ENVISIONING THE FUTURE: SECOND CAREER TEACHERS' HOPES AND CONCERNS

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Abstract:

Teacher shortage has become a serious problem for many educational systems around the world which offer alternative programmes. Many of these programmes recruit candidates from different professions. The study sought to explore Second Career Teachers' hopes and concerns in an Intensive Alternative Certification Programme for teachers of TEFL in a teacher education college, focusing on second career teachers' future orientation and possible-selves. The study adopted an inductive approach and included 32 candidates who responded to an open-ended questionnaire inquiring about their hopes and concerns at their initial steps in the programme. The theoretical perspectives draw on future orientation and possible selves theories. The study exposed teachers' multiple possible-selves that might need nurturing. This should raise awareness among curriculum planners of teacher education programmes and foreground the skills and backgrounds that career changers bring with them and help them see the value and relevance to their practice.

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Introduction

Teacher shortage has become a serious problem for many educational systems around the world (McInerney, Ganotice, King, Marsh, & Morin, 2015). In order to handle the challenge, alternative fast-track programmes are offered and embody different models of teacher development. Many of these programmes recruit candidates who are career changers and take up teaching as a second career (Laming & Horne, 2013). Most international literature focuses on first career teachers and there is limited research on second career teachers' professional development (Nielsen, 2016), and even less research about their beliefs, hopes, concerns and transition into their second career as teachers (Brindly, & Parker, 2008; Tigchelaar, Brouwer, & Korthagen, 2008; 2010; Williams, 2013). Second career teachers usually enter the programmes possessing experience resulting from previous careers, bringing into teaching maturity and expertise (Eifler, & Potthoff, 1998; Tigchelaar, Brouwer, & Korthagen, 2008). Research confirms that this background distinguishes them from first career teachers, as they have different needs related to their transition to teaching (Tigchelaar, Brouwer, & Korthagen,2008; Varadharajan, Carter, Buchanan, & Schuck, 2016).

This study explores second career teachers' (SCTs') hopes and concerns in an Intensive Alternative Certification Programme for Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) in a teacher education college in Israel. The programme was a national initiative of the Ministry of Education to overcome the shortage of English teachers in the country. The participants were native or near-native English speakers who possessed an academic degree in various disciplines.

In this country, English is a compulsory core subject in all public schools, starting officially from the third or fourth grade. It is one of the most difficult subjects for students in schools. It also functions as a gate-keeper to higher education, for which applicants need to obtain a defined knowledge base of the language.

The study focuses on SCTs' possible selves theory considering that present beliefs are an important factor in setting goals for the future, motivating people to greater effort for implementation (Seginer, & Lens, 2015; Zaleski, & Prezpiorka, 2015; Kooij, Kanfer, Betts, M., & Rudolph, 2018) and moving closer to fulfillment of ideals (Hammerness, 2003). This contention is also expressed in discussions about the effect of motivation that pre-service teachers possess on the development of students (Aksu, Demir, Daloglu, Yildirim, & Kiraz, 2010; Thomson, & Palermo, 2014). Hence Teachers' vision could play a central role in ensuring that more teachers 'learn to hope rather than only hope to learn' (Hammerness, 2003, p. 56).

Teachers' concerns are equally important (Harkins, Forrest, & Keener, 2009) as they throw light on areas that need attention to enhance retention in the education profession. It is, therefore, vital to gain more knowledge about goals and concerns which might challenge teachers' motivation and well-being (Hagger, & Malmberg, 2011). It is also noted that not much attention has been given to 'future oriented reflection' (Aurzua, & Vasquez, 2008, p.1936). Future oriented reflection allows new teachers to view their past experiences with 'a view towards the future' (Aurzua, & Vasquez, 2008, p.1944) and envision what kind of teacher they want to become (Sfard, & Prusak, 2005). This is even more significant considering the capital second career teachers bring with them from their past experiences in previous careers (Neilsen, 2016). Thus, the road to teaching entails also 'a journey into the deepest recesses of one's self-awareness where failures concerns and hopes are hidden' (Kagan, 1992, p. 137).

Theoretical Perspectives

Second career teachers

Non-traditional teachers are defined differently in various contexts. Research on special programmes for second career teachers acknowledge that the reference to second career teachers as 'nontraditional teacher candidates' needs clarification (Eifler, & Potthoff, 1998; Zeichner, & Schulte, 2001; Crosswell & Buetel, 2017). In research conducted by Eifler and Potthoff, the characteristics attributed to SCT's are persons possessing substantial life experience resulting from previous careers: for instance, some raising children which probably enables them to bring with them maturity and expertise. This important capital can be valuable and yet might also place teachers in a high-risk category during their initial training (Darrell, 2011) due to well established habits that can cause rigidity ((Madfes, 1989)**.**

The common assumption is that SCTs' earlier experience in work and life should enable them to transfer the competencies and knowledge they acquired earlier to teaching (Tigchelaar, Brouwer, & Korthagen, 2008). They appear to be confident that they will bring the necessary knowledge, skills and competencies to the teaching learning setting. Examples of previous workplace experiences include specialized, practical real-world knowledge, interpersonal skills, management and organizational skills (Salyer, 2003). Greene (1988) notes their reflexive competencies and suggests that they 'surpass the given and look at things as if they could be otherwise' (p.3). This is supported by Chambers (2002) who observes that they bring highly developed analytic thinking and a willingness to try new methodologies. They are self-directed and need the recognition of past experiences and even learn best when they receive such recognition and when their learning is self-determined (Friend, & Cook, 2000)**.** However, research shows that career changers are sometimes not viewed as novices due to their experience and age and thus do not always receive the essential support that they might need (Madfes, 1989). Furthermore, transferring competencies from previous careers is not an automatic process, as they might not always match the competencies needed in teaching (Tigchelaar, Brouwer, & Korthagen, 2008). More recent research confirms that SCTs' transferred beliefs and their previous careers seemed to enhance their new positions within teaching (Nielsen, 2016).

'Mid-life transition' is 'a real occurrence in the life of a human being' (Powers, 2002, p. 304). It entails a completely new way of making sense of self and it 'requires considerable mental effort to shift into a new professional mindset and integrate a new profession into pre-existing frameworks of themselves as professional' (Snyder, Oliveira & Paska, 2013, p. 621). It is sometimes a compromise for lower pay, but a desire fulfilled. Tifft (1989) indicates that transition to teaching might result out of an impetus to contribute to the world and make it a better place to live. This is reinforced by other studies in various countries which also highlight SCTs' aspiration to contribute to society and initiate change in policy and practice (Brown, 1992; Sumison, 2000; Trent, 2018). Studies have noted the personal qualities and strengths of career changers as having a high developed sense of self, an understanding of human nature through former work and life experience (Crow, Levine, & Nager, 1990; Fredus, 1992, 1994) and possessing more self-confidence and self-concern (Tigchelaar, Brouwer, & Korthagen, 2008). They are more outspoken in their beliefs about teaching and the value of education in students' lives, they are aware of social issues related to education and show vocational mission and personal commitment (Powell, 1992; Chambers, 2002; Greenwood, 2003).

Studies that investigated different aspects of first-career teachers and SCTs found distinctions between the two groups pertaining to motives, skills knowledge, beliefs and autonomy (Tigchelaar, Brouwer, & Vermunt, 2010, 2008). However, an earlier study investigating 3000

pre-service teachers including career changers found that traditional students tended to choose teaching because of a love for young people, while most second career already had children of their own and chose teaching more as an end in itself rather than another professional end (Snyder, Doerr, & Pastor, 1995). While first career teachers were developing motivation, SCTs were strongly motivated. As for knowledge and beliefs, first career teachers were developing practical expertise and beliefs, SCTs were bringing practical expertise. The study also showed that first career teachers were less autonomous as compared to SCTs who were self-responsible and aware of being an employee in an organization. The study concluded that SCTs need a 'tailor made pedagogy attending to expectations and transitions to teaching and developing a theory of practice to address the scarcity in knowledge about how to support them and increase retention' (Tigchelaar, Brouwer, & Vermunt, 2010, p.175). Crosswell and Buetel reinforce this contention claiming that teacher education contexts appear to be unresponsive to the diversity and background that SCTs bring to the professions and it is critical to investigate how they can be better transitioned into teaching (Creswell & Buetel, 2017).

Possible-selves

Possible-selves theory explains a person's future orientation of the self (Markus, & Nurius, 1986; Markus, & Wurf, 1987) and how it is related to motivation for present and future action (Hamman, Gosselin, Romano, & Bunuan, 2010). It is a complex interplay of current and imaginative self-identities (Henry & Cliffordson, 2013). Hamman et al., note the interchangeable use of identity and a person's possible self. They argue that the line between them is indistinct and they have common features. However, the addition of 'possible' to 'self' provides 'a lens for examining self-views that encompass a future orientation' (Hamman et al., 2010, p. 1351). Possible selves define a person's ideas of what one would like to become – the 'hoped for self' and what one is afraid of becoming – the 'feared self' (Markus, & Nurius, 1986; Leondari, 2007).Research on professional development and transitions have applied possible selves theory to explore how people in a state of transition adapt to new career roles. Ibbara defined it as 'provisional selves' (p.765) to describe its temporary nature and the process of negotiation between current self conceptualisation with the future vision of self, as people experiment with images that serve as 'trials for possible but not yet fully elaborated professional identities' (Ibarra ,1999, p. 765).

Teachers' possible selves

The theory of possible selves is used to explore individuals' self-concept at various life juncture situations. Teachers in a career transition might face similar challenges (Hamman et al., 2013). Thus the theory of possible selves can provide understanding of their identity in the present and in the future (Hamman et al., 2010). This conception is based on Markus' who claims that 'Knowing how people think about themselves currently is of some help but knowing what they hope and fear should refine this understanding' (Markus, 2006, p. xii). This notion is also addressed by Urzua and Vasquez (2008) who assert that 'future oriented reflection' (p.1936) helps teachers to envision the teacher they want to be and 'to project a designated sense of self as a teacher' (p.1944). Although work on identity tends to focus on past and present dimensions of identity, the importance of future dimensions in the construction of self has been growing and more researchers are exploring teachers' perceptions of future events (van Lier, 2006; Wilke & Losh, 2008). This echoes the study conducted by Hammerness on the concept of teachers' vision as a tool both for teachers and teacher educators to surface beliefs and identity, build on teachers' hopes, help teachers understand the gap between their hopes and their practice (Hammerness, 2003) and direct actions in the present (Hamman et al., 2013). Thus, possible selves may function as an incentive to achieve the hopes or the 'self' one wants to become and avoid realizing feared selves (Hamman et al., 2013).

Possible-selves are dynamic and instrumental. This implies that teachers can change their possible-selves by attempting to become what they appreciate as 'good teachers' or successful teachers ((Hamman et al., 2010). This notion endorses Markus and Nurius' 'working self' (1986) which contradicts the traditional views of self as a fixed self-concept, but as an active self-knowledge that can change, depending on past experiences and present circumstances (Oyserman, & Fryberg, 2006) and liberate people from the feeling of constraints and restricted options (Markus, & Nurius, 1986).

Being aware of one's various possible-selves encourages a focus on who one wants to be rather than what they want to do (Ruvolo, & Markus, 1992). In adult education and career development, possible-selves center more on the 'self' and search of meaning and is therefore important in goal setting and motivation (Plimmer, & Schmidt, 2007). In the same vein, research suggests that there should be a balance between hoped-for and feared-possible-selves, as this may provide avoidance goals and can also enhance a person's motivation, by having a hoped-for alternative to avoid a fear coming true (Oyserman, & Markus, 1990; Unemori et al., 2004; Hoyle, & Sherrill, 2006). The 'teacher self' is a vital concern to teacher education (Bullough, 1997) and one of the core possible selves for those who choose to become teachers (Hong & Greene, 2011).

Snyder, Oleivera and Paska (2013) argue that second career teachers who are in a transition stage from established former careers to a new profession, need to make sense of a new 'self' and to shift from preexisting mindsets of their previous careers to a new professional mindset of teachers and teaching. This framework guided the research which sought to understand how career changers envisioned their new profession as teachers through their hopes and concerns.

Design of Research

The study took place in an Alternative Certification Programme for second career TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language). This is a one-year intensive programme where upon completion of all requirements, participants obtain a teaching certificate license as TEFL teachers.

Participants

The participants were a group of 32 candidates in their second week of the programme. The age range of the participants was between 25-59, with six males and 26 females. Participants came from different professions and all possessed an academic degree and were proficient in the English language. Some were native English speakers who were born or spent some years in an English-speaking country. Each participant had passed an oral interview at the college to enter this programme.

Process of the study

In one of the courses taught by the researcher, participants were asked if they would be willing to answer a short open-ended questionnaire about their hopes and concerns regarding their future career as teachers. The time to conduct the study was purposeful as the aim was to identify their frame of reference at the initial phase of transition from first to second career before their practicum. Participants were informed about the purpose of the research, its voluntary basis, and anonymity. Participants were asked not to include names or any identification details on their responses.

Forty-seven questionnaires were distributed in hard copy; 32 participants responded. The questionnaire asked students to express their hopes and concerns in a narrative form regarding their new profession as teachers. This study builds upon a previous study conducted among

regular candidates enrolling into a traditional route at a teacher education college (Leshem, 2016).

The choice to investigate both hopes and concerns aligns with research in professional development of prospective teachers who contend that the focus on both aspirations and concerns can provide a more helpful lens with which to understand prospective teachers' development (Conway & Clark, 2003; Hong & Greene, 2011).

Qualitative analysis (Creswell, 2013) was used to analyze candidates' responses. Hopes and concerns were copied into a table in two adjacent columns. Each column (hopes and concerns) was read in order to identify emergent themes. Each theme was coloured differently. A second table was created containing the emergent themes. Each theme was put in a separate column in a table and was further analyzed to identify sub-categories. The same procedure was conducted with the texts of concerns. Following the analysis, a third table was created where the emergent themes of concerns and hopes were put one against the other to identify balance between the themes (See Table 1).

Hopes	Example statements		Fears	Example statements
The teacher			**The teacher**	
Self as teacher	I want to become 'a teacher'; I want to be the teacher children like to meet.		instructional	lack of knowledge; not being able to apply what has been learned
Self as English teacher	I hope to give them a good language basis		Behavioural (classroom management)	failing to motivate the pupils
Making a change	I want to make a change by advancing pupils so that they can then contribute to society'		personality	Concerns about standing in front of a class
Support and sense of belonging	the school community would provide a supporting safe atmosphere where I could make friends, share		**Support from others**	not being able to manage with the other teachers/principal People not respecting me

	challenges and be empowered'		
Professional self-image	appreciated by others a role-model a teacher whose lessons children love to attend	**Professional self-image**	My concerns are a mirror picture of my hopes. I am aware of my negative features; I might fail to transmit the positive, so my self-image will be hurt
Resilience	I hope to be able to hold on to my enthusiasm		
Devotion	Devotion to the cause of teaching will help me overcome any barriers		
Well being	I want to feel happy		
The new profession	Dynamic, interesting, creative, funny	**External factors**	I am concerned about feeling insulted every time I open my salary slip
The system	to belong to the educational system and not be frustrated from the system		

Table 1: Categories and example statements

Findings

The evidence revealed that out of 230 statements, 121 statements related to hopes and 109 related to fears. The analysis of hopes identified six main categories: **The teacher**, **making a change**, **support and sense of belonging**, **professional self-image, the new profession**, **the system.**

1.   The teacher

In the category related to 'The teacher', teachers' statements addressed '**self as English teacher'** and '**self as teacher'**.

Examples of '**Self as English teacher'**:

I hope to contribute to academic future of kids by giving them language skills which include cultural and comprehension skills

I hope to give them a good language basis

I wish to improve their level of English and their spoken fluency

Examples of '**Self as teacher'**:

I want to become 'a teacher'

I want to be the teacher children like to meet.

I want to be the enriching teacher, the teacher who can endow self-efficacy

I want to be pleasantly surprised from things I am not aware of

In the possible-self related to 'Self as teacher' the affective qualities of professional teachers were strongly emphasised and teachers used emotive expressions such as: *reach out, enjoy, friendship, emotional and cognitive needs, fun, success, love, touch their soul, joy, warmth.* In the statements related to self as 'English teacher', the teachers referred to instructional qualities of professional English teachers.

2.   Making a change

In the possible-self of 'making a change', teachers presented three statements. One stated the hope '*to make a change by advancing pupils so that they can then contribute to society'*, and the others were more specific and related to making changes in the learning of English: '*Make a difference in students' approaches to learning English and establish a more positive outlook on the subject-this I feel will entice them a lot more and create more productive learning'.* The statements point at two distinct possible selves: 'a self' which goes beyond their professional role as 'an English teacher' to a self-projection of 'a teacher' where their influence crosses the boundaries of a classroom.

3.   Support and sense of belonging In the possible-self related to 'Support and sense of belonging', the teachers hoped for '*seeing themselves as part of the school community'*. They hoped '*the school community would provide a supporting safe atmosphere where they could make friends, share challenges and be empowered'*. The word '*belong*' reoccurred quite often in their statements and was elaborated as '*being able to contribute beyond teaching'*. The desire for '*good communication with staff, students, parents and management in the school'* was also emphasised. Teachers seemed to see their professional self as members of a community.

4.   Professional self-image

The category of 'Self-image' clustered 26 statements in which teachers referred to qualities of a teacher and how they would be seen by others.

 A '*safe place'* , '*a source of motivation', 'appreciated by others', 'a role model', 'a teacher whose lessons children love to attend', 'a confident teacher', 'someone who children would feel easy to approach', 'hope to hear from parents and pupils sentences like: thanks to you I succeeded, you made a difference…*

Teachers also referred to personality features such as: **Resilience**: 'I hope to be able to hold on to my enthusiasm', 'I hope to attain my goals, cope with challenges'. **Devotion:** 'Devotion is my strongest hope'. 'Once I possess this most important trait in teaching I will be able to accomplish'. 'Devotion to the cause of teaching will help me overcome any barriers'. **Wellbeing**: 'I want to feel happy', 'feel I am doing something meaningful', 'I want to enjoy myself'. There

were statements connoting leadership traits- 'After 30 years in roles that I fulfilled where I influenced on people. I hope to feel that I am in a role with influence'.

In the same vein, teachers expressed a very strong **established identity** and hoped to be able to bring themselves and what they are to the new profession: *'I hope to be able to teach through who I am and what I bring', 'I hope to be able to bring myself –experiences, capabilities, creativity', 'Learn about myself from them'.*

5. New profession

Under the category of 'new profession', statements referred to the essence of the new career: 'Just the right profession', 'dynamic', 'interesting', 'creative', 'funny',' flexible', 'special', 'steady at last, as this is a long-term change'. 'feeling of fulfillment and security that this is a job until retirement', 'arrive and leave every day with a smile on face, 'to renew my professional life and to be able to use what I bring me with in the new job'. Teachers hoped to be motivated so that the new 'profession' would be a long lasting secure profession.

6. The system

When teachers referred to the system, they mainly had in mind the educational system at large, policy makers, society and parents: '…*to be accepted…' 'to find myself part of the system that influences youth of today'; 'to belong to the educational system and not be frustrated from the system'; 'to be able to cope with a big system of teachers parents and pupils'.* Teachers maintained a holistic view of the profession, where different social forces are involved, and their role would probably entail mediation between these forces.

It is worth noting that there were two statements relating to the past as influencing the present: 'I want the pupils to go home and tell their parents what they have learned; I remember that for me this was exciting when I enjoyed school and could tell it to my parents'.

'I still remember my English teacher from school. Thanks to her I would like to be like her'.

In these excerpts teachers retreated to times of their school days. They did not mention their previous careers.

Feared-for possible-selves

In the data on teachers' concerns four main categories were identified, which balance with the hoped-for categories: **The teacher**; **self-image**, **support from others**; **work related external factors.**

1. The teacher

The Teacher category was divided into three sub-categories: instructional concerns, behavioural concerns and personality concerns.

The instructional concerns related mainly to issues of material coverage, '*lack of knowledge', 'not being able to apply what has been learned'*, not being a '*good enough teacher*', and '*not being able to cater for issues of diversity'*.

The Behavioural concerns evolved around discipline problems, '*pupils' misbehavior', 'not being respectful',' failing to motivate the pupils*'. The Personality concerns relates to self-confidence such as: '*standing in front of a class', 'being able to control irritation'* and '*keeping things in perspectives'.*

2.   Professional self-image

The teachers' statements under the category of Self-image concerned their hopes not coming true. Some of their statements related to fear of audience, clashes of beliefs with school, not being able to show who they really are and want to be, and loss of self-confidence. The strongest expression was the realization that teaching is not suitable to their personality shown in the following examples:

'My concerns are a mirror picture of my hopes. I am aware of my negative features; I might fail to transmit the positive, so my self-image will be hurt'; 'I am afraid to stand and talk in front of an audience. Even as a student I was like that'; 'Fear from other teachers – loss of self-confidence'; 'I fear the process of learning about myself, about my mistakes – not easy to admit'; 'I am concerned about Lack of intellectual challenge, lack of professional development'; 'My strongest fear is to realize that this is not what I hoped for'; 'My self-confidence will not suffice to cope with the class'; 'I am afraid of Being frustrated that I cannot give what they should get'; 'I fear the feeling of being different, underestimating myself, people not understanding me'; 'To discover that I do not want to be a teacher, Oh, just not that! ;'My main fear is that I will lose my self confidence that I can bring about a change and lose what I am in the professional process'; 'I am concerned about Emotional load and the price I will have to pay as a teacher'.

3.   Support from others

Teachers expressed a strong concern about not getting support from other teachers in the school, from parents, and from the educational system:

I am afraid not to manage with the other teachers, principal'; I come from hi-tech and am not used to this milieu'; 'I am concerned about the Ministry not listening'; unsupportive of teachers'; 'I am concerned about people not respecting me'; The stories about struggles of teachers in the first years scare me. I hope it won't happen for long; 'The fear that bureaucracy, politics and unreasonable expectations from the ministry will dampen my enthusiasm and have a negative effect on my students'.

4.   Related external factors

The External factors related mainly to the disappointment from the low salary, though this factor was less dominant compared to other statements. Some teachers expressed it quite directly: *'I am afraid of being poor'* or, '*I am concerned about feeling insulted every time I open my salary slip'.*

Teachers also feared that they would feel boredom and disappointment already at the beginning of their new career.

Interpretations and discussion

The study investigated hopes and concerns of second career English teachers participating in an Alternative Certification Programme in a teacher education college. Several researchers have suggested that a balance between hoped-for and feared-for possible-selves would enhance motivation, as there are additional sources of information about what could happen if the hopes are not realized. Likewise, if a person's feared self is a powerful motivation, when it is balanced with hoped for self, then the person knows what to strive for to avoid their concerns (Unemori et al., 2004; Hoyle, & Sherrill, 2006; Hamman et al., 2013). The analysis of statements of hopes and concerns showed a near balance between hopes and concerns. In both domains teachers referred to similar categories of 'self as teacher', 'instructional issues; 'self-concept';

'support and belonging'; 'work related external factors'. Thus, the tendency of the group demonstrates a motivational mindset that could be useful information for teacher education programmes (Hong, & Greene, 2011) in trying to support teachers in the challenging transition phase.

Evidence from the data shows that although most teachers were not familiar with pedagogical content knowledge as they came from different professions, their hopes and concerns focused more on affective domains (emotional, behavioural, relational). Concerns about ability to transmit knowledge coherently, or knowledge of tasks as factors that could promote or impede their teaching were part of their concerns but less prominent. The fact that the participants of the research were a distinct group of future English teachers who were proficient in the language which they were supposed to teach (Language being the means and the end), provided some level of comfort; yet they were concerned about losing self-confidence due to discipline problems and other external factors within the ambience of the school system.

This observation might explain the focus on 'self-image' that stood out in teachers hopes and concerns. This supports the notion that SCTs exhibit more self concerns (Bendixen-Noe, & Redick, 1995), and accords with adult education (Plimmer, & Schmidt, 2007) which emphasises former work experience and a developed sense of self (Crow, Levine, & Nager, 1990; Freidus, 1994). Earlier experiences play an important role in career changers; yet, transfer of skills did not stand out in either their fears or hopes, the emphasis was more on transfer of personality characteristics i.e. their 'established self'. Teachers hoped for and at the same time were concerned about not being able to 'bring themselves' into teaching or feel that they can be influential in some way. Teachers expressed an already well-established identity and yet, were concerned about the need to adapt to a different identity. This feeling was very strongly expressed in their comments.

It is suggested that future oriented discourse reflects identity (Hamman, 2010) and thinking about the future might be salient for teacher candidates who are in transition. Hamman et al, (2013) claim that in a transition stage, teachers are navigating between their current self as a teacher and the teacher they will be in response to the demands of contextual influences. Evidence suggests that the participants of the programme were navigating with an additional identity of 'an EFL teacher', with all its challenges and contextual tensions of being one of the most difficult subject areas for students. As a consequence, teachers revealed an identity conflict moving from a position where they possess identity capital as fluent English speakers and professionals in a previous career, to a novice status where this capital might not be valued (Hall, & Burns, 2009), needing to acquire new competences and establish new relationships. This caused stress and concern about their self-confidence and self-image, as expressed in their hopes and concerns. Teachers had expectations that the school system would appreciate their past experiences and what they bring with them. They reflected a future oriented self of belonging, of being part of a community. This was strongly evident in their concerns about not having support from other teachers, as they might look at them as 'different'. In a sense, they *were* different according to studies comparing first career teachers and SCTs (Powell, 1992; Rodriguez, & Sjostrom, 1998; Mayotte, 2003; Dickar, 2005; Tigchelaar, Brouwer, & Vermunt, 2010). These differences, although not always explicitly stated, surfaced from their concerns about 'internal politics' and 'competition with other teachers'. This might be due to their past experiences as employees and their developed schema of 'how things are'. This notion is mentioned by Watters and Diezmann (2015) who argue that career changers bring special attributes of professional knowledge and familiarity with micro-politics of organisations and are likely to manage bureaucracy issues much better than those who enter straight from university.

A noteworthy finding was that only three statements related to 'making a change', while research suggests that this is one of the common characteristics of SCTs (Sumison, 2000). Most teachers were familiar with the educational system through their own children being in the system, or other previous personal experiences. Although both their hoped-for statements and feared for statements included allusions to a desire to 'do it differently', teachers were realistic and even a bit cautious about their intrinsic motivation. This is echoed in their concerns about the 'cumbersome', 'bureaucratic, unsupportive' and 'old fashioned' system. However, when teachers spoke about making a change, their vision crossed the boundaries of the classroom. Hamman et al., (2010) argue that 'in-service teachers are able to look beyond the everyday tasks and consider a more abstract, value-laden future self, due to their experience'(p.1356). I would like to suggest that this is also applicable to SCT who bring their 'real world' experience and wisdom (Crosswell & Beutel, 2017) to the teaching profession and have a broader range of vision.

Conclusions: future oriented insights

The group of teachers in this study shared common features of SCTs pertaining to previous experience, and embedded routines. However, this group was distinct in the sense that they were all TEFL teachers. The study did not set out to explore the difference between SCTs in general and SCTs of a specific discipline of teaching; however, it should be noted that possible-selves of SCTs belonging to a defined cultural group with its professional boundaries and routines might have different mindsets. This notion accords with the assumption that 'individual's possible-selves are shaped by their social context' (Hong, & Greene, 2011, p. 494). Having this in mind, the study has no generalizability intentions and propositions offered can be applied and investigated in other similar contexts. It would be interesting to further research the transition phase of SCTs in general and SCTs of a discipline of teaching due to the contextual effects on teachers' beliefs. It should also be noted that the participants in this study were viewed as a group and not as individuals. This prevented the comparison between each participant's hopes and concerns. Research emphasises the importance of teachers' discursive projections of self into the future (Sfard, & Prosak, 2005) and thus a more profound exploration of teachers' narratives and 'future projected talk' (Urzua, & Vasques, 2008, p.1936) could contribute to teachers' possible-selves and identity construction.

The evidence showed that teachers at the very initial stages of their second career as teachers emphasised different aspects of 'self' both in their hopes and fears. Literature sees the issue of 'self' as a necessity and critical component in teacher education (Conway, 2003). This can be enhanced by 'reflection for action' as noted by Urzua, and Vasquez, (2008, p. 1936) who emphasise the importance of acknowledging candidates' previous experiences through which they can 'imagine the kind of teacher they want to become' (p. 1944) and supported by Tigchelaar et al., (2010) who highlight the need to integrate past experiences into the programmes. By focusing on the future, possible-selves can improve well-being and optimism about the future (Lee, & Oyserman, 2012; Kooij, Kanfer, Betts, M., & Rudolph, 2018). This is sometimes overlooked in programmes for SCTs which tend to focus on the profession of teaching, especially in intensive short term programmes. Tigchelaar et al., (2010, 2014) suggest that SCTs who are in a transition phase operate within former horizons in their initial steps into the second horizon and earlier experiences are their main frame of reference, even if they are not aware of it.

Some of the teachers were in a state of uncertainty regarding their choice of profession and their suitability to becoming teachers. They projected a 'self' of resilient, devoted, contended and fulfilled teachers and yet a very fragile mindset of 'choice of the right profession'. Could this be a phase where programme educators address the nurturing of 'self'? In work transition

theories the critical role of 'experimenting with provisional selves' and 'adapting to new roles', has been acknowledged (Ibarra, 1999 p.788). According to more recent research, there have been insufficient efforts within teacher education to apply possible-selves and future orientation theories to the development of new teachers, and more specifically, to SCTs or adult learners where transition is even more complex (Rossiter, 2007; Hamman, 2013). Research supports the view that well elaborated possible selves can help individuals face failures (Leondari, 2007). Many teacher education researchers are also interested in how individuals' transition phases are managed by the use of future-oriented selves (Frazier, Johnson, Gema, & Kafka, 2002; Kerpelman, Shoffner, & Ross-Griffin, 2002; Thomas, & Beauchamp, 2011, in Hamman et al., 2013). Yet, few efforts have applied possible-selves theory to foster positive possible-selves and to cope with feared teachers selves (Rossiter, 2007; Hamman, 2013). Building on student teachers' hopes and challenging their fears and concerns may deepen their developmental journey toward expertise in teaching (Conway, 2003).

The study focused on the hopes and concerns at the very initial phase of entering the programme. Some candidates were not even sure whether they were staying or leaving. It could be interesting to follow the group and explore their possible-selves at the induction phase (first year of teaching) when they are already officially part of the school milieu. This would contribute to the notion that teachers' professional identities emerge through interaction with others while reflecting on past events and how these events inform future events and activities (Urzua, & Vasquez, 2008).

The special programme the teachers were part of was initiated due to shortage of English teachers and a prevailing attrition rate. The study explored the hoped-for and feared possible-selves of second career English teachers. The study exposed teachers' multiple possible-selves that might need nurturing. This should raise awareness among curriculum planners of teacher education programmes and foreground the skills and backgrounds that career changers bring with them and help them see the value and relevance to their practice (Mayotte, 2003). Scholars argue that it is crucial to gain further understanding of SCTs' needs (Lamming & Horne, 2013) and what enables and limits the re-construction of their professional identities (Trent, 2018). Research suggests that future oriented discourse provides a glance into wished for teachers' identity and thus affords insights into the process of development of teachers' identity (Urzzau & Vasquez, 2008). This study contributes to this need by exploring the hopes and concerns of career changers EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teachers at their initial steps into teaching. A follow up study of the second career teachers who completed the programme is in process.

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