/body dualism that places mind above body, suggesting that "one's biological or physical makeup and corporeal experiences exist in a reciprocal relationship with thinking, reasoning, and decision making" (as cited in Alsup, 2005, p. 90). The teacher's body is an integral part of the teacher's personal and professional identities, and teachers need to be aware of the impact of the cultural expectations on shaping their bodies. Teachers' body images have also been rigidly defined in popular culture. According to Weber and Mitchell (1995), teachers are either portrayed as "the 'serious-business' look that so many real-life teachers adopt or a sloppy dowdy look that invites indifference, derision, or pity," and "[b]oth styles reinforce an image of teacher as asexual, concerned only with the mind"

(p. 71). These portrayals in popular culture contribute to the cultural expectations that people hold of teachers' body modifications, and they influence the ways that teachers physically embody their professional identities. According to Alsup (2005), "the ease or difficulty of embodying a teacher identity was dependent on the amount of similarity between the pre-service teacher's and that preferred in the discourse community of secondary school teachers" (p. 90). Teachers whose body images do not fit into the dominant discourse are likely to experience difficulties and frustrations in the process of becoming a teacher.

Overall, many of the participants in my study felt pressured to dress based on the cultural expectations and school norms. Dressing accordingly made them feel more recognized as teachers and more accepted in the school environment. However, sometimes it meant that they had to suppress their personal preferences of dress and body modifications. The teacher's body is often ignored, but it plays an important part in the development of teachers' professional identities. From dress, hairstyles, accessories, and tattoos to body shape and movement, and facial expressions, the participants modified their bodies to fit into the teaching profession. Some of them used their own body modifications as a pedagogical approach to better relate to their students or to encourage the students to be themselves instead of following the trends. Three of the participants drew a teacher image without any personal identifiers to unsettle stereotypical images of teachers' bodies. On the one hand, the dominant discourses and cultural scripts of teachers' appearance and dress have a persuasive impact on teachers' bodies, but on the other hand, teachers need to critically examine those expectations and to learn to respect their personal identities and preferences.

4.4 Cultural expectations of female and male teachers

The socially and culturally constructed nature of gender identities means that representations of men and women are various and are subject to social and cultural variation, with some representations being more dominant than others. For example, beauty is viewed as more important for women than for men; nevertheless, "female beauty is a temporary state to be transgressed by even the most beautiful woman" (Longhurst et al., 2008, p. 219). In contrast to representations of femininity, representations of masculinity often involve "bodily displays of aggression and violence" (Longhurst et al., 2008, p. 219). According to Fisher et al. (2008), "Western society has come to analyse the world in terms of sets of dualisms," such as emotion and reason, body and mind, weak and strong, and private and public, and "women are often associated with the former of each of the oppositional pairs" (p. 91). This explains why women are often linked to emotion and irrationality and are often regarded as "private homemaker and guardian of family values" (Fisher et al., 2008, p. 92). In popular culture, the teaching profession has been regarded as "feminine and low status" and has been presented "as a form of babysitting, rather than an academic or intellectual pursuit" for female teachers (Fisher et al., 2008, p. 93).

Teaching young children has often been regarded as women's work (Drudy, 2008). The assumption of teaching as an extension of women's nurturing nature devalues women teachers' professional capabilities for teaching. Weber and Mitchell (1995) revealed the stereotype that "women are especially suited to be good elementary teachers because they are kind and nurturing" (p. 51). This gender stereotype still existed in my participants' perceptions of female teachers. Several of the participants

of my study assumed that women are more suitable for teaching at the primary/elementary school level, and that men are more suitable at the intermediate/secondary level. Many of the participants recalled that the teachers they had when they were at elementary school were mainly females. Caroline stated that the majority of her colleagues in the elementary school where she taught were female. Charlotte, a pre-service primary/elementary school teacher, explained to me why she chose to draw a female elementary school teacher in her picture:

> I didn't draw myself. I just thought of a regular teacher in the classroom and I was like looking up at the classroom and seeing what she is doing. I was thinking about drawing a man, because I think there are more and more men going into primary/elementary schools or just education in general. But when I look at my university class, there are forty-one girls and one guy. I am not gender stereotyping it, but I do think a woman provides the maternal aspect of the whole taking care of children everyday. I think it's easier for women to be around with children just because of the maternity that they have in their genes. There is a lot more men in high school. Because in high school you are dealing with young adults. Men can deal with adults. When you are in high school, you really do not want anybody to take care of you. You just want to do your thing. You have different needs and want to be approached in different ways when you are in high school.

Charlotte tried to justify the assumption that elementary school teachers play a motherly role for younger students, and that female teachers' motherly instinct makes the teaching job natural to them. However, she also thought it would be wonderful to have more male teachers in front of a classroom because male teachers probably have different ways to teach than the approaches taken by female teachers. Caroline, a special education teacher, also highlighted that there should be more male teachers because male teachers are rare in special education. She believed that it is important for students to learn male gender roles through having male teachers around.

Carter, a male pre-service teacher, said that he originally wanted to become a primary/elementary teacher. The reason he did not follow his initial idea was because

he thought that, traditionally, females go into that profession. He doubted that male teachers would be as nurturing as female teachers, and he was afraid that he would not get a job if he were to do the primary/elementary level. Therefore, he decided to become a secondary school teacher. When he was doing his teaching practicum, he noticed the different roles that male and female teachers played. Carter found that male teachers are expected to participate more in sports activities in school and female teachers are expected to be nurturing and caring. He gave me an example as follows:

> During my internship, I volunteered to go on a ski trip helping out students. There was a group of male teachers who were very excited to go, but ... no female teacher wanted to go. They had to [ask for] females to go because they needed one female to go to the school trip. I thought it was very weird. It might just be all the female teachers in the school did not know how to ski, but that female teacher who did go with us stayed inside. She was the one who gave hot chocolate to students. If anyone hurt themselves, she would be the one to take care of them, while all the male teachers went out skiing. I don't want to say this, but almost the male teachers are more fun. They fool around. They are like clowns. Female teachers are more nurturing. They are someone you can go and talk to.

Carter highlighted that although male teachers are often expected to be fun and make jokes, he did not consider himself as a typical fun teacher. Instead, he would rather be the teacher that students can talk to. He would like to sit down and chat with students and get to know students as individuals. When he was young, he felt that there was a lack of community spirit within the class where he was in school and he wanted to add the community spirit to his class when he became a teacher. However, he was also aware that it is against an unwritten rule for a female student to stay alone with a male teacher just to talk after class. He found it a little bit tough for him to try to take on a traditionally feminine role. He was aware that male teachers are not expected to be as close to students as female teachers are and he had to perform his teacher identities according to those unwritten rules. In terms of the unique challenges that male teachers

confront, Parr and Gosse (2011) suggest that male teachers tend to be "unduly vulnerable to false accusations of inappropriate conduct with pupils, frequently of a sexual nature" (p. 379) and male teachers' constant fear of false accusations limits their "ability to act in ways that they otherwise more naturally might; ways in which their female colleagues were free to act without suspicion" (p. 389). Molly also noticed the constraints that male teachers have. She felt that it was improper for a male teacher is left in the classroom alone with a female, but if she were left alone with a male student, there would not be such judgment.

Molly pointed out that there is a lot of pressure for female teachers to be nurturing towards their students. As a female teacher, Molly thought that she was not a very nurturing person, which was one of the main reasons that she went into the intermediate/secondary education instead of the primary/elementary education. During her internship, she noticed that female teachers were expected to do a lot of volunteer work. She found that female teachers would serve food for students and no male teachers would do that. She also noticed that students would be more respectful for male teachers than for female teachers. Even when the teachers were in equal employment levels or the female was in a higher employment level, the students would still view the male as being more important. When male students were highly disrespectful to the female teachers, the female teachers would have to get male teacher to help deal with the problem. She believed that there is expectation for male teachers to get leadership roles even though female teachers are as capable and sometimes even more capable of doing so. Statistics Canada (2018, September 7) states that eighty-four percent of elementary school and kindergarten teachers in Canada in 2016 are females. According to Riddell, Tett and Winterton (2006), in the period between 1999 and 2000 "whilst

women continue[d] to dominate in primary teaching in developed countries and their numbers [were] increasing in secondary education, men continue[d] to hold most management positions" (p. 7) in most European countries. Griffin (1997) suggests that female teachers tend to devalue leadership positions in school. Female teachers "think of how they can serve the occupation; males often seek promotion into administrative positions, putting distance between themselves and children" (Griffin, 1997, p. 14). Hoff, Menard, and Tuell (2006) suggest that "women [were] still under-represented in school administration, particularly at the highest levels of responsibility" (p. 43) in Maine and women faced barriers with regard to accessing, acculturating and advancing in school leadership roles. In Canada, the percentage of female principals was 47% during the 2004-2005 school year; however, the percentage varied by school level (Blouin, 2008, December 1). The percentage of female principals of elementary schools was 53%, while female principals took up only 32% of principals at secondary level (Blouin, 2008, December 1).

Emily, a pre-service intermediate/secondary teacher, was eager to challenge the problematic assumption that female teachers are softer and kinder, and that male teachers are more strict and tough on their students. She was a strict teacher, which surprised some of her students. She felt that expecting female teachers to be soft-hearted is problematic. She was convinced that teachers need to have strict guidelines because students need to learn responsibility, time management, and other important life skills.

It is worth noting that several of the participants mentioned that their favorite teachers were male teachers when they were at school. Both Charlotte and Megan indicated that although they had more female teachers than male teachers at school, their favorite teachers were males. As discussed earlier, the most important teacher to

Michelle was a male French Immersion teacher. Michelle believed that a good teacher was an outsider, pushing the limit and not always doing what is expected. She thought that her French teacher was an outsider. He had very strict standards beyond the school regulations. He would throw chairs and chalk, and do things that teachers cannot do in today's classroom, but he also pushed against administration to take his students on field trips. The best teacher that Logan had in school was a male teacher. That teacher was very strict, but treated students equally and wanted the best from every student. Logan shared with me a memorable experience of that teacher. When he was in Grade 8, the school principal saw him wearing shorts at school and told him to get changed because the school policy did not allow students to wear shorts even in summer. Logan kept wearing shorts for the next few days and he kept being called to the principal's office and being told to get changed. His classroom teacher told him that by rights students cannot be told what to wear in school because there is a law in place that school cannot deny a child in education due to their economic circumstances. So the next day, Logan went to the principal's office and said, "Sir, you can't deny me an education because of the clothes I wear to school." The principal was a little bit shocked when he said that. At the end of the day, there was an announcement that the policy was changed and the students could wear shorts to school since then. Logan found that his teacher had supported him in that way. It could be a coincidence that the four participants' favorite teachers were males. However, male teachers may be perceived to have certain traits that leave a deeper impression on students. Dalton (2010) suggests that male teachers in movies tend to have a better sense of humor than female teachers, whereas female teachers in movies play a more nurturing role. In school movies, such as *Dead Poets Society* (Haft et al., 1989) and *The Chorus* (Mauvernay, Perrin, Jugnot, Cohn, &

Barratier, 2004), male teachers are often portrayed as outsiders who challenge the school norms and school authorities.

Overall, the participants' stories showed that their choice of teaching level tended to be a gendered decision and their teaching practice was a gendered experience. Female participants felt that they are expected to be more nurturing and softer as teachers, while male participants sensed that they are expected to be either more fun or stricter and tougher as teachers. Some of the participants experienced tension between their personal identities and beliefs and the dominant discourses of male and female teachers, and they were aware of the gender inequalities in the teaching profession. Some of the participants understood why the stereotypical gender roles of male and female teachers exist, but they also believed that those gender stereotypes need to be unsettled. Three of the participants, Nathan, Logan and Emily, drew the teacher image without gender indicators to avoid reinforcing any gender stereotypes of the teacher. Their drawings represented the change in people's attitudes towards the conventional assumption that teaching is mainly women's job. In the next section, I summarize the key insights that I gained from the drawing activity.

4.5 Summary

Through examining the drawings of participants, I gained the following insights: 1) Participants' drawings revealed both their personal beliefs about teaching and their perceptions of the cultural expectations of teachers. The traditional cultural markers of schooling identified in Weber and Mitchell's (1995) study, such as the blackboard, the teacher standing in front of the classroom, and the teacher's pile of grading assignments, still appeared in the drawings of my participants. The drawings of my participants also

included some new cultural markers, such as SMART boards, different shapes of tables, parent volunteers, and the teacher bending over to help a student. Although some of the participants intended to show their progressive teaching beliefs in their drawings, their drawings included some traditional elements of teaching. Moreover, drawing revealed the ambivalences between participants' personal beliefs and need to conform to the cultural expectations of teachers. The drawing activity, paired with the discussions of drawings, can be used in teacher education programs for pre-service teachers to examine their negotiation of their personal beliefs of teaching and the cultural expectations of teachers. 2) Teachers tend to modify their bodies based on cultural expectations and school norms. Although some participants wished to dress casually at the workplace, they felt the pressure to conform to the expectations of schools and dress formally. The teacher's body is an integral part of the teacher's professional identity and some of the participants used their bodies as a pedagogical approach, such as encouraging their students to dress in their own styles by modeling it themselves. The three participants who drew their teacher image without any personal identifiers showed a strong desire to challenge traditional expectations of teachers' appearance and dress. 3) The participants of my study were aware that there are different expectations of male and female teachers. Some participants of my study still held the stereotype that women are more suitable to teach at the primary/elementary school level, and that men are more suited to teach at the intermediate/secondary level, because they believed that female teachers tend to play a motherly role for younger students. These gendered expectations of teachers limited their choices and possibilities of being a teacher. Although one male participant wanted to be become a primary/elementary teacher initially, he decided to be an intermediate/secondary teacher because he doubted that he would be as nurturing

as female teachers. However, three of the participants intentionally kept gender out of their drawings, which showed their desire to unsettle the gender stereotypes of teachers.

Chapter five: Teachers' attachment to and critique of the representations of teachers in movies

5.1 Introduction

Teachers have been represented in many different genres of popular culture, such as movies, television series, and cyberculture (Fisher et al., 2008). These representations of teachers are not merely entertainment; instead, they play an important role in constructing people's understanding of what it means to be a teacher (Fisher et al., 2008). According to Henry Giroux, popular culture is the medium through which people construct their individual and collective identities. He argues that "it is precisely on the terrain of culture that identities are produced, values learned, histories legitimated, and knowledge appropriated" (Giroux, 2002, p. 187-188). In my study, each participant was invited to view at least one school movie of their choice, and to critically examine the fantasies and illusive images embedded in school movies as well as the impact of popular culture on their own professional identities. In the participants' discussions of their chosen school movies, they not only expressed their admiration for the teacher characters, but also identified the problematic portrayals of these teachers. Most of the participants chose to watch some classic school movies, such as *Dead Poets Society* (Haft et al., 1989) and *Mona Lisa Smile* (Johanson & Newell, 2003), while a few of the participants intentionally chose some unconventional movies that provide more complex portrayals of teachers to view. More specifically, among the twelve participants, four participants, including Joel, Emily, Sophie, and Logan, chose the movie *Dead Poets Society* (Haft et al., 1989). Three female participants, including Grace, Katie, and Molly, chose the movie *Mona Lisa Smile* (Johanson & Newell, 2003). Caroline chose the movie *Won't Back Down* (Johnson & Barnz, 2012). Charlotte chose

both the movie *Won't Back Down* (Johnson & Barnz, 2012) and the movie *Bad Teacher* (Miller, Householter, & Kasdan, 2011). Megan chose the movie *Freedom Writers* (DeVito, Shamberg, Sherm, LaGravenese, 2007). Nathan chose the movie *Pay It Forward* (Abrams, Levy, Reuther, & Leder, 2000). Michelle chose three movies to view, including *Monsieur Lazhar* (Déry, McCraw, & Falardeau, 2011), *The Chorus* (Mauvernay et al., 2004), and *The Class* (Benjo, Scotta, & Cantet, 2008). In this chapter, I first discuss the participants' attachment to and critique of John Keating in *Dead Poets Society* (Haft et al., 1989) and Katherine Watson in *Mona Lisa Smile* (Johanson & Newell, 2003) because the participants greatly admired the teacher characters in these two movies and had rich discussions on them. In the latter sections, I discussed the participants' fantasies of devotion and selflessness, their critique of the dualism of the "good" and "bad" teachers, and their perceptions of the alternative portrayals of teachers in school movies.

5.2 Teachers' attachment to and critique of John Keating in *Dead Poets Society*

Four participants, including Joel, Emily, Sophie, and Logan, chose to watch the movie *Dead Poets Society* (Haft et al., 1989), which tells the story of an English teacher, John Keating, who teaches unconventionally and encourages his students to live extraordinary lives. He stands on his desk to inspire his students to look at the world in a different way, and encourages his students to tear out the introduction of their poetry books since he believes that they do not need the conventional rules for rating poetry. However, he is blamed for one student's suicide and he has to resign from his position at the end. All the three pre-service teacher participants, Joel, Emily, and Sophie, expressed their desire to become a teacher like John Keating, but they were also aware of the constraints of being John Keating in real life.

One of the participants, Carter was an English teacher, and he got very attached to John Keating in *Dead Poets Society* (Haft et al., 1989). Carter recalled that when he was young, he was very much like Todd, who was a quiet and introverted student in the movie. In the movie, John Keating made Todd leave his comfort zone and bravely perform poetry in front of the class. When Carter was in Junior and Senior high schools, he was nervous about sharing ideas in class. He wished that he could have had a teacher like John Keating who would have brought him out of his shell and have encouraged him to express himself freely. He wanted to become the teacher who breaks the boundaries and goes beyond the lecture to provide a learning environment where students feel safe and comfortable to express themselves through various forms of arts. However, Carter found it hard to teach in the way that John Keating taught in the real school setting. During his internship, although he had many new ideas about teaching to implement, he had to put aside some of his ideas of teaching to fit into the school that he went into. He found that lecturing is still the main teaching method in the school where he did his internship, and that there is not a whole lot of change from when he went to school. In his internship, he wanted to put the students in groups and teach them in a student-oriented way, but one of his cooperating teachers used PowerPoints to teach and he had to adopt the cooperating teacher's teaching method and use PowerPoint too. Moreover, he found that the way that desks were arranged in the classroom was not conducive to group work, making it hard to break the students into groups. Carter admitted that he probably would not be able to teach in the exact way that John Keating taught, but he could teach closer to the way that John Keating taught than the way that the headmaster taught. In his internship, although he had to adapt to his cooperating

teacher's way of teaching, he did try to add his own material and put his own twist on teaching whenever he could.

Carter also pointed out that, although the movie is inspiring, the traditional teaching style was emphasized by its contrast with John Keating because the movie implies that John Keating is different from everybody else, and that the rest of the teachers in the school taught traditionally. For instance, the movie portrays the Latin teacher who has all the verbs written on the board and has the students repeat them. The headmaster, Mr. Noland, is against John Keating's unorthodox teaching methods and he eventually takes over John Keating's class after Keating is fired. Through reviewing the movie *Dead Poets Society* (Haft et al., 1989), Carter realized that the movie both challenges and reinforces rigid teaching methods. Although the movie portrays an idealistic image of a teacher who teaches differently and makes significant changes to students' lives, the whole school is traditional, which reinforces the idea that the traditional way of teaching dominates in schools. Giroux (2002) also doubts that the movie functions to subvert conservative discourses of teaching. He points out that "as soon as Keating's unorthodox teaching methods appear to threaten the legitimating ideology of the school, he resorts to the discourse of accommodation rather than resistance" (Giroux, 2002, p. 85). When John Keating is blamed for his student's suicide, he passively accepts the fact that he is fired instead of challenging the unfair decision. He encourages his students to live extraordinary lives, but "there is nothing extraordinary in Keating's failure to resist at the end of this film" (Giroux, 2002, p. 85). He has to leave the teaching position and his class is taken over by the headmaster who is in favor of conservative teaching methods. Carter did not like the ending because he believed that we should progress as a society and we should come up with new ideas to

improve ourselves, but if teachers stuck to something that was done years ago and taught in the exact same way, there would be no growth or improvement. The discussion of the movie made Carter aware that a movie can simultaneously unsettle and reinforce traditional teaching styles. Unlike Giroux's ideas that the movie ultimately reinforces traditional discourses of teaching instead of challenging them, Carter felt that the movie encourages people to go beyond conformity, to be individuals, and to use poetry as their voice.

Another pre-service teacher, Emily, found that she understood the movie *Dead Poets Society* (Haft et al., 1989) differently before and after she had her teaching experience. Emily said that before going into her internship, the movie inspired her to teach differently, but after going through some struggles in her own teaching experience, she could better relate to John Keating's struggles and she understood why not everyone can teach that way. She found that the movie encouraged teachers to break school norms and make changes, but that in real life this might be difficult, especially for new teachers. She explained her ideas as follows:

> A teacher always hopes to make a difference and make a change, but it's not always the case. As a new teacher, you have all these bright new, hopeful ideas, but a lot of times you can't implement them for many years, and a lot of times you lose hope in that process. You get stuck in the traditional way of teaching, or the way things are taught now. It takes [that] one teacher to not care about anything, and [to] just do it to make an impact, but there are not many people would be willing to risk their profession to do that. I am not saying that I will be that teacher who wouldn't care, but I have a profession that I need to be able to stay in. I have to walk on thin ice for a while and hope that when I have a little bit more power, I can start making a difference.

Emily did manage to implement some of her own ideas about teaching during her internship. Her cooperating teacher taught in a more traditional way, but she did a lot more hands-on activities. Sometimes her cooperating teacher did not think her plan would work, but the outcome turned out a lot better than her cooperating teacher thought

and her cooperating teacher was learning from her about what the students were capable of. However, Emily admitted that fear always hung over head at this early stage of her teaching career because she could lose her job for any reason. She felt pressure to adapt to the existing school norms before she had a secure job position.

Sophie, a pre-service teacher, also expressed her worries about being John Keating:

> When I was younger, I definitely wanted to become a teacher like John Keating. He is cool. He is teaching the students in his own way. Now I am afraid of being like him. I want to be able to teach within my interests and interests of the class, [being] more nontraditional, but I fear repercussion of that. I don't think it would be as seriously as what happened in the movie, but I am definitely afraid of a large repercussion of nontraditional method of teaching. I don't want to get in trouble. I don't want anything bad to happen.

Sophie admired John Keating a lot, but she said that she would not go as far as to get the students to rip the pages off the book as John Keating did in the movie. If her ways of teaching conflicted with the school norms, she would like to make sure that she did everything in an appropriate and accepted way. She thought that if new teachers could not maintain their teaching positions in the first place, they would not be able to make positive changes for students in future. In school movies, the "good" teachers are the ones who risk their jobs to fight against school authorities. Dalton (2010) points out that the conflicts between school authorities and individual teachers in the movies originate from the different responsibilities they have—"teachers educate the children, and administrators run the institution" (p. 136). As a result, "teachers battle administrators on behalf of their students, and administrators try to exert control" (Dalton, 2010, p. 136). In my study, several participants talked about the conflicts that they had with school administrators. For example, Caroline, a special education teacher, was questioned by the principal for allowing a severely disabled student to go on a field trip

with her Grade Four class. She believed that the principal mainly cared about her professional liabilities and about making sure that she could not be sued if something happened to the students. Caroline said to the principal that students' collaborating and socializing with their peers was written in the functional curriculum and she was also teaching the other students to be comfortable accepting a student with disabilities. In many other school movies, such as *Mona Lisa Smile* (Johanson & Newell, 2003) and *The Chorus* (Mauvernay et al., 2004), teachers eventually have to leave their jobs because of resisting or challenging the orthodox ways of teaching and the authoritative rules in schools. Although these teachers lose the battle against the school authorities, they win respect and trust from their students and they are regarded as the "heroes" who fight for the benefit of their students at all costs. However, the message that teachers have to sacrifice their job security in order to provide better education for students is problematic. As Sophie mentioned, if teachers can stay in their teaching positions longer, they are more likely to make greater and more consistent positive changes to students.

Unlike the three pre-service teacher participants, Logan, an experienced teacher, did not explicitly express a fantasy of being a teacher like John Keating, but he did admire some aspects of this character. He admired that Keating provided his students with a sense of autonomy and taught them to think independently rather than to conform to what they are told to do. In the movie, Keating invites his students to march in their own way in the school courtyard, and "the pedagogical lesson taught in this case is that they must learn how to swim against the stream, to find 'their own walk'" (Giroux, 2002). Like Keating, Logan would like to encourage his students to be individuals and to have independent thoughts. However, Logan thought that movies tend to use

exaggeration for entertainment, so he would never base his thoughts about the real world on a movie. He claimed that his views of teachers mainly came from his own school experience because he had spent hundreds of hours in classrooms with different teachers, and these real-life experience had much more of an impact. However, when I met him a few months after our interview, he asked me to add to my research data that his understanding of the world is not only based on his experience and other's experience in real life, but also shaped by popular culture and media. Possibly my research project inspired him to think about the impact of popular culture on himself afterwards.

Overall, the participants' discussion of *Dead Poets Society* (Haft et al., 1989) not only showed their attachment to the heroic and charismatic teacher images portrayed in the movie, but also demonstrated their awareness of the constraints of achieving those ideals in real life. The three pre-service teacher participants shared their teaching experiences during their internship and expressed their fear of the consequences of becoming a teacher like John Keating at the early stages of their teaching career. In the face of the school norms and school authorities in real life, teachers, especially pre-service teachers, may not be as fearless as the heroic teachers portrayed in school movies are. The pre-service teacher participants felt pressure to adapt to school norms and to their cooperating teachers' teaching styles, but they did strive to make changes whenever they were able to do so. This movie elicitation practice provided the participants the chance to relate their own teaching experience to a teacher character in a movie and to reflect on the characteristics of the teacher characters that they admired. It also made the participants realize that the school movies that inspire teachers to teach innovatively may simultaneously reinforce traditional norms and teaching methods. In

Dead Poets Society (Haft et al., 1989), Mr. Keating represents an innovative teaching style because he goes beyond lecturing and encourages the students to think and explore things on their own. Fisher et al. (2008) suggest that "the school's traditional curriculum and didactic pedagogy leave little room for the kind of independent thinking and personal expression celebrated by Keating" (p. 39). In contrast with Mr. Keating, Mr. Nolan represents a traditional teaching style because he "wants the boys to play by the rules and follow the assigned text uncritically instead of learning to think for themselves" (Dalton, 2010, p. 67). Through reviewing school movies, the participants became more aware of the implied messages in movies and of the impact of popular culture on their perceptions of teaching and being a teacher.

5.3 Teachers' attachment to and critique of Katherine Watson in *Mona Lisa Smile*

Three female participants in the study, including Grace, Katie, and Molly, chose to watch the movie *Mona Lisa Smile* (Johanson & Newell, 2003), which portrays an unconventional art history teacher, Katherine Watson, who challenges the traditional female roles of the 1950s and inspires her students to be intelligent and independent women. Grace was a special education teacher who had taught for many years, and she found that she had a lot of similarities with Katherine Watson. She saw herself as an unconventional teacher in terms of both her appearance and her teaching methods because she had tattoos on her arms and she taught in unorthodox ways. Grace said that she did not care too much about following a strict curriculum or having her students meet certain benchmarks. Instead, she wanted her students to become better people, who get along with others, who think independently and solve problems on their own instead of relying on others. In addition, she wanted them to be generous,

compassionate, and sensitive to others' needs. Grace had seen other teachers yell at students with behavioural issues, and felt their approach was ineffective. She said that she always treated students with respect and she taught her students to treat others the way that they wanted to be treated.

In *Mona Lisa Smile* (Johanson & Newell, 2003), Betty is a student who strongly disagrees with Watson's liberal ideas and is convinced that "her destiny is to get married and have babies" (Bride, 2009, p. 102). In the end, Betty realizes that she does not have to fit into the traditional gender roles of women and she is thankful that Katherine Watson opens their minds. She writes in her final editorial for the college paper that "I dedicate this, my last editorial, to an extraordinary woman, who lived by example and compelled us all to see the world through new eyes" (Bride, 2009, p. 104). The story of Betty resonates with Grace as she recalled that she had a female student who often showed up late to her class and was rebellious, but years later her student added her in Facebook, apologized to her and told her that she was a really good teacher. Like Katherine Watson, Grace eventually earned respect and recognition from her student. The final scene of the movie where the students were chasing Katherine Watson to show their gratitude for her resonated with Grace. Grace recalled that when she left the community where she taught, her students sent her off at the airport crying. She promised the students to come back for their graduation and she did fly back to see them graduate years later. Like Katherine Watson, Grace had a strong connection with her students.

Another similarity that Grace identified with Katherine Watson was that she did not want to conform to the conventional roles of women. Grace was not married and did not have children. She was aware that women are traditionally expected to get

married and have children, but she decided not to do what society expected of her. Moreover, she believed that not having children could make her a more effective teacher because being a special education teacher was demanding and draining. She wanted to focus on her occupation. However, Grace was open to different opinions and lifestyles. She said that she respected people who do have children and have a more conventional lifestyle and she hoped that other people could respect her choices as well.

Near the end of the movie, Katherine Watson as "the advocate of women's rights, is forced to confront her own prejudices" (Fisher et al., 2008, p. 41). Katherine Watson encourages her student, Joan, to go to law school while having a family, but Joan eventually decides to become a housewife. Joan said to Katherine Watson,

> It was my choice not to go…You stand in class and tell us to look beyond the image, but you don't. To you, a housewife is someone who sold her soul for a center hall colonial. She has no depth, no intellect, no interests. You're the one who said I could do anything I wanted. This is what I want. (Bride, 2009, p. 97)

Grace was fully aware that teachers cannot impose their own views and values on their students. She recalled that she had a girl in her Grade Seven class in an Indigenous community and the girl was doing reading and writing as well as math at Grade 10 level. Grace encouraged this gifted girl to go away for school and then come back to help her community, but that girl did not want to go out of the community because she had a close relationship with her family and friends. She ended up dropping out of high school, and later on she had her own family and stayed home. Grace was disappointed by this girl's decision, but knew that it was her choice and she could not force her students to do anything that they did not want to do. She thought that teachers could show students the options available to them and help them realize their dreams, but teachers could not force them to do anything because if it is not their choice, it would not be lasting.

Grace found that domestic violence was frequent in the community where she was teaching and she had a couple of situations where she knew that there was something going on at home with her students. However, as an outsider who was not from the community, she found it very hard to deal with these issues in an appropriate way. As a teacher, she also found that she had limited ability to deal with things that happened to the students outside the school. Grace learned that she as a teacher could not save all the students. Some students went through challenges in their lives and she was not able to change their living conditions. She just did what she could do.

In movies, teachers are often portrayed as saviours who rescue their students. For instance, both *Mona Lisa Smile* (Johanson & Newell, 2003) and *Dead Poets Society* (Haft et al., 1989) portray teachers who rescue their students from being constrained by traditional ways of thinking. Although in this section I mainly focus on the participants' discussions of *Mona Lisa Smile* (Johanson & Newell, 2003), I would also like to further illustrate the image of the teacher as a savior by using some other examples. Both *Dangerous Minds* (Simpson et al., 1995) and *Freedom Writers* (DeVito et al., 2007) portray white teachers who rescue their underprivileged and underachieving non-white students. In *Dangerous Minds* (Simpson et al., 1995), the teacher, LouAnne Johnson, is a white woman who teaches a special program for underachieving students in an inner-city school. Most of the students in her class are either African Americans or Latinos, and they are portrayed as undisciplined, unmotivated, and rebellious. Giroux (2002) suggests that "racial differences in this film are situated within the spatial metaphor of center and margins" (p. 150-151). LouAnne, as a white teacher, is at the center of power, while her students of color are only at the margins. In this way, the movie reinforces the stereotype that "white teachers alone are capable of bringing order, decency, and

hope to those on the margins of society" (Giroux, 2002, p. 156). In reality, however, LouAnne does not make a real difference in the students' lives since she expresses little concern about the students' personal experiences and cultural backgrounds. What she has done is to impose her own cultural values on her non-white students and reinforce white supremacy. Moreover, the African-American parents and the African-American principal in the movie are negatively portrayed in order to show how a white teacher fights against the uncaring parents and the bloodless principal to rescue the students. Similarly, the movie *Freedom Writers* (DeVito et al., 2007) is about a white teacher rescuing her ethnic minority students who are involved in gang violence. The movie puts forward the negative stereotype of ethnic minorities living in a violence-filled environment. However, the audience can see the efforts that the director makes to address and interrupt racism. For example, when the teacher Erin Gruwell intercepts a racist drawing of one of her students, she angrily starts telling them about the horrors of racism, especially how racism, in the extreme, led to the Holocaust. She has her students read *The Diary of Anne Frank* and brings in an actual Holocaust survivor to speak to her students. It is worth noting that Erin chooses racism towards Jewish people rather than the racism endured historically by African Americans as her example when most of the students in her class are African Americans and Latinos. Compared to LouAnne in *Dangerous Minds* (Simpson et al., 1995), Erin Gruwell draws more attention to the students' lives outside of school. She encourages her students to keep a journal every day to record their personal lives, and eventually compiles their journals into a book, named *The Freedom Writers Diary*. Bride (2009) suggests that school movies tend to produce a rescue fantasy that provides the viewers with "an escape from the daily routine and life" (p. 93), and that makes people attach to school movies.

However, Grace was aware that these depictions are unrealistic and that teachers are limited in real life. Sometimes she had an impact on a student and sometimes she did not. Sometimes she just had to let it go and hoped that there would be another teacher who could make a connection with that student. Grace's ideas disrupt the ideal image that teachers are able to rescue all their students.

However, Grace's description about her experience of teaching in an Indigenous community may reinforce some negative stereotypical assumptions about Indigenous people. She talked about the gifted Grade 7 student who was not willing to go anywhere else to further her education and ended up dropping out of high school. Grace also discussed the problem of domestic violence in the community. Although Grace showed great respect to the Indigenous culture of the community and acknowledged her limitations in relation to saving all the students in the ways that she thought was beneficial for them, similar to *Dangerous Minds* (Simpson et al., 1995) and *Freedom Writers* (DeVito et al., 2007), Grace's story falls within the master narrative of a white teacher who tries to rescue his or her underprivileged non-white students. In mass media, white teachers also tend to be portrayed as rescuers of non-white students. For example, in real life, Maggie MacDonnell was awarded the 2017 Global Teacher Prize and she had been teaching in an Inuit Village in the Canadian Arctic for six years (Varkey Foundation, 2018). She did many things to improve the lives of the students and to address the social issues in the community, such as launching a life skills program particularly for female students and establishing a fitness center for local people to develop a healthier lifestyle (Varkey Foundation, n.d.). She made a great contribution to the Indigenous community, but her story also reinforces the image of the white teacher who comes into an Indigenous community and saves the students from their

poor social and environmental conditions. I argue that we need to be conscious of how those narratives may implicitly reinforce white supremacy. Carter, another participant, admitted that until he went to a conference and heard about the problematic portrayals of white teachers as saviours who rescue their non-white students, he had never considered it before because he thought that it is different from his own teaching situation where there is not a whole lot of diversity in the school system. The ideas that he heard from the conference made him think more about students from different backgrounds. He realized that he might find a teaching job in an Indigenous setting and felt he would not see himself as a rescuer going into the school and saving the students. Instead, he would recognize that they have a different culture and respect their culture. Carter was in the early stage of his teaching career and he was learning about the issues that need attention when teaching in a different culture. Critical viewing of school movies can possibly make teachers become more aware of race-related issues in schools.

Molly and Katie are the other two participants who chose to watch the *Mona Lisa Smile* (Johanson & Newell, 2003), and both of them admired Katherine Watson. Molly admired Katherine Watson for insisting on her beliefs and principles. She explained as follows:

> Ms. Watson refused to become someone that society…and the educational institution expected her to become. She had her principles, which were always overpowering the institutional expectations of her. It is so important to not lose the sense of who you are and what your end goals are. I would love to become a teacher like her.

Molly understood why Katherine Watson chose to leave the teaching position in the end. Molly believed that what makes her an excellent teacher is that she challenged traditional norms and inspired the students to think in new ways. If she signed the

contract and conformed to the school norms, she would not be able to do what makes her a good teacher. However, Molly also acknowledged that teachers cannot expect to make significant changes right away. Instead, they need to be patient. Katherine Watson had taught at Wellesley College for only one term, but Molly said that that she would have given it more time than that if she had been Katherine Watson. She would not have left right away after being unhappy in a teaching position for only a short period of time. She was optimistic that, slowly but surely, she would have brought more and more of her own style into teaching. Molly thought that teachers did not need to make enormous efforts to make change. In her view, even creating a safe and inclusive classroom and letting the students know that they have the right to be their own person can make a huge difference. Molly's ideas disrupted "the illusion that 'real' teaching success comes with serious self-sacrifice and a sometimes unexplainable, dramatic turn-around of students," which has been reinforced in cultural representations of heroic teachers (Bride, 2009, p. 82). Another participant, Katie, found that the school movies, which portray the teacher as someone who comes into a "bad" class and finds it difficult to teach and all of a sudden solves all the problems, are problematic. Katie thought that those movies tend to focus on what teachers have to do in order to rescue the students instead of on the problems existing in the school system and the ways to deal with those problems. In her opinion, a student cannot do well for multiple reasons and the way that the school system operates may prevent some students from having the advantage that other students might have. As Fisher et al. (2008) suggest, popular culture creates a climate where teachers, instead of the education system, are blamed for "any student's failure, and even for society's ills as a whole" (p. 170). Katie challenged the image of

the teacher as the sole saviour because there might be systematic problems that could not be solved by individual teachers.

In conclusion, Grace identified several similarities with Katherine Watson in *Mona Lisa Smile* (Johanson & Newell, 2003). Grace saw herself as an unconventional teacher and an open-minded woman who did not conform to the traditional expectations of women. Like Katherine Watson, Grace had rebellious students, but she eventually earned trust and respect from her students and built close connections with them. Compared to Katherine Watson, Grace was more aware that teachers cannot impose their ideas on their students and that they are not able to rescue all their students. Grace's ideas challenge the ideal image that teachers are able to rescue all their students. I argue that we also need to question the image of teachers as saviours who rescue their underprivileged and underachieving non-white students and to avoid producing stereotypical assumptions about different ethnic groups. Moreover, Molly and Katie argued that it is not realistic to expect teachers to make significant changes to students in a short period of time. Katie believed that the teacher is not the sole saviour because students cannot do well for many reasons and the school system itself may prevent some students from having the advantage that other students might have. The image of the teacher as the sole saviour puts a great deal of pressure on a teacher when there are systemic problems that are not being dealt with that might contribute to students' low performance. The image of the teacher as the sole saviour connects with the cultural myths that everything depends on the teacher and the teachers are always held responsible for students' problems, which Britzman (1986, 1991, 2003) points out.

5.4 Teacher devotion and the dualism of "good" and "bad" teachers in movies

As mentioned in Chapter Four, Charlotte portrayed a very dedicated teacher image in her drawing. Her attachment to the idea of the teacher's devotion and selflessness was also evident in her discussion of the movie *Won't Back Down* (Johnson & Barnz, 2012), which tells the story of a teacher and a student's mother working together to reform a failing public school. (*Won't Back Down* has been critiqued as a problematic movie in its anti-union, pro-charter school stance.) Charlotte never questioned the dedicated and self-sacrificing teacher image, nor was she aware that the belief that "teachers should do everything for students" may lead to teacher burnout. She believed that the movie sends an important message that students are the only ones that matter. She admired that the teacher and the parent characters said multiple times in the movie that "we are not doing this for us, we are doing it for our kids." Charlotte was convinced that teachers are doing their job not for the money, for the school, or for the three-month vacation, but for the students. Her ideal teacher image echoes the dedicated and selfless teacher image portrayed in popular culture. In movies, teachers are commonly portrayed as being dedicated and self-sacrificing. For instance, the movie *Stand and Deliver* (Musca & Menéndez, 1988) tells the story of a dedicated math teacher who works extra hours and gives up his holidays in order to help his students pass a Calculus test. When he is hospitalized because of a heart attack, he still sends out work to his students, and he returns to work in only two days (Ellsmore, 2005). In the movie *Freedom Writers* (DeVito et al., 2007), Erin Gruwell works two part-time jobs to purchase new books for her at-risk students. Since she spends too much time helping her students, she barely has time for her family, which eventually leads to her divorce. This image of dedicated teachers portrayed in the movies can be problematic because

they provide the illusion that teachers have to sacrifice their family time, personal lives, and even their own health in order to become "good" teachers. Bride (2009) suggests that teachers are often represented as "heroes" in popular culture and "the hero is an exemplary citizen, is self-sacrificing and motivates us to become change-makers" (p. 80). However, she argues that real teaching is not as dramatic or perfect as the hero stories told in movies, because "all of us fail, falter, struggle, and invest in our students and our teaching for reasons that are not purely selfless, nor always clear to us" (p. 81). It is worth noting that the movie *Freedom Writers* is based on the true story of Erin Gruwell, who only taught for several years in school and then left to start the Freedom Writers Foundation (Erin Gruwell, n.d.). While individual teachers definitely can make a difference in students' lives, school movies seem to suggest that if only teachers gave literally everything of themselves, they could compensate for the lack of investment our entire society has put into education and the lives of children. Charlotte pointed out that popular culture does not place enough emphasis on the amount of work that teachers actually do and their schedules because it is boring stuff and people want to see something dramatic, funny, or challenging, or something that has an impact. However, the "boring" elements, such as schedules and routines, are an important part of teachers' lives and they need to be included in the movies so that people can gain a better understanding of what a normal day is like for teachers. Charlotte was convinced that although popular culture does not give teachers the credit that it should, teachers do not need much credit from popular culture. Her attachment to a selfless teacher image was evident in her following statement:

> I think it is too bad that people are not aware of how much work we put into our job, but I don't think it is something we should stand up against because we have enough gratification from the students learning something, or appreciating us or saying thank you. [Appreciation] is what we need from the rest of the world.

Although Charlotte was attached to the fantasy of devotion and selflessness produced in the movie *Won't Back Down* (Johnson & Barnz, 2012), she was also aware of some unrealistic aspects of the movie. She found that everything in the movie happened so quickly and it concluded with a happily ever after ending, which may not happen in real life situations. Caroline, an experienced teacher, also chose to view the movie *Won't Back Down* (Johnson & Barnz, 2012), and she was aware of the dramatic nature of the movie. She thought that the teacher-parent collaboration portrayed in the movie was fantastic, but the collaboration where the parent goes to a teacher for help does not happen often in real life because teachers may say that they are doing their best and there is nothing else they can do due to certain constraints in the school system. She hoped that the teachers could appreciate parents' feedback more and see the value of parents' perspectives and opinions. She also believed that it was an idealistic portrayal of a teacher and a parent successfully transforming a broken inner city school. She felt that the teacher and the parent in the movie did the impossible, getting all the proposals and paper work done and meeting the deadlines. She believed that turning around a failing school does not happen often in real life. She thought that there were many flaws in the school system in the U.S. and people need to overcome many hurdles to make a difference. Moreover, when young teachers speak out against school administrators, they are very likely to be perceived negatively by school administrators.

Charlotte noticed that there was a "bad" teacher portrayed in the movie *Won't Back Down* (Johnson & Barnz, 2012), one who did not care about students. She believed that a teacher like that is very rare in real-life situations. She thought that school movies tend to portray an extreme "bad" teacher character to contrast with the "good" teacher character. In her opinion, teachers should not be categorized as "good" or "bad"

teachers. Fisher et al. (2008) and Dalton (2010) have a similar argument, which is that teachers tend to be dichotomized into the "good" and "bad" in popular culture. "Good" teachers are often featured as those who are charismatic and caring, who get involved with students on a personal level, who fight against the status quo in education, and who personalize the curriculum for students (Dalton, 2010; Fisher et al., 2008). On the contrary, "bad" teachers are featured as those who do not care about students, who suppress students' individuality, who stick rigidly to the curriculum, and who fail to protect students from dangers (Dalton, 2010; Fisher et al., 2008). The good/bad dichotomy provides an over-simplified way of understanding teachers since there is not always a clear-cut distinction between "good" and "bad." Smith (1996) defines binary opposition as "the system by which, in language and thought, two theoretical opposites are strictly defined and set off against one another but simultaneously arranged, somewhat paradoxically, in pairs" (p. 384). Hall (1997b) suggests that using binary oppositions, such as white/black and masculine/feminine, is a reductionist way of representing the world. For example, "there is no pure 'black' or 'white,' only varying shades of grey" (Hall, 1997b, p. 235). In real life, teachers are positioned on a continuum of effectiveness rather than on two extreme poles. However, popular culture tends to represent teachers in either positive or negative ways, thus perpetuating and reinforcing the good/bad binary in popular discourses about teachers.

Another participant, Megan, pointed out some unrealistic portrayals of the teacher and her concerns about the dedicated and selfless teacher image when reviewing the movie *Freedom Writers* (DeVito et al., 2007). Megan believed that the movie does not focus on all the struggles that a new teacher goes through. The movie shows that the teacher character, Erin Gruwell, experienced some hard times, but it seems that she

was not very frustrated when confronted with difficulties in teaching. Her class at the beginning was almost out of control, but she solved it very quickly. Megan doubted that a new teacher in real life could solve the problem and have a positive impact on the students right away as Erin Gruwell did. Since Erin Gruwell was dealing with very difficult students and situations and was doing two part-time jobs and teaching at the same time, Megan believed that she might be mentally and physically exhausted and might need counselling herself, but the movie did not show her mental health state. Megan believed that although good teachers should be dedicated, when teachers are so dedicated to their career, it undoubtedly has an impact on their social and personal lives and mental health. She found that a lot of women struggle with balancing personal life and a career. Megan believed that that it is unrealistic to expect women to play the superwoman role and to be able to do everything. She believed that it is better for a female teacher to have a dedicated partner to help raise the children in real life. In terms of women's roles at home, Katie, another participant, thought that a lot of the work at home falls to women, and she felt that she as a mother had to do more than her husband. When she had to work intensely, she felt guilty for not being a good mother and of not having enough time to accompany her daughter, but she found that her husband did not feel the same way when he had to work intensely. The traditional expectation that women need to take care of the family and do more household chores than men places a lot of pressure on female teachers who try to maintain a work-life balance.

In summary, Charlotte was very attached to the dedicated and selfless teacher images which are portrayed in school movies. However, these portrayals of teachers promote the problematic assumption that teachers have to sacrifice their family time and personal lives in order to be "good" teachers. Both Charlotte and Caroline were

aware of the unrealistic portrayals of teachers in movies. Caroline pointed out that the wonderful teacher-parent collaboration portrayed in *Won't Back Down* (Johnson & Barnz, 2012) does not happen often in real life and she argued that school teachers need to have better collaboration with students' parents. Caroline also pointed out that turning around an at-risk school is far more complicated than the movie suggests. Charlotte believed that popular culture needs to place more emphasis on the amount of work that teachers do daily so that audiences can have a better understanding of teachers' daily lives. She also made an important point that we should not categorize teachers into "good" and "bad" because it provides an over-simplified way of understanding teachers. Megan suggested that a lot of dedicated female teachers may struggle to balance their teaching careers and personal lives and that teachers' mental health is worth people's attention.

5.5 Alternative portrayals of teachers in school movies

Apart from the classic movies that portray a "charismatic and extraordinary teacher [who] is both heroic and saintly, prepared to dedicate his/her life to education and to caring about the minutiae of students' lives" (Fisher et al., 2008, p. 38), alternative portrayals of teachers have appeared on screen in recent years. A few of my participants chose to watch movies that unsettle some of the traditional perspectives of teachers. Although these movies may not challenge every single aspect of the traditional teacher image, they do provide more complex portrayals and encourage us to rethink the possibilities of being a teacher.

Michelle, a French teacher, chose three French-language school movies to view, including *Monsieur Lazhar* (Déry, McCraw, & Falardeau, 2011), *The Chorus*

(Mauvernay et al., 2004), and *The Class* (Benjo, Scotta, & Cantet, 2008). *Monsieur Lazhar* (Déry et al., 2011) tells the story of an Algerian refugee, Bachir Lazhar, who replaces a teacher who commits suicide in a Montreal public grade school and who helps his students get through the loss of their former teacher. One memorable scene for Michelle was when the students were having a dance in another classroom and Mr. Lazhar was alone in his classroom correcting. All of a sudden, he started to dance in his own style. Michelle loved this scene because, she said, it is the first time that the audience notices his whole body and sees him as a person instead of a teacher. Michelle was convinced that teachers have to allow themselves to be human in the classroom and that there have to be some personal elements that come through. Otherwise, there will be no connection with the students. Michelle loved the final scene when Mr. Lazhar had to leave his teaching position and one of the students hugged him. She felt that even though there was not much said between the two of them, the feeling was understood. Mr. Lazhar was also dealing with the tragic loss of his own family, which enabled him to better understand his students' loss of their former teacher.

Michelle also believes that Mr. Lazhar challenges our common understanding of what a good teacher is because he is not technically a teacher. He is an Algerian refugee who lies about his past to get a teaching job in Canada. However, he helps his students process their grief. He believes that his students need to express their emotions and understandings about the loss that they are experiencing, but the rest of the school wants to keep it suppressed. Michelle thought that Mr. Lazhar was definitely an "outsider," because he is a refugee with no teaching qualifications and has different opinions from the administrator's. As Dalton (2010) suggests, good teachers are often portrayed as "outsiders," who enter the teaching profession without any professional

training, and are considered threats to school norms and "not well-liked by other teachers or by administrators" (p. 150). They may also be "seen as 'other' in terms of sexual orientation, gender, or another perceived difference" (Dalton, 2010, p. 29). Michelle believes that effective teachers are destined to be someone outside the norm who will ultimately be defeated by the norm. As seen in many other school movies, such as *Dead Poets Society* (Haft et al., 1989) and *Mona Lisa Smile* (Johanson & Newell, 2003), the teachers who are "outsiders" are forced to leave in the end, implying that individual teachers are unlikely to win a battle against the school authorities. Michelle told me that she had trouble getting permission to show *Monsieur Lazhar* (Déry et al., 2011) to her students in class because of the content of suicide. She believed that it would be a good opportunity to discuss the tragedy that happens in Lazhar's life, his refugee status, as well as emotional issues and suicide. However, she was told by administration not to show any movies related to suicide or mental illness in class. Michelle found that suicide and mental illness were taboos in the school where she taught. In Australia, there is a move to "break the taboo surrounding youth suicide and mental ill health" in school because they believe that "we need to [normalize] sadness, anger, frustration and shame, so our kids have the tools to acknowledge and deal with it before it becomes a problem" (Morphet, 2018, January 6). Michelle wished that she could show more challenging films to her students and expose them to controversial issues. Lemieux (2017) engaged twenty pre-service teachers in discussing the movie *Monsieur Lazhar* (Déry et al., 2011). The study showed that the discussion the of movie encouraged pre-service teachers to think about "[h]ow do [they], as teachers, prepare [their] school community for traumatic events such as death or suicide?" (p. 67). The study points out that "film and television have the potential to bring awareness about

sensitive matters like suicide and depression that are at times talked about in educational settings" (Lemieux, 2017, p. 67). Lemieux's study showed that teaching through film allowed the pre-service teachers to empathize with the teacher character in the film, to reflect on their teaching philosophy, and to think about what it means to be a "good" teacher. In her study, the pre-service teachers commented on the traditional, teacher-centered teaching methods that Mr. Lazhar used in the beginning of his teaching journey. Through viewing the film, they identified "two main errors in the lack of teacher education which are evidenced in the film," including "the inappropriateness of the assessment methods" and "the level of difficulty of the work assigned to students" (p. 69). Michelle, a participant of my study, also noticed Mr. Lazhar teaching in an old-fashioned way. However, Michelle highlighted that Mr. Lazhar did try to adopt his colleagues' teaching methods that he thought were effective. Michelle believed that Mr. Lazhar showed willingness to become a better teacher and to approach his students, which enabled him to gain respect from his students. Although the participants of Lemieux (2017) and my study made meaning from the movie in different ways, my study agrees with Lemieux (2017) that pre-service teachers' discussions on movies "might shed light on the multiple meanings and definitions of 'good teaching,' an important part of student-teachers' professional and human development" (p. 70).

Michelle has shown the movie *The Class* (Benjo et al., 2008) to many of her classes over the years. In the movie, the teacher character, François Marin, is teaching a group of culturally diverse students in a lower socioeconomic area of Paris. Michelle believed that there is no stereotypically "good" teacher in the movie, which challenges traditional portrayals of teachers as heroes or saints. François worked to engage the students in his class, but it was still difficult for him to maintain order and to earn respect

from his students. Michelle believed that François Marin was not very admirable or effective, but he did care for his students and fought for them at times. He defended one of his students who accidentally hit a female student with his backpack because he believed that although that student was troubled, it was better for him to be at school than not. However, the final decision was to expel the student. Michelle found that François Martin was powerless both in the classroom and the staffroom.

Michelle told me that most of her students did not enjoy this film. However, after showing the movie for many years, she finally had a group of students who liked it and who empathized with the struggles that François went through. There is one scene that shows François insulting two of his female students, "saying they behaved like "skanks" (French: pétasses)" when he gets angry about what they have done (The Class (2008 film), n.d., para. 6). Michelle's students sympathized with François Martin's action. They believed that he was pushed too far and the bad word just slipped out. They thought that his mistake was understandable and forgivable because teachers are human and they are fallible. Michelle's students found the ending of the movie very unsatisfying. The movie ends up with an empty classroom and the teachers and students having a football match outside. There was no celebration or students' revisiting. Michelle thought that although the ending was not fulfilling, it is representative of what it is like in real life. After being together with the students for a year, a teacher will go on and have a new group of students next year and start again. Unlike teacher films with dramatically happy endings, this movie reminds people that schooling in real life is not as dramatic as what is portrayed on screen.

Michelle thought that the ending of the film *The Chorus* (Mauvernay et al., 2004) was more satisfying than the ending of *The Class* (Benjo et al., 2008). *The Chorus*

(Mauvernay et al., 2004) tells the story of a music teacher in the 1940's who successfully transformed his rebellious students at a boys' boarding school into a choir. Although the teacher ended up getting fired because he broke the rules, the bond between the students and the teacher was long lasting. The movie begins with the students as adults, gathering together and remembering the important experiences they had with their teacher. *The Chorus* (Mauvernay et al., 2004) is a happier and a more traditional school movie compared to the other two French language movies, in that the "heroic" teacher image provides more fantasies for the audience. Viewers like the feeling of realizing their dreams in an imagined world. As Bride (2009) suggests, viewing school movies provided her with "emotional satisfaction via identification with the hero, to experience the care that these hero teachers gave to others" (p. 94). Michelle found that many school movies follow the same kind of formula and portray the teacher as a hero. She believed that various portrayals of teachers and school experiences are important.

Nathan chose to watch *Pay It Forward* (Abrams et al., 2000), which he believed was an unconventional movie that challenges some of the conventional assumptions of teachers. The movie portrayed a social studies teacher who challenged his seventh-grade students to put into action a plan that would change the world. A student in his class came up with the idea of doing a good deed for three people who must then do good deeds for three other people. The teacher in the movie had burn scars on his face, which Nathan thought disrupted the traditional expectation of what teachers are supposed to look like. In the movie, the teacher started a relationship with a student's mother. Nathan pointed out that the teacher's journey in the movie was a journey of finding love and physical intimacy, which challenges the cultural myth that teachers

have no personal life outside of school. Nathan admired the teacher for giving his students a challenge that was beyond the expectations of the students' parents and society, and for showing the students that they can have an impact on the world. However, Nathan said that he would not assign the same project to his students on the first day of class because, based on his experience with high school students, they would probably not complete an assignment that was so unstructured. He believed that it would be more feasible to provide students with a list of potential projects that they can choose from, while still giving them the freedom to do projects outside of the list.

Several participants mentioned the movie *Bad Teacher* (Miller et al., 2011), which they believed was only meant to be funny and is not a movie they take seriously. They believed that everything the teacher does is the opposite of what a teacher should do. For example, the teacher drinks at school, uses drugs, curses at students, has no interest in teaching, and does the job solely for the money. Charlotte felt that this teacher should not have been allowed to teach at all and that a teacher coming to class without any preparation and having an empty desk was unrealistic. Emily noted that there are different portrayals of teachers in popular culture, which encourages audiences to accept a variety of teaching styles. She suggested that there are people in the teaching profession who should not be there, and that the movie *Bad Teacher* (Miller et al., 2011) is meant to portray teachers like that. Overall, the participants did not take movies like *Bad Teacher* seriously because they did not think the movie was either realistic or educational. It seemed they were not fully aware of how negative images in popular culture manipulate how people think about teachers and the teaching profession. Fisher et al. (2008) suggest that "teachers are frequently portrayed either as objects of pity and derision or as sources of terror" (p. 46). For instance, in the satirical American cartoon

The Simpsons (Frink, Brooks, Groening, Selman, & Simon, 1989-2015), teachers are often negatively portrayed as ignorant, biased, lonely, depressed, and under-qualified (Kantor, Kantor, Kantor, Eaton, & Kantor, 2001). On the one hand, the representations of "bad" and "sad" teachers challenge the traditional image of the teacher as the hero, but on the other hand, they reinforce the idea that "teachers have low status in [the United States] and are often cowed by parents, students and authorities" (Fisher et al., 2008, p. 47). Dahlgren (2017) argues that portrayals of teachers as villains in popular culture have underlying meanings, particularly in the context of the United States:

> [T]hrough the sheer repetition of a strategic set of negative images of public schools and teachers, Hollywood products have been able to convince American citizens that public schools in the abstract were, and are, in crisis, while, at the same time, the public schools with which these citizens had the most intimate, everyday contact were operating in a satisfactory manner. (p. 8)

As hooks (1997) reminds us, filmmakers consciously produce certain representations in their movies and they know that these representations will achieve certain impacts.

Overall, some of the participants of my study chose to view unconventional movies, which showed their openness to the various possibilities of being a teacher, and their attempt to break away from idealistic perceptions of teachers. School movies tend to focus exclusively on the professional lives of teachers (Trier, 2001), and that is why Michelle felt that it was special to see Mr. Lazhar start to dance when he was alone in his classroom correcting his students' work. Michelle believed that teachers need to allow themselves to be human in the classroom and to let their students get to know them personally, so that they can build closer connections with their students. Michelle also raised the important issue that suicide and mental illness are usually forbidden topics in schools. I argue that we cannot prepare our students for the future by putting a bubble around them and over-protecting them. It is important to expose students to

what is happening in the world, current events and conflicts. Incorporating challenging movies into teaching allows students to discuss controversial issues and helps them keep an open mind about what is happening in the world. The movie *The Class* (Benjo et al., 2008) challenges our ideals about a teacher being well-liked by all the students and being flawless. *Pay It Forward* (Abrams et al., 2000) provides a more inclusive understanding of teachers' physical appearance and personal lives. The participants did not think the movie *Bad Teacher* (Miller et al., 2011) was realistic or educational. Society needs to be more aware that repeated negative images of teachers can have an impact on people's perceptions of teachers and the teaching profession. My study suggests that it is a valuable experience for teachers to view and discuss unconventional teacher movies because it allows them to explore the controversial issues raised by those movies and to rethink their idealistic assumptions about teaching and being a teacher.

5.6 Summary

Based on the discussions with my participants, I gained the following insights: 1) Both the participants' choice of movies and their discussion of the movies showed their attachment to the heroic, dedicated, selfless, and charismatic teacher images portrayed in popular culture. Their attachment to these images parallels the fantasies of selfless devotion that Robertson (1997) found with her pre-service teacher participants. The new insight that my study gained was that, though many of the participants, especially pre-service teachers, had fantasies of becoming like the extraordinary teachers portrayed in school movies, they were also conscious of the constraints of achieving their teaching ideals in real life, and they were afraid of losing their jobs if they didn't fit into the existing school norms and teaching methods. The message

embedded in popular culture that teachers have to sacrifice their job security in order to provide a better education for their students is problematic. My study suggests that teachers need to be provided with better job security in order to bring more innovative ideas into teaching and to make more positive changes. 2) The use of movie elicitation in my study allowed the participants to rethink taken-for-granted views, such as the teacher as the hero and saviour, that are perpetuated and reinforced by popular culture. Some of them disrupted the dominant image of teachers as heroes who sacrifice their personal life for the teaching profession, as saviours who save all students, as the sole rescuer of students, and as saints who have no flaws. They also challenged the idea of categorizing teachers into "good" teachers and "bad" teachers. Moreover, they realized that school movies that encourage teachers to teach differently may simultaneously reinforce traditional norms and teaching methods. They began to realize that the image of white teachers as saviours who rescue their underprivileged and underachieving non-white students can reinforce white supremacy. Some of the participants chose to view some unconventional movies, which showed their openness to the various possibilities of being a teacher. While the studies by Bride (2009) and Robertson (1997) explored teachers' attachment to classic school movies including *Mona Lisa Smile* (Johanson & Newell, 2003) and *Stand and Deliver* (Musca & Menéndez, 1988), my study added new insights about teachers' perceptions of more unconventional movies. 3) One of the participants raised the issue that she could not get permission from her school administration to show students movies related to suicide or mental illness because these subjects were taboo in the school. My study suggests that students at a certain age need to know more about mental illness and how to deal with it, and that they need to be given more opportunities to discuss some controversial issues. Teachers can

incorporate challenging movies into their curriculum in order to open students' minds and to help students gain a better understanding of real life challenges. 4) The participants of my study had different understandings of the impact of popular culture on their personal beliefs. I argue that they need to be more aware of how dominant discourses construct and naturalize the meanings attached to teachers and teaching. Michelle told me that she was a careful viewer and she tried not internalize those stereotypical images of teachers in popular culture. She said that she could make a distinction between the portrayals of teachers in popular culture and her own personal beliefs about being a teacher. However, no matter how careful we are, we cannot completely separate our personal beliefs from dominant discourses in popular culture. Instead of distancing ourselves from popular culture, we need to be more aware of how it manipulates our perceptions. Through participating in my study, Logan, who used to believe that popular culture was mainly for entertainment, began to rethink how his understanding of teachers has been shaped by popular culture and media. Emily, another participant, highlighted that we are greatly influenced by mass media in general. She believed that movies have slowly changed cultural norms and what we expect teachers to be, and that if we start putting images of transgendered teachers, gay and lesbian teachers, and multicultural teachers in movies, it will start becoming a more accepted norm. My study suggests that teachers should not passively accept the idealized teacher images in popular culture, nor should they deny the impact of popular culture on them. Integrating movies into teacher education programs allows them to be more aware of how popular culture manipulates their perceptions of teachers, and encourages them to critically examine their fantasies about teaching and being a teacher. In the next chapter,

I will focus on the participants' own teaching and personal experiences and explore how they negotiate their personal and professional identities in real life.

Chapter six: Teachers' lived experiences negotiating their personal and professional identities

6.1 Introduction

In addition to engaging the participants in the drawing activity and in discussion of the movies, I interviewed the participants about their lived experiences negotiating their personal and professional identities. Alsup (2005) suggests that the identity development of teachers involves both their personal and professional selves. Becoming a teacher does not mean that an educator must lose his or her personal self; instead, teachers need to learn to transform themselves by integrating their personal and professional selves (Alsup, 2005). In my study, I invited the participants to talk about the consistencies and inconsistencies between their personal and professional identities, the reasons that they chose to become a teacher, the tensions and struggles that they experienced as pre-service or in-service teachers, and other emerging topics. The life stories that I collected from the participants provided me with a better understanding of who they are as people and as teachers as well as how they negotiated the different discourses in which they engaged. Since one of the purposes of my study was to explore the connections and contradictions between teachers' personal and professional identities, in this chapter, I first discuss the participants' perceptions of their personal and professional identities and how their personal identities connect and conflict with their professional identities. I asked the participants to discuss the reasons why they decided to become teachers, and found that their decision was largely influenced by personal factors. Therefore, in the second section, I continue to explore the interrelationship between participants' personal and professional identities by focusing on what made the participants pursue a teaching career. Since the narrative inquiry used

in my study helps investigate teachers' emotional experiences, in the third section, I discuss the participants' emotional experiences and vulnerabilities that emerged from the data.

6.2 The connections and contradictions between the participants' personal and professional identities

Many of the participants in my study indicated that their personal and professional identities were interrelated and their personal traits and competences, such as their communication and organization skills, their ability to empathize with others, their open-mindedness, and their creativity largely contributed to their professional role as a teacher. Exposing their personal identities to a certain degree, rather than repressing them, enabled them to build closer connections with their students. Several participants highlighted that they had to modify their personal selves to meet the institutional, social, and cultural expectations of teachers, but they did not think that they needed to make radical changes to become a teacher. Although some participants experienced inconsistencies between their personal and professional identities, they could not completely change their personal selves and one of the participants chose not to teach in the school system because of the huge conflict he could foresee between his personal and professional identities.

Emily was a pre-service science teacher at the high school level and she perceived herself to be a strict teacher. She believed that her strictness was linked to her personality to a certain degree because she was a very outspoken, stern, and strict individual and did not let people "walk over her". She found that her personal traits benefited her as a teacher and explained,

> Personally, I am outspoken. If I know someone is doing something that they shouldn't be doing, I will be the first one to say "no, you can't [do that]." I will stand my ground, but at the same time I can be empathetic. I have the relatability that in conflict situations I maturely tend to relate to the other side before I jump to conclusions, which I think is a good skill as a teacher. Because if you have a conflict with administration or conflict with the parent or conflict with another teacher, the best thing you can do at first is like "I appreciate your point of view and I appreciate where you are coming from, but this is how I see things and this is the way things need to be done." I am a master of organizing and time management. I can do multiple things at once. As a teacher, you need to be on the ball. I am a very social person. I am not the kind of person who sits down in a house and [doesn't do] anything. I will be out socializing as much as I can. My social nature benefits me because it helps me when it comes to interaction with colleagues, administration, and parents, and the community in general.

Emily had very good communication skills, and she perceived these as an important quality for teachers. She highlighted that teachers need to have a relationship with administration to the point where they feel comfortable voicing their opinions. She recognized that it would be hard for new teachers to do so because they may be intimidated and may not know what is and is not acceptable. During her internship, she proposed and was granted permission by the administration to implement her own classroom policy to help deter students from handing in assignments late. She believed that her social nature and communication skills enabled her to express her different opinions to the school administration in a respectful and effective manner.

Molly, a pre-service teacher, believed that she had a mixed bag of personal traits. She said that she was a hard worker and a very stressed person, and she was also sarcastic. She personally liked to use sarcasm and tell jokes. When she started her internship, she did not use sarcasm at all because she was told in her teacher education program that teachers should never use sarcasm in the classroom. As time went on, her sarcasm and humor started to come out a little bit, and she surprisingly found as a result that her students wanted to talk to her, got close to her, and respected her more as a person. She realized that she could just be herself instead of being the kind of person

she thought she was supposed to be. It was memorable to her that at the end of her internship one of her students told her, "Miss, you are so weird, but I am gonna miss you so much when you leave." It can be seen that Molly was very different from other teachers and her unique personal traits made her stand out as a teacher. Molly believed that it was important for students to see her as a person, not as the narrowly defined identity that has been created for teachers. She said, "once I started being me as a teacher instead of who I thought I was supposed to be, it got so much better." However, Molly did modify her personal self to some extent to become a teacher. She said that she was "an emotional and grouchy person," so she made sure that she kept her emotions in check and maintained a neutral and appropriate manner while teaching. Although she had to act in a more professional way after she stepped into the school building, Molly believed that she was still the same person as a teacher. She said, "it is me, and it is just a more appropriate form of me." Molly's experience signifies how teachers' personal identities play an important role in developing their professional identities. Although teachers need to act in a professional way, they do not have to completely repress their unique personal traits to become the kind of educator that they think they should be.

Katie, an experienced teacher, believed that her personal and professional identities matched very well, but she mentioned that she was very shy and nervous and could not speak her mind when she first became a teacher. She wanted to be seen as professional, confident and knowledgeable, so she hid her nervousness and shyness to go along with the expectations of who she should be. Katie appreciated that she received a lot of support when she first started her teaching career. Her cooperating teacher was aware that Katie was not that confident, and he gave her a copy of the internship report that he wrote where he stated how pleased he was with her work. This encouragement

greatly boosted Katie's confidence. Katie found that as she gained more experience in teaching, her nervousness and lack of confidence faded. Similar to Katie, Carter, a pre-service teacher, also expressed his struggle to find confidence when teaching. He felt he was introverted and not very confident when teaching. When reviewing the movie *Dead Poets Society* (Haft et al., 1989), Carter said that when he was young, he was like Todd, a very shy and quiet student character in the movie, and he was nervous about sharing his ideas in class. However, he thought that becoming a teacher changed him to a certain degree because he felt that he was the authority in front of students and that gave him a little more confidence. He told me that when he was with peers, he sometimes withheld something he knew because he was not sure whether it would fit into what they were talking about. However, when he was teaching, he knew that he needed to have a lot more confidence about what he said and he no longer kept his ideas to himself. He believed that there was a different dynamic in front of students versus in front of peers. It can be seen that on the one hand, teachers' personal identities have a great impact on their professional role; on the other hand, taking on a professional role also helps their personal selves grow.

Several participants indicated that they kept some aspects of their personal lives private and did not want to incorporate them into their professional identities. Katie pointed out that she would like to keep her personal and professional lives separate. Although she did not go to a bar very often, she would feel very uncomfortable if her high school students accidentally saw her in a bar. She felt that, as a teacher, she had to dress and act in a certain way, which might be a little different from what she did in her private life. Michelle believed that she could describe herself with a list of hyphenated terms, such as actress, teacher, and doctoral student, but she always thought of herself

as a teacher and as someone who had to be responsible to her students. She was offered a part-time acting role on a television show where she would have to act as someone who stays the night with the main character. She refused that acting opportunity because she did not think it was appropriate for her to play this role as a teacher and she did not want her students to see her even in a television show having a one night stand with a man. She said, "it is important that I remember I am a teacher all the time. The teacher part of me is always there." It was obvious that her role as a teacher influenced her personal choices. Michelle's story addresses the issue that teachers are in the public eye and they need to be conscious of how their personal choices fit into their professional role as a teacher.

Several participants in my study mentioned that they were conscious of how they were perceived by the general public and they would be careful about what they post on social media sites. However, Nathan pointed out another perspective that it might be hard for teachers to keep their personal lives private nowadays because of the development of technology. He believed that the expectation that teachers should not have personal identities can be problematic. Nathan explained,

> As a teacher, you don't act with your students the way that you would act with your friends. You definitely don't have a downtown life or drink out in public, because you [will] probably [be] seen by your students and your career is over. The message is to repress your personal identity, but the reality is that we are all connected by technology in the 21st century, and we are going towards a new direction that the old system of hiding yourself doesn't fit anymore. If I hide my social identity, [my students] will eventually get to it. If they find that I drink but do it rarely and responsibly and I hang out with friends and have a good time, they are not going to find an evil person. They are gonna find a normal person.

As Lynch (2015, September 9) suggests, "social media alone has made it almost impossible to hide private lives from the eyes of students, their parents and even administrators." Moreover, teachers are likely to run into students and parents in their

daily lives, so they will have to be prepared to take on their professional role any time after school hours. Grace remembered that when she was a child she was astonished to see her teacher off campus, "You go shopping! You wear jeans!" It made Grace realize that a teacher had a life outside the school. Both Nathan and Grace believed that it was important to let their students know that they were human too and they lived normal lives.

The stories of Michelle and Emily demonstrate that exposing their emotions to a certain degree instead of hiding them helps teachers to connect with their students. Michelle stated that she wanted her students to know that she was a human being, not a machine, and she was comfortable with sharing some of her personal life with her students. She told me a story about a conflict that she experienced with her personal life and professional life and it turned out that her personal fragility made her relationship with her students much closer than before:

> I had a real conflict with my personal and professional life about a year ago when I cried in front of my students. I forgot to pack my daughter's lunch and I realized throughout the morning that she didn't have any food. I called the school but they were not able to get any food for her. I was thinking about my child, "I haven't given her any lunch and the school wouldn't give her any lunch." I just started crying in the middle of class. My students asked, "What's wrong?" I said, "I am such a bad mother. I forgot my daughter's lunch." They said, "Madam, go. You are a wonderful mother and you care so much. This is affecting what you are doing. You need to go." They said, "Why don't you ask the teacher across hall [to] watch us? We promise we will work quietly for the rest of the class." So I asked the teacher and went to my daughter's school. When I got there, somebody had already given her lunch. I got back and thanked my students. My students said, "No, you deserve it." They were so genuine and lovely. When they saw this moment of fragility in me, we became very close. We were close before that, but we were extremely close after that.

Emily told me a story about how her own achievement and stress on the internship observation day helped enhance her relationships with the students:

> The most memorable part of my internship was when the kids knew I was going to have my observing teacher come in. That was a Grade Twelve biology class

> and we did the candy DNA modelling. Everything went smoothly, and when the observing teacher left at the end of the class, the kids told me that I actually kicked ass on my lesson. I was proud of the kids because they did so well, but the kids were actually proud of me. It was a very interesting time during my internship. From that point on, my relationship and the dynamic with the students were stronger. That whole observation day I think the kids saw the effort I put into it and they could tell I was stressed out, but at the end of it, it all paid off. They were proud of what I accomplished. It was a whole different level of teacher-student rapport. I didn't expect it from the kids. That was the moment when I realized that the kids actually respected me and were actually proud of what I was doing for them.

Emily believed that developing a rapport with students is as important as teaching because it leads to respect. If teachers do not have a good rapport with students, they do not get respect and students do not want to learn. Emily's story also showed that teachers can be empowered by comments from students.

Most of the participants believed that there were both consistencies and inconsistencies between their personal and professional identities and some of them experienced more inconsistencies than others. Sophie was a pre-service French teacher at the primary/elementary level. She perceived herself as a positive person and a people person and she believed that those traits are a good fit for teaching early grades. However, the inconsistencies between her personal and professional identities were her queer and activist identities. She was afraid that people would think that she was teaching the wrong thing to the students. She said that she would be very careful about how much information she gave about herself when she became a teacher, because if she did not mention her queer identity, people would not know about it. She recalled that she never had an openly LGBTQ teacher in her life, but she was friends with some teachers who were queer. Some of them did not talk about their queer identity in school, while some started Gay-Straight Alliances. She said it would be great if the school that she went to already had a Gay-Straight Alliance, but if the school did not have one, she

would probably not start one. She believed that activism was not as important to her as teaching. She was involved in two activist organizations while doing her education program, but she thought she would cut back when she became a teacher. It was not only because doing activism would take a lot of time out of her life, but also because she did not want to be as public as before. She said, as far as she knew, the teachers who did a lot of activism and volunteering were already secure in their teaching positions. At this early stage of her career, Sophie did not want to risk her teaching job to get involved in activism. When Sophie's personal identities conflicted with her professional identities, she chose to prioritize her professional role as a teacher. However, she still had her activist beliefs, and she wished that eventually she could find a way to express her personal beliefs in the future.

In terms of the inconsistency between her personal and professional identities, Caroline perceived herself as being very casual and laidback, which echoes her drawing of the ideal teacher who dresses casually and comfortably and sits surrounded by her students. Caroline was worried that people would see her as being immature or not being serious enough. One time her principal told her that she giggled too much, but she found it hard to break this habit. She tried to be more professional when she was in a professional setting, but felt it was part of her personality. She said that she could pick some characteristics from the teachers she admired either in the movies or in real life and try to take them on, but in the end, she could not change herself and she would still remain who she was.

Both Nathan and Logan saw themselves as opinionated, and they could foresee that this personal trait would probably get them into trouble in the future. Nathan said that he was not afraid to be himself because he believed that people are going to be who

they are regardless of whether they are afraid or not. He talked about his experience of having his students do an entire unit around marijuana. He believed that drug education should not be eliminated, and students should not be discriminated against if they have drug addictions. In his class, he had his students look at why decisions were made about certain drugs in history and how certain drugs are illegal and what their impacts are. The students were very interested and became motivated to write surveys and articles on drug use for the newspaper. Nathan believed that a whole unit where students learned about drugs was not something most teachers would teach. Nathan had very strong ideas about teaching, and he was not afraid to insist on his beliefs and to teach in the way that he wanted to teach.

Much like Nathan's strong viewpoint, Logan said that he was the kind of person who always questioned why we do things and what the rationale was behind it. He had been taught to think that way since he was a child. He said that if someone in a position of authority told him to do something that did not make sense to him, he would not be afraid to question it. In his drawing, he drew a stick man to challenge the stereotypical expectations that people commonly hold for teachers. He believed that teachers as human beings come in all different forms and it is impossible to represent what a teacher is in one picture. He said that he could draw a teacher sitting with one student or a teacher out in the soccer field with kids. He believed that a picture is a snapshot of a moment in time and it cannot represent the whole situation. When he taught English as a Second Language abroad, he collaborated with his colleagues and made a couple of changes to school policies. He believed that he brought in all his personal traits, characteristics, and personality with him to class, and he could not separate who he was from his job. He was aware he was too outspoken, too opinionated and too free with his

words, so he thought that it would not be suitable for him to teach in the school system. He felt that he was not able to express his views as freely and honestly as he wanted as a teacher. He was doing his PhD degree because he wanted to teach at the university level and he believed that there was a lot more freedom in academia.

Several participants, including Grace, indicated that they were essentially the same people inside and outside the classroom. Grace believed that her personal and professional identities were very consistent, which she thought led to her success as a teacher. She stated:

> When the kids saw me outside the school, I was still the same person. I still had my sense of humor, and I still had my boundaries. I wasn't trying to meet anybody's expectations. I was just trying to be the best teacher that I could be. I think teachers' burnout happens when there isn't a consistency between who you are as a person and who you are as a teacher. If you feel that you have to act or put on a smile or a happy face and get through curriculum, you are going to go through burnout really quickly because you are putting all of your efforts and energy into performing, and teachers should not have to perform. I don't switch on and off like a light switch. I may be more reserved or act more professionally, but my integrity is still there. The core value of who I am is still there.

Grace found that most of the successful teachers portrayed in the movies incorporate unconventional strategies into their teaching. She believed that there is no guarantee that the approach portrayed in the movies would have the same effect in real-world situations. Grace believed that there was no right or wrong way and teachers just needed to find an approach that matches their style and to be consistent with it. She further explained, "It doesn't matter specifically what teacher traits you have. You can be soft-spoken and mild-mannered or take more authoritative stands. I think it is the authenticity that makes a difference." Grace's opinion shows that teachers need to be true to themselves and not hide their personality.

Overall, the life stories of the participants showed that teachers' personal identities and professional identities are intertwined. The participants' personal traits, such as good communication and organization skills, sociability, empathy for others and sense of humour, benefited them as teachers. Some of the participants were aware of their personal weaknesses and modified their personal selves to meet the social, cultural and institutional expectations of teachers. They also found it difficult to keep their personal and professional lives separate because of the effect of social media and the nature of the teaching profession. They paid special attention to how they were perceived by the general public and to whether their personal choices fit into their professional identities. Several participants highlighted that they were the same person inside and outside the classroom although they exhibited more professionalism in the classroom. Some participants experienced some inconsistencies between their personal and professional identities, but they did not believe that they could completely change who they were as people. The huge inconsistency between teachers' personal and professional identities may make them consider pursuing careers outside the school system, such as at the university level where they felt they were more free to express their personal selves. My study suggests that it is important for teachers to have a sense of who they are, to identify their own strengths and interests, and to be confident about who they are before they go into the classroom.

6.3 What made the participants pursue a teaching career

Pursuing a teaching career is usually a personal choice for teachers, and their decision to become a teacher is associated with a variety of personal factors, such as their personal traits, their own experience in school, their family background, and their

personal beliefs. Those factors not only contributed to their decision to become a teacher, but also had a long-run impact on the development of their professional identities. In my study, I asked participants about how they decided to pursue teaching. Some of the participants indicated that they had dreamed of becoming a teacher since they were young, while some participants gradually discovered their interests and capabilities of teaching over the years.

Several participants indicated that they did not want to pursue a teaching career at the beginning or that they changed their mind about which level of students they preferred to teach. Their experiences showed that their personal and professional identities were constantly under construction. As the participants knew more about their personal selves, they shaped their professional selves accordingly. Charlotte was one of the participants who took some time to find her niche. Her mother was an elementary teacher, but she was not sure whether she should follow her mother's footsteps. She said,

> For the longest time, people were telling me, "you are going be a teacher." When I was in elementary school, I really wanted to be a teacher, but when I was in high school, I didn't want to be a teacher. When we were adolescents, we all had the period "don't tell me what to do." First year of university, I was doing archeology. I found archeology wasn't really interesting. It's a history degree and I need to be alone for the longest period. I realized that I have to work with people and I am really good at working with people. It's the first year I wasn't teaching dance lessons to younger kids. I was really missing it. I put everything together and realized that maybe I did need to be a teacher. I remember one day I told my mom that I decided to go into education, she cried, "I can't believe that you realized that you are really good at it." She told my elementary principle who told me for the longest time that I was going to be a teacher, and he said, "that's awesome because that's where she needs to be." Everybody saw I had the qualities to be a teacher. I just didn't see that when I was 15 or 16. Now I know even more that's where I need to be and that's what I want to do.

Charlotte was glad to know that her qualities were a good fit for being a teacher. She said that she had good communication skills and was good at teaching people, not

necessarily teaching in a classroom environment but teaching what she had learned to her friends in daily life. When she learned something new, she liked to teach it to someone else because it helped her learn too. Charlotte also developed her teaching skills through instructing dance lessons to younger children as a part-time job. From the experience of teaching dancing, she learned about classroom management and about keeping students interested. Since the students were in the dance studio where there were no desks and they had to stand, Charlotte found that keeping the students focused was a challenge. She felt that she had to make sure the students were productive while having fun for every single second of the one-hour lesson. She did a good job and developed her own strategies to keep the students focused in class. Moreover, Charlotte's mother was a good resource for her, which gave Charlotte the opportunity to be familiar with the teaching profession from a very young age. She found that her mother's teaching beliefs had a positive impact on her. She learned from her mother that being a teacher was not only about curriculum; instead, it was about being a third parent, a mentor, a psychologist, a doctor and she wanted to incorporate this belief into her teaching. Charlotte found that her mother and she had a wonderful partnership, and that she could talk about everything going on in her professional and personal lives and her mother could relate. She not only learned from her mother but her mother also adopted ideas from her. Moreover, since her mother was a teacher, Charlotte was fully aware that she would be very busy when becoming a teacher, having a family and raising children at the same time, and she consciously prepared herself for the busyness of being a teacher. She did a lot of volunteering work and helped students in need. Alsup (2005) suggests that although people may know that teaching is a demanding job from their family members, "that increased comfort or familiarity with educational discourse

might lead young people to choose teaching as a career—they feel that they know the good and the bad, and there will be few surprises" (p. 108). Having her mother as a role-model would help Charlotte adapt to the teaching life because she was aware of both the rewarding aspects of being a teacher and the busy nature of the teaching profession.

Similar to Charlotte's experience, Nathan did not plan to be a teacher until he realized in the last year of high school that teaching was what he was best at and becoming a teacher matched his strengths and his past teaching experience. When I asked him why he pursued a teaching career, he said,

> I didn't want to be a teacher. I didn't like school through all my Elementary Grades because I had dyslexia and I was bullied a lot too. That combination made school really tough for many years. As I got into high school, there were more opportunities for me to be creative, my grades shot up. I graduated from high school with honours and I had a lot of great experiences in high school. When I was getting to graduation time, I taught workshops for elementary students. I had been in drama club for three or four years in high school and I wanted to teach these kids all the cool things I learned in high school, the drama class and drama club, so I created workshops. Part of that journey is learning more about teaching and practicing as a teacher. I was encouraged by a lot of teachers to pursue teaching as a career. After finishing my last two degrees, I decided to pursue teaching because that's what I was good at. The jobs that I have done require creating relationships with young people and analyzing and creating content. Those are my strengths. I have always been a teacher. Why not be a teacher? My strengths and skills are fit for teaching.

Nathan believed that his strengths, his passions and his qualities as a person made him pursue a teaching career. He said that although he was not very talented with reading and writing, he could think critically and articulate concepts very well. He wanted his students to see that he was a successful person with a learning disability. If there were students in his class who had learning disabilities, Nathan wanted to show them that although their disabilities might limit them in certain areas, they could still achieve success through hard work and perseverance.

Another participant, Molly, did not decide to become a teacher until she did her second degree. She said that she did not do well in high school because she did not prioritize studying. She did not go to class very often and her grades went down quickly, which made her feel she could never be a good student. However, when she went to university, she began to work hard and soon realized that she had the potential to produce results. She did her first degree in Fine Arts in Theatre which was not set in a typical classroom environment. When she got into her second degree in English, that one was set in the classroom and she realized how much she loved discussion and writing essays. She also had a few good professors who made her think about things in different ways, and she wanted to be like them. In high school, Molly did not have any teachers that were thoroughly memorable. She said, "It did not make the profession look interesting for me until I saw someone who was so good at it and enjoyed doing it." It took time for Molly to find her own interests and strengths, and the teachers that she admired made the teaching profession more appealing to her.

As shown in Michelle's drawing, her most memorable teacher was her French Immersion teacher in junior high school. Michelle also became a junior high French teacher because she felt a strong connection to the class that her most memorable teacher taught. The biggest impression left on Michelle was that her French teacher and his students were very united and close to one another. When Michelle became a teacher, she wanted her students to feel that same closeness to her. She developed a good rapport with her students and kept in touch with many of them. She told me that she called her students her "babies" even though some of her previous students are now thirty or forty years old. On Mother's Day, one of her former male students sent a lovely picture to all the important "mothers" in his life, and she was one of his "mothers" who

shaped him and gave him the courage to explore things. Michelle felt touched and she was glad that she had an impact on him. Michelle enjoyed the closeness she had to her students and cared for them as though they were her children. She also admired that her French teacher had high expectations of his students, and she learned that a good teacher is someone who connects with the students, but also challenges the students by having high standards. Michelle's teacher played an important role in her life and in the development of her professional identities.

Caroline and Grace were two of the participants who specialized in special education. They both mentioned that they struggled in school when they were students, and consequently they had a lot of empathy for students who struggled in school. They wanted to become teachers to help those students. Caroline felt that she fostered negative emotions when she thought about her own experience in school because she could not keep up with other students. She found that high school was very stressful and grade-oriented. Because of anxieties and learning disabilities, she could not achieve top marks like her peers even though she studied very hard. She was thankful that her mother supported her at home, with tutoring and hiring tutors for her in high school. She felt that her teachers were not meeting the students' needs and she knew other students in the class felt the same way. Her negative school experience made her want to become a teacher because she thought she could do better than they had done with her. As a teacher, Caroline wanted her students to enjoy learning, and she was very empathetic towards her students because she had been through struggles in school herself. She tried to make every student feel special by getting to know them on a personal level, especially the students who were struggling and having self-confidence issues.

Grace also struggled in school, not academically but socially. She found high school difficult socially and she wanted to help those who find school a struggle, who do not necessarily fit in, or who lack learning or social skills. She never felt that she fitted in when she was a high school student because she had always been like "a black sheep", a loner, an introvert. She always enjoyed reading and being on her own as opposed to hanging out with a group of people. She found herself relating to the students who had the same challenges as her much more easily than the successful ones. Grace was one of the participants who had dreamed of being a teacher from the time she was young. She believed that the reason she gravitated towards special education was that these students have the same needs as she had in high school. She said, "I think special education teacher is my home, and that is where I am most effective because it is the most authentic to who I am as a teacher and who I am as a person."

Emily was a pre-service science teacher teaching at the high school level and she thought that she had no patience for teaching younger students. However, after she completed the after-school care program in an elementary school, she said that she liked teaching at the elementary school level more than at high school level. She said, "It was only when I was in that environment, I realized that I like it." She was so surprised to find that she developed patience for younger children and she was thinking about doing the primary/elementary degree after substituting in high school for a year.

Choosing which grade level to teach can be a difficult task for some teachers. Charlotte and Sophie had a strong preference for teaching at the primary/elementary level while Grace and Michelle were convinced that they could better connect with secondary school students. However, Emily gradually found that she preferred to teach younger kids and Logan realized that he was more suited to teaching at the university

level instead of in the school system. Their experiences showed that teachers' professional identities can shift as they develop an understanding of their personal selves and sometimes teachers do not know what choice is best for them until they have teaching experience in a certain setting.

Overall, my study found that several participants did not plan to pursue a teaching career at the beginning, and it took time for them to find where they wanted to be. Some did not decide to become teachers until they realized that their personal qualities, strengths and interests were a good fit for being a teacher. The teachers' understandings of the teaching profession were also influenced by their family members that were teachers and the memorable teachers they had when they were in school, and they tended to adopt some of the qualities of the teachers that they admired. Some participants' own experiences of having struggles in school made them feel empathetic with the students who struggled at school and gave them a strong desire to become a teacher who could help those students. It is important for teachers to reflect on what brings them to the teaching profession and how their personal traits, family background, school experiences and other aspects of their personal lives contribute to their professional role as a teacher.

6.4 Teachers' emotional experiences and vulnerabilities

The teaching experiences of the participants showed that they were personally and emotionally invested in their teaching jobs. Their feelings of joy, satisfaction, vulnerability, isolation, stress, and burnout were part of their personal and professional selves. Kelchtermans (1996) suggests that teaching is a vulnerable job and emotions play a crucial role. Storytelling is an effective way to understand teachers' vulnerability

because “the experience of vulnerability is always a particular experience, in a particular context, by a particular person” (Kelchtermans, 1996, p. 320). In my study, I asked the participants to talk about their lived experiences and the tensions that they experienced as teachers, and many of their experiences revealed the vulnerabilities of being a teacher.

The tension that the participants experienced between the authoritative discourses of teaching and their personal teaching beliefs and voices was one of the major factors that led to teacher vulnerability. Several pre-service teachers indicated that they had different teaching ideas from their cooperating teachers and struggled with implementing their own teaching ideas during their internships. As mentioned in Chapter Five, Carter wished that he could put students in groups and teach them in a student-oriented way, but one of his cooperating teachers mainly used PowerPoint to teach and he had to adopt his cooperating teacher’s teaching method instead of his preferred way. He felt that he came to the internship to learn from his mentors and it was tough for him to come in with his ideas and say “Actually we should do it this way.” Like Carter, Molly also experienced some constraints from her cooperating teacher. She found that the handouts used in class were very outdated, but she had to use them to be consistent with her cooperating teacher’s way of teaching. She was grateful that her cooperating teacher allowed her to use technology in her classroom because she liked to integrate videos into her drama teaching, but she found that she did not have a chance to structure the lessons as she wanted. Emily, another pre-service teacher, found that her cooperating teacher taught in a traditional way. Her cooperating teacher would have a Word document scrolling down on the screen for students to copy the notes. Emily said that she quickly learned that she did not want to teach in the same

way. Emily used PowerPoint with animations and Jingles to help the students understand concepts in biology. She also engaged students in hands-on activities, such as extracting DNA from strawberries and building DNA molecules. In the curriculum, there were twelve different scientists that students were expected to know. Her cooperating teacher would go through each scientist and introduce what they did, but Emily got the students into groups and got them to research the scientists and present it back to the class. She felt that she was like John Keating going into the classroom with a completely different mindset, but she also admitted that fear would always hang over her head during the early stage of her teaching career because she feared that she might lose her job if she challenged the schools norms. The pre-service teachers all came to their internships with their preferred teaching methods and they had to negotiate the authoritative discourses of teaching and their personal perspectives. Britzman (2003) suggests that teachers tend to struggle with two competing views on what it means to be a teacher: "the centripetal or normative voice, which defines what a teacher is and does in relation to the kind of authority and power teachers are expected to deploy;" and "the centrifugal or resisting voice, which speaks to one's deep convictions, investments, and desires" (p. 123). Pre-service teachers sometimes find it hard to implement the ideas that they have learned from their teacher education programs and they feel the pressure to conform to the school norms or their cooperating teachers' styles. Michelle said that she, as a mentor teacher, kept learning new ideas and techniques from her intern students. She believed that internship should be a time of experimentation and this is when they have time to try their ideas and see if they work in real settings.

The stories of experienced teachers showed that they experienced frustration, stress, and burnout when they did not get enough support from school administrations or when they had different opinions from the administrators. Caroline had taught for many years and she told me that last year was the most difficult teaching year for her. She felt there were a lot of physical and emotional demands in her job as a special education teacher and that she was not able to get a lot of support from her administration. One of the biggest challenges for her was that she was not able to have a consistent teacher assistant throughout the year. She was teaching students with severe disabilities and found that she spent too much time and energy in training new teacher assistants who did not have specialized knowledge and who did not know the students' routines. She raised the issue, but the administration was not willing to solve the problem. She found that when teachers speak up, it may not make a difference, because administrators are not willing to admit that the problem existed with the system at school. Instead, administrators thought that teachers should deal with the problem themselves. Caroline did, however, continue to push for support and she was able to get more consistency in teacher assistance the next academic year, but she knew the problem was still there and that another teacher might have to deal with different teacher assistants. Caroline said that she felt isolated, stressed and defeated last year because she did not have the support she needed from the administration and she felt she could not make changes to meet students' needs. She said that she took a semester off because she was burned out and was considering teaching in another school, but if she did go back to the school, she would feel reinvigorated to make changes.

When Grace taught in the Indigenous community, she had different teaching beliefs from the school administrator's ideas and ended up quitting her teaching

position. She used to let her students stay in her office during recess which they enjoyed. She sold coffee and hot chocolate to them, but her main purpose was to have more interaction with them. Students would chat with her and tell her about their lives and ask her for advice. However, the administrator wanted her to stop doing that, and he insisted that she needed to keep her office door closed. Grace said, "that was really hard for me. There were a lot of days I went home and cried because that wasn't who I was as a teacher. That wasn't who I am as a person because I really like these kids and they are not allowed to come to my office." Grace found that the school administrator's ideas about how to run the special education department were very different from hers. She chose to quit her job after that year of teaching because she could not interact with the students in the way she wanted.

Apart from the emotional struggles that teachers experienced with school authorities, teachers also struggled when interacting with students' parents. Michelle pointed out that dealing with difficult parents is a hard task for teachers. Although she met many great parents over the years, she felt that the difficult parents stuck in her memory and hurt her emotionally because she put so much into teaching and she found it disappointing when they were upset or angry. She experienced parents yelling over grades and also awkward situations where divorced parents came in together arguing between themselves in front of her. She recalled one incident where she suspected cheating and the parents were angry. An intern student was present during the meeting when she offered their child a make-up test. The intern student told her that it was one of the most important experiences that she had had as a pre-service teacher because she would now know how to handle that sort of situation. Michelle said,

> It's crisis management. There was a moment that I felt threatened. They were going to get physical and they were getting very aggressive towards me. I asked

> someone else to come with me and sit down. All those things, she wasn't taught from school and she needed to see it to really understand how to handle it and how to stay calm. It's important that pre-service teachers attend parent-teacher meetings to see how those go. Even though it can be stressful or it can be boring, it's still important to experience that. Those kinds of interactions cannot be taught. Pre-service teachers have to experience them.

Michelle also mentioned that she had a set of parents emailing her every day and expecting her to reply. She found it very time-consuming and stressful. Apart from dealing with parents, Michelle highlighted that there were many other stressful moments in teaching, such as dealing with aggressive students and students having panic attacks. Teacher education programs need to prepare pre-service teachers with conflict resolution and first aid skills to deal with those stressful situations.

Many participants believed that teaching was an emotional journey because they were very attached to their students. Several participants mentioned that the most memorable experience of teaching was when their students came and thanked them for what they had done for them. However, teachers tend to feel frustrated when they find that they are not able to make positive changes. Emily said she could foresee that teaching could be very frustrating when students did not want to be there and sometimes teachers could get to the point where they were too exhausted and they did not know whether they should give up on those students. Logan pointed out that the expectation that the teacher is solely responsible for student learning is problematic because parents are also responsible for dealing with discipline issues and they need to be held accountable.

Some of the participants had substituting experience and they indicated the difficulties of being a substitute teacher. Megan was an experienced teacher who had taught both in Canada and in some international settings. She struggled emotionally when she taught as a substitute teacher in Canada. She said that she had to wake up

early every morning to wait for a call. Sometimes she got a call, and sometimes she did not. When she was called, she had to go in right away, but if she was not called, she would have to continue waiting. She found that not knowing whether she could work or not every day was very stressful. She also felt that she often received little respect from other teachers and from the principal in the schools where she was substituting. She said that substitute teachers usually get paid poorly and some of them have to find other work on top of teaching. She said that she loved teaching, but she found that getting into the teaching profession was difficult and competitive. When she was doing her Bachelor of Education, she did not know about the lives of substitute teachers. She felt that teachers are always in competition and feel a need to compare themselves with other teachers.

Charlotte also felt pressured when substituting. She felt that she needed to be fun and to make sure that the students got the work done productively, but she found that the work that substitute teachers do is usually not fun. She said that it is usually students sitting down and working on their sheets because it was easy for the original teachers to assign that. She found it hard to make her class fun when the work was boring. She also felt that she had to be careful about what she said, what she did, and what jokes she made because she did not know the students and the students did not know her. Moreover, she found it hard to write a report at the end of the day explaining what she had done and what she did not have time to do. She was trying to do what she thought was best for students, but it might not be what the original teacher wanted.

Overall, teaching is a vulnerable job and teachers are emotionally affected by the tensions and struggles that they experience. For pre-service teachers, they tend to experience tension between the teaching ideas that they would like to implement and

their cooperating teachers' ideas, and for in-service teachers, they tend to experience tension between their personal teaching beliefs and the opinions of school administrations. A fundamental tension in education is between the dominant and counter discourses of teaching and learning. Teachers experience tensions between dominant discourses and lived experiences, between authoritarian perspectives and personal perspectives, and between the need to conform and the desire to rebel. Moreover, teachers feel vulnerable when they encounter stressful situations in teaching, such as dealing with difficult parents as well as aggressive or sick students. Teacher education programs need to prepare pre-service teachers with more practical skills, such as conflict resolution and first aid. My study also suggests that we need to pay more attention to the lives of substitute teachers. Compared to full time teachers, substitute teachers tend to experience more uncertainty within their teaching jobs, less respect, less financial security, and less freedom to teach in their preferred ways.

6.5 Summary

Through investigating the lived experiences of the participants, I gained the following insights: 1) Teachers' personal skills, competences, and personality traits largely contribute to their professional identities. Their professional roles as teachers can also help their personal selves grow. It is important for teachers to be more aware that their personal and professional identities are interconnected and that they need to find ways to integrate their personal identities into their teaching instead of hiding or repressing them. Although teachers may modify their personal selves to have more professionalism in the classroom, they do not have to completely change who they are to become the kind of teacher that they think they are supposed to be. The huge

inconsistency that teachers perceive between their personal and professional identities may make them consider leaving the teaching profession. My study suggests teacher education programs should provide teachers the opportunity to know more about themselves as people and to think about how they integrate their personal identities and skills into teaching and how they deal with inconsistencies between their personal and professional identities that they can foresee. 2) My study also showed that not all of the participants planned to pursue a teaching career in the beginning and that along the way they might change their mind about which level of students they preferred to teach. As they learned more about their personal qualities and strengths, they developed their professional selves accordingly. A teacher education program can encourage teachers to reflect on what brings them to the teaching profession and how their personal traits, family background, school experiences and other aspects of their personal lives contribute to their professional role as a teacher. When the teachers first start their teacher education programs, they can make a portfolio or a scrapbook documenting what brought them to the teaching profession, and it can become a reminder of their initial goals and ideals when they encounter any difficulties in their teaching. 3) The lived experiences of the participants showed that they were personally and emotionally involved in their teaching and that teaching is a vulnerable job. Teachers tend to experience tension between the need to conform to the normative discourses of teaching and the desire to develop their own styles. Some of the pre-service teacher participants struggled with implementing their own teaching ideas during their internships and some of the in-service teacher participants had different teaching beliefs from the school administrations. Those tensions made the teachers feel frustrated, stressed, isolated, and burned out. The experiences of the participants also showed that dealing with difficult

parents and unmotivated or sick students can make teachers feel stressed and vulnerable. Teacher education programs need to prepare pre-service teachers with more practical skills, such as conflict resolution and first aid. Being a substitute teacher can be a stressful experience. Teacher education programs need to equip pre-service teachers with the abilities to cope with the emotional struggles they may encounter as substitute teachers or as full-time teachers.

Chapter seven: Conclusion and implications

7.1 Introduction

My study identified three discourses that are crucial to teachers' identity development, including teachers' personal identities, professional identities, and cultural expectations of teachers. Teacher education and professional development programs mainly focus on equipping teachers with content knowledge and pedagogical skills instead of helping teachers develop integrated professional identities (Alsup, 2005). Teachers often experience tensions among their personal selves, their professional identities, and the need to conform to cultural expectations (Alsup, 2005; Britzman, 2003; Weber & Mitchell, 1995). Teachers are not given much chance to critically examine how the dominant representations of teachers affect their assumptions of what it means to be a teacher, and little research focuses on exploring how teachers negotiate their identities within and against cultural expectations of teachers. The purpose of my research was to explore the intersection of teachers' negotiations of their personal identities, their professional identities, and the cultural expectations placed on them by engaging the participants in the three arts-based research practices. My study took a holistic view of teacher identities and intended to address both the connections and contradictions among the multiple discourses that teachers engage in. In the preceding three chapters, I discussed the data that I collected from the drawing activity, the movie elicitation, and the interviews respectively. In this chapter, I summarize the main insights that I gained from my study and highlight the significance of my study. I also provide recommendations for teacher education and teacher development programs, for pre-service and in-service teachers, and for future research.

7.2 Main insights

To achieve the purpose of exploring teachers' negotiation of the multiple discourses that they engage in, my study addressed questions about the participants' perceptions about how their personal identities, professional identities, and cultural expectations of teachers connect and/or contradict with each other, about how they perceive the cultural expectations of teachers, about how they negotiate their identities within and against cultural expectations, and about the possibilities of using arts-based research practices to enhance teacher education programs. In this section, I show how the research data addressed these research questions.

7.2.1 Question one: What are teachers' perceptions of the connections among their personal identities, their professional identities, and cultural expectations of teachers?

The participants of the study perceived that their personal and professional identities were interrelated. Their personal traits and competences, such as their communication skills, their social nature, and the empathy that they had for others, greatly contributed to their professional identities. For instance, one participant unconsciously brought her sarcasm and sense of humor into her teaching, which made her a unique teacher in her students' eyes. Other participants saw their professional role as teachers as one that greatly boosted their self-confidence and helped them grow as individuals. When I asked the participants about what made them pursue teaching, the participants' responses showed that their decision to become teachers was influenced by many personal factors, such as their personal strengths, their own school experience,

the teachers that they admired, and their family backgrounds. For example, some participants indicated that they struggled academically or socially when they were students, which inspired them to help other students who experienced the same struggles as they had. My study confirmed Alsup's (2005) idea that "[t]he professional self does not exist in isolation from the personal self and associated relationship" (p. 106). It is important for teachers to reflect on how those personal factors and past experiences contribute to both who they are as people and who they are as teachers. Apart from recognizing the close connection between teachers' personal and professional identities, the new insight gained from my study is that getting to know one's personal self is a difficult but important task for teachers because teachers themselves may not be fully aware of their strengths and preferences at certain points of their lives. Both teachers' personal and professional identities are fluid and constantly under construction. Several participants of my study indicated that they did not plan to become teachers at the beginning or were not sure what level of students they preferred to teach. They gradually realized that they were suitable for teaching after they developed a good understanding of their personal strengths, interests, and personality traits. The three arts-based research practices used in my study were three effective tools that any teacher can use to develop a deep understanding of their personal selves and that can also be used in professional development. My study suggests that teacher education programs need to provide teachers with more opportunities to reflect on what brought them into the teaching profession and how their personal selves contribute to their professional identities.

Moreover, my research data revealed the impact of the cultural expectations on teachers. The drawing activity showed that some teachers still hold stereotypical images

of teachers standing in front of a board. Although some of the participants disagreed with teacher-centred teaching approaches, they drew themselves standing up in front of a board, which parallels the stereotypical teacher image revealed by Weber and Mitchell (1995). The drawing activity used in my study also showed that the participants felt pressure to modify their bodies to fit into school norms and cultural expectations of what teachers are supposed to look like. Although some participants expressed their desire to wear casual clothes at work, they responded to pressure to dress more conservatively. Some believed that dressing formally was a cultural marker which distinguished them from their students and made them more socially recognized as teachers. Although possessing progressive teaching beliefs, one of the participants drew traditional desks in her picture and she believed that traditional elements of teaching in her picture originated from her childhood memories, which confirmed Weber and Mitchell's (1995) idea that the culture in which the teacher grew up plays an important role in shaping teacher identities. The movie elicitation showed that the participants, especially pre-service teacher participants, were very attached to the heroic and dedicated teacher images portrayed in popular culture. Both the drawing activity and movie elicitation allowed the participants to be more aware of the impact of cultural expectations on their personal and professional selves. My study encourages teachers and teacher education programs to draw more attention to the interrelationship among teachers' personal identities, professional identities, and the cultural expectations of teachers.

7.2.2 Question two: How do teachers perceive and deal with inconsistencies among their personal identities, professional identities, and cultural expectations of teachers?

The research data showed that participants experienced both consistencies and inconsistencies among their personal identities, professional identities, and cultural expectations of teachers. The participants struggled with fitting into institutional expectations while maintaining their personal beliefs and attitudes. For example, one of the participants experienced the tension between her queer identity and the dominant heteronormative discourses of the school. She indicated that she would be careful about revealing her queer identity in the workplace. As a teacher, she chose to prioritize her professional role as a teacher instead of her activist identity, but she hoped that she could be able to express her activist ideas more freely in future. Some other participants also found that their personal traits, such as being laidback or being too outspoken, did not fit into the cultural and institutional expectations. However, some found that they could not completely change themselves to meet those expectations. One of the in-service teacher participants highlighted that keeping the consistency between who she is as a person and who she is as a teacher is key to her success. She did not want to suppress her personal beliefs, values, and attitudes to meet the expectations of others, and she quit her teaching position when she had different teaching beliefs from the school administrator. Another in-service teacher participant indicated that she experienced physical and emotional exhaustion when she did not get enough support from school administration. The experiences of the participants showed that the huge inconsistencies between teachers' personal beliefs and the opinions of school authorities lead to teachers' burnout, emotional struggles, and even withdrawal from

their teaching positions. For in-service teachers, they tended to experience tensions between their personal teaching beliefs and the opinions of school administrators. For pre-service teachers, they tended to experience tensions between the teaching ideas that they would like to implement during their internship and their cooperating teachers' teaching styles. When faced with inconsistencies between dominant discourses of teaching and personal beliefs and attitudes, many of the pre-service teacher participants expressed their fear of not getting teaching jobs and they felt pressure to adapt to the cultural expectations and school norms. Several of them admitted that it would be hard to be a teacher like John Keating who risked his job to fight against school norms and school authorities. One of the participants pointed out that teachers can have a greater influence on students if they stay in their teaching positions longer instead of quitting their jobs. My study suggests that teachers need to be provided with better job security to be less fearful of challenging the traditional assumptions of teaching and to implement their progressive teaching ideas. When teachers are provided with more freedom to integrate their personal beliefs and personal traits into teaching instead of suppressing their personal selves, they will feel less pressured to change themselves to the cultural and institutional expectations and will be able to keep their personal and professional identities more consistent.

7.2.3 Question three: What are teachers' perceptions of the cultural expectations of being a teacher?

My study used both the drawing activity and movie elicitation to examine how the participants perceived cultural expectations of teachers. In terms of the drawing activity, the participants' drawings showed both stereotypical assumptions about

teaching and their progressive teaching beliefs. Their drawings included some traditional cultural markers of a teaching image that appeared in the study by Weber and Mitchell (1995), such as formal dressing, pointer stick, blackboard, the teacher's desk with piles of grading assignments, and the teacher standing in front of a board. However, there were also new elements of teaching in the drawings of my participants, such as SMART board, iPads, computer, math manipulatives, different shapes of tables, parent volunteers, and yoga mats. Weber and Mitchell (1995) suggest that some traditional cultural markers of schooling, such as the teacher's desk and pointer stick, symbolize the teacher's control over students. Although there were still some traditional cultural markers to symbolize the teacher's power in my participants' drawings, these new elements in their drawings showed the participants' perceptions of the teachers as facilitators instead of controllers of the class. A few drawings showed that teachers were not distancing themselves from students, but rather working with students. Their drawings challenged the cultural myth that everything depends on the teacher and that the teacher is responsible for individually controlling the class as Britzman (2003) notes. The drawing activity also revealed participants' perceptions of body image and gender expectations of teachers. Participants had different perceptions of teacher's dress codes, and they suggested that school culture with regard to teacher dress can vary from school to school. Although some participants had a strong desire to wear casual clothes at work to connect with their students, they believed that dressing formally was still the expectation of the schools where they taught. Some participants believed that there is a trend that teachers can dress more casually nowadays and that they can use casual dressing style as a pedagogical approach to encourage students to dress in their own styles. The stereotype that females are more suitable for becoming elementary school

teachers revealed by Weber and Mitchell (1995) also existed in my study. Some of the participants of my study held the assumption that female teachers are more nurturing and caring and are more suited to teaching younger students, whereas male teachers tend to be either more fun or stricter and are more suited to teaching at the intermediate/secondary level. Those expectations had an impact on the participants' choices of teaching level. In order to break away from conservative assumptions about teachers' physical appearance and gender, three of the participants drew the teacher image without showing specific details about the teacher's clothes, body shape, or gender, which opens up the possibilities of being a teacher.

The movie elicitation allowed participants to critically examine representations of teachers in movies. Many participants expressed their fantasies of becoming the heroic and charismatic teachers portrayed in teacher movies, but they indicated that they might not be able to implement all their teaching ideals in the early stages of their teaching careers, which echoes Bride's (2009) idea that there is a discrepancy between heroic stories portrayed in movies and teaching practices in real life. The participants of my study pointed out that it is problematic to reinforce the message that "good" teachers have to sacrifice their jobs to provide better education for students. They believed that teachers are more likely to make more consistent positive changes if they stayed in their teaching positions longer. Some participants were very attached to the dedicated and selfless teacher images portrayed in teacher movies, but they were also aware of the unrealistic aspects of teacher movies and the problem of dichotomizing teachers into "good" and "bad". Many participants also thought critically about the expectations of the teacher as a saviour. One of the participants believed that teachers could not save all students because teachers have a limited ability to solve the problems

that students confront outside the school. She also believed that teachers cannot impose their own values on their students; instead, they need to respect student choices and cultural backgrounds. Another participant pointed out that the stereotype of the teacher as the sole saviour ignores the systematic problems in school that might contribute to students' low performance. Through reviewing and discussing the teacher movies, the participants became more aware of the stereotypical images of teachers reinforced in popular culture and of how those representations of teachers impacted their professional identities. Some of the participants chose to view school movies that challenge traditional assumptions about teachers, which showed their openness to the various possibilities of being a teacher. The movie elicitation showed the idealism in teaching and the constraints of achieving those ideals in real life, and it also showed the participants' perceptions of teacher sacrifice, teacher as saviour, teacher as lone hero, and the binary opposition between "good" and "bad" teachers.

7.2.4 Question four: How do teachers negotiate their identities within and against the cultural expectations of being a teacher?

Based on the discussions above, my study suggests that, on the one hand, teachers perform their identities based on perceived cultural expectations of teachers; on the other hand, they demonstrate a desire to resist and challenge some of the stereotypical assumptions of teachers that conflict with their personal beliefs. The participants were aware of the cultural expectations about teachers' appearance, dress codes, and body shape, and they modified their personal selves to meet those expectations. However, participants also experienced tensions between their personal beliefs and the cultural expectations of teachers. Although the participants of my study

felt the pressure to conform to the cultural expectations of teachers and school norms, they were also aware that cultural expectations of teachers can be unsettled and challenged. Some of the in-service teacher participants chose to either insist on their personal beliefs when their personal beliefs contradicted with the cultural norms, or to quit their teaching job. Pre-service teacher participants also expressed strong desires to challenge traditional assumptions about teaching and to implement the progressive teaching ideas that they learned from the teacher education programs. However, compared to in-service teacher participants, pre-service teacher participants were more concerned about fitting into cultural expectations and school norms during the early stages of their teaching careers. Some of them indicated that they might have to give up some of their personal beliefs before they had secure teaching positions. Although dominant discourses, cultural expectations, and power relations play powerful roles in constructing our understanding of teachers and teaching, it is possible for individuals to disrupt dominant discourses and make changes to the status quo. As Henry Giroux (1981) suggests, "schools are more than merely ideological reflections of the dominant interests of the wider society;" instead, they are "social sites…characterized by an ongoing struggle between hegemonic and counter-hegemonic forces" (p. 15). My study inspires teachers to be conscious of how the cultural expectations of teachers impact their teacher identities and encourage them to break away from traditional ways of thinking and to be open minded to alternative possibilities of teaching.

7.2.5 Question five: What is the potential of arts-based research practices in teacher education programs to help teachers to develop their identities?

My study suggests that arts-based research practices can be incorporated into teacher education programs to promote a holistic understanding of teacher identities. Teacher education programs focus mainly on the development of teachers' professional identities and pay less attention to how teachers negotiate the multiple discourses that they engage in. The arts-based research practice of drawing a teacher image (any teacher) draws teachers' attention to their personal identities and the cultural expectations of teachers. The contradictions between what teachers draw and how they interpret their drawings also reveal the tensions that they experience among their personal beliefs about teaching and culturally expected ways of teaching.

Arts-based research practices can also be used to encourage teachers to critically examine cultural expectations of teachers and to make them more aware of the impact of cultural representations of teachers on their teacher identities. The use of movie elicitation in my study allowed the participants to rethink traditional assumptions, such as the teacher as hero and saviour, that are reinforced by popular culture. One of the participants noted that he used to believe that popular culture was mainly for entertainment, but he became more aware of how popular culture shaped his understanding of teachers through participating in my research. In terms of the drawing activity, this not only makes visible the stereotypical images of teachers and teaching, but also allows teachers to reflect on and challenge those stereotypes. For example, several participants drew a teacher standing in front of the classroom. When discussing their drawings, they realized that their drawings reinforced the stereotypical image of teachers and they expressed a strong desire to challenge a teacher-centered approach of

teaching. One of the participants realized that she included some traditional elements of teaching that were derived from her own school memories in her drawing, and after reflecting on her drawing, she believed that she would draw a couple of things differently if she could draw the picture again. According to bell hooks (1995), "art is necessarily a terrain of defamiliarization: it may take what we see/know and make us look at it in a new way" (p. 4). Drawing as one of the arts-based research practices can be used to both reveal and unsettle the cultural stereotypes and dominant discourses about teachers.

Moreover, arts-based research practices can help access teachers' emotional struggles that are not given enough attention in teacher education programs. According to Britzman (2009), teaching and learning is not only a process of knowledge integration, but also an emotional situation. One of the strengths of arts-based research is to evoke emotional responses from participants (Leavy, 2009, 2018). The narrative inquiry used in my study revealed the emotional struggles and vulnerabilities that participants experienced. Incorporating arts-based research practices into teacher education programs would help address teachers' emotional wellbeing.

7.3 Research contributions

In this section, I highlight the contributions that my study made conceptually, substantively, and methodologically.

7.3.1 Conceptual contributions

Based on Alsup's (2005) theory of borderland discourse, my study focuses on the multiple discourses that teachers engage in and explores how teachers perceive the

connections and contradictions among their multiple identity positions. Although Alsup's (2005) study demonstrates the awareness of the impact of cultural expectations of teachers, it does not closely examine teachers' perceptions of cultural expectations and how they negotiate their identities within and against the cultural expectations of teachers. My study builds on Alsup's to explore the development of teacher identities with a particular focus on the broader cultural expectations. Through examining the interrelationship between teachers' personal identities, professional identities, and the cultural expectations of teachers, my study contributes to a holistic, postmodern understanding of teacher identities. My study suggests that teachers' personal and professional identities are interconnected and the cultural representations of teachers contribute to teachers' assumptions of what it means to be a teacher. Based on Judith Butler's theory of performativity, there is no gender behind the notion of "gender". Instead, people perform masculine and feminine traits based on the cultural scripts of males and females. My study suggests that there is no original meaning attached to teacher identities either. Teacher identities have been performed repeatedly and those performative acts construct our understanding of what it means to be a teacher. However, it is possible for teachers to challenge naturalized assumptions about teachers. The research data showed that teachers perform their identities both within and against cultural expectations. My study addresses the tensions that teachers experience between dominant discourses and lived experiences and between authoritative perspectives and personal perspectives. Drawing on Greene's concept of "teacher as stranger," my research inspires teachers to take a stranger's point of view on everyday life. To take the view of the stranger, Greene (1973) suggests, is "like returning home from a long stay in some other place" (p. 267), and the homecomer can notice things in his house

that they never noticed before. For teachers, they cannot merely accept the "the ready-made standardized scheme of the cultural pattern handed down to [them] by ancestors, teachers, and authorities" (Schutz, 1964, as cited in Greene, 1973, p. 268). Instead, they need to take a fresh look at the roles of teachers. In this way, teachers are more likely to challenge the status quo and make changes to the traditional forms of teaching and learning.

7.3.2 Substantive contributions

There has been a long tradition of research on teacher identities and teacher images (Cole & Knowles, 1993; Weber & Mitchell, 1995; Hawkey, 1996; Palmer, 1998; Danielewicz, 2001; Beijaard et al., 2004; Alsup, 2005). My study brings the topic of teacher identities back onto centre-stage and examines the prevailing cultural expectations of teachers. The drawings of the participants revealed some traditional assumptions of teachers, such as a teacher standing in front of a board and holding a pointer stick in hand, as similarly shown in the study by Weber & Mitchell (1995). However, the drawings of participants in this study also demonstrated their resistance to conservative assumptions of how teachers are expected to look and behave, and what a teaching environment is like. The movie elicitation showed that the participants were attached to the heroic, dedicated, and charismatic teacher images in movies, but they were also aware of the unrealistic aspects of teacher movies and of the problematic portrayals of the teacher as hero and saviour. Some of my participants chose to view some unconventional movies, which added new insights about teachers' perceptions of the various types of school movies.

My study also addresses the real struggles that both pre-service and in-service teachers experience. Clandinin et al. (2015) reported that approximately forty percent of teachers leave teaching within the first five years of teaching in Alberta, Canada. My study suggests that the huge inconsistencies between teachers' personal and professional identities can lead to teacher burnout, emotional struggles, and withdrawal from teaching positions. My study also highlights that teachers experience tensions between dominant discourses about teaching and their personal beliefs and lived experiences. Teachers, especially pre-service teachers tend to be fearful of losing their teaching jobs, and they feel pressure to conform to school norms and the status quo before they have secure job positions. My study suggests that better job security needs to be provided for teachers. My study also points out that teacher education programs need to pay more attention to teachers' mental wellbeing because teachers are personally and emotionally involved in the teaching profession.

Furthermore, my study added new insights about the impact of social media and public views of teacher identities. The participants of my study indicated that they found it hard to keep their personal and professional lives separate because teachers are constantly in the public eye. They expressed their worry about going out and meeting their high school students. The development of technology also made it hard for teachers to keep their personal lives private. Participants indicated that they had to be careful about what they posted on social media sites because students could find out about their personal lives on the Internet. The effect of social media made the teachers' personal lives more available to their students, which helped disrupt the unrealistic images of the teacher as superhero and saint. The participants suggested that it was

important for students to know that their teachers were human too and that they lived everyday lives.

7.3.3 Methodological contributions

The three arts-based research practices used in my study, drawing, movie elicitation, and narrative inquiry, have been used separately in other studies. My study was innovative in that it used the combination of these three arts-based research practices to explore teacher identities and the cultural expectations of teachers. The layered approach provided a deep understanding of each participant's background, personal identities, and lived experiences. When the participants introduced their drawings to me, I began to get to know them and their teaching beliefs. When the participants discussed the school movies, I invited them to talk about how the movies resonated with them and I began to know more about their teaching experiences. After the drawing activity and movie elicitation, I adjusted my interview questions for the narrative inquiry based on what they said in the last two practices. For example, Grace indicated that she drew herself as an unconventional teacher with causal clothing and tattoos on her arms in the drawing activity. For narrative inquiry, I asked follow-up questions about her experiences when going against school norms and school authorities. I noticed that some common themes emerged throughout the three arts-based practices of individual participants. For example, Charlotte expressed her desire to become a dedicated teacher throughout the three practices. In her drawing, she drew the teacher in four different places to show how dedicated and busy a teacher should be in order to meet each student's need. She also emphasized the teacher's dedication when discussing the movie and telling her own stories. Through examining the connections

and contradictions among the data gained from multiple arts-based research practices, researchers can gain a more holistic understanding of participants' experiences. My study suggests researchers use a combination of different arts-based research practices that are suitable for their research topics. Moreover, my study suggests that the drawing activity and movie elicitation are particularly effective for both examining the participants' perceptions of cultural expectations and challenging cultural stereotypes. My study confirms Weber and Mitchell's (1995, 1996, 1999) ideas that drawings are an effective tool for revealing and challenging traditional assumptions about teachers, for shifting attention to teachers' embodied identities, and for bringing better understanding to the tensions and ambivalences that teachers experience. My study suggests that arts-based research helps reveal and unsettle dominant ways of thinking, evokes emotions, helps explore fluid, multiple identities, addresses hidden tensions and contradictions, and captures the complexity of lived experiences.

7.4 Implications

This study provides a deep understanding of teachers' negotiation of the multiple discourses that they are engaging in and has important implications for teacher education and teacher development programs as well as for pre-service and in-service teachers. Some suggestions for further research also emerged during my study.

Below are the suggestions that my study provides for teacher education and teacher development programs. First, my study suggests that teacher education and teacher development programs need to provide teachers with opportunities to take a holistic view of their teacher identities and to examine how their personal identities contribute to their professional role as a teacher and how they deal with the

inconsistencies between their personal and professional identities if there are any. Huge inconsistencies between who they are as a person and who they are as a teacher and contradictions between their personal beliefs and the authoritative discourses of teaching may lead to vulnerabilities or job withdrawal. For example, one of the pre-service teacher participants worried that people would doubt her teaching ability because of her queer identity, her activist identity, and the casual clothes that she wore. Three of the six pre-service teachers experienced tension between their preferred teaching methods and the cooperating teachers' teaching styles and they found it hard to implement all their ideas to teaching. One pre-service teacher and one experienced teacher worried that being strongly opinionated would get them in trouble as teachers and the experienced teacher eventually decided to pursue a teaching career at the university level instead of in the school system. Another two experienced teachers went through emotional struggles when they had different teaching ideas from their administrators', and one of them ended up quitting her job and the other teacher considered leaving her teaching job in that school. Teacher education and teacher development programs can hold seminars and workshops for teachers to discuss what leads them to a teaching career, why they choose to teach at a certain level, and how they negotiate their personal traits and beliefs and the authoritative discourses of teaching.

Second, my study suggests that teacher education and teacher professional development programs incorporate the drawing activity, movie elicitation, and storytelling into courses and workshops, allowing teachers to examine both the cultural expectations of teachers and their own teaching beliefs. Teacher educators can invite teachers to draw teacher images and to reflect on their unconscious beliefs and the

impact of cultural expectations and school norms on their teacher identities. Teacher educators can also invite teachers to view teacher movies and to examine their fantasies of teaching and the impact of the popular culture on their perceptions of teachers. Moreover, teacher educators can encourage teachers to share their personal stories and experiences. Most of the participants of my study indicated that it was the first time they participated in this type of drawing activity and movie elicitation. My study suggests that teacher education and teacher professional development programs can engage teachers in arts-based practices to reflect on their personal and professional identities and the representations of teachers in popular culture.

Third, several pre-service teacher participants of my study indicated that they had to put aside some of their own teaching ideas to adapt to the teaching styles of their cooperating teachers during the internship. For instance, both Carter and Molly had different teaching ideas from their cooperating teachers' and they found it hard to teach in their preferred ways. My study suggests that pre-service teachers need to be provided with more freedom to implement the ideas that they learned from teacher education programs and that cooperating teachers need to encourage interns to experiment with their new ideas to see if those ideas work.

Fourth, teacher education and teacher development programs need to prepare teachers with more practical skills, such as conflict resolution skills, first aid skills, and mental health skills. As an experienced teacher, Michelle pointed out that there are many stressful situations that teachers need to handle, such as dealing with difficult parents and aggressive or sick students and that pre-service teachers need to learn practical skills to deal with those situations. She suggested that pre-service teachers observe the parent-teacher meetings during their internship so that they can gain

experience of interacting with students' parents. Many of the participants believed that they were emotionally involved in teaching and they experienced some negative feelings, such as frustration, stress, isolation, and burnout, when teaching as a full-time teacher as well as a substitute teacher. My study suggests that teacher education and teacher development programs need to pay more attention to teachers' mental health and to provide them with strategies to deal with their emotional struggles.

Fifth, I interviewed the participants about their suggestions for teacher education programs and they highlighted that engagement needs to be modelled more within the teacher education programs. Nathan found that his professor simply lectured about how to write a lesson plan. He thought it would be helpful if they could make lesson plans and try them out by teaching the lesson to their peers. Charlotte also suggested the professors need to model teaching methods that are engaging and that meet the different needs of students. She found the professors told them to keep the students interested and engaged, but sometimes their own teaching did not promote an engaged way to learn. She hoped that professors could model the effective and innovative teaching methods in their classes. Although many professors of Education teach in engaging and effective ways, these suggestions are important to keep in mind.

In terms of suggestions for pre-service and in-service teachers, my study suggests that teachers need to know themselves as individuals, respect their personal selves, and develop a vision of what kind of teacher they want to be. They do not have to suppress their personal beliefs, values, or preferences to become the teacher that they think they are supposed to be. They need to know their strengths and interests and maintain their unique personal traits. For example, Molly found that her students liked her sarcasm and humor and her unique personal traits made her stand out as a teacher,

despite the fact that she had been told that sarcasm was inappropriate for the classroom. Both Charlotte and Nathan believed that it was hard for them to make a decision to pursue a teaching career until they realized their own strengths and interests. Teachers can document what led them to pursue a teaching career and use it as a reminder when they encounter difficulties and emotional struggles in teaching. They also need to be conscious of how their family background, school experience and other aspects of their personal lives contribute to their professional roles as a teacher. Moreover, my study suggests that teachers need to critically examine the cultural expectations of teachers and the effect on them and develop an awareness of and resistance to the dominant discourses of teaching. They need to be aware that their multiple voices and personal perspectives can be suppressed and marginalized by the dominant discourses in education. My study encourages teachers to take a fresh look at taken for granted views and to challenge traditional assumptions about teachers. Teachers can consider modelling their alternative lifestyles and having an impact on people in the communities in which they work and live. Additionally, teachers need to be aware that the development of their professional identities inevitably involves tensions, contradictions, and emotional struggles, as well as a constant negotiation among the multiple discourses that they are engaging in.

In terms of suggestions for future research, my study shows the value of using different drawing activities. For example, pre-service teachers can be invited to draw the teacher image both at the beginning and the end of their teacher education programs to examine how their perceptions of teachers and teaching change over time. Researchers can also invite teachers to draw an image of a student or an image of the school environment to examine their perceptions of what an ideal student and the school

environment look like. My study also suggests that future research can focus more on teachers' emotional experiences and on how they cope with their emotional struggles. Since the stories of my participants showed that exposing their personal fragility to students could help them build closer connections with their students, future research can explore whether exposing the vulnerabilities of teachers can benefit teachers and if so, in what ways. Future researchers can also recruit participants from different cultural backgrounds and examine how they perceive the cultural expectations of teachers. In addition, future researchers could invite participants to read Britzman's (1986, 1991, and 2003) studies and to explicitly discuss their drawings and the school movies through the lens of cultural myths in the making of a teacher.

7.5 Conclusion

My study suggests that teachers experience both consistencies and inconsistencies among the multiple discourses that they engage in, including teachers' personal identities, professional identities, and cultural expectations of teachers. Teachers often experience tensions between dominant discourses of teaching and their personal beliefs and lived experiences. On the one hand, teachers perform their professional identities based on cultural expectations of teachers and school norms; on the other hand, they demonstrate a desire to resist or challenge those expectations that conflict with their personal beliefs. My study inspires teachers to be conscious of how the cultural expectations of teachers impact their teacher identities and to critically examine the traditional assumptions of teachers. My study also suggests that the discourse of teacher education needs to be shifted from one that merely focuses on

teachers' professional identities to one that involves the social and cultural expectations of teachers as well as teachers' personal voices and lived experiences.

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Appendix A: ICEHR Approval

MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY

Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research (ICEHR)

St. John's, NL Canada A1C 5S7
Tel: 709 864-2561 icehr@mun.ca
www.mun.ca/research/ethics/humans/icehr

ICEHR Number:	**20160537-ED**
Approval Period:	September 22, 2015 – September 30, 2016
Funding Source:	SGS Doctoral Fellowship
Responsible Faculty:	Dr. Elizabeth Yeoman Faculty of Education
Title of Project:	*Exploring the intersection of teachers' negotiation of personal identities, professional identities, and cultural expectations of teachers*

September 22, 2015

Ms. Xiaolin Xu
Faculty of Education
Memorial University of Newfoundland

Dear Ms. Xu:

Thank you for your email correspondence of September 10 and 18, 2015 addressing the issues raised by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research (ICEHR) concerning the above-named research project.

The ICEHR has re-examined the proposal with the clarification and revisions submitted, and is satisfied that the concerns raised by the Committee have been adequately addressed. In accordance with the *Tri-Council Policy Statement on Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS2)*, the project has been granted *full ethics clearance* to September 30, 2016. ICEHR approval applies to the ethical acceptability of the research, as per Article 6.3 of the *TCPS2*. Researchers are responsible for adherence to any other relevant University policies and/or funded or non-funded agreements that may be associated with the project.

If you need to make changes during the course of the project, which may raise ethical concerns, please forward an amendment request form with a description of these changes to icehr@mun.ca for the Committee's consideration.

The *TCPS2* requires that you submit an annual update form to the ICEHR before September 30, 2016. If you plan to continue the project, you need to request renewal of your ethics clearance, and include a brief summary on the progress of your research. When the project no longer requires contact with human participants, is completed and/or terminated, you need to provide the annual update form with a final brief summary, and your file will be closed.

The annual update form and amendment request form are on the ICEHR website at http://www.mun.ca/research/ethics/humans/icehr/applications/.

We wish you success with your research.

Yours sincerely,

Kelly Blidook, Ph.D.
Vice-Chair, Interdisciplinary Committee on
Ethics in Human Research

KB/lw

cc: Supervisor – Dr. Elizabeth Yeoman, Faculty of Education
Director, Research Grant and Contract Services
Associate Dean, Graduate Programs, Faculty of Education

Appendix B: Informed Consent Form

Informed Consent Form

Title: Exploring the intersection of teachers' negotiation of personal identities, professional identities, and cultural expectations of teachers

Researcher(s): Xiaolin Xu
Faculty of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland
Email address: xx1136@mun.ca

Supervisor(s): Elizabeth Yeoman,
Faculty of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland
Email address: eyeoman@mun.ca

You are invited to take part in a research project entitled "Exploring the intersection of teachers' negotiation of personal identities, professional identities, and cultural expectations of teachers."

This form is part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. It also describes your right to withdraw from the study. In order to decide whether you wish to participate in this research study, you should understand enough about its risks and benefits to be able to make an informed decision. This is the informed consent process. Take time to read this carefully and to understand the information given to you. Please contact the researcher, Xiaolin Xu, if you have any questions about the study or would like more information before you consent.

It is entirely up to you to decide whether to take part in this research. If you choose not to take part in this research or if you decide to withdraw from the research once it has started, there will be no negative consequences for you, now or in the future.

Introduction:
I am Xiaolin Xu, a doctoral student from Faculty of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland. As part of my doctoral dissertation, I am conducting research under the supervision of Dr. Elizabeth Yeoman.

Purpose of study:
The purpose of this research is to explore the intersection of teachers' negotiation of their personal identities, their professional identities, and cultural expectations of

teachers. Since arts-based research practices are employed in the study, this study also aims to provide insight for the possibilities of using the arts to enhance teacher education programs. This study will help promote a holistic and integrated understanding of teacher identities. It will also help deconstruct prevailing cultural expectations of teachers and encourage teachers to critically examine the cultural expectations that people hold of teachers.

What you will do in this study:
Three arts-based research practices are involved in the study. First, you will be invited to draw a teacher (any teacher) and then to discuss your drawing with the researcher. You can draw it either in our meeting or at your home, and the researcher will provide you with all the drawing materials that you need. Second, you will be invited to watch a teacher movie that you are interested in and then to discuss the movie with me in terms of how the teacher is portrayed in the movie. You can watch the movie either in our meeting or at your home, and the researcher will download the movie for you. Third, you will participate in an interview session and you will talk about how you perceive and deal with the inconsistencies among your personal identities, professional identities, and cultural expectations of teachers.

Length of time:
The total time commitment is approximately six hours, including two hour of drawing and discussion, three hours of watching and reviewing the teacher movie, and one hour of the interview. The three tasks including drawing, movie elicitation, and interviewing can be done all in one day or on separate days. The researcher will schedule the appointments with you at your convenience, but you are recommended to finish all the tasks within two months. The three components of data will be linked together by your first name before the three components of data have been collected from you. Once you finish the three tasks, the researcher will change your real first name to a fictitious name.

Compensation
You will be given a $30 (CAD) honorarium at the beginning of your participation.

Withdrawal from the study:
You are free to withdraw from the study without any consequences or explanation. If you withdraw from the study, any data collected up to the point of your withdrawal will be retained by the researcher, unless you indicate otherwise. If you do not want your data retained by the researcher when you withdraw from the study, the length of time that you are free to withdraw your data is three months after the date you have signed this consent form. After this period of time, you cannot withdraw your data since the researcher will begin to use your data for research writing at that point of time.

If you withdraw from the study, you can keep the compensation offered to you.

Possible benefits:
Through participating in the study, you may become more aware of the multiple discourses that you are engaging in as a per-service or in-service teacher and become more thoughtful about your work and your professional identities. You may also gain a better understanding of arts-based research as you go through the research process.

This study will potentially help shift the discourse of teacher education from the discourse that isolates teachers' professional identities into the discourse that addresses the connections and contradictions among teachers' personal identities, professional identities, and cultural expectations of teachers. The study will also serve as an exploration of using innovative arts-based research practices to study teacher identities and to enhance teacher education programs.

Possible risks:
This research may have emotional effects on you since you may feel upset when talking about your personal stories during the interviews. To minimize this risk, the researcher will ask you to share the stories that you feel comfortable talking about. If you feel very upset, the researcher can refer you to a counselor from the Counselling Center at Memorial University of Newfoundland.

Social risks may also exist in the research since absolute anonymity cannot be guaranteed in the research. Your friends, family members or colleagues may recognize the personal stories that you share for the research. In order to protect your anonymity, the researcher will provide you a fictitious name, and safeguard your personally identifiable information.

Confidentiality:
The ethical duty of confidentiality includes safeguarding participants' identities, personal information, and data from unauthorized access, use, or disclosure.

The researcher will take every precaution to protect your privacy and confidentiality. The research data, including recorded audio files, transcripts, and drawings will be securely stored during the research in locked drawers and/or password-protected files on a computer. Only the researcher and her supervisor will have access to the collected data. The consent forms will be stored separately from the research data so that it will not be possible to associate a name with any given set of responses. Although the researcher will report direct quotations from the interview, you will be given a pseudonym, and all identifying information, such as the name of the institution and your position, will be removed from the report.

Anonymity:
Anonymity refers to protecting participants' identifying characteristics, such as name or description of physical appearance.

In order to protect your anonymity, the researcher will provide you with a fictitious name, and safeguard your personally identifiable information. Names of persons and places, and any information from which identities could be inferred will be removed. Since you will be interviewed individually instead of in a focus group, anonymous participation can be largely achieved. However, there is still a small chance that you may be recognized since Newfoundland and Labrador has a relatively small population and there is a limited number of schools and teachers. Although the identifiable information will be removed from the research, the participants may be identifiable by their family members, friends, colleagues, and acquaintances based on what they say and how they draw.

Recording of Data:
All the interviews and discussions will be audio-recorded and transcribed. Audio recording and interview transcripts are important for the research since the researcher need to analyze the your stories and experiences in great detail. In order to ease your stress about audio recording, member checking will be employed in the research and you can edit or delete anything that they decide not to include when reviewing the transcripts of the interviews. However, if you do not want to be audio recorded, you will not be recruited as a participant for this study..

Storage of Data:
The research data, including recorded audio files, transcripts, and drawings will be securely stored during the research in locked drawers and/or password-protected files on a computer. Consent forms will be stored in another locked drawer so that they can be stored separately from the research data. Only the researcher and her supervisor will have access to the collected data. After the research is complete, the data will be retained for a minimum of five years, as required by Memorial University's policy on Integrity in Scholarly Research. After five years, the data will be destroyed.

Reporting of Results:
This doctoral dissertation will be publically available at the QEII library, Memorial University of Newfoundland. Some of the data will be reported in a summarized form. Direct quotations will also be used, but all quotes will be reported in an anonymous manner without identifiable features.

Sharing of Results with Participants:

A brief summary of the research findings will be given to you after the research project is complete. You can access the entire dissertation at website of the QEII library.

Questions:
You are welcome to ask questions at any time before, during, or after your participation in this research. If you would like more information about this study, please contact: Xiaolin Xu at xx1136@mun.ca or by telephone at 709-351-7207, or her supervisor: Dr. Elizabeth Yeoman at eyeoman@mun.ca or by telephone at 709-864-3411.

The proposal for this research has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University's ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research, such as the way you have been treated or your rights as a participant, you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr@mun.ca or by telephone at 709-864-2861.

Consent:
Your signature on this form means that:

You have read the information about the research.
You have been able to ask questions about this study.
You are satisfied with the answers to all your questions.
You understand what the study is about and what you will be doing.
You understand that you are free to withdraw participation in the study without having to give a reason, and that doing so will not affect you now or in the future.
You understand that if you choose to end participation during data collection, any data collected from you up to that point will be retained by the researcher, unless you indicate otherwise.
You understand that your data is being collected anonymously and therefore cannot be removed once data collection has ended.

I agree to be audio-recorded	Yes	No
I agree to the use of direct quotations	Yes	No
I allow my drawing to be presented anonymously in the doctoral dissertation	Yes	No

By signing this form, you do not give up your legal rights and do not release the researchers from their professional responsibilities.

Your signature confirms:

I have read what this study is about and understood the risks and benefits. I have had adequate time to think about this and had the opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered.

I agree to participate in the research project understanding the risks and contributions of my participation, that my participation is voluntary, and that I may end my participation.

A copy of this Informed Consent Form has been given to me for my records.

_____ _____

Signature of participant Date

Researcher's Signature:

I have explained this study to the best of my ability. I invited questions and gave answers. I believe that the participant fully understands what is involved in being in the study, any potential risks of the study and that he or she has freely chosen to be in the study.

_____ _____

Signature of Principal Investigator Date

Appendix C: Interview Plans

The plans for conducting three arts-based research practices with the research participants, including drawing, movie elicitation, and interviews

1. Drawing:
I will invite each participant to draw a teacher (any teacher). Here is the prompt I will use: "Draw a teacher (any teacher) in as much detail as possible. For example, you can draw you self-portrayal as a teacher, one of your favorite teachers, the teacher that you imagine, etc. "

After the participants finish their drawings, I will ask each of them to write a short paragraph to describe his or her drawing.

After the participants write the short paragraphs, I will ask them the questions below:

1. Could you please introduce your drawing to me?
2. Why do you portray the teacher in this way?
3. Do you think that your drawing reflects or challenges the cultural expectations of teachers?
4. Do you think that your drawing is associated with your own personal experiences?

2. Movie elicitation
After the participants finish the drawing activity, I will invite each of them to watch a school movie and then discuss about the movie.

I will provide the participants with a list of school movies, and they are free to choose which school movie they would like to watch. They are also free to choose the school movies beyond the list that I provide. Here is the movie list that I will provide for the participants:
Stand And Deliver (1988); Dead Poets Society (1989); Dangerous Minds (1995); Mr. Holland's Opus (1995); High School High (1996); In And Out (1997); Music Of The Heart (1999); Pay It Forward (200); Mona Lisa Smile (2003); School Of Rock (2003); The Chorus (2004); Half Nelson (2006); Freedom Writers (2007); The Class (2008); Bad teacher (2011); Won't Back Down (2012)

After the participants watch the movies, I will ask each of them the following questions:

1. How do you think the teacher(s) is/are portrayed in the movie?
2. Do you want to become the teacher(s) portrayed in the movie? And why?
3. What images or stereotypes are created, contested, or perpetuated in the movie?
4. What ideas or popular beliefs are challenged or reinforced in the movie?
5. What room for ambiguity or interpretation does the movie provide?

3. Interviews
In order to get deeper understanding of participants' experiences as pre-service or in-service teachers, I will conduct interviews with each participant individually after they

finish drawing and reviewing the school movies. Below are the questions that I plan to ask the participants:

1. Why do you pursue a teaching career?
2. Could you please tell me some of the tensions and struggles you have experienced as a teacher?
3. Could you give some examples about how do you deal with those tensions?
4. Do you think that drawing and reviewing movies can help you better understand your teacher identities? And why?
5. Which parts do you think that teacher education programs need to focus more on in order to better help student teachers?