BEGINNING ART TEACHERS' NEGOTIATION OF THEIR BELIEFS AND IDENTITY WITHIN THE REALITY OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

DESSERTATION

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By

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ABSTRACT

This study followed the ways beginning art teachers negotiated their beliefs and identity. Understanding the complexity of the way teachers’ identity and beliefs are constructed contributes to the notion that becoming a teacher, and being one, is more than learning to fulfill a function through possessing pedagogical skills, gaining experience in the classroom, or learning updated theories.

The research presents four case studies of student teachers, who graduated from the School of Art, Beit-Berl College in Israel. I collected the data over six years. I started to study their beliefs and the way they constructed their teaching identity within and against the discourses of the School of Art, as they became art teachers. Then I followed them as art teachers at various public schools in Israel as they gained four or more years of teaching experience.

My main research question was how these beginning art teachers negotiated their beliefs and identity within the reality of public schools. Through this question I examined how they renegotiated their practices and beliefs about their goals in art education. Had they kept the same set of beliefs that they developed as student teachers? How did they negotiate their beliefs in light of the educational system’s expectations and norms? How did they make sense of who they are, who they are not, and who they would like to be, in an environment that marginalizes art and art teachers?
The partial tales I collected from the art teachers and rewrote described impressive teaching practices, employing different discourses to address the complex reality they had to face. These stories provide particular examples for feminist poststructuralist theories that suggest that being a teacher is a constant process of becoming through employing knowledge and discourses in a specific socio/cultural environment. They provide interesting examples of how the art teachers shaped their schools while being shaped by them. The stories described a variety of conflicts and challenges the art teachers encountered in the public schools and ways they negotiated them. The descriptions of the conflicts and the meaning the art teachers made out of their struggles can help us understand what it means to constantly become a teacher.
DEDICATION

In memory of my father, Benjamin Cohen,
who taught me to believe that we can create a better world

And

To my husband
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I thank Dr. Michael Parsons, whom I feel fortunate to have as my advisor. I thank him for his wisdom and support that were vital to my studies and for the gentle ways he found to ask about some important issues. His caring and guidance provided me with a unique experience of learning, learning that included many more things beyond conducting a research in art education.

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I thank Dr. Marilyn Johnston for guiding me in the field of teachers' beliefs. Our conversation inspired me to listen carefully to the variety of voices, including my own. Her presence brought a great comfort to me.

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Last but not least, I thank my family. I thank my husband, Gilad Evron, without whose support and encouragement I would not have continued my studies. I thank my children, Omri, Nimrod, and Noa, for their understanding that their mother had to study behind a closed door for so many hours.
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- Constructing Studio Classes
- Cognition in Art Education
- Photography Criticism
- History of Art Education
- Integrated Curriculum and School reform
- Qualitative Research Methodology
- Curriculum Theories
- Theories of Gender in Education
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

[As teachers] we construct not only our teaching practices and all the relationships this entails, but our teaching voices and identities. (Britzman, 1991, p. 1)

In the normative discourse of teacher education, teacher identity is usually viewed as synonymous with teacher’s role (Britzman, 1992). But studies of teachers’ identity argue differently. Using feminist poststructuralist theories, Britzman argues that teachers’ identities are not an outcome of being in a teaching position or gaining experience in acting out their roles as a teacher in a classroom. She emphasizes the differences between these terms: “[R]ole speaks to function whereas identity voices investments and commitments. Function, or what one should do, and investments, or what one feels, are often at odds” (Britzman, 1992, p. 29). Thus, becoming a teacher is not just an outcome of providing student teachers with pedagogical skills and techniques and teaching experience. Rather, teachers’ identities are constructed through an ongoing process of discourses and knowledge they employ to make sense of who they are, who they are not, and who they what to be (Britzman, 1992).
Art teachers’ beliefs and identities are partially constructed within and by the art communities to which they are exposed during their studies of art and art education. In these art communities, art and artists are regarded highly. But art teachers’ roles in the schools are defined mainly by an educational system with different discourses in which art and art teachers are marginalized. The conflicts and the negotiations through which art teachers construct their teaching identities and their beliefs are my area of study. I wanted to study how the teachers’ questions and answers about why to teach art and how to teach it changed in light of the transition into the public school’s environments.

The term ‘teachers’ beliefs’ is used in the literature to refer to the assumptions, images, theories, and knowledge teachers hold about the subject matter to be taught, about their students, and about teaching and learning (Kagan, 1992, Sivertsen, 1994). Studies of teachers’ beliefs emphasize that the personal knowledge teachers hold influences their interpretation of what happens in their classes, and their further deliberations.

I believe that art teachers’ positions concerning their teaching goals and their practical theories in action (McCutcheon, 1995) can influence their practice, maybe even more than in other study areas that have a defined curriculum and secure status in the education system. When there is no art curriculum that art teachers have to follow,¹ it seems that they have the freedom to decide on the content of the art lessons and the

¹ This study was conducted in Israel where the elementary and middle schools have no art curriculum or national standards. In high school art programs there is a defined curriculum in art history. There, the students have to prepare for statewide matriculation exams.
teaching methods. In theory, without a preplanned statewide curriculum or guidelines, art teachers can create learning opportunities for their students according to what they believe is desirable and practical in their school. Thus, this study tries to get a closer look at the ways four art teachers, who have worked in a variety of schools in Israel, asked and answered the questions of what and how to teach in their schools. It aims to study how these teachers negotiated their beliefs and identity within and against their schools’ discourses.

This study consists of the art teachers’ partial tales of their practices, their beliefs and the development of their teaching identity, which I collected and rewrote. In the following section of the introduction I provide a reflective account of my own process of development as a researcher. I describe how I became interested in the issues I examine and what constitutes the lenses through which I conducted this research.

My Interests in Beginning Art Teachers’ Beliefs and Their Teaching Identity

In the process of conducting this study, my own understanding of teachers’ beliefs changed and was re-framed. In the first section, I present my interests in the developments of art teachers’ beliefs and their practical theories as part of my teaching in an art teacher preparation program (1982-1996). In the second section I describe a research I conducted (Cohen- Evron, 1999) about the development of beginning art teachers’ beliefs. The findings of that study motivated me to design this follow-up study.
In this follow-up study, I enlarge my researcher’s lenses beyond the teacher in the classroom. From the pilot study, which consisted of a questionnaire I sent to my former students (June 1999), I learned that once they held positions as art teachers, they had to relate to the status of art at their schools. This influenced their relationships with the administrators, other teachers, students and community, their teaching conditions, their practices, and their decisions as to whether to leave or keep their teaching positions.

In the last section, I described my need to re-frame the question at stake after getting involved with several critical and poststructuralist theories I studied at The Ohio State University. As an outcome of this theoretical framework, I was interested in examining the way art teachers negotiated their beliefs and identity within and against their schools’ discourses.

My Background and Position as an Art Educator

For fourteen years I was an art educator at the School of Art2, Beit Berl College, and for four years I was the head of the art education division there. The School of Art is considered one of the best art schools in Israel and the main institute for art teacher preparation. As an art educator, I believed that the program should provide students not

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2 The School of Art is an art teachers’ training college, and one of two main art schools in Israel. The college was founded in 1946 in Tel-Aviv. In 1985, the Art Teachers Training College became part of a larger college, Beit-Berl College. Most of the students at the college are between the ages of 20-30 years. After three years of study, students earn certification for teaching art at the elementary and middle school grade levels. If they choose, students can continue for a fourth year in order to earn a high school level teaching license. Since 2000, the student can earn a B.Ed in art education.
only with updated knowledge and methods, but also with opportunities to develop their own visions of learning and teaching art.

The School of Art’s program was grounded on the dual view of art teacher as artist and educator, and it included the study of visual arts (studio), art history and art education (Cohen-Evron and Lemish, 1995). Although these three areas possessed almost an equal proportion of the program, the main emphasis of the School of Art was on its arts studies. The visual arts studies were based on the approach Arnheim (1954; 1969) described as ‘problem solving’ and ‘visual thinking.’ The studio exercises were based on teaching art as a visual language, and aimed to bring the students to understand art and become aware of its uses (Lavi, 1976). The lessons themselves were dedicated to critiquing the students’ artworks.

As an art educator working at this prestigious art college, I faced two related challenges. The first was the gap between the high image of being artists and the low image of being an art teacher in the educational school system held by the students and some of my colleagues. While the very well known artists who taught at the School of Art were regarded highly and were usually characterized as ‘males,’ ‘risk takers,’ ‘individuals,’ ‘creative’ and ‘provocative,’ the art teachers at schools were usually characterized as ‘females,’ ‘nurturing,’ and ‘conservative.’ The second gap concerned the discursive practice of art teaching. While the art studies at the School of Art were based on a conceptual understanding of the visual language through formal exercises as
explained above, the art studies in the public schools were mainly based on ‘fun’ and ‘creative’ activities with materials (Schvid, 1975).

Trying to bridge these gaps between images, status, and teaching practices of art and art education, I felt it necessary to emphasize the similarity between creating an artwork and creating an art education process. By emphasizing these connections, I did not mean to simply implement the formal exercises that were used in the studio classes at the college as art teaching methods with school kids. Rather I believed that the art student teachers should express themselves by creating a meaningful art educational process. Their personalities, interests, weaknesses, and beliefs were important components in the design of the art education process.

As part of a yearlong course I taught, the preservice students were asked to design an art curriculum that integrated their knowledge from different fields of study at the college (e.g., art, art history and art education, and psychology) and their interests. Developing an art unit was presented as a process that is neither technical nor objective, but as one that should be creative and reflective. The student teachers were asked to design an art unit based on their beliefs (Walker, 1971), to teach it in a classroom and to critically evaluate the processes they and their students went through. This teaching experience was mentored in a model that used creation and reflection borrowed from the process used in studio classes (Schon, 1987). The mentoring process

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3 The term discursive practice “refers to particular ways of talking and writing about and doing or performing one’s practice that are coupled with particular social setting in which those ways of talking are regarded as understandable and more or less valuable” (Schwandt, 1997, p. 31)
opposed the process of transferring useful knowledge for designing an art curriculum, or providing solutions to problems. In contrast to the ‘banking’ method, I used Freire’s (1970) ‘problem-solving’ method, a method that requires ‘dialogue’ in which the teacher and the student are regarded as critical co-investigators. In using these methods I tried to follow Dewey’s notion:

He has to see on his own behalf and in his own way the relations between means and methods employed and results achieved. Nobody else can see for him, and he can’t see just by being ‘told’, although the right kind of telling may guide his seeing and thus help him see what he needs to see (R.D Archambault (ed.), 1974, p. 151).

During this dialogical mentoring, the student teachers also examined the meaning of the subject they had chosen to construct their unit around. This subject could emerge from an issue they encountered during art history, art, or school visits. But, before thinking about the teaching goals this issue evoked, the kinds of lessons they could design around it, or inquiring who the artists were that dealt with it, the student teachers had to examine its meaning --first for themselves, and then for their students.

Through this process, the chosen issue shifted from being constructed within the discourses used in the art classes of ‘problem solving’ and ‘visual thinking,’ a discourse associated with the Modern art world (Parsons, 1998). The process of searching for personal meaning incorporated the life experiences of the student teachers as well as their students, and it directed the preservice teachers to create a teaching experience that integrated art learning with students’ realities.
In sum, I regarded the personal process of curriculum development as a means to
develop the beginning art teachers’ beliefs concerning learning and teaching art and to
reexamine them. At the same time, this process allowed the student teachers to articulate
challenges in becoming art teachers and becoming aware of the process of constructing
their teaching identity. The reflection process provoked the beginning teachers “to
possess their theories rather than holding them blindly” (McCutcheon, 1995, p. 45).

My Previous Research on Developments in Art Student Teachers’ Beliefs

After using the mentoring model with more than 70 student teachers, to facilitate
our dialogue as a framework for their reflection, I conducted a research that examined my
own assumptions. I believed that by providing the student teachers with opportunities to
reflect on their beliefs and feelings and to articulate their deliberations during the process
of designing and teaching an art unit, they would become aware of themselves and
experience a process of growth. In order to permit the student teachers to teach according
to their beliefs, I provided them with ‘protected’ conditions, “conditions similar to those
created in the studios and conservatories; freedom to learn by doing in a relatively low
risk setting, with access to coaches who … help them to see on their own behalf and in
their own way what they need most to see” (Schon, 1987, p. 17).

The research I designed to examine my assumptions consisted of three case
studies (Cohen-Evron, 1999). I followed three of my student teachers. I documented our
mentoring meeting, interviews, and classroom observations, and collected their reflective
writings. Analyzing that data, I found that student teachers’ beliefs developed and shifted during their student teaching experience. Generally, they came to hold a more constructivist approach toward teaching. In the case studies I examined, the principles of the mentoring model, of constructing knowledge and relating to learning as a process of empowering, were apparent. The art student teachers employed these principles with different variations and in different contexts with their own students during their teaching training experiences.

As part of that research I reviewed other studies that examine what influences teachers’ beliefs. These studies indicate that teachers’ beliefs and their practical theories of action (McCutcheon, 1995) are shaped by their biographies, their personal and professional experiences and by the paradigms of their education community (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988; van Manen, 1990; May & Diket, 1997; Carroll, 1997). The studies found that teachers’ beliefs may be difficult to articulate even for the teachers themselves. Nevertheless, the beliefs about the subjects they teach, about their students, and about teaching and learning are an important aspect to be considered in understanding the process of teaching and learning (Kagan, 1992; Sivertsen, 1994). They influence what teachers do, how they interpret what happens in their classes, and how they continue to shape their teaching (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988; Anderson & Reynolds, 1995).

Sivertsen (1994) cites several studies and concludes: “Teacher educators generally try to change the beliefs of prospective teachers. Yet beliefs are persistent, and prospective teachers and practicing teachers generally preserve their beliefs as they go
through teacher education programs (NCRTL, 1991).” The findings of my research (Cohen-Evron, 1999) did not confirm these studies. Perhaps the reflective and creative processes the student teachers went through during their program at the School of Art contributed to the different outcome of my study.

Based on the findings of my research, I felt encouraged to continue with the mentoring process that created these opportunities for student teachers to teach according to their beliefs and reexamine them. In these ‘protected’ conditions, when I acted as mediator between the student - teachers and the educational system, changes and developments in the teachers’ beliefs occurred. But what happened to their beliefs after they graduated from the program and encountered the complexity of the realities of schools?

Enlarging the Gaze on the Issue Under Study

In order to find the answer to what happened to their beliefs after they graduated from college, I decided to design a follow-up study of my former student teachers. I wanted to learn what their practices and beliefs as art teachers working at different schools were, and to compare them with the beliefs they held as student teachers. I perceived this research to center about the further developments and changes of my former student teachers’ beliefs when they had to face the ‘real’ situation in general education. It seemed an opportunity to learn from my former students what I should change in my own teaching in the art teacher preparation program.
The questions of the study—what were the beliefs of my former student teachers concerning their goals in art education and how have they changed since their graduation—were re-framed after analysis of 27 questionnaires completed by former students of mine in June 1999. Through the analysis of their answers, I found that my former student teachers pointed out two related problems they faced as art teachers in the general education system. The problems were the low status of the arts in the schools and the kinds of school administration expectations and teaching conditions they had to face. Their answers emphasized that when they graduated from the art teaching preparation program and were repositioned as teachers, they found themselves in a different culture and discourse than existed at the art college. (This questionnaire will be further discussed in the methodology part of the study.) Their descriptions of the marginalized place of art and art teachers occurred across all of their answers to the various questions.

The status of art was not one of the categories that emerged from the analysis of the art student teachers’ descriptions while they were doing their teaching training (Cohen-Evron, 1999). In my study of their beliefs I found that they were focused on their relationships with their students, and ignored the broader school context. Thus, as an outcome of the pilot study conducted with my former students, it seems necessary in this study to examine issues concerning the status of art and art teachers in the school system. It seems that, beyond the relationships between the teachers and their students, the school context and even the educational system are part of the difficulties and the conflicts the teachers have to face while they decide what and how to teach art (or not to teach art).
Using the Theoretical Framework for Re-Framing my Research Questions

During my studies I became involved with critical and feminist theories (Habermas, 1970; Lather, 2000; Spivak, 1987; Britzman, 1991, 1992). Poststructuralist discourse “extends the possibility for empirical researchers to focus on the condition of social practices and cultural patterns and processes whereby self-narratives are produced” (Sondergraad, in press). These theories emphasize that identities and beliefs are socially constructed and cannot be investigated as “pure” phenomena, as if they were “uninfected” by culture. Agreeing with these theories, I felt that I needed to reframe my research questions.

Poststructuralist theorists agree with the position of constructivist researchers that teachers bring to their profession their personal and institutional biographies “and some well-worn and commonsensical images of teacher’s work” (Britzman, 1991, p. 3). They also agree that this biography in part “accounts for the persistence of particular worldviews, orientations, dispositions, and cultural myths that dominate our thinking and, in unintended ways, select the practices that are available in educational life” (Britzman, 1991, p. 3). But postmodern and poststructuralist researchers present a different understanding of teachers’ knowledge. They complicate the notion of experience as a resource for constructing meaning and knowledge (May, 1995, Weedon 1987). The simple notion that teachers use their personal experience as a resource to construct their practical theories is problematized by studies that understand both experience and the meaning one makes of it are socially constructed through discourse. Their emphasis is on
the broader sociocultural context, which was ignored in the theories of constructed practical theories in action.

Feminist poststructuralist theorists (Weedon, 1987; Britzman, 1991, 1992) relate to the individuals that hold personal knowledge in a different way than does the constructivist approach. They view teachers’ identities as “subjected to the constraints of social structure and to the practice of discourse while also subject to creative agency” (Britzman, 1992, p. 26). Identity is viewed as the site of conflicting forms of subjectivity: “We do not have one voice but many. Our voice is always contingent upon shifting relationships among the words we speak, the practices we construct, and the community within which we interact” (Britzman, 1991, p. 12). Therefore, the nature of teachers’ beliefs and identities is not fixed but fluxed, and “as the boundaries shift, so do our identities” (Britzman, 1992, p. 26).

Following this position, I developed my understanding that individual art teachers’ beliefs cannot be separated from the sociocultural environments and the discourses in which they are constructed. I agree with these theorists that the identity of a person should not be perceived as an isolated individual but as negotiated in specific discourses. “These theories [poststructuralist] suggest further that the ‘self’ is itself always production rather than grounded” (Spivak, 1987, p. 212).

In designing a study about art teachers’ practice and beliefs, I found myself dealing with a specific aspect (that I believe to be important) of their identities. Smith explains the connection between identity and beliefs: “As a teacher, the question of ‘what
is to be done’ with respect to Other (a particular child, or group) depends on who I think the Other is, and who I think I am in relation to them” (Smith, 1996, p. 6).

The term ‘teachers’ identity’ enlarges the study of teachers’ practical theories in action (McCutcheon, 1995) or teachers’ beliefs, that I used in my previous research. Teachers’ identity can be only partially expressed through teachers’ conceptions of their role and the practical knowledge they use to function as teachers in their everyday work. Some of the studies (Connelly & Clandinin 1995, 1999; Britzman 1991) about teachers’ practical knowledge are concerned with “how the activity of teaching expresses something about the subjectivities of teachers and determines ways teachers come to construct their teaching identities” (Britzman, 1991, p. 2). But resistance, passivity, refusal to participate, wishes of what one would like to become, or sense of agency are all parts of teachers’ identities and are not included in their practical knowledge.

Accepting the distinction Britzman makes (1992) between teachers’ role and teachers’ identity and agreeing that beliefs and the identity are socially negotiated, my study of the art teachers’ beliefs and identity concerns how these beliefs were constructed, resisted, and negotiated in specific sites and times. I agreed with feminist postconstructivist theorists (Weedon 1987; Britzman 1991, 1992) that discourses construct the possibilities and the limitations of what we can think and desire (or what is unthinkable), and through these discourses we as teachers create the meanings of our stories and experience. Based these theories, my research is focused on studying how the

7“Resistance to domination is practiced by self-contained, autonomous individuals in response to an oppressive force from the outside” (St. Pierre, 2000).
stories and experience. Based these theories, my research is focused on studying how the
art teachers negotiated their beliefs and teaching identity within and against their schools' normative discourses.

The Purpose of the Study and the Research Questions

"As discursive boundaries shift, so do our identities"  
(Britzman, 1992 p. 26)

In my previous study (Cohen-Evron, 1999) I found that the student teachers I examined went through a meaningful process of growth. They became aware of their beliefs, reinforced them and shifted them. In my three case studies, the students came to hold a constructivist approach to knowledge, and to relate to learning as a process of empowerment. But the professional development that occurred during the student teaching experience is not a purpose in itself. Teachers education programs aim to prepare for the teachers' work at schools.

The purpose of this research is to examine the ways beginning teachers negotiate their beliefs and teaching identity after they graduate from the teacher preparation program. The transition from student teaching at college to a teaching position involves many professional changes, and for some of the beginning teachers it also suggests personal changes such as living location and family status. The focus of this study is on the transition to schools as relocation in a different social and cultural environment that holds different discourses regarding art and art education. This study tries to identify the
ways beginning art teachers renegotiate their beliefs and teaching identity within specific schools’ contexts and discourses.

My research consists of four case studies of student teachers who graduated from the School of Art, Beit-Berl College in Israel. The data was collected over six years. I started to study their beliefs and the way they constructed their teaching identity within and against the discourses of the School of Art, as they became art teachers. Then I followed them after they were repositioned as art teachers at various public schools in Israel and had had four or more years of teaching experience. The development of their practices and beliefs was examined through the their narration of the ways they negotiated their positions as art teachers in their schools. Through these stories I sought to understand how the change in discourses in their school system influenced their deliberations concerning what to teach and how to teach. I would like to understand these stories as the personal “struggles we engage as we construct not only our teaching practices and all the relationships this entails, but our teaching voices and identities” (Britzman, 1991, p. 1).

My main research question is: How have beginning art teachers negotiated their beliefs and identity within the reality of public schools? Through this question I would like to examine how art teachers renegotiate their practice and beliefs about their goals in art education. Have they kept the same sets of beliefs that they developed as student

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4 The reason for selecting teachers with four or more years of teaching experience is explained in the section about reducing the number of research participants, in the Methodology chapter.
teachers? How do they negotiate their beliefs in the light of the educational system’s
expectations and norms? How do they make sense of who they are, who they are not, and
who they want to be in an environment that marginalizes art and art teachers?

In order to study these questions I examine in each of the case studies questions
related to the period in which they were art student teachers, and questions relating to
their work as art teachers.

1. Questions related to the beliefs and identity as student teachers:

   a. What were the student teachers’ beliefs concerning their goals in art
      education and themselves as art teachers?
   b. How were these goals and beliefs constructed within and against the
      School of Art’s normative discourses?

2. Questions related to the beliefs and identity as art teachers:

   a. What are the outlines of the school where the art teachers work
      (location and population, the status of art, art teaching conditions)?
   b. What were the normative discourses (concerning art and art education)
      the art teachers encountered within the public educational system?

3. How did the art teachers negotiate their identity and beliefs within and against
   the discourses?

   a. What are their main purposes and goals as art teachers?
   b. What are the art teachers’ typical practices?
4. How have these beliefs changed and developed from their position as student teaching?
   
a. What are the conflicts and the challenges the art teachers describe having to face?
   
c. How have the art teachers negotiated these challenges and conflicts?

Overview of the Design of the Study and its Timeline

My study is designed as two in-depth case studies of the ways beginning art teachers negotiated their beliefs and identities within the context of their schools. Their stories were complicated and expanded by the narration of two other art teachers who negotiated their beliefs in different schools.

The data was collected over a period of six years, which can be divided into two phases. In the first phase I collected partial tales (Stuhr, Krug, & Scott, 1995) of the students teachers during their teaching experience at the School of Art, Beit Berl College (1994-1996). In the second phase I collected data while my former students held positions as art teachers and had gained four years or more of teaching experience (June 1999 – March 2001).

In the two in-depth case studies, all of our mentoring meetings during their student teaching experience were recorded and transcribed, I collected my notes from the observations of their lessons, and I conducted interviews with them at the end of their student teaching. In all four case studies, I collected their student teacher reflective
writings, including their summarizing and evaluation of the processes they and their students went through.

In the second phase I followed the four former student teachers as they became art teachers and had four or more years of teaching experience. I collected their answers to a questionnaire (June 1999), and I visited their schools and observed them teaching (December 1999). I collected the schools’ brochures, and instructional materials the teachers created. I also conducted 2-3 interviews (December 1999, June 2000). Following these interviews we continued our correspondence through letters and E-mail that were collected as well (1999-2001). My own research diary was included among the documents I analyzed. After writing a first version of the teachers’ case studies I shared it with them as a “member check” (January 2001-March 2001).

In studying the teachers’ negotiation of their beliefs and identities, I collected teachers’ stories, written materials and my own impressions. I do not perceive the teachers’ narratives as a direct reflection of their realities but as constructions of these realities. The teachers are the tellers of their experiences, and their stories are translations that are “always producing rather then merely reflecting or imitating some ‘original’” (Lather, 2000). As a researcher I am aware of the danger of “confusing the narrative of lived experience with experience” (Britzman, 1991, p. 13).
Significance of the Study

The concern of teacher educators must remain normative, critical, and even political - neither the colleges nor the schools can change the social order. Neither the colleges nor the schools can legislate democracy. But something can be done to empower teachers to reflect upon their own life situations, to speak out in their own ways about the lacks that must be repaired; the possibilities to be acted upon in the name of what they deem decent, human, and just.

(Greene, 1978, p. 71)

In this study I have collected stories of art teachers about the ways they negotiated their beliefs and teaching identity within their schools. I believe that the comparison of their stories with the ways they constructed their beliefs and identity during their studies at the art college can provide some understanding of how the discourses they encountered in the school system influenced their deliberations concerning what and how to teach art. I perceive the stories I collected as providing examples of how art teachers can shape their schools while being shaped by them. The descriptions of their struggles and the meaning they make out of their struggles can better our understanding of what it means to constantly become a teacher. Further, identifying the challenges and conflicts the art teachers had to face in their schools, and how they negotiated them, or failed to negotiate them, can contribute to our understanding of why teachers leave the educational system.

If we agree with Maxine Greene (1978) that “the concern of teacher educators must remain normative, critical, and even political,” we should follow her advice to let the teachers “speak out in their own ways about the lacks that must be repaired; the possibilities to be acted upon in the name of what they deem decent, human, and just” (p. 71).
I believe that as an art educator who works in a teacher education program, one should not only let teachers speak out, but one should learn to listen to them as well. Their discursive practices and their social relationships are an integral part of what it means to be an art teacher, and should be taken into account. Thus, the stories I collected and rewrote can contribute examples that can open a “dialogic discourse” as Britzman suggests:

When we stop and look at teachers in this way – to see teachers as being shaped by their work as well as shaping their work - we are able to shift the discourse of teacher education from an instrumentalist belief in controlling and manipulating variables - an orientation based upon the suppression of subjectivity – to a dialogic discourse. A dialogic discourse can take into account the discursive practices and their social relationships that realize pedagogy and lived experiences of teachers. (Britzman, 1991, P.1)

My study is designed as four case studies that provide the reader with contextual stories of art teachers working in public schools in Israel. This study does not intend to offer generalizations about the art teachers’ work in Israel or about the teachers that graduated from the School of Art. “Case studies [also] allow us to experience vicariously unique situations and unique individuals within our own culture. They can help us overcome the problem caused by the fact that (1) many clinicians learn best by modeling, but (2) there are often not enough truly exceptional models to go around” (Donmoyer, 1990).
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This study examines the ways the researched art teachers negotiated their beliefs and teaching identity within their schools, through their narration. I believe that their stories can provide some understanding of how the discourses in the school system influenced their deliberations concerning what and how to teach. They can also provide us with specific cases of the ways they dealt with the constant issue of becoming and being a teacher. I would like to present their stories as the personal struggles they were engaged in as they constructed not only their teaching practices but also their teaching voices and identities (Britzman, 1991).

The literature review includes four related areas: teachers’ beliefs in general and in art education in particular, different paradigms and their discursive practices in the art education field in general and in the Israeli education system in particular, teachers’ identities, and post-structural feminist discourse.

The literature about teachers’ beliefs provides a foundation for my research. I review the main trends and findings of the literature on teachers’ beliefs in general and in art education. This section includes teachers’ practical theories in action (McCutcheon
1995), which deal with those teachers’ beliefs that have direct implications on the practices and deliberations in the classroom.

The different paradigms in art education are important for the data analysis in this study. In analyzing the art teachers’ beliefs concerning their goals, I looked for emergent categories. These categories were compared with existing paradigms in the field of art education as they have been described in the literature and their discursive practices the teachers encounter within the field of art education in the Israeli education system. I am aware that the paradigms are described in an abstract and generic language, whereas teachers’ stories about their beliefs and classroom practice are usually personal, contextual, subjective, temporal, historical, and specific (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995). I believe that the paradigms help to map the specific stories, and the stories help us to question these categories and to understand the richness of the different approaches in art education.

My understanding is that art teachers’ beliefs are part of their teaching identity, which is constantly constructed and negotiated in specific social/cultural frameworks. In the literature review of teachers’ identities, I investigate selected theories that relate to this issue. Specifically, I am interested in the distinction feminist theories make between teachers’ roles and teachers’ identities. This distinction helps us to understand that becoming a teacher is not just an outcome of being in a position of a teacher in a classroom and gaining experience. Rather it is the meaning the teachers give to their experiences through the discourses and knowledge they employ. Thus, I agree with those
theorists who argue that the identity of a person is not constructed by an isolated individual but is negotiated within specific discourses.

In the last area of the literature review, I explore the use of the term ‘discourse’ in poststructuralist theories and how it relates to the construction and negotiation of teachers’ identities and beliefs. In particular, the notion of the individual and the perception of reality are relevant to my study of teachers’ beliefs. According to the discourse theories the expressions of individual teachers and their lens through which they interpret their own experiences and their reality are inseparable from the discourses they employ to make sense of them. Following discursive theories (Mills, 1997) the study of teachers’ beliefs is not be limited to their interpretations of their practices in their classrooms. Rather I take into account the discourse boundaries that structure what art teachers perceive as possible and desirable and what they exclude. Drawing from Bakhtin’s discourse theory and the feminist poststructuralists’ notion of constituting the individual, I will examine, within specific discourses, how art teachers’ beliefs shape the educational experiences of their students and themselves while being constantly shaped by them.
Teachers’ Beliefs

Multiple Ways to Conceptualize and Label Teachers’ Beliefs

There is general agreement in the literature that teachers’ beliefs are important because they influence what teachers do, how they interpret what happens in their classes and how they continue to shape their teaching. Yet, researchers conceptualize the issues and even the term ‘teacher’s beliefs’ in very different ways.

The terms ‘teachers’ beliefs’ and ‘teachers’ thinking’ are used in the literature to refer to the assumptions, images, theories, and knowledge teachers hold about the subject matter to be taught, about their students, and about teaching and learning (Kagan, 1992; Sivertsen, 1994). “Feiman-Nemser and Floden (1984) characterized the goals of these studies as getting inside teachers’ heads to describe their subjective knowledge and beliefs” (Kagan, 1992, p. 66).

In the 1970s and in the 1980s the literature on teachers’ beliefs focused on the ‘teachers’ thinking process’ (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999; Clark & Peterson, 1986). For example, in the third edition of the Handbook of Research on Teaching (Wittrock, 1986), in a chapter entitled ‘Teachers’ thought process,’ Clark & Peterson (1986) discuss teachers’ behavior as substantially influenced and even determined by ‘teachers’ thought processes’ and ‘teachers practical knowledge’ (Elbaz, 1981). They organize the literature in this chapter according to several areas of study: teacher planning, teachers’ interactive thoughts and decisions, teachers’ attributions, and teachers’ implicit theories.
Reviewing the literature on teachers’ beliefs in the beginning of the 1990s, Kagan (1992) writes that rather than using the term ‘beliefs’ some researchers refer instead to ‘teachers’ principles of practice,’ ‘personal epistemologies,’ ‘perspectives,’ ‘practical knowledge,’ or ‘orientations.’ McCutcheon (1995) uses the term ‘teachers’ practical theories in action.’ She defines it as “interrelated concepts, beliefs, and images teachers hold about their work” (p. 34). Other terms that refer to teachers constructing their knowledge based upon their autobiographies and experience are ‘teachers’ theories in practice’ (May & Diket, 1997), ‘teachers’ personal practical knowledge’ (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988), ‘images’ (Clandinin, 1986; Elbaz, 1983), and ‘teachers’ personal theories’ (Ross, Cornett & McCutcheon, 1992).

In a paper about teacher thinking and educational reform presented at AERA (April 1999), Lux reviews studies on teachers’ thinking, focusing on those of another term-‘teachers’ implicit theories of teaching and learning.’ Clark and Peterson (1986) define implicit theories as a personally held systems of beliefs, values, and principles that guide teacher cognition. Lux (1999) notes that there are multiple ways to conceptualize and label the attributes of teacher thinking, including ‘private theories of thinking and learning’ (Clark & Peterson, 1986) ‘knowledge in action’ (Richardson, 1990), and ‘lay theories of teaching’ (Holt-Reynolds, 1993).

In an effort to organize the different terms used in the ‘teacher’s beliefs’ literature and to track the main trends, I review them according to two different issues that have
been examined. The first issue that I explore focuses on influences of teachers’ beliefs on their practice and efforts to influence these beliefs. It examines questions of influence concerning two populations - prospective teachers and in-service teachers. Studies of these questions mainly use the general terms of ‘teachers’ beliefs’ or ‘teacher thinking,’ and many of them deal with teachers’ beliefs as related to a specific study area (math, science, literature, etc.). Within this group of studies, one can find positivistic approaches that look for correlations between beliefs and behavior as well as constructivist approaches that examine how reflections on experience might change prior beliefs.

A second trend of studies tries to understand the nature and origin of the knowledge teachers hold and use. The terms used in these studies, such as ‘teachers’ knowledge,’ ‘practical theories in action,’ or ‘teachers’ implicit theories of teaching and learning,’ etc., emphasize that teachers’ knowledge and beliefs are constructed through personal practical experiences and personal biographies. These practical theories and beliefs function as the lens through which teachers interpret classroom events. Within this group of studies, some researches also examine issues of teachers’ implicit theories in relation to school reform efforts.

The findings of the studies in these two trends will be presented in the coming sections. I review these findings according to the issues examined and in light of the different epistemological approaches to knowledge. Following the presentation of the

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5 This way of presenting the rich body of literature helps me to organize it, although I am aware that some of the researchers’ studies relate to both major trends.
main findings, I discuss the assumptions made by positivist, constructivist, and poststructuralist studies about the nature of teachers’ beliefs and their relationship to practice.

Studies of Influences on Teachers’ Beliefs and Efforts to Influence Them

Researchers concerned with prospective teachers’ beliefs study both the influences of those beliefs and means to influence them. These studies examine beliefs about the nature of teaching and learning that prospective teachers bring with them to teacher education. They are interested in how these prior beliefs influence the process of learning to become teachers, and how teacher education programs can introduce, in a meaningful way, alternative conceptions of teaching and learning that will change these prior beliefs. Lux explains this issue:

It is fairly well established that preservice teachers enter the profession with “lay versions” of teaching, based upon prior experience and beliefs, which are quite resistant to change…. These lay versions of teaching are often centered around one’s own experience as student….This contributes to a recurrent theme across teacher thinking research that teachers teach as they were taught, learning how to teach through a process of tradition and imitation. (Lux, 1999, p. 7)

These research findings are troublesome when we consider that most teacher education programs and reform movements call for visions of teaching and learning far removed from the “telling and listening” practiced in traditional classrooms.
Beliefs prospective teachers bring to teacher education programs.

Bird, Anderson, Sullivan and Swidler (1992) categorize the beliefs prospective teachers bring to teacher education programs:

Such beliefs may include conceptual categories that define what is reasonable or important to notice and consider (e.g., differences among students or features of classroom activities); empirical claims (e.g., students learn to read when they are read to, or children learn racial tolerance when they grow up in multiracial groups); prescriptive guidelines (e.g., teachers should treat each child as an individual, or teachers should make each lesson interesting to the children); and educational values (e.g., mathematical understanding is essential for all citizens, or cooperation is preferable to competition). Their significance is that prospective teachers use their beliefs to “read” situations, to interpret new information, and to decide what is possible or realistic or proper. (Bird, Anderson, Sullivan and Swidler, 1992, p. 1)

Lortie’s (1975) work on teacher socialization finds that students’ preconceptions are at the core of the process of becoming teachers and that these preconceptions have a much more powerful influence on that process than does preservice training. Many studies follow in a similar vein. For example, Calderhead and Robson (1991) find that preservice teachers hold rigid images of teachers and teaching which influence both their interpretation of teacher education curricula and the ways they make sense of their experiences during student teaching.

Anderson and Holt-Reynolds (1995) summarize several studies, which conclude that the many beliefs prospective teachers bring with them to teacher education about the nature of teaching and learning interact with the content and pedagogy of their teacher education courses to influence what and how they learn. Several researchers have documented that these personal beliefs about students and classrooms have been shaped
by the many hours spent in the schools as students, internalizing models of teaching (Anderson and Holt-Reynolds, 1995; Sivertsen, 1994) Stevens (1999) describes recent research indicating that personal characteristics of prospective teachers often result in differing perspectives on teaching and learning. For example, she cites Kalaian and Freeman’s (1994) study, involving 766 students, which finds that women enter teacher education with less self-confidence than men and with more optimism about the usefulness of education courses and the practical experience their program offers. Furthermore, women are more likely to favor student-centered approaches to education. These gender differences persist through the end of the program. Research studies on older teacher candidates, those who come to education in a mid-life career, find that they are more open to learning and have a broader context from which to construct their theories of teaching (McMahon, 1997; Serow, 1993; Brookhart and Loadman, 1996). Stevens (1999) summarizes recent studies which found gender and age differences in motivation to teach, students’ optimism about the effects of teacher education, levels of self-confidence about teaching, and the impact of former schooling on students’ conception of teaching.

**Efforts to influence prospective teachers’ beliefs.**

Rather than modifying their initial biases during teacher education programs, candidates appear to grow increasingly comfortable with them (Feiman-Nemser and Buchmann, 1986; Tabachnick and Zeichner, 1984; Zeichner, 1989). Sivertsen states that
research conducted by the National Center for Research on Teacher Learning (NCRTL, 1991) finds that “teacher educators generally try to change the beliefs of prospective teachers. Yet beliefs are persistent, and prospective teachers and practicing teachers generally preserve their beliefs as they go through teacher education programs” (Sivertsen, 1994, p. 3).

While it is generally believed that teacher education has minimal influence on the beliefs of teacher candidates, there are some studies that find contradictory results. Building on Dewey’s (1933) concept of ‘reflection’ on experience and Schon’s (1987) ‘reflection in action,’ Calderhead (1989) describes some constructivist teacher education courses where student teachers’ reflection is deliberately focused on themselves, their own beliefs and personalities, and how these inform their classroom practice and educational goals.

In a recent review of preservice education programs and their approaches to discourse communities, Putman and Borko write, “Most professional development schools have as a central component the establishment of new learning communities where inquiry, critique, and reflection are the norms. We know little, however, about the impact of these communities on experienced teachers’ knowledge, beliefs, and practices” (Putman and Borko, 2000, p. 10).

Stevens’ (1999) review of recent literature on the impact of teacher education finds contradictory results. Some research confirms pessimistic views about the effects of teacher education. For example, Maxson and Sindela (1998) find that students’ images of
teaching and learning, both before and after a ‘reflective’ teaching course, do not show a clear understanding of teaching and being a teacher. Their research suggests that students ‘mouth’ program concepts but do not make the connections to their own beliefs and knowledge (Stevens, 1999).

However, Stevens (1999) reviews some other studies that are more optimistic about teacher educators’ efforts. Several researchers have found that courses are not homogeneous and that individual differences in reaction to those courses play a part in the successful learning of curricular content (Bramald, Hardman and Leat, 1994). For example, in research on personal teaching metaphors as a means for facilitating the professional development of preservice teachers, Bullough and Stokes (1994) show that students’ concepts of teaching change and become increasingly complex and more sophisticated (Stevens, 1999). Jones and Vesilind (1996) find that preservice teachers’ concepts about effective teaching are fluid and sensitive to change during student teaching. Preservice teachers attribute the changes in their thinking to interactions with students (Stevens, 1999). McDermott (1995) finds that preservice teachers with extensive practical experience think differently about student teaching than those who have none. Students with no practical experience were concerned mostly with their basic teaching skills and management, whereas those who had spent time in the classroom as part of an early field experience were more concerned about the children’s learning (Stevens, 1999). In a study of images student teachers hold about teaching, Johnston (1992) explores their personal practical knowledge. Despite parallel experiences in teacher
education, these student teachers had constructed very different images of teaching. Her findings suggest that student teachers go through a process of balancing their pre-existing beliefs with the reality of schools. The tension between the student teachers’ practical knowledge and the realities of the classroom needs to be understood as a valuable opportunity to provide reflective reconstruction of that practical knowledge and to promote growth and understanding (Stevens, 1999).

Studies concerning influences on teachers’ beliefs after entering service.

A number of studies on teachers’ beliefs examine influences and correlations between teachers’ beliefs and their practice. Kagan (1992) reviews findings of research about the persistence of teachers’ beliefs after entering service (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Hoy, 1969; Rosenhold, 1989; Smylie, 1989; Berliner, 1987). According to these studies, teachers continue to solve instructional problems largely by relying on their own beliefs and experiences. When teachers do accept ideas and information through professional development, “they filter it through their own personal belief systems, translating and absorbing it into their unique pedagogies” (Kagan, 1992, p. 75). Other studies have found that teachers’ notions of ‘good teaching practice’ are heavily mediated by the character of the professional communities in which they work (Sivertsen, 1994).

Many studies on teachers’ beliefs examine the correlation between those beliefs and instructional behavior in the classroom. These studies seek to add another component to the cluster of factors that influence teacher instruction, teacher skills, attitudes,
characteristics, and methods (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). Some researchers have found connections between teacher beliefs and teachers’ behavior. These were represented as highly significant findings because of the difficulties inherent in capturing teacher beliefs (Kagan, 1992). Kagan organized a review of these studies according to two special forms of teacher beliefs: teachers’ sense of self-efficacy and content-specific beliefs.

Self-efficacy refers to a teacher’s generalized expectancy concerning the ability of teachers to influence students, as well as the teacher’s beliefs concerning his or her own ability to perform certain professional tasks.... A teacher’s sense of self-efficacy has been positively related to a number of specific classroom behaviors. (Kagan, 1992, p. 67)

Studies examining the influence of teachers’ content-specific beliefs (mainly regarding math, science, and literature) on their practice find a correlation between these beliefs and a wide variety of instructional and non-instructional behaviors. These behaviors include the teacher’s epistemological conceptions of the field to be taught, as well as his or her deliberations about instructional activities, goals, forms of evaluation, and the nature of student learning. For example, Kagan (1992) cites studies finding that mathematics and science teachers who have a conceptual understanding of their field tend to emphasize conceptual explanations and to modify textbooks, whereas teachers with a more superficial understanding tend to lean heavily on prepared texts and rarely modify them (Grossman et al., 1989). Grossman et al. found that a teacher’s orientation to literature (reader-, text-, or context-oriented) determines the nature of instructional activities used in English classes (Grossman, 1989; Grossman, Reynolds, Ringstaff and Sykes, 1985).
For example, Silverstien (1994) describes a study that examined the influences of an inservice writing program. The study found that students' outcomes were related to how different teachers perceived and enacted the program.

In the field of art education, May (1995) writes that teachers' understandings of art as a way of knowing and an area of study create opportunities for their students to learn and influence teachers' decisions and actions in art class. Because art teachers frequently have autonomy in the areas of curriculum planning and implementation in the schools in which they work (Koroseic, 1992), their beliefs can strongly influence their curricular decisions.

The constructivist approach to teachers' knowledge and the possibilities of change

Several studies of influences on teachers' beliefs were conducted using a constructivist approach to teachers' knowledge (Prawat, 1992; McLaughlin and Tabert, 1993). Considering teachers' beliefs as knowledge that is constructed (this approach to teachers' knowledge will be further discussed in the next section), these studies suggest that "changes in teachers' viewpoints will require reflection and discussion, and forming the type of professional communities in which teachers may begin these discussions" (Sivertsen, 1994, p. 10). Richardson (1992) discusses a form of staff development that helps teachers explore their beliefs and knowledge, reconstruct their premises related to teaching and learning, and alter their practices. "[Richardson] claims that in order for the teachers to participate in this reconstructive process, they must acknowledge the power of their own practical reasoning and expertise, and share the ownership of the new content that helps them reconstruct their practical knowledge"
(Fuller, 1994, p. 2).

The possibility of changing teachers’ beliefs about teaching and learning is important in any reform effort. Studies have found that, to achieve instructional change, teachers must develop a vision of what classes could be like and personalize that vision. They must have a personal commitment to change and reflect on their action, allowing their reflections to influence subsequent actions (Silverstsen, 1994). The studies of teacher thinking and educational reform cited by Lux (1999) suggest that ‘single shot’ interventions, such as one or two day workshops, are generally ineffective in supporting teachers in transitions to non-traditional ways of thinking and practice. Furthermore, teachers may demonstrate shallow or superficial changes even when engaged in long-term interventions (Rust, 1994). Wideen, Mayer-Smith & Moon (1998) indicate that collaboration with peers and ongoing support from instructors appear to be critical in facilitating the transition to ‘reform oriented thinking.’

**Studies of Teachers as Holders and Makers of Knowledge**

The second main trend of research concerns the origins and nature of the beliefs that teachers bring to their profession. These beliefs function as teachers’ lenses to interpret classroom events and to select their practices. This literature on teachers’ beliefs or teacher thinking, focusing on ‘teachers’ knowledge,’ ‘teachers’ practical theories’ or ‘teachers’ implicit theories,’ studies teachers as holders and makers of knowledge. This knowledge is used in and constructed by decision making in everyday teaching practice and deliberations. These studies seek “to move closer to the experience of classrooms”
(Connelly & Clandinin, 1999, p. 1) and to examine the nature and roots of the teacher’s personal knowledge.

Clandinin & Connelly (1995) define teachers’ knowledge as “that body of convictions and meaning, conscious or unconscious, that have arisen from experience (intimate, social, and traditional) and that are expressed in person’s practices” (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995, p. ?). The kind of knowledge which teachers construct and which informs their practice is distinguished from models constructed by university researchers.

Formal models are a product of a series of abstractions and formalizations made by researchers who operate in the context of academic reasoning and attempt to satisfy the current standards of their research community. In contrast, teachers operate in the context of pragmatic pedagogical problem solving in which they have to make on-the-spot decisions as they interact with their students in specific situations. (Fuller, 1994, p. 6)

Lux quotes another comparison, provided by Clark (1988), that captures the nature of teachers’ implicit theories of teaching and learning:

These implicit theories are not neat and complete reproductions of the educational psychology found in textbooks or notes. Rather, teachers’ implicit theories tend to be eclectic aggregations of cause-effect propositions from values, biases, and prejudices. (Lux, 1999, p. 4)

Clandinin & Connelly (1995) study the language used by teachers in describing their knowledge and characterize the differences between this language and that used by university researchers and in the policies of educational institutions. The language of the theories is a language:

of abstraction, a rhetoric of conclusions, is propositional, relational among concepts, impersonal, situation-independent, objective, nontemporal, ahistorical, and generic. In contrast teachers leave behind the classroom language of story, which is prototypical, relational among people, personal,
contextual, subjective, temporal, historical, and specific. (Clandinin and Connelly, 1995, p. 14)

Teachers’ practical knowledge and practical theories in action guide their decision-making processes and form the interpretive lenses teachers apply to their post-teaching reflection, which informs their future decisions (McCutcheon, 1995). “In deliberation, our decisions and actions are grounded in the practical and a view of the possible, in what we believe will work and what we believe is worth knowing and pursuing, or what we believe is true, beautiful, good, and just” (May, 1995, p. 59).

Teachers’ personal practical knowledge involves more than decision making or problem solving in the classroom because their decisions and actions are grounded in their lived experience as persons with unique histories (Connelly and Clandinin, 1988; May, 1995). Teachers’ practical knowledge, or their practical theories in action, are grounded in their histories - both professional and personal, life experiences, current endeavors, and expectations for the future, and not merely in their experience as teachers (Clandinin, 1985; Connelly and Clandinin, 1988; Pinar, 1988; Van Manen, 1990; McCutcheon, 1995). Since teachers’ implicit theories reflect their cumulative experiences, they incorporate formal and informal knowledge, and highly idiosyncratic and personal views not related to educational experience (Lux, 1999).
Studies of teachers’ self images.

Research about teachers’ practical knowledge also includes an examination of the teacher’s image of the self and its impact on performance. Joseph and Burnaford (1994) identify three central images teachers hold of teachers: teachers as paragons who are noble and almost heroic; teacher images as polarized – some are sensitive while others are callous, some imaginative while others are repressive; and teacher images as complex - teachers struggle with conflicting priorities as they make daily choices in the classroom (Zeigler, 1999).

In another study cited by Zeigler (1999), Coie & Knowles (1993) use the term “teacher role identity” (TRI) to capture the images preservice and beginning teachers construct about themselves as they enter the profession. A strong TRI assists beginning teachers as they cope with challenging situations and contexts and leads to a sense of professional success: “The pressure and complexity of these realities [at the schools], Cole and Knowles (1993) note, lead some to leave the profession, others to a basic survival stance, and some to retain the belief they will make a difference” (Zeigler, 1999, p. 7).

Development of teachers’ practical theories.

To be effective, teachers develop solutions in ways that are appropriate to the circumstances. “While teaching, teachers work to refine their proficiency; they try to increase the professional expertise necessary to educating students and increase the
likelihood that most students will have access to and be successful in an excellent curriculum” (McCutcheon, 1995 p. 37).

In order to explain the process of development of practical theories, McCutcheon (1995) draws upon Kolb’s (1981) work in cognition theory. Kolb’s cyclical learning model begins with a concrete experience on which the person observes and reflects, forms generalizations, tests implications in new situations, and then repeats the cycle. Other studies explain the need to develop personal practical knowledge as a response to the many uncertainties that characterize classroom teaching. “A teacher must be able to identify, label, solve, and evaluate the solutions to problems. Because there are no indisputable external guidelines, teachers create their own, in the form of a personal cohesive pedagogical system that they can support without reservation” (Kagan, 1992, p. 80).

**Contextualizing teachers’ personal practical knowledge.**

Some studies broaden the research on teachers’ beliefs to include the context of the schools’ culture. Clandinin and Connelly (1995) provide such a study; it addresses the question of how to contextualize teachers’ personal practical knowledge. In this study they broaden the view of the teacher as an isolated being inside the classroom and take into account the context of the school. According to the authors both places in this landscape, inside the classroom as well as outside, influence how, what, and why teachers teach.

We try to show that the professional knowledge landscape that teachers inhabit creates epistemological dilemmas that we understand narratively in terms of
secret, sacred, and cover stories...[The landscape metaphor] allows us to talk about space, place, and time.... Because we see the professional knowledge landscape as composed of relationships among people, places, and things, we see it as both an intellectual and moral landscape. (Clandinin and Connelly, 1995, p. 4)

The stories collected in Connelly & Clandinin’s study on teachers’ professional identities (1999) deal with these relationships between people, places, and things, as stories of intellectual and moral conflicts. The authors study teachers’ perceptions about themselves as characters in their teaching stories and compare these stories to the schools’ stories. In their study they find dilemmas and conflicts between the stories.

It should be noted that the areas of teachers as knowers of themselves and their situations within the schools were not the focus of the studies that examined teachers’ practical theories in action. An alternative way to contextualize teachers’ beliefs will be presented as part of the literature review of teachers’ identities.

Assumptions about the Nature of Teachers’ Beliefs and Their Relation to Practice

This section provides a summary of the agreements and disagreements in the literature cited above about the nature of teachers’ beliefs and their relation to practice.

There is a general agreement in the literature of both trends described above that teachers’ beliefs and their practical theories are shaped by their biographies, their personal and professional experiences, and the paradigms of their education communities (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988; Van Manen, 1990; May and Diket, 1997; Carroll, 1997).
Researchers also agree that teachers’ beliefs may be tacit or difficult to articulate to themselves and others. Further, studies in both trends emphasize that teachers’ beliefs are important because they influence what teachers do, how they interpret what happens in their classes, and how they continue to shape their teaching (Connelly and Clandinin, 1988; Anderson and Reynolds, 1995). To summarize, “teachers’ beliefs about the subjects they teach, about their students, and about teaching and learning influence their classroom practice” (Sivertsen, 1994, p.10).

The rich literature reviewed above presents a variety of assumptions about the stability or persistence of teachers’ beliefs and their relation to practice. While researchers generally agree that these two are related, there are significant disagreements caused by different theoretical approaches in studying this topic. Researchers have examined teachers’ beliefs using positivist, constructivist, and postmodern or poststructuralist theoretical viewpoints. The nature of teachers’ beliefs and their relation to teachers’ practice are perceived differently according to each of those viewpoints.

The assumptions of positivist studies about teachers’ beliefs and their relation to practice.

According to positivist researchers, the correlation between teachers’ beliefs and practices is viewed as evidence of the existence of the ‘true’ beliefs teachers hold consciously or unconsciously. The assumption that teachers’ professional knowledge is a belief “is not as radical a proposition as it may appear, when considering that knowledge
is generally regarded as belief that has been affirmed as true on the basis of objective proof or consensus of opinion” (Kagan, 1992, p. 73). Kagan notes that, despite a great variety in focus, empirical studies have yielded quite consistent findings that teachers’ beliefs appear to be relatively stable and resistant to change.

In reviewing the main studies of correlations between teachers’ beliefs and practice, Kagan (1992) notes that researchers encountered some difficulty because beliefs cannot be inferred directly from teacher behavior, since teachers can follow similar practices for very different reasons. Nevertheless, researchers have found relationships “between various forms of teacher beliefs and important instructional/noninstructional variables of school life” (Kagan, 1992, p. 67).

The assumptions of constructivist studies about teachers’ practical knowledge.

In studies that relate to teachers’ beliefs as constructed ‘personal knowledge,’ researchers draw different conclusions about the stability and the nature of teachers’ beliefs than in the positivist studies. Based on the constructivist approach to learning, they disagree with the positivist assumption concerning the fixed character of teachers’ beliefs.

Research on teacher beliefs builds on cognitive research showing that learning only occurs when learners actively think about or try out new ideas in light of their prior knowledge. This shift in how learning occurs marks an important new direction for teacher learning as well as student learning. (Sivertsen, 1994, p. 4)

The studies on teachers’ beliefs as teachers’ knowledge assume that knowledge is constructed, and therefore they suggest the possibility of learning and changing through
reflection (Calderhead, 1989; Sivertsen, 1994). These studies do not look for correlations between practices and beliefs but rather try to understand the dynamic process of reflection upon practice that might change beliefs, which in turn might change practice and deliberations.

Schon (1987), Shulman (1986), and Anning (1988) claim that classroom experience is seductive only with reflection and that this suggests that the improvement of the teacher-learning process requires acknowledging and building upon teachers’ experiences and promoting reflection on those experiences. (Fuller, 1994, p. 7)

In line with these researchers, McCutcheon (1995) suggests that, through a process of reflection and discussion, teachers can refine their practical theories and come to understand them more fully. She argues that the importance of uncovering these beliefs is that “it permits them [the teachers] to critique and change [them] if they believe certain aspects are untenable, unfair, or improper. Through such a process, teachers come to possess their theories rather than holding them blindly” (McCutcheon, 1995, p. 45).

The practical theories held by teachers may be tacit or difficult for teachers to articulate. Studies of teachers’ practical knowledge relate to the teacher’s practice itself as a crucial source for developing practical theories. They rely on the way teachers view and narrate their teaching experiences (Clandinin and Connelly, 1995, 1999) and assume that teachers’ practices express their practical theories.

It is a kind of knowledge that has arisen from circumstances, practices, and undergoings that themselves had affective content for the person in question. Therefore, practice is part of what we mean by personal practical knowledge. …When we see practice, we see personal practical knowledge at work. (Clandinin and Connelly, 1995,p. 7)
The assumptions of postmodern and poststructuralist approaches to teachers’ knowledge.

Poststructuralist theorists agree with the position of constructivist researchers that teachers bring to their profession their personal and institutional biographies “and some well-worn and commonsensical images of teacher’s work” (Britzman, 1991, p. 3). They also agree that this biography in part “accounts for the persistence of particular worldviews, orientations, dispositions, and cultural myths that dominate our thinking and in unintended ways, select the practices that are available in educational life” (Britzman, 1991, p. 3). They accept the position held by constructivist theorists that “this ‘personal practical knowledge’ or knowledge made from the stuff of lived experience, is so intimately a part of teachers’ enactments that its appearance as skills become taken for granted” (Britzman, 1991, p. 5). But the postmodern and poststructuralist researchers present a different understanding of teachers’ knowledge. They complicate the notion of experience as a resource for constructing meaning and knowledge.

Postmodern educators would go further by saying that knowledge is shaped by the interplay of language, power, and meaning. Values – what we often take to be knowledge and the “underbelly” interest of our deliberations - are constructed in social relation and personal/social contexts that have history (May, 1995, p. 80).

The simple notion that teachers use their personal experience as a resource to construct their practical theories is problematized by studies that understand both experience and the meaning one makes of it as being socially constructed through
discourses. Their emphasis is on the bigger sociocultural context that was ignored in the
theories of constructed practical theories in action.

To understand how the student teacher becomes constructed in this discourse of
the real, it is necessary to deconstruct the underlying assumption that real
experience can somehow bestow appropriate meaning upon the student teacher.
This requires an exploration of the effects of the discourse of the real and how it
works to define knowledge, pedagogy, and place. (Britzman, 1991, p. 214)

Furthermore, Britzman (1991, 1992) and other poststructuralist theorists
(Weedon, 1987) relate to the individuals that hold personal knowledge in a different way
than the constructivist approach to personal practical knowledge. They view teachers’
identities as “subjected to the constraints of social structure and to the practice of
discourse while also subject to creative agency” (Britzman, 1992, p. 26). The identity is
related as the site of conflicting forms of subjectivity. “We do not have one voice but
many. Our voice is always contingent upon shifting relationships among the words we
speak, the practices we construct, and the community within which we interact”
(Britzman, 1991, p. 12). Therefore, the nature of teachers’ beliefs and identities is not
fixed but fluxed, and “as the boundaries shift, so do our identities” (Britzman, 1992, p.
26). Britzman’s position on teachers’ identity and the distinction she makes between
teachers’ identities and teachers’ roles is further discussed in the literature review of
teachers’ identities. Relevant to the current discussion about the nature of teachers’
beliefs are the arguments that (a) teachers’ identities are sites of conflicts among
concepts, beliefs, and feelings; (b) teachers’ identities are shaped by their work as well as
shaping their work; and (c) identities are constructed and deconstructed through
discourses. This view “de-centers conversational notions of identity as being solely constituted by the self-knowledge intuited by experience” (Britzman, 1992, p. 26).

Studying the voices and thoughts of teachers, according to the poststructuralist approach, is not studying existing reality as it is represented or expressed through teachers’ practice. Rather, poststructuralists study the meaning teachers make of their practice within and against the context and the discourses they interact with. Knowledge, according to this approach, “is not so much about immutable truths as it is about historical products of certain practices” (Britzman, 1991, p. 24).

**The Different Paradigms in Art Education and their Discursive Practices**

In the beginning of this section, I will first define the use of the terms ‘paradigm’ and ‘discursive practice,’ then I will cite several descriptions of paradigm shifts in art education and their manifestation in typical discursive practices. In the last part, I will describe discursive practices that constitute the art education field in Israel.

Kuhn (1970) uses the term ‘paradigm’ “to mean a ‘disciplinary matrix’-commitment, beliefs, values methods, outlooks and so forth shared across a discipline” (Schwandt, 1997, p. 109). Kuhn holds that a new paradigm is likely to replace an established one when the new one is thought to offer better solutions to problems and concerns than the previous one.

Drawing on Kuhn’s definition Carroll (1997) refers to paradigm as a body of beliefs and values, laws and practices that govern a community of practitioners:
Even if a community, or an individual within a community, has not examined or articulated the beliefs and values which govern its everyday actions, a paradigm still may be strongly felt. As such, the paradigm works in a subliminal way governing decisions which seem to be made intuitively, instinctively, or simply out of habit. (Carroll, 1997, p. 178)

Carroll (1997) argues that common to both qualitative research and paradigm analysis “is a sense that reality and truth are constructions that arise out of communities and must be seen contextually” (Carroll, 1997, p. 173).

The term discursive practice “refers to particular ways of talking and writing about and doing or performing one’s practice that are coupled with particular social settings in which those ways of talking are regarded as understandable and more or less valuable” (Schwandt, 1997, p. 31). The use of the term acknowledges that the language of the practice is in part constitutive of its meaning and that the meaning of the practice “is reflective of the intentions of its practitioners as well as socially, historically, and politically constructed” (Schwandt, 1997, p. 31).

Paradigm Shifts in Art Education and their Manifestation in Typical Discursive Practices

One can find several descriptions of paradigm shifts in art education as well as the situation of co-existing paradigms (Pease, 1992; Carroll, 1997). Kuhn’s position that only in retrospect can one really determine whether a “paradigm shift” has occurred (Carroll, 1997) can provide an explanation of the variety of different interpretations of the
existing paradigms and the shifts or developments that have occurred in the goals and practices of the art education.

Efland, Freedman & Stuhr (1996) articulate five paradigms in the 20th century field of art education previous to the postmodern area. These paradigms include ‘Academic Approach,’ ‘Elements of Design,’ ‘Creative Self-expression,’ ‘Art in Daily Living’ and ‘Art as a Discipline.’ The authors believe that:

During economic hard times the teaching of art assumed a paradigmatic problem-solving approach; and during the period of the Cold War tensions, the focus returned, once again, to structure and discipline.... They were justifiable adaptations to changes in the social environment but not necessarily progressive changes. (Efland, Freedman & Stuhr, 1996, p. 69)

Although these paradigms are described as movements that occurred in a chronological order, in different periods during the 20th Century and as responses to specific socio-historical events, I believe that one can find most of them at the current time in schools in Israel as well as in the U.S.

The academic paradigm, dated from the 17th Century to the 19th Century, is based on the view that art teaching should provide methods to imitate nature and previous Western artworks. The discursive practices include methods of improving the eye-hand coordination, skill in producing the illusion of three dimensions in two-dimensional media through still-life and life model drawings, and copying artworks. According to this paradigm, “values are found in accuracy of representation” (Efland, Freedman & Stuhr, 1996, p. 68).
In the early 20th century the first paradigm shift was “away from the life drawing practices of the academy to the teaching of elements and principles of design” (Efland, Freedman & Stuhr, 1996, p. 69). The discursive practices of this formalist view of art as a ‘pure’ language include teaching lines, colors, shapes, spaces, composition, etc. through systematic exercises. For example, Dow lessons (1899/1913)

“consisted of simple landscape compositions based on such principles as ‘repetition,’ ‘variation,’ ‘opposition, or ‘transition.’ His practice was grounded in formalism, the belief that works of art are composed of elements and principles, and sensitivity to this underlying structure enables one to understand, appreciate, and apprehend the beauty of form. (Efland, 1995, p. 26)

In the early to mid century, a second shift occurred to the teaching of art as Creative Self-Expression, “followed by attempts to focus art education on art in daily living and then to the teaching of art as a discipline” (Efland, Freedman & Stuhr, 1996, p. 69). Art educators that hold a Self-Expression paradigm perceive children’s art as a direct (non-cognitive) expression of their perception of and/or emotional response to the world.

The Creative Self-Expression paradigm is embedded in the modern concept of individualism as a cultural ideal: “Art curriculum has maintained this notion of individualism through the promotion of autonomous expression in the production of art within the school…”(Efland, Freedman & Stuhr, 1996, p. 19). For Lowenfeld (1947), who was the best known and most influential exponent of the Self-Expression paradigm, “the purpose of art education was to foster this development of expressive powers by providing appropriate materials and protecting the child from inappropriate social influence” (Parsons, 1998b, p. 82). The discursive practices of this paradigm that aim to
free the artist’s or the child’s imagination also include the elimination of rules and rejection of imposed adult ideas (Efland, Freedman & Stuhr, 1996). While Lowenfeld motivated children by having them recall memories and feeling, other used guided imagery or dialogue with material to initiate the flow of ideas (Efland, 1995).

Burton (2000) suggests a new perception of the traditional Creative Self-Expressive child-centered paradigm of Lowenfeld, in what she calls ‘Learner-Centered’. Examining this traditional paradigm with awareness of its critics and the developments of recent theories, Burton searches for an alternative that will still focus on the learner. The Learner-Centered approach does not suggest a simplistic way of teaching like the traditional ‘laisser-faire’ practice, but still asks students to bring their own experiences into the art classroom where they are invited to reflect upon them, to explore possibilities and engage their thinking through dialogue.

Teaching through dialogue is not a laisser-faire pedagogical practice, nor a free-for-all conversation....Sometimes a dialogue may be structured with specific learning in mind and at other times leading towards exploration and discovery. However, it always presupposes that the teacher knows enough about children’s perceptions to pace the interchange to their needs, capacities, interests and levels of understanding. (Burton, 2000, p. 344)

Parsons (1998b) contrasts the Self-Expressive paradigm with Arnheim’s views of artmaking (1954; 1969). Arnheim argues that artmaking involves cognition, and views the artist as “a problem solver and the artistic development of the child consists of successive solutions to problems set by different media” (Parsons, 1998b, p. 81). The discursive practices constituting this ‘problem solving’ approach include providing the students with situations that would enable them “to speculate about unknowns and, by
testing hypotheses, to know that these are ways to enlarge upon the understandings one forms about art” (Efland, 1995, p. 34). The purpose of teaching art according to this paradigm is to provide the students with skills as well as conceptual understanding of making art and understanding the art of others (Efland, 1995). Parsons (1998) argues that this classic paradigm of cognition in the psychology of art is being challenged in the postmodern era. “Its universalistic implications and individualist views of learning sit uneasily with our awareness of diversity and the importance of cultures; and its prohibition of linguistic thinking in art fits poorly with our postmodern interest in meaning and context” (Parsons, 1998b, p. 84).

Carroll (1997) presents the position paper of Clark, Day, and Greer (1989) on Discipline-Based Art Education (DBAE) prepared for the Getty Center for Education in the Arts as a contrast to the paradigm characterized as Creative Self-Expression and aligned with the 60s Discipline - Centered Reform. The DBAE approach identifies four major disciplines that contribute to the content of art education: aesthetics (art appreciation), art criticism (describing, analyzing and interpreting art works), art history (focusing on understanding artworks within the context of history and culture), and art creating. Carroll (1997) emphasizes that the categories that were used by Clark, Day, and Greer (1989) to distinguish between the Self-Expressive paradigm and DBAE concerned goals, content, curriculum, conception of learner, conception of teacher, creativity, implementation, works of art, and evaluation. All of these influenced the discursive practices to become ‘subject centered.’ The DBAE practices promote inquiry methods.
Students were involved in “critical thinking about art” through questions such as “why is this considered to be a work of art? How are the elements of art used in the work of art? What visual clues tell you the age of the art work? Identify five art vocabulary words that describe media or techniques in the work” (Walkup, Stephens & Wilson, 1996).

Another example of paradigm change is described by Carroll (1997), in referring to Efland’s (1992) identification of attributes of modernism and postmodernism and their impact on art education. Efland (1995) explains that while modernist art theory was grounded in expressionism and formalism, postmodern aesthetic theories are grounded in doctrines that come from the sociology of art and the art world. The postmodern critics questioned the modernist myths about the artist as a unique individual and the hierarchy of ‘high art’ versus mass culture. These critics also questioned “whether works of art can be interpreted with a single ‘true’ meaning or whether there are, in John Berger’s phrase, many ‘ways of seeing’ (1972). In short, both the work of art and the artist have lost their place of privilege as sources of understanding” (Efland, Freedman & Stuhr, 1996, p. 71).

Promoting the same notion, Neperud (1995) argues that modernism and postmodernism are two contrasting ways of searching for meaning and have a pervasive effect on art education content and context: “These orientations have been characterized by contrasting value orientations such as the degree of focus on objects versus context, and the attention given traditional aesthetics and history versus the development of new

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approaches, as well as universal versus specific contextual meaning” (Neperud, 1995, p. 2). Modernism advocates “formalism as a set of values focused predominantly on visual qualities” (Neperud, 1995, p. 3). It is characterized by an elitism that creates a gap between the fine art, as defined by aestheticians, art historians, and critics, and the mass art preferred by popular culture (Neperud, 1995). The postmodern paradigm opposes the modernist notion that art is an autonomous, self-sufficient realm preoccupied with aesthetic issues and values separated from the social world (Efland, 1995). Instead it places emphasis on the social and cultural context within which the art is produced and through which it is interpreted.

Pearse (1992), on the other hand, believes that postmodernism “is post-paradigmatic in that it pushes the boundaries of the notion of paradigm. For art education this means that we ‘have embarked on a post-paradigmatic era, one in a constant state of flux, a kind of perpetual pluralism’” (Carroll, 1997, p. 173). Pearse (1992) argues that this means that art teachers should use methods appropriate for deconstructing social meaning and understanding the methods of decoding sign systems. They should guide the students not to create new forms “but to produce work which meaningfully and critically interprets the potentially infinite array of cultural forms and interactions” (Pearse, 1992, p. 250-251).

The notion of the postmodern paradigm that art education should promote the awareness of the social and cultural context within which art is created and through which it is interpreted, and the notion that students should learn to decode the sign
system of cultures, are both ideas that are promoted in multicultural art education. Multicultural art education aims to critically apprehend “the meaning of the object, artist, and process in the sociocultural context” (Stuhr, 1995, p. 197). It opposes the DBAE approach as a paradigm based on Western elitists “who defined culture and the state of being cultured as belonging to those people who shared their attitudes about what was an acceptable life style and what was good art” (Mefee, 1995, p. 171). Multicultural education “has always been grounded in a vision of equality and served as a mobilizing site for struggle within education” (Cahan & Kocur, 1996, p. xx). In art education this view raises questions about Eurocentric and patriarchal approaches in the field. For example, Multiculturalists criticize the two most commonly used introductory art history texts, H.W. Janson’s *History of Art* (1971) and Helen Gardner’s *Art Through the Ages* (1959): “Both texts distort or omit the history of black African art, the art of African Diaspora, and the art of many other cultures and groups” (Cahan & Kocur, 1996, p. xx). Multicultural art education teaching practices can be reduced to a superficial and meaningless teaching of African masks and then assigning the students to create their own masks. But when culture is not viewed as forms of artifacts devoid of historical or social significance, it becomes very complex because “they take into account the cultural and social values and beliefs—including cultural biases—of teachers and students” (Cahan & Kocur, 1996, p. xxi). The Social Reconstructionist Multicultural art education (Stuhr, 1995) is “founded on the belief that art education can make a difference in student
understanding of and action in the world and that difference can enrich and improve social life” (Freedman, 2000, p. 314).

Parsons (2001) describes the practices used nowadays as characterized by inclusion of the postmodern and the multicultural paradigms, and the integrated approach to art education:

Old notions of discipline are dissolving as the disciplines themselves become less confident that they know which images are most worth studying or which interpretations are the true ones. Multiple interpretations of the same works are widely accepted. We more often consult the cultural context of artworks. There is more interest in the meanings constructed by students, in making connections with their lifeworld and in integrated curricula. (Parsons, 2001, p. 99)

He suggests that the enlargement of the range of images that art educators deal with and the inclusion of everyday visual culture, is another paradigm shift or can be seen as “gradual development of the disciplinary paradigm into something more encompassing” (Parsons, 2001, p. 99). Duncum (2001) describes this shift to visual culture as a shift from studying the art of the institutionalized artworld to studying the more inclusive category of visual culture. Defining the field as visual culture is not just calling for a different approach to the same objects. Visual culture includes, beyond the traditional canon of the fine arts, other visual forms as well, such as television, film and video, cartoons, computer graphics and animation, fashion photography, and advertising (Freedman & Stuhr, 2000).
Discursive Practices that Constitute the Art Education Field in Israel

Art Education in the General Israeli Education System

The Israeli Ministry of Education and Culture supervises and funds the general educational system\(^7\) in Israel, which includes kindergartens, elementary, middle and high schools, as well as teacher preparation colleges. Art teaching is mandated only in the elementary schools, where the students (organized in classes of 40 students) get a lesson of 45 minutes per week by an art teacher. Although the art classes are mandated in the elementary schools, it is one of the few subject areas that do not have a separate classroom in the building. Therefore, in most of the elementary schools, art is taught in bomb shelters, which are converted by the art teachers' own initiatives to temporary art classrooms. Principals have the authority to provide a classroom for art studies and to arrange a schedule that will offer art lessons for 20 students (half a class) for 90 minutes every second week.

Art lessons are not part of the required curriculum in the middle and high school. Nevertheless, in many of the middle schools art lessons are provided to the 7\(^{th}\) and 8\(^{th}\) grades. The elementary and the middle school art teachers have no art curriculum or guidelines to follow, and they are expected to develop their own curriculum.

\(^7\) The government also funds two other Jewish religious education systems. The general education system is divided into different divisions of education such as the [Jewish] religious education, Arab education, [agriculture] settlement education, and technological education. Another division is according to study areas such as math and English. The visual arts and theater are one of these areas. Another division is according to the students population (elementary, high school, teachers preparation program, etc.).
In high school, art is one of the subjects the students can elect and add to the core subjects for matriculation exams. High schools that offer their students an art program for the matriculation exams usually provide an art classroom. In some of the affluent high schools, this program develops into an art department that includes several art teachers specialized in different areas of art (photography, sculpture, etc.) or even into arts high schools. The high school art program consists of five hours per week and includes art history and studio classes.

In the Technological Education trend, that supervises vocational middle and high schools, art history matriculation exams are required for students who study fashion design, architecture, industrial design, and art. In both, general education and technological education trends, the art matriculation exams are divided into two levels. The first level is offered to students in the 10th grade and includes a statewide test in art history. The test consists of question about 120-160 Western and some Israeli artworks the students have to know. The second level is offered to students in the 12th grade and includes a statewide test in art history (on 360 artworks). The 12th graders that choose to study an extended art program are also required to present art exhibitions, accompanied by an artist’s statement. The exhibitions are evaluated by an external evaluator (an artist or another high school art teacher).

In the general education high school, the 12th graders have an option to write a thesis in art history instead of doing the statewide test. Another difference between the art programs of technological education and general education is that the second offers the
teacher more freedom of choice concerning what to include in the art curriculum. Some of the art teachers in the general education system can choose which of the two art programs they would like to follow.

The art teacher preparation programs within the general education system are offered in three colleges and one religious (Jewish) college as three or four year programs that certify art teachers. These programs are developed according to the general requirements of the teachers’ preparation program that included general studies (as Hebrew, English), education studies, art studies (studio), art history, and art education (including student teaching). In 1999, the Council of Higher Education authorized the program in the School of Art, Beit Berl College, to offer students the first degree in art education.

**Main Discursive Practices the Art Teachers Encountered in the Israeli Schools**

More than two decades ago Sabina Schvid (1975) described the normative practices in art teaching in Israeli schools as “acting with materials” or “creative action.” Schvid (1975) believed that the assumptions of the Israeli Ministry Education planners were that “creativity” in art activity is transferable to other study areas in general and to art appreciation specifically. Although today we know differently (Burton, Horowitz and Abeles, 2000), this practice is the norm in many of the elementary schools. The theory of

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8 Another art teachers preparation program is offered through the Education School in Tel Aviv University for students who completed the BA degree in Art History and wish to acquire teaching certification.
Lowenfeld (1947) that suited the progressive movement of the education in the Kibbutzim and in the labor education trend might be part of the reason for the establishment of this practice.

Yet, at the same time, the art teachers, like the other elementary teachers, were expected to take part in the effort to establish the ideology of the young Jewish state. The curriculum of the elementary school is structured not only around teaching the basic skills of writing, reading or a more updated approach of ‘learning how to learn,’ but also around national and Jewish religious holidays. The art teachers are expected to prepare with their students products that will decorate the schools and, if possible, some gifts for the parents for at least eight such events during the nine months they teach. Most of the art teachers are also expected to be responsible for stage designs for these schools’ special events. Another expectation is that art teachers will provide art lessons on the “yearly theme” that the ministry of education selects every year.\footnote{The theme has varied according to the political and ideological agenda of the minister, from “the expedition of Jews out of Spain” to “respect.”} In recent years, some art teachers have also been expected to fulfill the role of the interior designer of the school, helping each of the teachers in the building to create “a learning environment” around themes that the students are studying. This initiative is based on the assumption that art should be integrated with the subject areas of the general curriculum.

Although these art activities are mostly expected from art teachers at elementary schools, the art teachers in this study describe these expectations in middle and high schools as well. For example, Naomi, who taught at middle and high school, described
some of her conflicts around these expectations:

[But even] when you teach studio class, you are considered to be the national decorator. It is such an archaic approach! I think that there is a problem when one relates to art as the production of endless outcomes. I also have problems with decorating according to holidays.

Last year with another teacher I did a powerful photographic exhibition we borrowed from 'Bezelem.'\(^{10}\) (The yearly theme was 'respect'). The exhibition was of huge black and white photos by Israeli photographers. And what disturbed the principal was that in Jerusalem Day\(^{11}\), we didn’t do anything. These little things... Jerusalem Day isn’t important. But there are constantly conflicts between what I believe to be more important. For example- a day that was devoted against the violence against women [that was ignored at school] versus Hanukkah that was just celebrated.

(Interview with Naomi, December 17, 1999)

In order to help the elementary art teachers with these expectations, the Inspector of Art Education in the Ministry of Education organizes in-service training around the yearly themes, the creation of learning environments, etc. For the high school teachers the in-services are around the content, the structure and the materials they have to cover in order to prepare the students for the matriculation exams. For example, Tamar described such an inservice events she took part in:

In the art inservice of the technological education they support the teachers very nicely. They provide peer meetings. We share things we do and they provide copies to everyone. So I have here [in the notebook] many things I got from other [teachers] (interview with Tamar, December 13, 1999).

Although in these in-services some practical issues were discussed (for example, how to prepare the students for their final art projects), the normative practices are based on lectures with slides and testing the knowledge students have memorized. Ada, an art

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\(^{10}\) Bezelem- is an Israeli human rights organization.

\(^{11}\) 'Jerusalem Day’ in one of the national days celebrated in the educational system.
teacher at a vocational high school, described her adaptation of these practices:

I also had to understand that here [in this high school], I have mainly to adopt the banal methods of frontal teaching. Sometimes I give them worksheets or questions. I combine looking at slides, with writing on the board, and I give them typed copies of the material....
(Interview with Ada, December 15, 1999)

Naomi described her struggle with these discursive practices:

The lessons are frontal because I need to cover a lot of material. The frontal teaching is a linear teaching. You need all the time to progress. You cannot be side tracked, and to compare things. It isn't flexible. There is a goal- to prepare for the Matriculation exams. The goal is not to enrich [the students], to make [the students] more flexible. It is very difficult to develop discussions. And I also have big classes 28 – 39 kids in a class...
If the class is good, I can ask them to summarize at home what they need to know, and in this way to cover the facts they need to memorize for the test. And then, in the class we can talk on many things and to open it up...
Even to use a video is difficult. I give them many opportunities for guided watching of TV programs on art I record and bring to class. It is still a frontal lesson. They have handouts, and the TV is in place of me with the slide projector
(Interview with Naomi, December 17, 1999).

The discourses of the School of Art, Beit Berl College

The discourses of the School of Art, Beit Berl College, were different from the normative practices deriving from Lowenfeld theory, from the agenda of the Ministry of Education, or from the matriculation exams. Its program was grounded on the dual view of art teacher as artist and educator, and it included studies of visual arts (studio), art history and art education. Although these three areas were given an almost equal proportion in the program, the main emphasis of the school of art was on its arts studies. Art was regarded highly, and to admit that you came to the college only to become an art
teacher was, as Noga described it, "to depreciate yourself because it [art teaching] was not valued" (Interview with Noga, January 2001).

The visual arts studies were based on the approach Arnheim (1954; 1969) described as 'problem solving' and 'visual thinking.' The exercises were based on the language of the art, and aimed to bring the students to understand this language. For example, the students had to create two cubes that were exactly the same size, but one should look heavier than the other. Another example was to create two paintings exactly the same, one in a postcard size and the other in a big format (1.20 x 1.40m’), without creating the feeling of a reproduction or an enlargement. These studio exercises were done outside of the class hours. The lessons themselves were dedicated to a critique of the students’ artworks. These exercises were connected to contemporary art, which was introduced mainly through American art magazines such as Art in America, Art Forum, and Art Today, and through current exhibitions at museums and galleries in Israel.

One can identify the same discourses when the art teachers that graduated from this art program described their goals and teaching practices they use at their schools:

*I would like] to start from a situation of exercises that are again annoying fragments, and to develop a process. This kind of thing interests me.... I want them to go through a process of development. It can be a visual development, or something very emotional. It is more important that there be excitement from their work then that they achieve good outcomes. Then I know that they internalized the language through all the exercises we did. (Interview with Naomi, December 17, 1999)

My goals there [in the middle school] were to expose the students to art, that they will know how to speak the language of art, and maybe to understand this language better, so that they will become part of an audience that consumes art. (Interview with Ada, December 15, 1999)
Last year I gave the 8th graders an exercise to work on formats. They worked on special formats and created a diptych or triptych. They did wonderful things. They had to think of how to work on one piece that is combined from two or three formats. We discussed whether there is connection between the parts or they are disconnected. So, in this work they brought up their ideas and I provided the story that framed it. It is an exercise in which the subject is free.
(Interview with Tamar, December 13, 1999)

In some art education courses, the student teachers encountered social perspectives on art education. As part of a yearlong art methods course, they were asked to connect the issues they chose to teach with the life experience of themselves and of their students. Through this process, the chosen issue shifted from being constructed within the discourses used in the art classes of ‘problem solving’ and ‘visual thinking,’ a discourse associated with the Modern art world (Parsons, 1998). It incorporated the life experiences of the student teachers as well as their students, and it directed the preservice teachers to create a teaching experience that integrated art learning with students’ realities. One can identify this approach in the art teachers’ discursive practices;:

_I gave the 11th grade students an assignment to create an environmental sculpture, which related to the village ‘A-Y’ [their school] as a place. I told them: ‘you can relate to ‘A-Y’ as a place and what it means for you, (many of them feel that it is like a prison with all its rules and the frameworks), you can relate to it as an organic place and [you can] relate conceptually to this place. This will be the starting point to your artwork._

(Interview with Tamar, December 20, 1999)

_In both of the schools I did exhibitions of students’ work against violence against women. I heard about it in the university. And it is a subject that interested me more as I articulated my political views._

(Interview with Naomi, December 17, 1999)
Another approach to art education the student teachers encountered as part of the art methods course was the notion of developing an integrated curriculum with other subject areas and around life-centered issues (Krug & Cohen-Evron, 2000). This approach was found as part of the teaching practices of one of the art teachers participating\(^\text{12}\) in this study, the only one who taught at an elementary school.

\[I\] gave audiocassettes to the third graders who worked [with their homeroom teacher] on the same theme [my neighborhood] and they recorded voices in the neighborhood. Later, in the class, we discussed how we could translate the voices to visual arts. Some drew birds, the realistic figures that created the voices. But then we discussed how could we translate different tones, and they painted abstract, Kandinsky like paintings. They presented their work in an exhibition called “voices in the neighborhood.” These kinds of subjects are more connected.\]

(Interview with Noga December 21, 1999)

**Teachers’ Identity**

Art teachers’ identities and beliefs are partially constructed within and by the art communities to which they were exposed during their studies of art and art education. In these art communities, art and artists are regarded highly. But art teachers’ roles in the schools are defined mainly by an educational system with different discourses, in which art and art teachers are marginalized. The conflicts, negotiations, and resistance through which art teachers construct their identities and the changes in their beliefs after college graduation about the goals of art education are my areas of research.

\(^{12}\) I also found this approach to be guiding a middle school art teacher who was one of the three case studies on which I collected data but did not analyze it.
The first section of this review focuses on the difference between teachers’ roles and teachers’ identities, and the ways identities are constructed through discourses. Closely related is the difference between teachers’ practical knowledge and teachers’ identity, also explained in this first section.

According to the feminist poststructuralist\textsuperscript{13} positions, identity is not fixed but rather negotiated within social context and discourses. In the second section, I explain this view of identity. This section also discusses the roles of context and culture in general and in particular in becoming the ‘self.’

“It is impossible to discuss identity without taking into account the antagonistic meaning of experience” (Britzman, 1992, p. 29). In the third section, I provide such a discussion, emphasizing the notion of “negotiating identity” in general and negotiating teachers’ identities in particular. Finally, I use the theories presented to discuss what kind of control teachers might have in negotiating their experience.

**Teachers’ Identities and Teachers’ Roles**

In her book *Practice makes practice: A critical study of learning to teach*, Britzman writes that as teachers “we construct not only our teaching practices and all the relationships this entails, but our teaching voices and identities” (Britzman, 1991, p. 1). In the normative discourse of teacher education, teacher identity is viewed as synonymous with teacher’s role (Britzman, 1992). But studies of teachers’ identity argue differently.
Britzman's studies of teachers' identity are concerned with how "teachers construct themselves as they are being constructed by others" (1991, p. 2). Britzman bears Poststructuralist theories in her studies. These theories refer to identity not as a fixed product but as constant social negotiation and signified relationships to the other (Britzman, 1992). They are concerned with "the inherited and constructed meanings that position our understanding of social life" (Britzman, 1992, p. 25). Using these theories, Britzman relates to the traditional inquiry about teachers' practice from a different perspective. She emphasizes that teachers' identities are not an outcome of being in a teaching position in a classroom or gaining experience in acting out their roles as teachers; rather, "our development is both social and historical, embodying both conscious and unconscious circumstances" (Britzman, 1992, p. 28).

Defining teachers' identity from a perspective of teachers as knowers of themselves, Connelly and Clandinin's (1999) book *Shaping a professional identity: Stories of educational practice* examines teachers' positions on questions such as "Who am I in my story of teaching?" and "Who am I in my place in the school?" Reflecting on their studies of teachers' knowledge since the 1970s, Connelly and Clandinin write, "We became fascinated with trying to understand teachers as knowers: knowers of themselves, of their situations, of children, of subject matter, of teaching, of learning" (Connelly and Clandinin, 1999, p. 1). In this study, the authors refer to teachers' identity as a more

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13 "Feminist poststructuralism is a mode of knowledge production which uses poststructuralist theories of language, subjectivity, social processes and institutions to understand existing power relations and to identify areas and strategies for change" (Weedon, 1987, p. 40).
inclusive term than teachers’ practical knowledge, which they used in their previous studies. Research on teachers’ practical knowledge examines teachers’ images, concepts, and beliefs that impact their roles as teachers. These studies consider teachers’ concepts and beliefs about the subject matter, the teaching and learning process, and the learners. While studies of teachers’ practical knowledge also include examination of the image of the self as a teacher and its impact on performance (see p. 39), Connelly and Clandinin’s (1999) study of teachers’ identities goes further to examine teachers’ positions about themselves as characters in their own teaching stories and in relation to their school stories. These stories not only include teachers’ beliefs about their role as teachers, but they also relate to the way teachers understand themselves and their place in the context of their work. Connelly and Clandinin (1999) found dilemmas and conflicts between teachers’ stories and schools’ stories, which they interpret as discrepancies between teachers’ identities and the formal expectations regarding their roles.

We believe that the dilemmas experienced by the participants...are partly connected with the identities each teacher lives out in her work and partially, these matters are connected to the discrepancies each experiences between her identity and the formal curricular expectations of her role. (Connelly and Clandinin, 1999, p. 85)

Britzman’s distinction between teachers’ identity and teachers’ role can provide a further explanation of these conflicts: “[R]ole speaks to function whereas identity voices investments and commitments. Function, or what one should do, and investments, or what one feels, are often at odds” (Britzman, 1992, p. 29). It is important to understand not only that role and identity are not synonymous but also that the two “are in dialogic
relation and it is this tension that makes for a ‘lived experience’ of teacher” (Britzman, 1992, p. 29).

Britzman finds a second difference between teachers’ roles and teachers’ identities: “Whereas role can be assigned, the taking up of an identity is a constant social negotiation” (Britzman, 1992, p. 24). While the teacher’s role is determined by teaching conditions and the expectations of different people involved in schooling (e.g., the superintendent, the principal, parents, students, colleagues, the curriculum, the teachers themselves, etc.), the teacher’s identity is negotiated with these conflicted representations and expectations. “One must ferret out how multiple interpretations of the meanings of social experience come to position one’s identity as a teacher. This involves scrutiny into how we come to know ourselves when we are trying to become a teacher” (Britzman 1992, p. 24).

Britzman and other feminist poststructuralist theorists relate to the identity itself as a site of conflicting beliefs, concepts, and feelings (Britzman 1991, 1992; Weedon, 1987). According to this approach, the contradictions are not only between teachers’ stories and the schools’ stories but also within teachers’ own identities.

Although the studies of teachers’ identities by Connelly and Clandinin (1995, 1999) and by Britzman (1991, 1992) are conducted from different perspectives, the researchers agree that there is a difference between teachers’ roles and teachers’ identities. In using the term ‘teachers’ identity,’ these studies refer to positions that can be only partially expressed through teachers’ conceptions of their role and the practical
knowledge they use to function as teachers in their everyday work. Although they are concerned with “how the activity of teaching expresses something about the subjectivities of teachers and determines ways teachers come to construct their teaching identities” (Britzman, 1991, p. 2), resistance, passivity, refusal to participate, wishes of what one would like to become, or sense of agency\textsuperscript{14} are all parts of the teachers’ identities (but they are not included in teachers’ practical knowledge). Therefore, there is a problem when the teacher’s identity is taken as “an outcome of pedagogical skills, an aftermath of being there in the classroom, or as a function of experience” (Britzman, 1992, p. 23).

\textbf{Views of Identity and the Roles of Context and Culture}

The traditional European view of the nature of the ‘self’ describes contradictions between subjectivity and objectivity, between self and other, between individual and culture (Witherell, 1991).

A central concern in discussions of the nature of self during this century has been the legacy of mind-body dualism posed by Descartes in the seventeenth century. The notion that there are two distinct realms of reality - one of matter ‘out there,’ without consciousness or purpose; the other of mind ‘in here,’ the realm of consciousness and selfhood – has left its legacy in debates about the relationships between subject and object, self and other... (Witherell, 1991, p. 85)

Opposing this notion, other theories suggest that the formation of the self is a social process. Studies of critical and feminist poststructural theories emphasize that

\textsuperscript{14} “Agency, a term borrowed from critical theory, emphasizes a sense of efficacy and the power of human beings to shape and determine their own lives. Those with a sense of agency question the status quo, imagine new possibilities for their work, and construct new understandings and approaches to alter the system either individually or collaboratively (Freire, 1998; Giroux, 1988, Shor, 1992).” Ziegler, 1999, p.11).
identities are not a ‘self’ outside of histories or societies but that we define and are
defined by our social and cultural contexts and through our relationship with other
persons (Habermas, 1970; Lather, 2000; St. Pierre, 2000; Britzman, 1991, 1992; Weedon,

Bernstein (1978) writes that, for Habermas, “individuals shape and determine
themselves not only through their work, but also through communicative action and
language” (p. 195). Identity cannot be separated from the sociocultural environments and
discourse within which it is constructed and which it influences. Britzman perceives
culture as the site where identities are negotiated: “Culture is where identities, desires,
and investments are mobilized, constructed, and reworked” (1991, p. 57). Furthermore,
she explains that within any culture, there are an array of contesting and contradictory
discourses “that vie for our attention…. Within any given culture, there exists a
multiplicity of realities – both given and possible – that form competing ideologies,
discourses, and the discursive practices that are made available because of them”
(Britzman, 1991, p. 57).

According to Britzman, as well as other critical and feminist poststructuralist
theorists, the question of who we are is asked and answered through discourses in a
specific place and time. According to poststructural theories, “identities are presumed to
be created in the ongoing effects of relations and in response to society’s codes” (St.
Pierre, 2000) and the notion of a unitary fixed ‘self,’ of a singular coherent and essential
identity, is being de-constructed (Weddon, 1987; Munro, 1996).
We can no longer believe in “the individual” in terms of a whole and completed ego or autonomous ‘self.’ We now think of a ‘self’ more fragmented and incomplete, composed of multiple layers of identities in relation to the different social worlds we inhabit; embodied, with a history, produced, in progress. (Leach, 1997, p. 36)

Britzman perceives identity as being “constitutive of direct and indirect experience and mediated by the discourses that lend conceptual order to our perceptions, points of view, investments, and desires” (Britzman, 1991, p. 57). She explains the position of identity as lived through discourses: “Our identities, overdetermined by time, place, and sociality, are lived through the discourses or knowledge we employ to make sense of who we are, who we are not, and who we can become” (Britzman, 1992, p. 27).

Using the term subjectivity instead of identity to emphasize the different epistemological notion, Weedon (1987) explains the fluidity of identity as being a product of society and culture:

In making our subjectivity the product of the society and culture within which we live, feminist poststructuralism insists that forms of subjectivity are produced historically and change with shifts in the wide range of discursive fields which constitute them. (Weedon, 1987, p. 33)

The feminist poststructuralist position views the identity as shifting and evolving as it answers to normative expectations. Not only does it emphasize that identity is not fixed and closed by being the subject of different discourses, but it also views identity itself as a site of discursive struggle since we do not have one voice but many. “Individuals are both the site and subjects of discursive struggle for their identity” (Weedon, 1987, p. 97). Further, the individual is not perceived as a passive site of discursive struggle: “The individual who has a memory and an already discursively
constituted sense of identity may resist particular interpretations or produce new versions of meaning from the conflicts and contradictions between existing discourses” (Weedon, 1987, p. 106).

Identity is viewed as negotiated in relation to the other and fictions others create to make sense of their own identities. It is constructed and deconstructed through discourses (Britzman 1992). Since the answer to the question of ‘who we are’ is set by the conditions of discourse, it is “always transposed by our own history, deep commitments, and normative notions of what constitutes truth, power, authority, and knowledge. Such a view de-centers conversational notions of identity as being solely constituted by the self-knowledge intuited by experience…. As discursive boundaries shift, so do our identities” (Britzman, 1992, p. 26).

The role of Experience in Becoming the ‘Self’

Britzman draws from Dewey’s arguments that “behind every understanding of experience is an implicit theory of knowing, as well as values and beliefs about the nature of learning” (Britzman, 1991, p. 34). According to constructivist approaches, we construct meaning out of experiences, and the meaning is what one tells oneself or another about what happened and why. Kegan (1983) provides an explanation of the relationship between experience and the meaning (and knowledge) one makes of it according to the constructivist approach:

‘Experience is not what happens to you,’ Aldous Huxley said, “it’s what you do with what happens to you” (1972). And the most fundamental thing we do is the composing of meaning, including, of course, the occasional inability to compose
meaning, which we often experience as the loss of our composure. ...The idea that we are constructive of our own experience crosses philosophy, theology, literary criticism, and psychology. (Kegan, 1983, p. 11)

This approach disputes experience as instructive in and of itself and opposes the notions that “experience is the best teacher” or you should “let experience be your guide” (Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1986). Britzman explains further that it is our capacity to bestow experience with meaning, reflect on it, and take action that distinguishes mere circumstance from lived experience. “Without awareness of potential and given meaning, and our own capacity to extend experience through interpretation and risk, without this active side, our capacity to participate in the shaping of experience is diminished” (Britzman, 1991, p. 34).

Poststructuralist theories complicate the notion of experience as a resource for constructing meaning and knowledge, including the process of constructing teachers’ knowledge. They dispute the ideas that experience contains an inherent and essential meaning (Foucault, 1980) and that experience is prior to language but requires language in order to be communicated to the other (Weedon, 1987).

It is not individuals who have experience, but subjects who are constituted through experience. Experience in this definition then becomes not the origin of our explanation, not the authoritative (because seen or felt) evidence that grounds what is known, but rather that which we seek to explain, that about which knowledge is produced. (Scott, 1991, p. 779)

Lather explains that what one thinks one sees or feels “is always already distorted: by language; informat desire to persuade, protect and preserve; translation; psychic stress and torment; anthropological framing and mediation; our own reading
practices” (Lather, 2000, p. 156). Britzman adds that “experience is the product of our
codes of intelligibility, our schemas of interpretation” (Britzman, 1991, p. 231).
Experience, then, doesn’t ‘tell’ us who we are or what we see: we are the tellers of
experience. “And yet our potential to retell, set by the conditions of discourse, is always
transposed by our own history, deep commitments, and normative notions of what
constitutes truth, power, authority, and knowledge” (Britzman, 1992, p. 26). This means
that, in the poststructural view, subjects “may well be the tellers of experience; but every
telling is constrained, partial, determined by discourses and histories that prefigure, even
as they might promise, representation” (Britzman, 1995, p. 236).

Opposing the constructivist approach, poststructuralist theories emphasize that to
tell and retell cannot be perceived as an individual enterprise of constructing meaning out
of personal experiences. We do not see or feel experience but we understand it through
language, concepts and contexts made by others.

As we acquire language, we learn to give voice - meaning - to our experience and
to understand it according to particular ways of thinking, particular discourses,
which pre-date our entry into language. These ways of thinking constitute our
consciousness, and positions with which we identify structure our sense of
ourselves, our subjectivity. (Weedon, 1987, p. 31)

Poststructuralistic theories call into question conventional notions of identity
as being solely constituted by the self-knowledge constructed by personal experience.
They are concerned with ways of tracing identity as subjected to the social structures and
to the practices of discourse while also subject to creative agency. “As each of us
struggles in the process of coming to know, we struggle not as autonomous beings who
single-handedly perform singular fates, but as vulnerable social subjects who produce and are being produced by culture” (Britzman, 1992, p. 28).

According to this position, identity is a shifting set of answers to conventions and “in the case of teacher’s identity, it is our conceptual ordering of experience, rather than experience itself that generates the answers we offer” (Britzman, 1992, p. 42).

**Negotiating Identities**

Traditional theories explain the process of socialization through which people learn codes and language and adjust to society. Lortie defines socialization as “a subjective process - it is something that happens to people as they move through a series of structured experiences and internalize the subculture of the group” (Lortie, 1975, cited in Britzman, 1991, p. 56). An alternative view of negotiating identity suggests a dialogical and more complex process: “The problem is that traditional theories of socialization cannot account for the ways individuals refashion, resist, or even take up dominant meanings as if they were their authors” (Britzman, 1991, p. 56). The process of negotiating identities suggests that people shape the culture and are being shaped by it within available discourses. Neither culture nor identities are perceived to be static.

Rejecting the notion of identity as what each individual ‘really is’ as well as its fixed and unitary nature, feminist poststructuralist theories perceive identity as lived through the discourses or knowledge employed to make sense of who we are. “A poststructuralist position on subjectivity and consciousness relativizes the individual’s
sense of herself by making it an effect of discourse which is open to continuous redefinition which is constantly slipping” (Weendon, 1987, p. 106).

Referring to this quotation, Britzman (1992) explains that “the play of relativity is rooted in the push and pull of social meaning” (p. 28) as part of the process of coming to know who we are. According to this view, negotiating identity will be concerned with

How we come to make up positions, make alliances, and weave the justifications for the things we do…. In such a scheme, we can attend to how identity produces a set of shifting answers to normative expectations. Our answers are not, however, fixed or closed. They hint at the tensions of our times and the contradictions of our places. (Britzman, 1992, p. 28)

Drawing on Gramsci’s (1976) theory, Britzman explains that the relationship between structure and consciousness produces the contradictory space for negotiating identities. It is there that one has the potential for both contesting the order of things and legitimating them. Self-understanding requires an awareness of one’s historical context and the way meanings are constructed. “Critical self understanding also depends upon a persistent interrogation of one’s own deep investments in, resistances to, and desires for challenging the status quo” (Britzman, 1992, p. 28).

Referring to Bakhtin’s (1986) view of identity, Britzman (1992) further explains the negotiating process as being inherent to identity.

In Bakhtin’s terms, identity is not about fixity; it voices a range of competing positions negotiated with others through language. Language is not a neutral medium…. It is the symbolic terrain where hegemony is asserted and revisited. Using language is always a negotiation because words are slippery and elusive; they bear the capacity to assert another intention, another meaning, another word. (Britzman, 1992, p. 31)
Negotiating Teachers’ Identities

“Normative notions collapse the distinction between acquiring pedagogical skills and becoming a teacher” (Britzman, 1992, p. 29). Disputing the normative discourse of teacher as expert, as self-made, as a product of experience, Britzman describes the process of learning to teach, as well as teaching itself, as negotiated. Both learning to teach and teaching are a constant “process of becoming: a time of formation and transformation, of scrutiny into what one is doing, and who one can be” (Britzman, 1991, p. 8). Teaching, according to this approach, is situated in relationship to one’s biography, present circumstances, deep commitments, affective investments, social context, and conflicting discourses about what it means to become a teacher (Britzman, 1991).

Teaching can be reconceptualized as a struggle for voice and discursive practices amid a cacophony of past and present voices, lived experiences and available practices.... Learning to teach is a social process of negotiation rather than an individual problem of behavior. (Britzman, 1991, p. 8)

Teacher’s identity, then, concerns “one’s intentions and values, as well as one’s views of knowing, being, and acting in a setting characterized by contradictory realities, negotiation, and dependency and struggle” (Britzman, 1991, p.8).

The normative discourses that produce the context within which teachers’ identities are negotiated present dichotomies of theory and practice, knowledge and experience, objective and subjective. Opposing this dichotomize position, Britzman writes: “Such relationships are better expressed as dialogic in that they are shaped as they shape each other in the process of coming to know” (Britzman, 1991, p. 2).
Teachers' identities are negotiated within the context of school-life. Britzman continues and explains the role of this context in producing teachers' identities and beliefs.

Produced because of social interaction, subject to negotiation, consent, and circumstance, inscribed with power and desire, and always in the process of becoming, these dialogic relations determine the very texture of teaching and the possibilities it opens. They fashion as well the way teachers understand their practices and the subjectivity that bestows this practice with identity. (Britzman, 1991, p. 3)

Britzman portrays the context of school life: “Just as culture is always in the process of being reinvented, renegotiated, and reinterpreted by its participants, so too are the signifying practices of school life” (Britzman, 1991, p. 58). The context of schools within which teachers’ identities are negotiated is one of contradictory discourses. For example, “A word such as teacher is already overpopulated with other contexts; its multiple meanings can never be isolated from the speaker, the listener, or the situation” (Britzman, 1992, p. 43). As teaching is often seen as a feminized profession, these discourses about the word teacher include stereotypes associated with women: “Like the ‘good’ woman, the ‘good’ teacher is positioned as self-sacrificing, kind, overworked, underpaid, and holding an unlimited reservoir of patience…. Stereotypes engender a static and hence repressed notion of identity as something already out there” (Britzman, 1991, p. 5). Teaching style, then, as well as teachers’ identities,

[...] turns out to be not so much an individually determined product as a dialogic movement between the teacher, the students, the curriculum, the knowledge produced in exchange, and the discursive practices that make pedagogy intelligible. Thus the myth that teachers are self-made serves to cloak the social
relationships and the context of school structure by exaggerating personal autonomy. (Britzman, 1991, p. 232)

Britzman explains that, while we all live in myths, “some myths instigate repressive notions of pedagogy and identity, while others open us to the dialogic. This latter image of teachers – as negotiators, mediators, and authors of who they are becoming – is the place where identity becomes infused with possibilities” (Britzman, 1991, p. 6).

Teacher’s identity is not fixed but a social process of negotiation with others through language and discourses: “This struggle [for teachers’ identity] to borrow, to negotiate, to claim ownership, and to take up that which seems already completed, suggests the contradictions within which teacher identity is constructed and deconstructed” (Britzman, 1992, p. 24). Thus, the meaning of being a teacher is constantly negotiated.

In her discussion of resistance by women teachers, Munro (1996) provides an example of socially negotiated processes in teaching. She studies how women teachers relate to the normative discourse of gender roles like ‘teaching as women’s true profession’ that have functioned to mask the agency of women teachers’ lives.

Women teachers have not simply been acted upon but have negotiated, resisted and created meaning of their own (Casey, 1993; Hoffman, 1981; Kaufman, 1984; Weiler; 1994)...What becomes essential to rethinking resistance is a focus on the ‘politics of the everyday’ in which certain discursive practices are refused or ‘taken-up’ and new ones created. How women teachers negotiate the tensions between dominant stereotypes of women’s nature and social role and meanings they give to their work is central not only to rethinking resistance but fundamental to rethinking pedagogy and curriculum. (Munro, 1996, p. 17)

In my research I propose to study how art teachers negotiate their identities in the schools. Like any other teachers, they have to negotiate their identities within and
against the discourses described above. However, as art teachers the context of their negotiation also includes the marginalized status of art in the schools and misunderstandings about their roles as art teachers. Perceptions of art as enrichment or fun activities and art teachers as school decorators are part of the discourse that devalues students’ voices and the interpretative and ambiguous nature of the arts while holding objective and measurable knowledge highly. Thus, I perceive art teachers in the process of negotiating their identities as being change agents in a struggle against this marginalized place of the arts and promoting the values the arts can enhance in the educational environment.

**What Kind of Control Do Teachers Have in Negotiating their Experience?**

One can interpret the issue of what kinds of control teachers have in negotiating their experience in schools as an examination of the influences and the voice teachers have in their everyday practice and teaching conditions. In other words, we can ask whether and how teachers can influence their realities and act as agents of change when they are in conflict with the schools’ stories. This interpretation of control requires an examination of how teachers negotiate their practice and pre-designed roles based on their beliefs (e.g., choosing and creating instruction materials, designing the curriculum, influencing teaching conditions such as class size, establishing student exhibitions and field trips to museums, etc.).

In the previous sections, I discuss constructivist and poststructuralist theories that dispute the notion of experiences as authoritative and objective events. According to both
approaches, experience is not something one feels or sees, or an atheoretical event that happens to teachers; rather, it is the meanings, interpretations, and explanations the teacher constructs. Poststructuralist theories emphasize especially that “all analyses of experience must be situated within a larger discursive area” (Pitt, 1998, p. 538). For feminist poststructuralism, “It is language in the form of conflicting discourses which constitutes us as conscious thinking subjects and enables us to give meaning to the world and to act to transform it” (Weedon, 1987, p. 32).

According to these theories we can examine the complex ways in which teachers give/take/resist and negotiate the meanings and the explanations of their experiences and practices in relation to the meanings given by others. Such an approach to the issue includes examining how teachers’ stories about their teaching experiences in a specific school, working with specific students, colleagues, principals, art communities, etc., narrate the negotiation of their own answers to the conflicting normative discourses and expectations. Teachers’ agency, according to this approach, “seems to lie in the subject’s ability to decode and recode its identity within discursive formations and cultural practices” (St. Pierre, 2000, p. 498).

In a study that implied such an approach to women teachers’ resistance to the normative discourse in education, Munro (1996) finds that the teachers’ stories themselves

Become a form of agency through which they ‘dispense with boundaries’ (Jagla, 1992:62) to create and re-create a reality more consistent with their images of themselves as intellectual, activist, or teacher educator. Thus the fictions they tell
both enable them to write against the patriarchal script and function as a form of resistance. (Munro, 1996, p. 22)

In my own study, I intend to track the way art teachers narrate their stories of negotiating their teaching experience within the schools’ discourses, assuming that they are both subject and site of different and conflicting discourses. These discourses were partially originated at the art college they graduated from and in their education communities. I agree with Britzman’s perception of teaching as “coming to terms with one’s views of knowing, being, and acting in a setting characterized by contradictory realities, negotiation, and dependency and struggle” (Britzman, 1991, p. 8). Therefore, I will retell the art teachers’ negotiated practices and the meanings they make of them. I believe that the way art teachers negotiate their practice and the way they interpret their deliberations about selecting teaching practices are the available expressions of their beliefs and worldviews within specific discourses.

‘Discourse’ in Structuralist and Poststructuralist Theories

Introduction

The term “discourse” cannot be pinned down to one meaning, since it has had a complex history and is used in a range of different ways by different theorists (Mills, 1997). In the first part of this section I explicate further the notion of discourse. Within this part, I focus on key ideas in Foucault’s work on discourse. “Michel Foucault’s work has been crucial to the development of a range of different theories which have been broadly grouped under the term ‘discourse theory’” (Mills, 1997, p. 16). Since I have
studied the art teachers’ negotiation of their beliefs and teaching identity, two sub-parts of discourse theory, the notion of the individual and the perception of reality, seem to be of particular importance to the discussion. Following a presentation of some conflicting interpretations of these two notions, I address the idea of teachers’ beliefs in relation to discourse theory. Finally, I explain the notion of discourse in my own study.

The Notion of ‘Discourse’

“The term ‘discourse’ has become common currency in a variety of disciplines: critical theory, sociology, linguistics, philosophy, social psychology and many other fields, so much so that it is frequently left undefined, as if its usage were simply common knowledge” (Mills, 1997, p. 1). Since the 1960s it has been a word associated with French philosophical thought, but one finds in the literature different uses of the term by different theorists. For example, some theorists contrast discourse with ideology:

‘Discourse’ is a speech or writing seen from the point of view of the beliefs, values and categories which it embodies; these beliefs etc. constitute a way of looking at the world, an organization or representation of experience – ‘ideology’ in the neutral non-pejorative sense. Different modes of discourse encode different representations of experience; and the source of these representations is the communicative context within which the discourse is embedded. (Fowler, 1981, cited in Mills, 1997, p. 6)

Mills (1997) believes that one can distinguish between abstract theoretical concern from of discourse and analyses of individual discourses, or groupings of statements produced within power relations, as one can find in the works of Barthes and Bakhtin. Bakhtin explains that there is always a power struggle and hence a dialogical
relationship between authoritative discourse and internally persuasive discourse. Authoritative discourse dictates, in some ways, the knower’s frames of reference and the discursive practices that sustain them. In contrast, “internally persuasive discourse has no institutional privilege, because its practices are in opposition to socially sanctioned views and normative meanings” (Britzman, 1991, p. 21). According to Bakhtin the relationship between authoritative and internally persuasive discourse “determines one’s ideological becoming: the orientations, investments, beliefs, and dispositions that are already inscribed in the specific discourses we take up” (Britzman, 1991, p. 20).

Discussing discourse theory, Mills (1997) notes that, while Foucault is one of the theorists most often referred to, there are a large number of thinkers whose work on the theorizing of discourse is important. She cites Macdonnell (1986), who examines work by Foucault, Hindess, Hirst & Althusser, and Bakhtin, concluding that “it is the institutional nature of discourse and its situatedness in the social which is central to all these different perspectives” (Mills, 1997, p. 11). One can argue that to define the term discourse “would be to contradict the logic of the structure of thought in which the term ‘discourse’... functions” (Bove, 1990, cited in St. Pierre, 2000, p. 484). However, Mills writes that the general notion of discourse incorporates the grouping of utterances or sentences, statements which are enacted within a social context, which are determined by the social context, and which contribute to the way that social context continues its existence: “Institutions and social context play an important determining role in the development, maintenance and circulation of discourse” (Mills, 1997, p. 11).
Pecheux (1982) emphasizes the institutional nature of discourses and states that they do not occur in isolation but rather in dialogue, in relation to or in contrast and opposition to other groups of utterances. In his work on discourse, Pecheux analyzes the meanings of words and their relations to larger structures without assuming that the words and sentences have a meaning in themselves. “Pecheux’s work is important in that he stresses more than Foucault the conflictual nature of discourse, that it is always in dialogue and conflict with other positions” (Mills, 1997, p. 14). For Pecheux, discourses are the sites of struggle: “Discourses are thus not fixed but are the site of constant contestation of meaning” (Mills, 1997, p. 16).

Within structuralist and post-structuralist theory, the use of the term discourse signals a major break with previous views of language and representation. Rather than seeing language as simply expressive, as transparent, as a vehicle of communication, or as a form of representation, poststructuralist theories see language as a system with its own rules and constraints and with its own determining effect on the way that individuals think and express themselves (Mills, 1997). Scott (1988) explains that “discourse is not a language or a text but a historically, socially, and institutionally specific structure of statements, terms, categories, and beliefs” (cited in St. Pierre, 2000, p. 484). Thus, discourses structure both our sense of reality and our notion of our own identity (Mills, 1997).

A further aspect that all these views of discourse have in common is that they consider discourse to be principally organized around the practice of exclusion. While
what it is possible to say seems self-evident and natural, this naturalness is a result of what has been excluded, that which is almost unsayable (Mills, 1997).

Michel Foucault’s notion of discourse.

Foucault’s work is not a system of ideas, nor a general theory; his work ranges over a variety of subjects including history, philosophy, psychology, and critical theory. The term discourse is not rooted within a larger system of fully worked-out theoretical ideas but is one element in Foucault’s work. According to Foucault, we “can no longer easily ask such questions as, What is discourse? or, What does discourse mean? In other words... one not only does not but cannot provide definitions” (Bove, 1990, cited in St. Pierre, 2000, p. 483). St. Pierre explains that since the meaning of any concept, including discourse, cannot be found through asking essentializing questions, the concern is “How does discourse function? Where is it to be found? How does it get produced and regulated? What are its social effects?” (Bove, 1990, cited in St. Pierre, 2000, p. 483).

Mills quotes Foucault’s (1972) explanation of discourse:

Instead of gradually reducing the rather fluctuating meaning of the word ‘discourse,’ I believe I have in fact added to its meaning: treating it sometimes as the general domain of all statements, sometimes as an individualizable group of statements, and sometimes as a regulated practice that accounts for a number of statements. (Cited in Mills, 1997, p. 6)

Mills clarifies the three explanations quoted above of Foucault’s use of the term ‘discourse’ in his own work. The first refers to discourse as all utterances or texts which have meaning and which have some effects in the real world. The second use is
when Foucault is discussing the particular structures within discourse – groups of
utterances that seem “to be regulated in some way and which seem to have a coherence
and a force to them in common” (Mills, p. 7). Foucault’s third use of discourse concerns
the rule-governed nature of discourse, referring to the rules and structure that produce
particular utterances and text. “Within most theorists’ work, these definitions are used
almost interchangeably and can be overlaid on the other” (Mills, 1997, p. 7). There is an
important distinction in Foucault’s work between the use of discourse as a whole, which
is the set of rules and procedures for the production of particular discourses. Discourse
as a whole refers to “a set of sanctioned statements which have some institutional force,
which means that they have a profound influence on the way that individuals act and
think” (Mills. 1997, p. 62). The particular discourses are not simple groupings of
utterances or statements “but consist of utterances which have meaning, force and effect
within a social context” (Mills, 1997, p. 13). They are grouped together “because of
some institutional pressure, because of similarity of provenance or context, or because
they act in a similar way” (Mills, 1997, p. 62).

Explaining Foucault’s work further, Mills (1997) notes that one of the most
productive ways of thinking about discourse is as “practices that systematically form the
objects of which they speak” (Foucault, 1972, cited in Mills, 1997, p. 17). Thus the ‘real’
is characterized as a set of constructs formed through discourse. For example, the concept
of madness is not an experience that was later organized; rather it is constructed through
discourse:

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All that was said in all the statements that named it, divided it up, described it, explained it, traced its developments, indicated its various correlations, judged it, and possibly gave it speech by articulating, in its name, discourses that were to be taken as its own. (Foucault, 1972, cited in Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1983, p. 61)

In this sense, a discourse is something which produces something else (an utterance, a concept, an effect).

In Foucault’s earlier work, he argues that discourses are highly regulated groupings of utterances or statements with internal rules which are specific to discourse itself. Foucault hopes to describe the rules, which are followed by individual speakers. “This presumably means that whereas in accounting for modes of speaking Foucault proposed to base his analysis on laws which were not available to the practitioners whose style of statement they determined” (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1983, p. 70). Thus, discourse as a whole consists of regulated specific discourses.

Foucault’s two main methods are archeology and genealogy. The *archeology* method allows Foucault “to focus purely on what was actually said or written and how it fits into the discursive formation – the relatively autonomous system of serious speech acts in which it was produced” (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1983, p. 49). Archeology “does not question things said as to what they are hiding, what they were ‘really’ saying, in spite of themselves…; but, on the contrary, it questions them as to their mode of existence,… what it means for them to have appeared when and where they did – they and no other” (Foucault, 1972, cited in Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1983, p. 51.)

The method of archeology attempts to depict what is excluded and what is included in the way in which discourse is produced. Foucault stresses that the main
reason for conducting an analysis of the structures of discourse is not to uncover the truth or the origin of a statement but rather to discover the mechanisms that support it and keep it in place.

Dreyfus and Rabinow (1983) emphasize that Foucault’s archaeology also rejects the notion of discovering the hidden true meaning, as the hermeneutic theorists suggested. Foucault does not describe the laws as operating behind the discursive phenomena; rather, they are described as rules operating within the discursive level itself.

Foucault’s basic objection to the hermeneutics of suspicion is that these secrets that the actor can be forced to face must not be understood as the true and deepest meaning of his surface behavior…. The actor can come to see what his everyday behavior means; he can be led to see deeper meanings masked by this everyday behavior; but what neither he nor the authority directing the hermeneutic exegesis can see is what the exegetical situation is doing to both of them, and why. (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1983, p. 124)

Foucault’s archaeological analysis of discourse is not interested in analyzing the discourses circulating in our society at present. He wants us to understand “the arbitrariness of this range of discourses, the strangeness of those discourses, in spite of their familiarity…. Discourses are constantly changing and their origins can be traced to certain key shifts in history” (Mills, 1997, p. 26). In the foreword to the ‘order of things’ Foucault describes his archaeological method:

But, unknown to themselves, the naturalists, economists, and grammarians employed the same rules to define the objects proper to their study, to form their concepts, to build their theories. It is these rules of formation, which were never formulated in their own right, but are to be found only in widely differing theories, concepts, and objects of study, that I tried to reveal, by isolating, as their specific locus, a level that I have called… archaeological. (Foucault, 1970/1994, p. xi)
Dreyfus and Rabinow explain that, although Foucault’s archaeology looks for the rules that allow some discourses to appear and exclude others, he can be distinguished from other structuralists because he is searching for local and changing rules.

While the structuralist claims to find cross-cultural, ahistorical, abstract laws defining the total space of possible permutations of meaningless elements, the archeologist only claims to be able to find the local, changing rules which at a given period in a particular discursive formation define what counts as an identical meaningful statement. (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1983, p. 55)

According to Foucault, when thinking about discourse as having effects, it is important to consider the factors of truth, power, and knowledge, since it is because of these elements that discourse has effects. “Truth, for Foucault, is not something intrinsic to an utterance, nor is it an ideal abstract quality to which humans aspire…. Truth, therefore, is something which societies have to work to produce, rather than something which appears in a transcendental way” (Mills, 1997, p. 18).

Discourses do not exist in a vacuum but are in constant conflict with other discourses and other social practices, which inform them regarding questions of truth and authority. As Foucault describes it, “I want to try to discover how this choice of truth, inside which we are caught but which we ceaselessly renew, was made - but also how it was repeated, renewed and displaced” (Foucault, 1981, cited in Mills, 1997, p. 19).

Foucault is concerned “with the mechanics whereby one becomes produced as the dominant discourse, which is supported by institutional funding, by the provision of buildings and staff by the state, and by the respect of the population as a whole” (Mills, 1997, p. 19). Thus, Foucault does not believe that knowledge exists separately from
power. While he is aware of the importance of state control and power relations based on economic imbalance, unlike Marxists, he does not see economic relations as primary, but rather as one type of power relation within a range of power relations. He does not locate power as a possession within the hands of a monolithic state; he perceives power as circulating through a society rather than being owned by one group. Power, according to Foucault, is seen as a form of action or relations between people; it is negotiated in each interaction and is never fixed and stable. Power is not simply imposed, and resistance is already contained within the notion of power. While some Marxist theorists view language as a vehicle whereby people express their power struggles, forced to believe in ideas which are not true or not in their interest, Foucault views discourse as the site where those struggles are acted out. "As history constantly teaches us, discourse is not simply that which translates struggles or systems of domination, but is the thing for which and by which there is struggle" (Foucault, 1981, cited in Mills, 1997, p. 43).

Foucault is not interested in which discourse is a true or accurate representation of the 'real.' Using genealogy, Foucault is no longer outraged by the discovery that the claim of objectivity masks subjective motivation. According to Foucault, the task of the genealogist "is to destroy the primacy of origins, of unchanging truth.... The genealogist does not seek to discover substantial entities.... The world is not a play which simply masks a truer reality that exists behind the scenes. It is as it appears" (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1983, p. 109).
The sense of the world of objects being constructed by institutions within social groups, particularly through language, has been a concern of many post-structuralist theorists and linguists. Foucault attempts to examine the change in these discursive systems over time and the changes that this subsequently causes in those cultures' views of reality (Mills, 1997). In order to study these systematic changes, Foucault maps "the discursive limits of an episteme, that is, the set of discursive structures as a whole within which a culture thinks" (Mills, 1997, p. 56). An episteme "may be understood as the ground of thought on which at a particular time some statements— and not others— will count as knowledge" (Mills, 1997, p. 56). It includes discourses, institutions, architectural arrangements, philosophic propositions, etc. (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1983, p. 121). In order to establish a set of flexible relationships between these components and to analyze the cultural practices in which power and knowledge cross and produce our understanding of the individual, the society, and the human science, Foucault employs 'apparatus.' Apparatus are concepts "used as tools to aid in analysis, not as ends in themselves" (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1983, p. 120). They bring together power and knowledge into a specific grid of analysis.

Foucault suggests that there are epistemic breaks - that is, at certain moments in a culture, there are discontinuous developments in discursive structures. This notion of discontinuity of discourse enables Foucault to counter the idea of improvement and progress of cultures. Mills writes that "this is perhaps where Foucault has most
influenced postmodern thinking, for this Utopian notion of history is very much embedded in forms of thought” (Mills, 1997, p. 59).

Foucault rejects the phenomenological position of being both within the studied phenomenon and outside of it in order to discover its true meaning. Using the combination of genealogy and archaeology he offers “an interpretive analytic of our current situation…. The practitioner of interpretive analytics realizes that he himself is produced by what he is studying; consequently he can never stand outside of it” (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1983, p. 124). Using genealogy, Foucault seeks to clarify the notion that cultural practices are more basic than discursive formations and that these discourses can only be understood as part of a society’s ongoing history (which is not a story of improvement and progress of cultures). In using archaeology, Foucault is not trying to uncover the truth or the origin of a statement but rather to discover the mechanisms that support the discourse and keep it in place. This method can allow us to realize the strangeness of the discourses and practices of our society, in spite of their familiarity.

Since we share cultural practices with others, and since these practices have made us what we are, we have, perforce, some common footing from which to proceed, to understand, and to act. But that foothold is no longer one which is universal, guaranteed, verified, or grounded. (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1983, p. 125)

**The notion of individuals (the subject)**

In his work Foucault calls the ‘self’ into question, since he attempts to write history without the subject, that is without the liberal humanist notion of a stable, cohesive ego: “Individuality is neither the real atomistic basis of society nor an
ideological illusion of liberal economics, but an effective artifact of a very long and complicated historical process” (Foucault, 1979, cited in Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1983, p. 120). Foucault tried to move away from the notion of the Cartesian subject – the individual – whose existence depends on its ability to see itself as unique and self-contained, distinct from the other, not part of the outside, of the known, because it can think and reason. He is seeking to construct a mode of analysis of cultural practices “which have been instrumental in forming the modern individual as both object and subject” (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1983, p. 120).

Dreyfus and Rabinow (1983) contrast Foucault’s notion of the individual with the hermeneutic approach (for example, that of Freud and Heidegger), which assumes that there is an essential continuity between everyday intelligibility and the deeper kind of intelligibility which the everyday view works to cover up. The hermeneutic view “holds that actors do not have direct access to the meaning of their discourse and practice, that our everyday understanding of things is superficial and distorted” (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1983, p. 123). Foucault’s genealogy regards individuals as “nothing but our history, and therefore we will never get a total and detached picture either of who we are or our history” (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1983, p. 122).

Derrida presents a similar notion of the ‘self.’ Instead of an essential unified self, he suggests a situated subject: “We do not make ourselves from ourselves but are formed in the significations of history, culture and discursive practices (the general text). Our experience, particularly our experience of ourselves, is always situationally mediated”
(Usher and Edwards, 1994, p. 148). Derrida emphasizes that lived experience is always mediated by language and discourse, and therefore the autobiography is written, as a text constructed through textual and intertextual conventions and strategies (Usher and Edwards, 1994).

In the same vein, Mills presents Foucault’s notion of the individual as “part of post-structuralist thinking which questioned the very fundamental bases of liberal humanist ideology, rooted as it is in the notion of the individual self with agency and control over itself” (Mills, 1997, p. 34). Post-structuralist psychoanalytic theory questions the unity of the subject, finding it more useful to analyze the subject-in-process, or the subject-in-crisis. This focus on a range of shifting and precarious subject positions means that the subject is no longer seen as a unified agent with control. Mills discusses Foucault’s notion of the subject:

Perhaps this is where his work is most controversial, since he is concerned to see the subject as simply an effect of power and in a sense to chart the death of the subject. Rather than seeing the subject or even the subject-in-crisis as an element whose existence and features could be charted, Foucault chose rather to ignore the subject in itself, and concentrate on the process which he considered to be important in the constitution of our very notion of subjectivity. (Mills, 1997, p. 34)

Foucault’s analysis, like some other ideological analyses, downplays the importance of the subjects because they are concerned with groups or classes of individuals. Foucault examines the construction of individual subjectivity through the actions of institutions such as the state and discourses. He connects his notion of the self with his genealogy method:
One had to dispense with the constituent subject, to get rid of the subject itself, that’s to say, to arrive at an analysis which can account for constitution of the subject within a historical framework. And this is what I would call genealogy, that is, a form of history which can account for constitution of knowledges, discourses, domains, of objects, etc., without having to make reference to a subject which is either transcendental in relation to the field of events or runs in its empty sameness throughout the course of history. (Foucault, 1980, cited in Mills, 1997, p. 35)

Rather than focusing on the self as a fragmented and unstable subject influenced by the conscious and the unconscious, Foucault sees the self as an effect of discursive structures – an effect that interacts with those structures but is not foundational in itself.

One can find different notions of the individual in Pecheux’s and Bakhtin’s theories of discourse. They argue that discourses structure both our sense of reality and our notion of our own identity (as explained previous on p. 77). According to Bakhtin’s theory, individuals are constantly in the process of a dialogical relationship between an authoritative discourse and an internally persuasive discourse that determines our orientations, investments, beliefs, and dispositions (Brizman, 1991). In both kinds of discourse, the word is not conceived as merely mirroring the intentions of its speaker. In each discourse, meaning is mediated by history and context, and by the speaker and listener. Drawing on Bakhtin’s theory, Britzman characterizes the voice of the individual:

Voice suggests relationship: the individual’s relationship to the meaning of her or his lived experience and hence to language, and the individual’s relationship to the other, since understanding is social. It may be sparked by personal intent, but voice is always negotiated within context and situations, and by meanings of others. (Britzman, 1991, p. 23)
In light of Foucault’s and other discourse theorists’ notion of the ‘self,’ Munro writes:

Feminist critique challenges the humanist tradition, which depicts the subject as unitary, essential, and universal, by shifting the terrain from asking “who” the subject is to revealing how individuals are continually being constituted through discourse as apparently unified subjects (Bloom & Munro, 1995; Britzman, 1995; Flax, 1990). (Munro, 1996, p.16)

Feminist theories reject the notion of a fixed and unified individual, but they modify Foucault’s notion of ‘self.’ As in Pecheux’s and Bakhtin’s theories, feminist theories set discourse more clearly in its social context and examine the possibilities for individuals to negotiate with the discursive structure. The feminist analysis focuses on discourses rather than on a single discourse as the determining factor in women’s subjection. “These discourses… will be in conflict with other discourses, which will force them to change in structure and content and which will make available to women and men spaces wherein they can resist and construct their own sense of self” (Mills, 1997, p. 94). Using the notion of discourse in this way enables feminists to construct scenarios for social change and subject positions while retaining the notion of women as agents. St. Pierre writes: “The subject of poststructuralism, however, is certainly not dead; rather, the category of the subject has been opened up to the possibility of continual reconstruction and reconfiguration” (St. Pierre, 2000, p. 497).

In discussing the notion of the individual, Britzman quotes Thomas Popkewiz’s (1987) explanation of discourse as “set[ting] the conditions by which events are interpreted and one’s self as an individual is located in a dynamic world” (cited in
Britzman, 1991, p. 17). She explains that discourse concerns the individual “in a dual way: in relation to what and how something is said and in relation to a community that makes particular practices possible and others unavailable” (Britzman, 1991, p. 17).

In line with this approach, Griffiths writes that various feminist epistemologies, which may differ in many other aspects, have in common “a theory about the production of knowledge using individual subjects as members of a collective which may (indeed probably will) change the perspectives of the original individuals or subjects and the knowledge that they have” (Griffiths, 1995, p. 80). These theories perceive individual experiences as inherently political and understand the individual as a self or subjectivity, “which, unlike the traditional concept of ‘person’ or ‘mind,’ allows space for the political in its construction” (Griffiths, 1995, p. 81).

Feminist theories examine the process of being engaged with discursive structures that constitute us as particular types of individuals or subject positions. The individual subjects are not perceived as simply adopting roles, which are mapped out for them by discourse.

Rather, they experience discomfort with certain elements, they are openly critical about others. Individual subjects are constantly weighing up their own perception of their own position in relation to these discursive norms against what they assume other individuals or groups perceive their position to be. (Mills, 1997, p. 97)

Thus, according to the feminist approach, negotiating and finding a position for oneself within discourse is an ongoing process that involves constantly shifting one’s perception of the current position and evaluating the wider discourse as a whole. "Some
women negotiate for themselves positions of institutionalized power and others accrue power to themselves by negotiating with the seemingly powerless positions which they have been allotted” (Mills, 1997, p. 94). Thus, using discourse theories, feminists are concerned not only with the roles that were carved out for individuals by institutional power, but also with mapping out sites where power is enacted and negotiated.

In sum, discourse theories were criticized for dissolving or ‘killing off’ the notion of individuality by declaring it to be but a text or an effect of discursive structures. Their decentering of the subject threatens the notions of agency and autonomy, of the self-creative subject or of a self-conscious subject which can know the ‘real’ through direct access to it, notions that are important to any educational enterprise that aims to bring about changes in subjectivity through appropriate interventions. However, feminist and other theorists offer different theoretical solutions by situating the individual in a context without accepting the notion of an essential unified self. Central to their solution is the notion of negotiation, of an ongoing process of construction and reconstruction through practical and discursive engagement within a specific social context.

**Perceptions of reality**

Foucault suggests that discourses structure our sense of reality and constitute objects for us; he does not perceive these systems as being abstract or enclosed. He is concerned with the way “that discourses inform the extent to which we can think and act only within certain parameters at each historical conjuncture. Thus, although he sees the
real as constructed through discursive pressures, he is also well aware of the effect of this ‘reality’ on thought and behavior” (Mills, 1997, p. 51).

Mills cites Foucault’s explanation of our perception of objects. The perception is formed within the limits of discursive constraints: discourse is characterized by a “delimitation of a field of objects, the definition of legitimate perspective for the agent of knowledge, and the fixing of norms for the elaboration of concepts or theories” (Foucault, 1977, cited in Mills, 1997, p. 51). Mills further explains the three components in this quotation. First, for Foucault, discourse causes a narrowing of one’s field of vision: “It excludes a wide range of phenomena from being considered as real or as worthy of attention, or as even existing; thus, delimiting a field is the first stage in establishing a set of discursive practices” (Mills, 1997, p. 51). Second, in order for a discourse or an object to be activated, “the knower has to establish a right for him/herself to speak. Thus, entry into discourse is seen to be inextricably linked to questions of authority and legitimacy” (Mills, 1997, p. 51). Finally, each act somehow maps out the possible uses which can be made of that statement, or future rules for its use.

Discursive boundaries structure what we perceive to be real categories, such as a group of plans, and they construct sequences of events into narratives which are recognized by a particular culture as real. Mills (1997) writes that Foucault’s position, which suggests that objects and ideas are created by humans and institutions and that it is this which constitutes reality for us, has been criticized because it seems to suggest that
there is nothing which is non-discursive or outside of discourse. Opposing this criticism, she argues that Foucault is not denying the materiality of events and experience:

It is simply that the only way we have to apprehend reality is through discourse and discursive structures. In the process of apprehending, we categorize and interpret experience and events according to the structures available to us and in the process of interpretation, we lend these structures a solidity and normality which it is often difficult to think outside of. (Mills, 1997, p. 54)

Foucault does not consider these structures to be the invention of institutions or powerful groups of people. Rather, he holds that there is a combined force of institutional and cultural pressure, together with the intrinsic structure of discourse, which always exceeds the plans and desires of the institution or of those in power. Our thoughts and beliefs do not spring from our own individuality; rather, what we can express and what we can think is constrained by discursive systems.

These systems are ones which we are not necessarily aware of, and it is only through the type of archaeological work which Foucault and Barthes have initiated that we can begin to be aware of the frameworks within which discourse is produced and within which we construct our utterances and thoughts. (Mills, 1997, p. 76)

**Discourse and Teachers’ Beliefs**

Examining the discourses in the educational field, one finds a variety of descriptions of how the discourses influence teachers’ beliefs. Putman and Borko emphasize that “discourse communities play central roles in shaping the way teachers view their world and go about their work” (Putman and Borko, 2000, p. 6). The authors describe teachers as “individuals participating in numerous discourse communities (Fish,
1980; Michaels & O'Connor, 1990; Resnick, 1991), ranging from scholarly disciplines such as science or history, to groups of people sharing a common interest, to particular classrooms” (Putman and Borko, 2000, p. 5). Further, they argue that these discourse communities provide “the cognitive tools - ideas, theories, and concepts - that individuals appropriate as their own through their personal efforts to make sense of experiences” (Putman and Borko, 2000, p. 5). Concerning learning to teach as a specific learning process, they note that “the process of learning, too, is social. Indeed, some scholars have conceptualized learning as coming to know how to participate in the discourse and practices of a particular community (e.g., Cobb, 1994; Lave and Wenger, 1991)” (Putman and Borko, 2000, p. 5).

Foucault describes the educational system, within which teachers’ beliefs are constituted, as a form of regulation of discourse rather than an enlightening institution where free inquiry after truth is encouraged: “There are strict speaking rights within educational institutions…. There are also strict rules about what can pass for knowledge” (Mills, 1997, p. 71). According to this approach, to examine the educational system “is to study its discourses and discursive practices in such a way as to reveal its commissions, and its omissions” (Britzman, 1991, p. 17).

Putman and Borko quote Ball (1994), who describes some of the characteristics of the discourses teachers have to negotiate and their effects on the perceptions and teaching practices.

The common view that ‘each teacher has to find his or her own style’ is a direct result of working within a discourse of practice that maintains the individualism
and isolation of teaching. This individualism not only makes it difficult to develop any sense of common standards, it also makes it difficult to disagree. Masking disagreements hides the individual struggles to practice wisely, and so removes an opportunity for learning. (Cited in Putman and Borko, 2000, p. 9)

Britzman believes that in order to explore the cultural myths that surround teachers, their work, and the way they interpret their realities, one has to examine superficial knowledge. Superficial knowledge is "made from the stuff of tacit understandings and discursive practices that are produced and then produce and organize how educational life is interpreted and lived" (Britzman, 1991, p. 6). This superficial knowledge becomes the material for cultural myths that "offer a set of ideal images, definitions, and justifications that are taken up as measures for thought, affect, and practice" (Britzman, 1991, p. 6). These cultural myths "partly structure the individual's taken-for-granted views of power, authority, knowledge, and identity" (Britzman, 1991, p. 7).

Studying the meanings teachers make of their realities, Britzman builds on the assumptions that "meaning is historically contingent, contextually bound, socially constructed, and always problematic" (Britzman, 1991, p. 14). She argues that personal meanings are difficult to pin down; "they can appear to be the property of an individual, while also connecting that individual to a social community" (Britzman, 1991, p. 14). They are contradictory: "They simultaneously express the said and the unsaid, pose myths and construct realities, and can be seen as belonging to individuals and cultures" (Britzman, 1991, p. 15). She argues further that, in studying teachers' practices and voices, one has to take into account how they
understand their realities as well as how they produce and reproduce meanings about education through their theories and beliefs.

This capacity for contradiction, or the situation of multiple and conflicting meanings that constitute the heteroglossic in language, can serve as departure for a dialogic understanding that theorizes about how one understands the given realities of teaching as well as the realities that teaching makes possible. Central to this study, then, is the problem of how subjects produce and reproduce meanings and myth about education through their theories, practices, routines, discourses, contexts and reflections on educational life, and how such meanings produce identities. (Britzman, 1991, p. 15)

According to Britzman and other feminist poststructuralist theorists, teachers’ identities and their perceptions of reality are not fixed notions but rather negotiated; they shape and are being shaped within a specific discourse. Within the schools’ discourses two simultaneous processes occur when one becomes a teacher. First, “as practices, perspectives, and communities shift, so too does the voice we use to name them” (Britzman, 1991, p. 12). Second, “as discursive boundaries shift, so do our identities” (Britzman, 1992, p. 26).

Drawing on Bakhtin’s theory, Britzman explains that the dialogical relationship between authoritative discourse and internally persuasive discourse determines teachers’ ideological becoming, including orientations, investments, beliefs, and dispositions that are already inscribed in the specific discourses (Britzman, 1991). Britzman describes student teachers that beginning to teach as “confronted not only with the traditions associated with those past teachers and those past and present classroom lives, but with the personal desire to carve out one’s own territory, develop one’s style, and make a difference in the education of students” (Britzman, 1991, p. 19).
Britzman argues that when we see teachers not as the static product of an assembly-line socialization, but rather as being shaped by their work as well as shaping their work, we are able to talk about dialogical discourse. "A dialogic discourse can take into account the discursive practices and their [the teachers'] social relationships that realize pedagogy and lived experiences of teachers" (Britzman, 1991, p. 1). This means acknowledging teachers’ talk as a legitimate response to the relations of power/knowledge available to them as subjects of academic, professional, and policy discourses. Thus, the notion of negotiating teachers’ identities can influence our notion of teacher education. It enables us “to shift the discourse of teacher education from an instrumentalist belief in controlling and manipulating variables – an orientation based upon the suppression of subjectivity – to a dialogic discourse” (Britzman, 1991, p. 1).
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

In the methodological chapter I present the assumptions of this qualitative study. By qualitative research I mean that I studied the construction of teachers' beliefs and identity in their natural setting, attempting to make sense of, or interpret the terms of the meaning the teacher under study brought (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994).

In the introduction I present the theories and my biases that shaped the veil through which I conducted the research. Followed, I describe the design of the research as four case studies and the process through which I selected the research participants. Then I present the methods I borrowed from ethnography research I used to collect the data over six years. In the end of this chapter I describe the challenges in analyzing and rewriting the stories of other.
My Position as a Researcher

The assumption of positivist philosophies of science is that natural science research methods are appropriate for social science as well (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). According to these approaches, research is an objective and value-free process of observing and making sense of human realities. Bias, culture, ideology, race, or gender should have no impact on describing others and on findings about the true reality, which is discovered through scientific research (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). The positivist researchers hold the belief and the expectation that the qualitative researcher “is capable of producing truth from the experience of being there and that the reader is receptive to the truth of the text. In both instances, experience is ‘the great original’” (Britzman, 1995, p. 233).

Rejecting the assumption of a realistic ontology and a single objective reality that can be discovered ‘out there,’ postpositivist researchers oppose this dominant positivist research paradigm. Postpositivist philosophies of science turn more and more to interpretive social theory, where the focus is on constructed versus found worlds in a way that increasingly focuses on the role of language in the construction of knowledge (Lather, 1994). Postpositivist researchers believe that research in the human sciences should be carried out in ways that are sensitive to the nature of human and cultural social contexts and remain loyal to the phenomena under study (Altheide and Johnson, 1994). They assume that an objective researcher does not exist, since one can not separate the known from the knower.
According to the poststructuralist approach, "the real' of ethnography is taken as an effect of the discourses of the real" (Britzman, 1995, p. 234). Thus, findings do not speak for themselves, and realities are multiple and constructed. Validity of research is read "through lenses that are no longer confined to pure knowledge, or truth claims. Thus validity is seen as a process shaped by culture, ideology, gender, language and so on" (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994, p. 481). Declaring that the age of putative value-free social science is over, Denzin argues that "any discussion of this process must become political, personal, and experiential" (Denzin, 1994, p. 501).

Since as a researcher I agree with the postpositivist approaches, I designed this study according to the position "that social research should be guided by a constructivist frame-work in which researchers acknowledge that they interpret and define reality" (Reinharz, 1992, p. 46). I specifically implied in my study the position of poststructuralist researchers who emphasize that the meanings we give to the phenomena under study and the categories we use to understand it are socially constructed. "Meanings are links in chain of references. They exist by way of their references to other meaning" (Søndergaard, in press). Categories used in this study, such as "teachers' beliefs," "art teacher," or "teachers' identity," are temporary. "They exist thorough repeated citations, and changes or breaks in citations will change or break the 'reality' that the categories postulated" (Søndergaard, in press). Thus, according to the poststructuralist position, ethnography can only be 'partial truths' and 'fictions.'

The ethnographic promise of a holistic account is betrayed by the slippage born from the partiality of language - of what cannot be said precisely because of what
is said, and of the impossible difference within what is said, what is intended, what is signified, what is repressed, what is taken, and what remains. (Britzman, 1995, p. 234)

In the following sections I further explain the challenges in collecting data and representing others according to the postpositivist and poststructuralist approaches.

The Question of Objectivity in Researching the Others.

The problem of studying the ‘other’ is at the center of any social research. Referring to traditional ethnography, Pratt (1985) comments: “The people to be othered are homogenized into a collective ‘they’” (cited in Fine, 1994, p. 74), and they are decontextualized from particular historical events. Fine continues to characterize the traditional ethnographer as writing from “nowhere”: “Researchers/writers self-consciously carry no voice, body, race, class or gender and no interests into their texts. Narrators seek to shelter themselves in the text, as if they were transparent” (Fine, 1994, p. 74). Fine explains the ethical problem this writing raises. Whether the writing is ‘for’ or ‘on’ the other, it is ideological representations of them as “unworthy, dangerous, and immoral, or as pitiable, victimized, and damaged” (Fine, 1994, p. 74).

From a postpositivist research paradigm, the neutral and objective position of the researcher cannot exist. Whatever the researcher thinks he/she sees or hears is “always already distorted” (Lather, 2000) by language, desires, reading practices, culture translators, etc. What the researched other can speak and what the researcher can hear is not simply a question of communication, or of building trust between the research
participant and the researcher. Rather, the researcher has to become aware of the veil of discourses through which he/she can hear and see the others and through which they can speak, think or act.

The theories and the positions the researcher holds are part of the discourse that constructs the veil through which he/she sees or hears the other:

Although theories are usually developed to describe reality, they often work in ways that influence the construction of reality. The theoretical models people use to categorize, organize, and talk about social life make only certain conceptions of what happens possible and contain certain assumptions about how people think and act. (Freedman, 1995, p. 87)

In this study I collected teachers’ narrations of the ways they negotiated their beliefs and teaching identity. I did not perceive these stories as direct reflections of the teachers’ reality within the schools; rather their stories were constructions of these realities. Their stories are translations that are “always producing rather than merely reflecting or imitating some ‘original’” (Lather, 2000). The process of translation inevitably distorts the other’s words and experiences.

In researching my former student teachers, retelling their stories and analyzing them, I did not pretend to hold an objective positivist research paradigm. I could not conduct the research as a neutral observer (because no one is neutral); further, our former student-teacher relationships influenced and distorted the ‘objectivity’ of each step of research and as such became part of the study itself. Thus, the art teachers were not telling their tales to just any researcher, and I was not listening to and observing them only as a researcher. Rather, I tried to explain my position and interest in the art teachers’
beliefs and practices, in the light of learning their perspectives as a source of knowledge that I believe to be important for an art teachers’ preparation program. Our former student-teacher relationships influenced the data I collected. I did not ignore our mutual expectations, or the fact that the teachers’ motivations and reactions as research participants were influenced by a history of the teacher-student relationship we once experienced. Nor did I ignore my own biases and expectations from the art teachers that were established in our former encounter as well as from my own career as an art teacher, and my art education studies.

In the following section, I discuss these problems of objectivity in each part of my study, and the steps I have taken in acknowledgement of these problems. In spite of all the steps I took as a researcher, I did not attempt to erase the distortions and solve the ethical questions relating to the power issues involved in representing the others. “Even when we have some confidence that our research is useful or even emancipatory, we are still ‘objectifying,’ still speaking for others in the name of doing good by them” (Usher and Edwards, 1994, p. 152). All I can do is to acknowledge these issues and to make them part of my study.
Designing the Study as Case Studies

In order to study the ways the beginning art teachers negotiated their beliefs and identities within the context of their schools, I conducted four case studies. “The principal difference between case studies and other research studies is that the focus of attention is the case, not the whole population of the cases” (Stake, 1988, p. 256). It was my intention to understand how the beliefs of the specific student teachers had developed while they were becoming art teachers and changed since they graduated from college and were repositioned in various schools. “In most other studies, researchers search for an understanding that ignores the uniqueness of individual cases and generalizes beyond particular instances…. [The case study] search is for an understanding of the particular case, in its idiosyncrasy, in its complexity” (Stake, 1988 p. 256).

My research includes two in-depth case studies of detailed stories collected over six years. I followed the art student teachers constructing their teaching identity and developing their beliefs while becoming art teachers through the art teachers’ preparation program at the School of Art, Beit-Berl, in Israel (1994- 1996). In documenting their oral and written narration, I tried to study the way they constructed their beliefs concerning why they should teach art, how to teach art, and how they perceived themselves as art teachers. I studied the way they negotiated their teaching identity within and against the dominant discourses of the School of Art. I continued to follow the art teachers’ negotiations of their teaching identity and beliefs after they graduated from college and
becoming art teachers at schools in Israel (June, 1999 till January, 2001). Their beliefs as student teachers were compared to the beliefs and practices they held as art teachers after they had four or more years of teaching experience. Through this comparison, I intended to study the influences of the transition of discourses and sociocultural environments on the way the teachers negotiated their identities and beliefs.

The two in-depth case studies were complicated and expanded through the narration of two other art teachers of the ways they negotiated their beliefs and teaching identity in different schools in Israel (their stories were collected from June 1999 till January 2001). The two additional teachers also graduated from the same art teachers’ preparation program (1993-1994) and had four or more years of teaching experience. My interpretations of the four art teachers’ narration were then shared with them individually, as member checks (in January & February 2001).

Using these four case studies, I have tried to provide the reader the experience of vicarious unique situations of unique individuals within their own culture. “They [the case studies] can help us overcome the problem caused by the fact that (1) many clinicians learn best by modeling, but (2) there are often not enough truly exceptional models to go around” (Donmoyer, 1990).
Participants and Location of the Research

The research participants whom I first intended to include in this study were three former student teachers of mine, on whom I collected rich data during their student teaching (1994-1996). When I contacted them in Israel, in June 1999, I found out that one of them had continued her studies and did not teach. The other two former students agreed to participate in this study. One of them, Noga, taught art at an elementary school in a middle class neighborhood in Ramat Gan, a town that is part of the Tel Aviv metropolis. The other art teacher, Tamar, taught middle and high school students at a boarding school in a rural area an hour and a half north of Tel Aviv.

Since I was interested in learning about art teachers' negotiation of their beliefs and teaching identities at a variety of schools with various student populations, I wanted to have more art teachers' stories in this research. I could have contacted some former students with whom I continued to have a relationship after they graduated. Although I had easy access to them, I felt that they were not suitable participants for this study. I suspected that those teachers with whom I established a relationship beyond student-teacher, might share my teaching beliefs, and therefore would not provide a variety of approaches to art education. As an alternative way to find potential research participants, I decided to send a questionnaire to students who had graduated from the course I taught during the years 1991-1996 at the School of Art, Beit Berl College, in Israel.

\[15\] In order to promote confidentiality all the real names of the teachers and their schools in this study were changed and coded.
Questionnaire

In order to find research participants from a target population (Jaeger 1988), I sent a questionnaire (appendix B) to seventy-two of my former students who took the course I taught during the years 1991-1996 at the Art School, Beit Berl College, in Israel. Twenty-seven former students (37.5%) sent the questionnaire back to me in Ohio. Seventeen of them (63%) held the position of art teachers, fifteen (55.5%) taught in the educational system. Twelve of them agreed to participate in the research (appendix C).

Beyond locating potential research participants, the information from the questionnaire was useful for my research in other ways. It provided me with an opportunity to collect information about my research questions from a larger group of teachers. This information provided me with an understanding of the broader context of those specific art teachers who I was to study in detail through the case study method.

Thus, I used the questionnaire to find out how many of the former students eventually became art teachers. What were some of reasons that caused them to teach or not to teach? What were their difficulties and successes as art teachers? How did the art teachers develop and change professionally and personally? I wanted to learn their views on what they believed to be important for students to be taught at the art teachers’ preparation program in order to become successful art teachers. I believed that although I asked the research participants about complex issues, they had “a common background and natural interest in the topic” (Jaeger, 1988, p. 313).
In using a mailed questionnaire sent according to an address list provided by the School of Art, there were certain limitations of which I was aware (Jaeger, 1988). Especially, the questionnaire limited my ability to ask for clarifying answers to the questions. I was aware that I would get a partial picture and not a representative one on any of the issues. For this reason I didn’t use the questionnaire’s results as a representative sample of my former student beliefs but as an opportunity to get a first glance at the answers to the further questions to be studied through qualitative methods. Doing the research from Ohio about participants that live in Israel, I found that the mailed questionnaire provided me with an opportunity to listen to the art teachers’ voices before I finalized and focused my research questions.

The art teachers’ reactions to the status of art and their relationship with the education system were issues brought up across all of the answers in the questionnaire. The status of art was not one of the categories that emerged from analysis of the art student teachers’ beliefs (Cohen-Evron, 1999) while they were doing their teaching training. In my study of the student teachers’ beliefs, I found that they discussed only the relationship with their students, ignoring the school context. It seems necessary in this study to consider issues beyond the relationships between the teachers and their students within their classroom, and to also examine the issues concerning art as a school subject.
Reducing the Number of Research Participants

Since I wanted to conduct a qualitative research study using case study methods, I needed to reduce the number of the research participants. As a criterion to select the research participants from among the twelve teachers who agreed, I chose to include in the study art teachers who had four (or more) years of experience as art teachers. These art teachers seem to have passed the first difficult period of the beginning of teaching, and felt committed to teach in the general education system. The beginning period of teaching, in many cases, is portrayed as a ‘survival’ period, when the beginning teachers just try to ‘get through the day.’ Former studies (Wittrock, 1986; Gordon, 1991) indicate that during the first years teachers encounter many difficulties environmental in nature, such as isolation, unclear expectations, inadequate resources, role conflict and reality shock: “Research tells us that many beginning teachers… leave the profession altogether or resort to overly conservative, unimaginative pedagogy in order to survive” (May, 1995, p. 67). I wanted to study the ways art teachers negotiated their beliefs and teaching identity after they decided to stay within the school system, and could express themselves through their teaching practices.

The feeling that the first period of the transition from college to school teaching was not the best period for learning about the teachers’ beliefs concerning their goals in art education was reinforced by the former students’ answers to the questionnaire. A high percentage (34.6 %) of the art teachers changed their teaching location during the first years and some (10.7%) quit their teaching positions. It seems that they needed time to
decide if they wanted to teach in the education system and/or to find another school
where they could teach in a way that related to their beliefs.

In analyzing the art teachers’ answers to the questionnaire (see appendix C- The
questionnaire findings), I found that there was a significant difference between the
beginning art teachers and the more experienced ones in the way they described their
problems, successes and changes in their teaching. The beginning art teachers reported as
their major concerns dealing with discipline problems and the problem of adjusting to the
school system. Gaining more self-confidence, these teachers allowed themselves to
“dare” to use varied methods. Some of the more experienced art teachers (with four or
more years of teaching experience) stated also that they had gained more self-confidence,
and that it had changed their teaching. But their descriptions pointed out that their self-
confidence allowed them to express their teaching identities and beliefs, and to become
more flexible in their teaching. This flexibility included changing pre-planned lessons,
becoming more tuned in to their students and collaboration with them. Some of the more
experienced art teachers felt that their goals as art teachers had become clearer and more
fully articulated. The more experienced art teachers got satisfaction from teaching, a
process they described as “interesting” and “surprising” and which had provided them
with a “learning experience.” The descriptions of the changes that occurred in their
teaching also included their becoming more reflective and self-critical.

The decision not to study the beginning art teachers reduced the number of art
teachers from the twelve who agreed to participate in this research to seven teachers,
about whom I collected data. They included six females and one male. One of them teaches at an elementary school, one at a middle school, two at a combined middle and high school, and three at different kinds of high schools. They work in urban schools, rural places, suburban neighborhoods, vocational and regular high schools, and a boarding school. Those schools are located at different places in Israel, from the northern border with Lebanon in the mountains of Galilee to the southern part of Israel, in the Negev desert, a few miles from the Gaza border.

During the process of analyzing the data I collected from the seven research participants over six years, I found that in order to deal with the material obtained in more depth, I needed to reduce the number of cases. I decided to concentrate on analyzing the two in-depth case studies of Noga and Tamar and to add two other teachers’ stories that would expand or interrupt the in-depth case studies by providing two different teaching environments (see table 1 – Profile of research participants). Naomi was an art teacher who worked at two different schools; a combined middle and high school in an affluent neighborhood in north of Tel Aviv, and a vocational high school in a blue-collar town that is part of the Tel Aviv metropolis. Ada was an art teacher at a vocational high school located in a town an hour north of Tel Aviv. This school aimed to work with ‘at risk’ students who were already at a marginal place in society after being thrown out of other schools.
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Code Names</th>
<th>Tamar</th>
<th>Noga</th>
<th>Ada</th>
<th>Naomi</th>
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<td>41 years old</td>
<td>34 years old</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>Becoming an artist</td>
<td>Learning art &amp; Art teaching</td>
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Teaching (00-01)

Table 1 – Profile of the research participants
My Relationships with the Research Participants

Using the questionnaire as a way to locate potential research participants, I succeeded in including randomly chosen art teachers with whom I had not communicated since their graduation. Nevertheless, from the answers to the questionnaire I became aware that our former student-teacher relationship influenced the teachers’ reactions even in replying to formal mailed questions. Many of my former students used the last part of the questionnaire to write a personal letter. Some discussed their frustration with getting a formal questionnaire that was in opposition to our personal teacher-student relationship; others thanked me or discussed the relationship we had had. Many felt they that would like to help me with this research and expressed their desire to thank me through their participation in it.

Reflecting on my attempt to select the art teachers in a more objective way made me realize that our former relations cannot be ignored or erased; I learned that I could not establish any relationships outside of the history of our teacher-student relationships. Their motivations to participate in my study and their expectations, as well as my access to them, were fruits of these former relationships. These relationships established my researcher’s position as an outsider and/or insider with the studied group.

My long and intimate previous acquaintance with the art teachers (three to six years) participating in this study provided me with easy access and gained their trust. Establishing trust and rapport is perceived as essential for the participants to share their
stories and for the researcher to understand the participants’ points of view (Janesick, 1994).

On the other hand, our former relationships became part of our researcher – researched discourse and influenced what I could hear and see and what the teachers could tell me. The veils through which I could hear and observe my former art student teachers were distorted by my own desire for their successes, by my identification with them, and by my perception that we were all taking part in the same cultural struggle against the marginalized place of the arts.

My awareness of our complex relations, that I was not only a researcher but also the researched teachers’ former teacher, influenced not only my data analysis but also the way I collected the data. My research diary, where I discussed these issues, became part of the data I collected and analyzed. I also planned my visits to the schools in Israel and the interviews I conducted with the art teachers (December 1999, June 2000, January 2001) according to their preferences. They chose the classes they wanted me to observe, the students or staff members they liked me to meet, and the locations and times of the interviews.

I entered their classrooms with my set of beliefs about art teaching, which were constructed throughout my career as an art teacher, as a supervisor of art student-teachers, as an art teacher educator, and as an art education student at The Ohio State University. Being aware of my own lenses, I documented my impressions of the dynamics in the specific sites in my field notes. I tried not to impose pre-established
criteria but to observe the complexity of each site with its specific school administration’s expectations, student population and discourses.

From our long formal and informal interviews (5-10 hours) during these visits, I got the impression that the art teachers wanted to share something with me, that they had their own agenda for my visits. Some wanted to share their successes, to demonstrate that they had become good teachers and followed my vision; others wanted to show me what the reality of the school ‘really’ looked like in comparison to the ideal, theoretical and non-relevant learning experiences they had during their preparation program with me.

Reflecting on my impressions (research diary, February 2000) about the teachers’ own agenda, I decided to ask them directly about their reasons for participating in this study. I got various e-mail responses to my question. Most of them referred to our former relationships. Some agreed to participate because they had enjoyed working with me as students. Others took part in the study out of a need “to give me something in return for my investment in them” (Tamar’s e-mail, 2/27/00). Other stated that they believed my visits would reinforce their reflexivity. One teacher answered that she perceived her participation in the research not only as an opportunity to reflect on her work, but also to break out of her isolated situation as an art teacher. (“I think my ‘isolation’ (I can’t think of another word) at I.D. school pushed me to take part in your work” (Naomi’s e-mail, 3/25/00). The teachers’ own agenda in this study emphasized the importance of the process of member check I did with them (in January and February 2001).
Methods of Data Collection

Triangulation of methods, data sources, and theories, as well as reflexivity, is needed to establish the validity of the research (Lather, 1986). I used multiple methods to collect data (interviews, observations, relevant written documents, and questionnaires) from the teachers, the schools, and my notes. During the process of collecting the data, I tried to retain the multiple perspectives of the art teachers’ stories in order to give access to the phenomena under study and to emphasize its complexity (Lather, 1986).

In order to collect data about the four case studies, I borrowed ethnographic methods. The data was collected over a span of six years, which can be divided into two periods: a. data collected about the way the art student teachers constructed their beliefs and teaching identity while becoming teachers (1994-1996); b. data collected after the research participants graduated and where repositioned as art teachers at various schools in Israel (June 1999 – January 2001).

The positions held by all four student teachers in the first period were studied through their written final art education projects. These final projects were part of the requirements of the art method course they studied with me and were submitted in order to graduate from the School of Art. In the final projects, the student teachers developed an art curriculum based on their beliefs and goals in art education. They documented their teaching process in the classroom, and assessed the process they and their students went through. These written documents expressed the student teachers’ goals in art education implicitly and explicitly and articulated their difficulties and successes during their
student teaching. Further data about their experiences during their studies in the art
teachers’ program was collected through their narration as documented during interviews

The data collected about the two in-depth case studies of Tamar and Noga while
becoming art teachers included materials beyond their documentation of the final art
education project. It consisted of their oral descriptions of their goals and deliberations
that were recorded during the mentoring meetings (6-7 meetings) we had in 1994 - 1996.
As a mentor of their teaching experience, I documented my meetings with them. The
documentation started with the first mentor meeting, when they were asked to explain the
theme they had chosen for their planned unit and to articulate, for the first time, their
goals in art education. This process lasted until the final meeting, when they reflected on
the whole process they and their students had gone through. I met with each of them 4-5
times (meetings of 2-3 hours) during their process of developing the art units. During
their student teaching experience (Noga taught from March 1995 till May 1995, and
Tamar from September 1995 till November 1995), I observed and discussed two lessons
each of them taught. I also documented telephone conversations and some short
debriefings with them during that period. The interviews that summarized their student
teaching process were held after they finished writing their final project (in April 1996).
Through documentation of their process of planning, reflecting on and assessing their art
curriculum as student teachers I learned about their beliefs: why teach art, how to teach,
and mainly how they perceive themselves as art teachers. I then analyzed how their
beliefs were constructed within and against the School of Art dominant discourses, as they articulated them and as I know them from my own experience\textsuperscript{16} at that college.

When I collected data on the way student teachers negotiated their beliefs concerning their goals in art education, I did not put emphasis on their teaching practices; rather, I studied their deliberations and concerns. I believed that at this early stage of teaching the student teachers’ practices were rapt to reflect more their lack of experience as beginning teachers than their beliefs. I found that their deliberations, reflections and framing of difficulties and successes were more important in following the way they constructed their beliefs and teaching identity. Therefore, my observations of the lessons taught by Noga and Tamar as student teachers were important, not as a means of studying their teaching practices, but mainly to allow me to understand their interpretations of their teaching experiences. I was interested in the issues they chose to reflect on or to ignore, and how their interpretations of their experiences influenced their deliberations.

The data collected in the second period about the way art teachers’ negotiated their beliefs and identity after graduating from college and being repositioned at various schools in Israel was collected between June 1999 and January 2001. The art teachers’ tales of the ways they negotiated their beliefs and identities within their schools were recorded, transcribed and translated from Hebrew. The semistructured or unstructured interviews (Reinharz, 1992) with the teachers were conducted during three visits to Israel in December 1999, June 2000 and January 2001. My analysis of each teachers’ stories

\textsuperscript{16} I studied at the School of Art for four years and taught there for fourteen years.
was then shared with that teacher as a member check. In the following sections, I explain further the methods I used to collect the data for this research.

**School Visits and Classroom Observations**

I borrowed ethnographic methods in collecting data during the school visits. Prior to my conversations/interviews with the teachers, I conducted classroom observations (in December 1999). Wolcott (1988) describes the ethnographic methods as:

> The anthropologist himself is the research instrument but in his information gathering his observations are made through an extended period of time, from multiple sources of data, and employing multiple techniques of finding out, for cross-checking, or for ferreting out varying perspectives on complex issues and events. (Wolcott, 1988, p. 192)

The school visits provided me with information about the context within which the teachers worked, and many of my questions during the interviews were related to my observations of classroom events and school’s climate. “By being on the scene, the anthropologist not only is afforded continual opportunity to ask questions but also has the opportunity to learn which questions to ask” (Wolcott, 1988, p. 192).

I visited each school several times (during three weeks) and tried to observe the same students in order to see a process of learning. (In Israeli elementary, middle and high schools, the students study art once a week.) During the school visits I followed the teachers’ attitudes and their teaching practices. I was interested in their relationships with the students, the way they empower or disempowered (Shor, 1992) them, and the way
they presented the subject matter. I recorded some of the lessons in order to be able to reflect on them during the process of writing the case studies.

In order to understand the broader context of their teaching, I was interested in learning about each school’s population, and the teaching conditions and the policies promoted by the administration. I collected further data about the teachers’ perceptions of the status they and art obtained in their schools. I was interested in their relationships and their mutual expectations with the staff and administration in their building, and with community members, and the kinds of connections that they had established with other teachers and with the institutional art world.

**Collecting Written and Visual Materials**

I used ethnographic methods (Wolcott, 1988) to collect various written materials about the ways the art teachers negotiated their beliefs and teaching identity. The documents I collected outside of the visits to Israel included the teachers’ answers to the questionnaire sent on June 1999, extensive E-mail and letter correspondence (from June 1999 till March 2001), and my research diary. “It is important to note that anthropologists use all kinds of written records” (Wolcott, 1988, p. 198).

During the school visits I collected official brochures of the schools that represent their programs and their teaching philosophies. I also took photographs of the art classroom setting, the way the artworks were displayed in the school, and some examples of students’ works to accompany my field notes that documented these visits. I also
collected curriculum materials and lessons plans that the teachers had designed or used since they graduated (summer 1996- winter 2000). The research participants were actively involved in collecting materials about their teaching position, and shared with me documents that I could not have known about. For example, Tamar showed me an Internet site she built for her students. She had also prepared a videocassette that documented an art exhibition of her students that was displayed a week before my arrival (December 2000) because she wanted to share with me their achievements. Naomi gave me a paper she submitted to her professor at Tel Aviv University, which she believed to be relevant to explain the struggles she faces as an art teacher.

My Research Diary

My research diary included notes of my impressions during the school visits and class observations and my own reflections about the research since June 1999. In my research diary I reflected on my ideas concerning the research and conversations I had with colleagues and professors. I used the diary as a place to sum up ideas of relevancy I found in articles and books I read or classes I attended. It documented my reflection on data I collected and analyzed, on my relationships with the researched teachers and other concerns I had in conducting this research.

The research diary became a document that reflected the changes I went through as a researcher, and it became part of the data I analyzed for this study. Fine suggests that
as researchers we “probe how we are in relation with the contexts we study and with our informants, understanding that we are all multiple in those relations” (Fine, 1994, p. 72).

Explaining the role of reflexivity in a research project, Usher and Edwards write: “We might want to argue that by fore-grounding how we construct what we research, reflexivity is no longer a problem but a resource. It helps us to recognize that we are part of rather than apart from the world constructed through research” (Usher and Edwards, 1994, p. 148). Altheide and Johnson (1994) write that the reflexive accounts of researchers about themselves and the process of their research are an ethical necessity in order to substantiate their interpretations.

**Unstructured Interviews**

One of the main methods I used to collect the teachers’ tales about the ways they negotiated their beliefs and identities while becoming teachers and within the reality of their schools was conducting formal and informal interviews (appendix A and D). In all four cases, I conducted several semistructured or unstructured long interviews (in December 1999, June 2000 and January 2001) that took two to four hours each. This method “differs from survey research or structured interviewing by including free interaction between the researcher and the interviewee” (Reinharz, 1992, p. 18). This approach to interviews offers researchers “access to people’s ideas, thoughts, and memories in their own words rather than in the words of the researcher” (Reinharz, 1992, p. 19).
Fontana and Frey (1994) explain that the traditional pre-established interviews were directed at information preconceived as relevant for the study and tended to ignore the respondent’s own concerns, personal feelings and emotions. My questions were not limited to the art teachers’ goals and practices in their classrooms. I did not want to exclude either their personal lives or the school context, including the different discourses within which teaching takes place. I agree with feminist researchers that in traditional interviews there is a danger of relating to the interviewee as ‘object’ with little or no regard for them as individuals. For example, Casey contends “that interviews need to respect the authenticity and integrity of narrators’ stories, to see them as subjects creating their own history rather than as object of research” (Casey, 1995, p. 232). I did not see respondents as faceless in an attempt to gather value-free data; rather, I tried to collect as much information as possible about the teachers and to allow them the freedom of open-ended responses.

In my study I was interested in the wider contexts within which the art teachers negotiated their beliefs and identity. I was interested in the teachers’ personal feelings as well as their goals and the objectives of their teaching. I tried to learn about their understanding of how the wider contexts and different discourses influenced their teaching. I also did not want to ignore the personal aspects that affect the teachers. For example, I related in the interviews to the fact that all of them were young women and that two of them were new mothers. (Becoming a mother changed my whole career and the way I perceived teaching.)
As opposed to structured interviewing with a limited set of response categories, I used pre-established open-ended questions (Fontana & Frey 1994). I believed that these questions would help me to conduct creative interviews that allowed the art teachers to express themselves more freely (Fontana and Frey, 1994). These questions referred to the teachers’ reasons for their deliberations, articulation of their problems and successes, description of their goals, relationships with their students and other members of their school community, and the teaching conditions they face at their schools.

This new approach provides a greater spectrum of responses and greater insight into respondents - or ‘participants’ to avoid the hierarchical pitfall (Reinharz, 1992, p. 22) - because it encourages them to control the sequencing and the language of the interview and also allows them the freedom of open-ended responses. (Fontana and Frey, 1994, p. 370)

In listening to my former student teachers, I did not pretend to ignore my own position as a researcher; rather, I tried to explain it to myself as well as to the teachers. I regarded their beliefs, practices, and perspectives as sources of knowledge that were important for me as an art educator working in a teacher preparation program.

Our former student-teacher relationships were another veil through which I listened, observed and conducted the conversations. I could not ignore our mutual expectations based on this association. For example, when the art teachers shared problems with me, they sometimes expected me not only to listen, but also to discuss the problems and, together with them, sketch out some alternatives. Should I have ignored their expectations because these discussions could distort the data collected? I believe that, according to the postpositivist approach, I could not collect the data in an objective
way; rather, I reflected on these dynamics and included them as part of my research. “How engaged researchers become with, for, against, despite, Othering constitutes a political decision that is never resolved simply ‘in the neutral’ by ‘not getting involved’ and ‘doing science’ instead” (Fine, 1994, p. 76). Thus, I agree with feminist approach to interviewing, which holds “that there is no intimacy without reciprocity” (Fontana and Frey, 1994, p. 370).

**Member Checks**

In January 2001 and March 2001, my interpretations and retelling of the teachers’ tales were presented to the art teachers. I asked them to become “member checks” (Lincoln and Guba, 1985), to add their corrections or to add their own versions to mine (none of them chose to add a different written version). Lather’s (1986) discussion of the “face validity” of qualitative research explains the importance of including member checks:

Guba and Lincoln (1981) refer to “member checks” which they consider to be ‘the backbone of satisfying the truth-value criterion’ (p. 110). Reason and Rowan (1981) argue that such member checks (recycling analysis back through at least a subsample of respondents) need to become a standard part of emancipatory research designs: ‘Good research at the non-alienating end of the spectrum …goes back to the subject with the tentative results, and refines them in the light of the subjects’ reactions’ (p. 248). (Lather, 1986, p. 67)

The teachers’ views about my analysis were recorded, and the transcriptions of these conversations were used as texts for further analysis. “The investigator and the
object of investigation are assumed to be interactively linked so that the ‘findings’ are literally created as the investigation proceeds” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 111).

Using the participants for member checks to analyze the data and to comment on the analysis done by the researcher allowed me not only to collect more data but also to include the perspectives of the people who were researched (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). These multiple perspectives might help to problematize the reading of the text as “narrative realism” of a “singular meaning and reporting of an already existing ready-made reality” (Usher and Edwards, 1994, p. 150).

**Data Analysis**

“Confronted with a mountain of impressions, documents, and field notes, the qualitative researcher faces the difficult and challenging task of making sense of what has been learned. I call making sense of what has been learned the art of interpretation” (Denzin, 1994, p. 500). Using text analysis, I interpreted the changes and developments in the art teachers’ beliefs and the ways they had negotiated them within and against specific normative discourses. Presenting teachers’ deliberation as constructed in social relations and in personal/social contexts, May (1995) argues:

Our values aren’t so ‘hidden,’ ‘personal,’ or ‘relative’ at all. A critical reading of the ‘texts’ or discursive practices we create in particular contexts can suggest what kind of knowledge and social relation are valued, how these get constituted, why, and to what effects for all involved. (May, 1995, p. 80)

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17 Text analysis or content analysis “is a generic name for a variety of means of textual analysis that involve comparing, contrasting, and categorizing a corpus of data” (Schwandt, 1997, p. 21).
While analyzing and retelling the stories I collected, I faced a dilemma that Britzman explains: “Interpreting the voice of others leads to the development of yet a different voice. My dilemma as a researcher is to reconstruct and critically re-present the voice of others, and, in so doing, care for their integrity, humanity, and struggles” (Britzman, 1991, p. 12).

In analyzing the teachers’ stories, the “meaning, interpretation, and representation are deeply intertwined in one another” (Denzin, 1994, p. 504). Thus, in order to keep the perspectives of others, I used categories of data analysis which emerged from the data itself and were not imposed prior to the data collection (Janesick, 1994). I also purposely looked for negative examples as a means to disprove some of my initial hypothetical assumptions and biases (Janesick, 1994).

The collected data of each of the case studies was analyzed separately. In each case study I analyzed the texts looking for the ways the art teachers constructed their teaching identity. Further, I looked for how they constructed their teaching identity and beliefs within and against the normative discourses in the two different environments: the School of Art and their current schools.

In conducting the analysis, I followed similar phases in each of the case studies. In the first phase I used the texts that related to their teaching experiences at the School of Art. I tried to identify the process of the students in becoming art teachers and the set of beliefs they held against and within the dominant discourses of the college. One of the main documents I used in this phase was the student teachers’ final projects I had
collected. In analyzing the final art education projects, I took into account that they were written in a specific context and for a specific purpose. They were a requirement, which the student teachers had to complete before receiving their teaching certificates, and were evaluated by two other art educators. Therefore, the way the student teachers understood the discourses of the School of Art, which consisted of the expectations from them, influenced the implicit and explicit beliefs expressed in these documents. In the two in-depth case studies, I also compared the student teachers’ positions in their final projects and in the last interviews to previous statements that they made.

In the second phase, I used the texts relating to the art teachers’ work at their schools. I tried to learn their beliefs concerning why they should teach art and how to teach within their schools’ normative discourses. I looked for the teachers’ descriptions concerning their teaching goals and typical teaching practices in their schools. I was interested to identify conflicts they had encountered and the ways they negotiated them. I paid attention to their tales of their problems and their deliberations concerning the use of instructional materials and teaching methods. I was interested in their descriptions of the mutual expectations and relationships with their students, other teachers, administrators, and the general education system. I also tried to follow the way the teachers characterized the discourses at their schools.

In the third phase, I compared the beliefs the teachers held as student teachers and as experienced art teachers. Through this comparison, I identified changes and developments in the arts teachers’ teaching identity and beliefs. Discussing post-
structural feminist discourse, Elizabeth Adams St. Pierre (2000) quotes Scott’s (1988) questions that are relevant to tan analysis comparing the teachers’ position as student teachers and their positions as experience art teachers: “How do meanings change? How have these meanings emerged as normative and others have been eclipsed or disappeared? What do these processes reveal about how power is constituted and operates?”

Although I regarded each of the case studies as a unique story, in the fourth phase I tried to compare the case studies, and to study the differences and the similarities between the stories. In analyzing the collection of the different stories, I was interested in learning how answers to the questions why teach art and how to teach changed in the light of the discursive practices\(^\text{18}\) of the schools. I was interested in learning about the kinds of conflicts the art teachers had encountered in schools and the ways they negotiated them.

Referring to the teachers’ beliefs concerning their goals and teaching practices in art education, I analyzed them in the light of the existing paradigms in art education. I use the term ‘paradigm’ as “a body of beliefs and values, laws, and practices which govern a community of practitioners” (Carroll, 1997, p. 171). Paradigm analysis, according to Kuhn (1970), “provides a way of looking into practice so it can be of assistance in thinking about why things are the way they are” (Carroll, 1997, p. 171).

\(^{18}\) Discursive practice “refers to particular ways of talking and writing about and doing or performing one’s practice that are coupled with particular social setting in which those ways of talking are regarded as understandable and more or less valuable” (Schwardt, 1997, p. 31).
I analyzed the art teachers’ positions in the beginning of their student teaching experience, and at the end of it, and I compared those positions with the ones they held as experienced art teachers. Analyzing the teachers’ positions, I looked for their direct statements about their goals in art education and their teaching practices as well as their positions emerging from their stories about their experiences and what they meant to them.

**Rewriting the Art teachers’ Stories**

I agree with postpositivist researchers that no one can achieve an objective accounting of reality but, rather, one can describe the relations of what is accounted during the study. In writing a research study from this position, the essential question I asked was “how [does] the author position[s] the Self as a knower and teller” (Richardson, 1994, p. 520). This question incorporates the ethical issues of power and authority held by a researcher writing the other’s voice. On this issue I agree with Reissman (1993), who explains that although she shares the feminist goal of “giving voice” to previously silenced groups, “we cannot give voice, but we do hear voices that we record and interpret” (cited in Casey, 1995, p. 223).

In positioning myself as a researcher, I understand the task of ‘writing others’ as translating the teachers’ stories, not only from Hebrew to English, but also through my own lens as a researcher. I regard representing the voices of others as more than recording their words (Britzman, 1991), and I am aware that ‘any search for meanings
must be situated in the practical context within which they are voiced” (Britzman, 1991, p. 14). Relating to problems of retelling the stories of others, Britzman writes:

The retelling of another’s story is always a partial telling, bound not only by one’s perspective but also by the exigencies of what can and cannot be told. The narratives of lived experience - the story, or what is told, and the discourse, or what it is that structures how a story is told - are always selective, partial, and in tension. (Britzman, 1991, p. 13)

Assuming that even our narratives of self-representation fail to represent ourselves, Pitt (1998) argues: “We must ask how this impossible desire plays itself out twice in research accounts - once in the self-narratives research participants present us with and again in the stories we tell about these narratives” (Pitt, 1998, p. 551).

In my own story I related to what the teachers said and did, as well as to what they could not say (precisely because of what was said). In rewriting others’ stories, I did not pretend to discover the truth behind them. Rather, I tried to articulate “the tensions between and within words and practices, or constraints and possibilities” (Britzman, 1991, p. 13), being aware that “there are only always different versions of different, not the same, stories, even when the same site is studied” (Denzin, 1994, p. 506). I attempted to write the teachers’ stories as containing internal contradictions and struggles, and to articulate a plurality of competing ways of talking about teaching art within specific contexts. I tried to write about the “insider’s perceptions in such a way that it does not attempt to, or even seem to amount to an attempt to, denigrate or dismiss entirely the

In my writing, I have put emphasis on the stories of two art teachers’ negotiations of their teaching identities. I complicated these stories by relating two other different stories that presented contradictions and provided multiple perspectives. “Like bell hooks and Joan Scott, Spivak asks that researchers stop trying to know the Other or give voice to the Other and listen, instead, to the plural voices of these Othered, as constructors and agents of knowledge” (Fine, 1994, p. 75).

In sum, in this study I provided the reader with my rewriting of the participants’ own tales. I could not avoid the distortions inherent in speech about the other. However, I was aware of these ethical and methodological issues and to tried to portray each story as situated and constituted in a specific place and discourse.
CHAPTER 4

ACCEPTING, ADDING, AND BEING ALONE
TAMAR'S CASE STUDY

Introduction

Tamar’s in-depth case study starts with the general description of her, followed by an account of our long relationship (1994-2001), which permitted me a unique access to her. The first phase of the case study relates to the process of Tamar’s constructing her beliefs and teaching identity as a student teacher within the School of Art discourses. It provides detailed descriptions of the process through which Tamar articulated her beliefs, became aware of them, and shifted some of them.

The second phase relates to Tamar’s teaching at a boarding school, called in this study A-Y in order to keep confidentiality. The school and Tamar’s perception of her place within it are mostly described through her narration. I was particularly interested in her stories of negotiating the status of art in her school. Following a general outline of Tamar’s art programs for studio and art history lessons, I present her goals and typical teaching practices in these classes. These were related to some of conflicts and challenges Tamar had to face. I was interested in the ways she negotiated these conflicts, as well as
to identifying the discourses within and against her perceptions of the conflicts and her solutions occurred.

**Description of Tamar**

Tamar was a tall and nice looking woman in the beginning of her 30th year. She was married and a mother to one baby son (born in June 1999). Tamar worked as an art teacher at a boarding school in a rural area an hour and half north of Tel-Aviv. The school included students from 7th to 12th grades.

Tamar was born in Jerusalem to a middle class family. Her mother was an elementary school principal and her father was a carpenter. As a young child, Tamar studied art at the Jerusalem Museum in an afternoon program, and later continued her art studies there as part of her high school program. She chose to write a theoretical art thesis as part of the matriculation exams that are required in Israel to graduate from high school. Tamar recalled that she learned a lot from this thesis, “like how to do an inquiry.” After spending two years in the army, she went for a yearlong trip to India. When she returned, she enrolled in an industrial design program at Hadassah College in Jerusalem. During that year she continued her painting studies with her teacher from the Jerusalem Museum. In an interview (December 1999), Tamar explained that she left that program because “I reached the conclusion that I really enjoy creating furniture, but I do not have the business instincts to push myself into that world.” Then Tamar moved to Tel-Aviv and studied for four years at the School of Art, Beit -Berl College. Tamar recalled:

*When I came to the Midrasha [School of Art] I didn’t know I’d become a teacher. I came to study art.... I knew that there are two good art schools – The Midrasha*
and Bezalel [academy of art] .... I didn't feel that I belong to Bezalel. I hadn't been there, but I heard rumors, and got the impression that it was a place where the teachers critique you harshly. It is not that I need to be encouraged all the time, but I do not like to be humiliated. ...In the first year [of college] I had a wonderful art method teacher that opened the world of teaching for me. (Tamar's interview, December 20,1999)

Although Tamar did not come to the School of art because she wanted to become an art teacher, she believed that her experience during student teaching and the art method courses changed her mind. In those courses Tamar enjoyed being taught “how to discover in any subject many ideas” and “how from each theme one can do many lessons and open it more and more”. Not only she found that this helped her not in developing art lessons but she also said: “I used these techniques in creating my own artworks as an artist.” Going through these experiences, Tamar felt that “teaching became a field of creation. And till today I feel this way. When I have good lessons, I feel that I create” (interview December 20, 1999).

At the art college Tamar was considered an intelligent and outstanding student who was also involved in student activities. In her art studies she moved from painting to sculpture and finally concentrated on photography. She participated in some group photo exhibitions of the college’s students.

During her fourth year, Tamar started to teach at a high school located in a lower income neighborhood near Tel-Aviv. That year she also got married. After graduating she and her husband moved to a small rural place. There they could afford a small house with a garden, but Tamar's access to the art world in Tel Aviv became more difficult. Tamar started to work as an art teacher at two schools. One was position as a yearlong substitute
at a high school in a nearby kibbutz, and the other one was at a boarding school (A-Y) for middle and high school students, in which she had been teaching (in Fall 1999) for four years.

Through Tamar's descriptions of her work at A-Y, I could feel that she was very much involved with her students' creative process and was very proud of their work. Eager to share their artworks with me, she videotaped an exhibition she had displayed a week before I arrived to visit her school (December 1999). Maybe her involvement was connected to her feeling that she herself created through the students.

*My process of creation is through them [the students]. Since I am not creating nowadays myself, through helping them with planning and thinking, I feel that in a way I am somewhat doing artworks.*

(Interview, December 13, 1999)

Although during this research Tamar wasn't an active artist, she was highly involved in the art world through professional magazines, art books, visiting sites on the Internet and visiting art exhibitions.

**Description of Our Acquaintance and Relationships**

My acquaintance with Tamar started in 1994 during Tamar's second year at the School of Art. She was my student in an Art Teaching Methods course.¹⁹ As part of her student teaching, Tamar designed and taught at an elementary school an art unit about advertising. As part of her studies in this course, she also was involved, together with two of her peers, in designing and operating a learning center that integrated history and art at
a middle school. She was a very successful student teacher. She knew how to employ her
art knowledge in interesting ways for students of different ages, to make the subjects
relevant to them and to get them involved. Because of her outstanding achievements in
the teaching field, she was offered to study the third year of Methods of Art Teaching as
an independent study with me. As part of that course, Tamar had to plan and teach an art
unit that would become her final art education project.\textsuperscript{20} Our mentoring meetings
concerning of her process of planning the art unit started in July 1995. We met for four
long meetings (two- three hours each). They usually took place at my home during the
evening hours. During those meetings Tamar chose a theme and developed her art unit
around it.

In September 1995 Tamar started to teach the art curriculum she had designed at a
middle school in Tel-Aviv. During the teaching stage, from September till the end of
November 1995, I observed her first, second and third lessons. During that period of her
student teaching, we met at the middle school twice, once after her first lesson together
with the cooperative art teacher, and, the second time, before she taught her fifth lesson.
We also had short discussions that took place at the college and one phone conversation
before the second lesson.

Tamar summarized and reflected on the whole teaching process at a meeting that
took place in April 1996. During that time Tamar was writing her final project, which

\textsuperscript{19} I Usually taught the third year Art Method Course. That year, as a chair of the Art Education Department,
I decided to teach the second year course in order to work with those teachers as a team member.
\textsuperscript{20} In the School of Art's program of art education, the students were out at the schools for their student
teaching practice one day per week during each of the four years of college.
documented and evaluated her student teaching experience (planning and teaching). I also documented her student teaching process through recording our meetings, taking field notes, and collecting Tamar’s written documents such as the instructional materials she developed.

I met Tamar again when she invited me to her wedding in summer 1996. In July 1997 I left Israel, taking with me the taped conversations, and the other documentation from Tamar’s student teaching. While I was working on my MA thesis at The Ohio State University (1997-1999), I asked Tamar to send me some photographs she took of herself and her students that were exhibited at a show I saw just before I left Israel. I did not tell her the purpose of my request, but I wanted to review these photos. I remembered that they were concerned with power issues between teacher and students. Tamar began to explore these issues during her student teacher training, in 1995. But I became aware of the fact that Tamar was dealing with the question of her relationship with her students only when I subsequently analyzed our dialogues more than two years after the conversations were taped.

In October 1997, Tamar sent me the photographs. Using visual means, through these photos she questioned the issues of power relationship and equality between herself - a white, European teacher and her high school dark skinned oriental students. Tamar also added some other photographs that were taken by her students. These also dealt with the relationship between them. Tamar explained the additional photographs she sent:
I wanted to pass them [the students] the authority of the photographer, to reverse the position of the relationship of photographer’s subjects and the photographer, to get more and different points of views.
(Tamar’s letter, October 31, 1997)

In this letter, Tamar described her new position as an art teacher at the boarding school. I was excited to read, two years after Tamar’s teaching training, that she was still asking herself some of the same questions she had asked as a student teacher.

*What remains the same is the issue I examine again and again—what are the relationships I am trying to create between the students and myself? How close can we become? How much can they move me? Right now, these questions exist in my mind and not in the photographs.*
(Tamar’s letter, October 31, 1997)

Tamar’s letter made me wonder—what kinds of issues trouble art teachers after they graduate from the teachers’ training program? What are the connections between their current beliefs as art teachers and those they held during their teacher training? What kinds of changes have occurred in their beliefs since they graduated and what influenced these changes?

Tamar’s letter was the trigger for my current research, and her agreement to be a research participant in this study was very important for me. Tamar answered my question as to why she agreed to participate in this research in our E-mail correspondence:

*I agreed to participate in your study for of several reasons. The first is out of respect, since you were beside me and supported me, and I felt that I would like to help you in anything you’d like. The second reason is that I appreciate you very much and I am happy to assist you in things that interest you. The third reason is that through your study I also gain something— I do self-reflection, and in the future I’ll be happy to read your whole study.*
(Tamar's E-mail, February 27, 2000)
Tamar’s self-reflection on her teaching seems to be part of her teaching process anyway. For example, Tamar described an art history lesson she did as an outcome of reflection:

*So, I wrote to myself this year: How to be creative in the theoretical lessons? [She laughs] And this lesson was one that I wrote [The art history lesson she did was designed as a trivia test based on questions the students wrote]*

(Interview, December 13, 1999)

I got the impression that Tamar gave me access to her work for so many years because she did not have other people to talk with about her teaching, to share her successes or her problems with (more about this in section ‘being alone’ p. 151).

After the summer 1999, for a year and a half we kept up E-mail correspondence, and I kept visiting Tamar at her school and interviewing her. In December 1999 I visited her school twice for two full days. Tamar chose to invite me on a day she taught a difficult group of students, but when she had time to talk with me. We had two long interviews/conversations (three hours the first time and four hours the second time, including a lunch break) that took place in her art classroom. I also observed an art history lesson Tamar taught and watched together with her a video she had prepared for me of her students’ works that were exhibited at the school a week before my arrival. Another visit and interview took place during the summer vacation, in July 2000 at Tamar’s home. My last visit to Tamar, in December 2000, was to share with her as a member check a first version of the case study.
Tamar’s participation in this research was important for me. In my research diary I wrote:

*I haven’t contacted any other potential research participants. I thought that if she [Tamar] would not agree to participate in the research I am not sure I would like to do it at all.*

(Research diary, June 1999)

One reason that her participation was important for me was that I had gathered a lot of data on the development of her art education concepts while she became an art teacher, and I wanted to learn how they had emerged, changed and developed since her graduation. But, my relationships with Tamar were not those of an objective researcher and a research participant (a discussion of this issue is in the methodological chapter). It seems that Tamar was proud to share her work with me, and I appreciated her as a teacher and as a person. I was excited to find that she was constantly using and developing achievements and qualities on which we worked together when I mentored her student teaching. For example, the need to implement changes as an outcome of self-reflection seemed to continue a process we started together. From my point of view, our acquaintance, which started as a student-teacher relationship and changed to become a relationship of researcher and research participant, can be more accurately described as a relationship of colleagues. During the seven years we knew each other we established good communication and shared our life stories beyond our formal relationships. I felt thankful for the opportunity Tamar gave me to accompany her art teaching for so many years and to learn from her teaching and thoughts. I believe that this unique access she provided me influenced the amount of data available to this research and its quality.
Phase I

Tamar's Construction of Her Beliefs and Identity as a Student Teacher

Tamar planned her art unit as a student teacher according to the goals in art education she articulated. But an analysis of these goals from the first mentoring meeting (July 1995) till the last one (April 1996) indicates that her perceptions of her goals as art educator changed. Through the process of dialogue and reflection that provided Tamar with opportunities to articulate her goals and to reexamine them, she not only became aware of her positions but also shifted them. In the following section I will use quotations from the transcriptions of our meetings and an interview (April 1996) as well as from Tamar’s reflective writing in order to articulate the changes that occurred in Tamar’s beliefs while she was a student teacher.

During our first meeting, Tamar described her reason for choosing the theme “photography as a medium that influences painting” for her art unit:

*It is clear to me that I want to address photography as phenomenon crucial to the development of the painting. I believe it is important to present these mutual relationships [of photography and painting], that each field is developing separately and in relationship to the other.*

(Mentoring meeting, July 95).

Tamar’s reasoning was based on her belief in the importance of teaching art history knowledge, which she perceived to be significant in understanding the current visual language. She herself studied this knowledge in different courses provided by the
School of Art, including Photography (studio and theoretical classes) and in art history classes, and she integrated it to create her theme of instruction.

At the same meeting, we discussed the importance or the meaning of this knowledge for herself and for her future students. During that dialogue, Tamar expanded her goals beyond passing on significant knowledge. When she had to articulate the importance of the knowledge, she described her goals as presenting different perceptions of reality and ways of representing these perceptions (*inner reality, exciting objective reality, imaginative or subjective reality, multirealities*).

_I want to present how photography influenced painting not only technically, but also the artists’ perception.... The photo can transfer the reality as a quotation but on the other hand, there is the artist's choice and the excitement of multirealities.... It is important to distinguish between photography that relates to an exciting objective reality and painting that can keep distance from that reality. It can deal with emotional contents. I would like to emphasize that the camera freed the painting and opened it to new directions.... The artist [painter] has the freedom to relate to inner reality, to imaginative or objective reality. He can choose._

*Photography went through stages. It started with portraits- a frozen reality. Then there was a stage of documentary photography of wars, and passing events and moments, then photography became an artistic medium, influenced from the development and different movements in the visual arts.*

(Mentoring meeting, July 1995)

Another goal that Tamar added is expanding the students’ perception of art:

_The students had not been exposed to artistic photos. They are exposed to the photos in their magazines. I thought that through relating to something familiar, I can make them see it as art products, as part of a visual language._

(Mentoring meeting, July 1995)

Tamar’s awareness of her goals during the first meeting was reflected in the way she changed the title of her unit. At the second mentoring meeting (August 95), Tamar
presented the title of her unit as "The perceptions of portraits in painting and in photography as an example of their mutual relationships." Tamar explained the title:

_It refers to the perceptions of reality through relating to portraits in both media, the painting and the photography. This is something important that can be meaningful to the students._

N: Why do you think it can be meaningful? Is it because of the subject [portraits]?

Tamar: _Through this subject [portraits] I can work with the students on advertisement and also on presenting themselves as they want and to create things that they are part of._

N: What do you think is the difference between your previous title that emphasized the mutual relationship between the media and the current one that emphasizes the perceptions of reality?

Tamar: _Before, I related to a historical development. Now I am not bounded to chronological development. The perception of reality is not in relation to time. It is also a subject that does not relate only to the mutual relationship between the media._

(Mentoring meeting, August 1995)

Tamar was looking for a meaningful connection between the content that spans from the art world and her future students’ world. She added goals that relate to students' expression through studio activity. She changed her art education goals. Her emphasis on different perceptions of reality that she believed she could demonstrate through the “portraits” unit was different from transferring knowledge about historical developments.

At the fourth meeting (September 1995), at the end of the planning stage of Tamar’s unit and before her teaching stage, I asked Tamar to describe the process she went through:

_At the beginning I constructed the unit according to chronological development. I wanted to present how the media developed. ...Now the focus is on two different_
processes of development: The transformation from the outside reality to inside interpretations of the reality, and the development from a simple interpretation to a complex one.

N: Is there a significant difference between the focus on chronological development and the focus now?

Tamar: Now the students go through a process. The process does not occur in the history of the culture but within the students themselves. They develop their understanding, their observation skills, their thinking and conceptualization skills...
(Mentoring meeting, September 1995)

Tamar became aware of the changes that occurred in her goals. Her goals as art teacher shifted to teaching for understanding through constructing meaning, and conceptualizing. Her awareness of the change as well as a clear statement of her position can be found in her reflective writing:

Through reflecting on the way I taught, on my own choices of what and how [to teach], I learned what my beliefs are. The most important outcome from this project for me was that it made me rethink what are my art education’s goals are. What I, as educator, can do to promote them? What the most important things for me as an art educator and as an artist and how do they influence my instruction processes?

...I believe that the interpretation of each individual student serves the freedom of subjectivity, that each student can express his views and hear opposing views about the same artwork. These were my goals of aesthetic education.

The process which the students went through, was the most important thing for me. I refer to both things: In the studio activity it was important for me that the students took responsibility of their ideas and translated them into a visual form and then interpreted their own artworks. In the process of interpreting others’ works, it was important to develop the students’ sensitivity to visual values and to permit them express their subjective opinions.

To sum up, the final project was a tool for me to examine my beliefs as an artist and art educator. The process pinpointed my goals, and the subject and the content were just the tools for developing my teaching process.
(Tamar’s reflective writing, January 1996, p. 32)
Tamar position about the goals of art education emphasized the importance of students’ awareness of their decisions making during the process of art creation. It became important for her that students would be responsible and would not do meaningless things. In the interview summarizing her student teaching experience (April 1996) Tamar said:

_In the process of [my] teaching I tried to relate to the goals: to provide art history knowledge, the language of art and to relate to the students’ emotional world. But I realized that throughout the process it was important for me to be meaningful for the students. I think I succeeded in integrating it to art through interpretation. I felt that the interpretation is something important and many times they do not pay attention to it in the process of art production. I asked them to plan their work or ‘read’ it afterwards…. The focus on interpretation is eventually to understand the process of what happened to you. I did not want to present one way. There were students who planned in advance and there were those who worked in the opposite direction and explained in the end their works and what they did. In my summary, I wrote that it was important to accept both ways, that it was important for me as a teacher not to be too dominant and make everyone plan in advance._

(Interview, April 96)

Tamar planned her teaching according to beliefs that were constructed within the discourses of the School of Art: creating and appreciation through understanding the language of art. She wanted to enrich her students with knowledge (art history) that would help them to understand the development of the visual arts. She believed that she could provide her students with a meaningful process, a process that aimed to make them aware of their visual decisions and the meaning of those decisions. She believed that the interpretation was a natural means to enhance that goal in art education.

In the process of reflecting on her goals and articulating how they related in a meaningful way to the student’s world, she added the discourses of the art education
course and combined them with the previous goals. Her students were not asked to create just according to conceptual exercises that enhanced their understanding of the language of art, but to relate to their own image (self portrait) from different points of view. These points of view were not merely visual, but different perceptions of the image. Thus, Tamar’s main emphasis was on becoming aware of the decision making related to two processes: first, to a process through which the students articulate their positions, and, second, how they could express their position using visual means.

Tamar described her own experience as student teacher in the interview (April, 1996) using the same words she used to describe her goal (as thinking and planning before implementing, and being able to articulate the decisions).

Tamar: *To me, the process of thinking and planning before teaching was essential.... In the planning phase I felt that the mentoring process helped me to focus on things. I had endless ideas. And I learned to focus and organize. The thing you want to teach should be clear to yourself before you try to explain it to others. I felt I really learned that in the process.*

N: I would like you to give me feedback as a mentor. Can you characterize my role in the process?

Tamar: *I think you helped me to focus on what I wanted. To focus on the processes I was working on and to be articulate in my decisions. Every time I started to spread out things too much, you helped me to focus them back.* (Interview, April 1996)

During that interview (April 1996), Tamar repeated the positions about her art education goals clearly, and emphasized the role of interpretation. Tamar’s position on the interpretation process can be related to what Parsons (1998) calls a “Postmodern” interest in children’s understanding and interpretations of art.
Working with the students, it was important for me to be meaningful. I wanted to feel that I provide them with opportunities to express themselves through the art language. It is connected to the issue of interpretation. I felt that this issue is very important to me...
Each of the lessons builds step by step the possibility to observe more and more of the art works they did, focusing on the interpretation and true understanding of the process you are going through. It was important for me that the students did not get the impression that there is only one way to create or to understand art works. I always wanted to get dualism. At least, that is what I hope I did.

N: What will you take from the experience you went through to your future teaching?

Tamar: I will continue to put an emphasis on the students’ choices and decisions. I think that the knowledge will be part of anything. The knowledge was an excuse for me to explore my other goals. From the experience I went through I’ll take the goals, [e.g.,] the process I like the students to go through.
(Interview, April 1996)

Focusing on what was the essential for herself as well as for her students, Tamar found that the interpretation of reality and the artworks could provide meaningful learning. She connected the interpretation to the process of planning ahead or to interpreting the artwork retrospectively, a process that could lead the students to become aware of and responsible for their ideas and decisions.

Tamar’s goals in art education were not merely reproductions of the dominant discourses of the School of Art. As she went through a process of articulating why art was important for herself and her students, it influenced her views of the issues and even impacted her own art creation as an artist. Tamar explained the dual directions of such influences between her goals as an art educator and her own creation process as an artist. In her reflective writing she described her art creation as a source for her art education goals:
I chose as the theme for the art unit “The perceptions of portraits in photography and in painting, and their mutual relationships.” My own occupation as a photographer, [as well as] my desire to deal with questions evoked by this and other media, such as painting, motivated me to look for mutual relationships among the media. During the process of planning this unit, I realized that my choices included more personal reasoning. I realized that my motivations in teaching this theme are connected directly to my own creation as an artist. The things that are most important for me in the creation of an artwork and in understanding of it are the planning of the artwork, and responsibility [to the decisions], or the interpretation of the final artwork. This was the core of the theme I taught. One of my main goals was that the students would go through the process of creation, starting in the thinking and planning, and continue to implementing and interpreting of the artwork.

(Tamar’s reflective writing, January 1996, p. 1)

In an answer to my question as to whether Tamar could find any connection between her occupation as an artist and the process she had provided to her students, Tamar described the influence of the art education experience on her art creation:

Maybe it helped to give meaning to my works. This year I worked on staged photos. I try to give myself explanations and not just to create. I present to myself the same demands I presented to my students. This year I made many decisions during the process of creation and this was the most important thing I asked the students to do. I found out that this was the most important thing in my work with them as a teacher. Without it, teaching seems meaningless. The artwork does not exist without the interpretation of the viewer, I mean whatever it evokes, and it is not important what kind of interpretation it is — emotional, conceptual or intellectual.

(Interview, April 1996)

In sum, Tamar, as a good student who absorbed the School of Art’s “problem-solving” paradigm, designed a unit that integrated knowledge from art history, art creation and art appreciation. Her goals included the components of comprehensive art education (Wilson, 1997), such as using “art history knowledge,” and “the language of art.” Tamar believed that the knowledge of these components was important for the
students in making choices about how to translate their ideas into visual forms and how to interpret their own artworks as well as the artworks of others.

Through reflection on her goals, they developed beyond transferring knowledge and understanding the language. Striving to become meaningful to her students, Tamar offered them a process through which they could examine their own reality from different points of view. It became important for her that her students would become aware of their decisions and would be able to explain them during the process of creating, or after the artwork was completed. In other words, Tamar became interested in empowering her students through emphasizing their ownership and possession of their ideas and decisions. She was not aware that she herself went through a similar experience during the mentoring process.

**Phase II**

**Tamar as an Art Teacher**

**Outlines of at the Boarding School**

In 1997 Tamar started teaching art at the A-Y, a boarding school located a five minutes drive from her home. A-Y was more than a school. It was a ‘youth village’ that included the one-story buildings of the school, houses for students’ residence, residences for the adults who worked at A-Y, a music building, a library, and a dining room. All the buildings were surrounded by trees and immersed in nature. Tamar described the place as a wonderful reservation that she felt in love with as she entered its gates.
Thirty-five hundred students stayed overnight at the school, and fifteen hundred came from the neighborhood settlements and returned to their families after 5 o’clock. Some of these settlements were located in the occupied territories. The students, from 7th to 12th grade levels, had one working day per week dedicated to agriculture or maintaining the village. Tamar described the student population as varied. Many of them were new immigrants that came recently from the former USSR and spoke Russian.

The Independence Liberal Party established the place more than forty years ago as an education institute. Administratively, the Settlements Department in the State Education Office was supervising the school. The “Sochnut” organization, which deals with Jewish immigration to Israel, was sponsoring the basic needs of the village, which included some special Hebrew classes for the new immigrant students. With the “Sochnut” money and with some donations, projects such as a new art building could be planned.

The ‘village’ had an overall principal, who was described by Tamar as the one who decided on most issues, although the school had its own principal. In order to graduate from high school, the students (grades 10-12) had to take matriculation exams in biology or geography and English, as well as in their elective subject areas. The school offered an alternative option to those students who did not fit in any study areas through learning in special classes in the 10th and 11th grades, and the study of agriculture in the 12th grade. Tamar felt that this alternative limited her ability to influence some students to
learn in her art program, which “includes submitting written assignments,” because it provides “a way to escape” from any academic efforts (Interview, December 13, 1999).

**Negotiating the Status of the Art**

When I visited Tamar’s school in December 1999, she worked in a temporary art classroom that did not suit her teaching needs. Her previous art room was in the process of being replaced by a new art building. In the meantime, she worked in a two room residential apartment. One of the rooms was dedicated to sculpture, and the other to painting, printing and theoretical lessons. This room was divided in such a way that the students sat crowded around one big table, facing a board, and the teacher couldn’t see them all (columns blocked her view).

Knowing that most of the art teachers have to negotiate with their school’s administration about having an art classroom, Tamar felt privileged that her school had invested in building a new art center. She perceived it as an evidence for the encouragement and high status of the arts in the school.

“They encourage the field of music and the visual arts. It is such a great feeling to work in such a place where you are encouraged, and they always give you...I didn’t go and ask for a new art classroom. I had a big room, 120 meters. Now, they are building a new classroom for the arts.... Not every department gets this emphasis here. So art isn’t marginalized.” (Interview, December 13, 1999)

This description of the high status of the arts got complicated through some other stories Tamar told about the school’s expectations and their understanding of what is art.

Tamar felt that because art was recognized by the educational system as an area of study for the matriculation exams, the status of art wasn’t marginalized in her school. The
art matriculation exams were the justification for maintaining an art program at the high school, and this dictated the main expectations of the school’s administration:

*So what is important for them is that there will be good achievements in the matriculation exams, and that the department will grow. They do not tell me anything, but if I’ll have small classes there will be no legitimization for the existence of the department.*

(Interview, December 20, 1999)

Tamar expressed mixed feelings about her role of transferring theoretical knowledge required for the test. Tamar found herself in a conflictual situation where, on one hand, in order to fulfill the role of a “good teacher” according to the school’s normative discourses and expectations she had to transfer knowledge, but, on the other hand, she strove to construct a different teaching identity. Britzman describes this conflict: “[R]ole speaks to function whereas identity voices investments and commitments. Function, or what one should do, and investments, or what one feels, are often at odds” (Britzman, 1992, p. 29). Thus Tamar described the theoretical knowledge she provided her students as “*important basic information for them,*” but she felt bored and “*got sick*” of teaching it.

Tamar’s understanding that the existence of the art department depended upon the number of students she would succeed in recruiting, made her become an advocate for art with the middle school students, who are her potential clients for the high school program. Her job as an art advocate was not easy since the students’ artworks and art as a discipline were not perceived to be important by the larger society the students were part of.
The parents are not involved in the school. But the parents influence their children to learn computers, physics, chemistry, etc. Art for them, although it is culture, doesn’t seem to be serious. And I can understand them. In the competitive business world there are certain demands, so if they choose to study art they’ll have to complete the subject areas they didn’t study.... I cannot tell a student that his parents are wrong because if you like art, they shouldn’t send you to learn physics. I do tell them that I think that they should choose for the three years of study the subject area they like the best. Because after the army, you might change, and you can always complete whatever will be necessary. (Interview, December 13, 1999)

Beyond raising the status of art within the student population, Tamar felt that she needed to negotiate with the staff her role as an art teacher, which was not viewed as a teacher of an study area but as a school decorator.

To the principal of the school, what is important is that the show-windows will look good, and will reflect the holiday, etc. So sometimes I do it more and sometimes less. I get to be paid for one hour to decorate. But when I place an exhibition, it is like three months of changing a few paintings. (Interview, December 13, 1999)

Tamar had to negotiate not only with the principal’s expectations, but also with other activities she was expected to do beyond teaching her art classes. Her way of negotiating was not to deny the expectations but also not to fulfill their requests and “let myself feel that they exploit me or that I become overwhelmed”. Her solution was to activate the other teachers.

I reduce some of their expectations. For example, I was warned that the boarding school’s staff would ask me to help them decorating before the holidays. So I taught them a technique and said that they should do it themselves. I do not let myself feel that they exploit me or that I become overwhelmed... I certainly agree to come on the day the activity takes place and to assist the others, because the teachers feel helpless. They are not aware how many aesthetic decisions they can do themselves. (Interview, December 20, 1999)
Tamar showed me some huge masks the students had created with her for decorating the dining room and the big hall, and presented it as part of a negotiation process with the school’s expectation:

But I will not do this every year. I cannot decorate every year. They expect from me to decorate every year.... This year I want them to create masks from natural and organic materials that will be connected to tribes. But I don’t know if I’ll do it every year. I am starting to clarify to them that I am not their decoration committee.

(Interview, December 13, 1999)

Tamar, who believed that the status of art and the art teacher should be perceived as more then ‘a decorating committee,’ gave voice to her position by displaying her students’ work in two big art exhibitions twice a year. She worked very hard on these impressive exhibitions. It seems that not only was Tamar proud of the students’ artworks, but she also believed that presenting the works could be a means of educating the teachers, the students and their parents what she believed art was about.

Without the exhibition the place of art is very limited. No one knows what is going on in the art studio. If no one knows and sees —what you do is limited. (Interview, December 13, 1999)

But, in listening to her stories, it seemed that the audience was not as cooperative as she would like.

Only a few people saw the video artworks although it was shown during the parents’ open house day. I know it. I advertised the exhibition. I gave every teacher brochures and asked them to encourage the parents to go and look at the students’ sculptures and videos. Perhaps 10% of the parents went to see it. It is not the climax of the parents’ day. That is the reason why I took the students to see the exhibition. I do not do the exhibition for my own sake. It is important for me that they see the works and understand them.

(Interview, December 13, 1999)
Tamar’s negotiating the status of the art was part of what she felt as a conflicting understanding of the nature of art.

*There is a very conservative perception of art. It causes a conflict. ... So there are things that I accept, and other that I oppose.*

(Interview, December 20, 1999)

That conflict of approaches to art meant that although the principal of the village appreciated the art, she appreciated a certain kind of art. And although Tamar, as the art teacher, could have been perceived as an expert in her field, her understanding of art and her deliberations were not always appreciated. This conflict between unequal powers was expressed in Tamar’s story about the reaction to a student outdoor sculpture called “danger mines.”

You have asked me about the work “danger mines” which was placed around the village. It caused a scandal. The village administration demanded that it be taken down. The argument was that the people would not understand it as an artwork and would think that there is a real danger. I think that the principal of the village herself was shocked [by the artwork] and decided to remove it without thinking twice. I talked with her and asked her first to read the student’s statement (you already have it). I asked her to try to understand his goal. I asked her on behalf of the freedom of expression to permit him to present the work, which was never intended to harm anyone. On the next day the signs [“danger mines”] were placed out again, but only within the school space [and not where the student had placed them]. The student’s feelings were really hurt.

(Tamar’s E-mail, May 15, 2000).

Tamar’s story of the principal’s censorship portrayed a struggle between unequal powers about what can be defined as legitimate artwork. In the name of “freedom of expression,” Tamar tried to legitimize the conceptual and visual decisions her student articulated. Looking at the student sculpture within the School of Art
discourses, she perceived that it provoked the audience to think about a place that looked like a peaceful reservation. The student statement was:

‘Danger - mines!’
The artwork defines through the signs invisible areas, places one shouldn’t walk through. The work forces the audience to distance themselves from certain areas, and it questions the site as a reservation, as a safe place for the environment and its population.

Relating to her negotiation of the conflict with the principal, Tamar believed that she could not carry out this kind of resistance and struggle during her previous teaching year because she did not then have the courage to oppose authority.

Being Alone

At the time of my visit to Tamar’s school (December 1999), we stayed in the art classroom from 9:00 PM till 4:30 AM. During all that day, we met the other teachers and the principal only when we went to the dining room for lunch. For me, that situation (which did not occur in any other school visits) illustrated Tamar’s description of her situation as ‘being alone.’ When I asked her with whom she talks and shares her teaching experiences, she answered: “With nobody. With you” (interview, December 20, 1999).

It is the reality. I do not have anybody to share it [the teaching] with. I do not have any colleagues. And the connections I had from the college slowly disappear. You do what you want and share it with nobody.
(Interview, December 20, 1999)
Tamar felt isolated as an art teacher, an isolation that limited her ability to have a
dialogue with the other teachers.

*No one knows what is going on in the art studio. If no one knows and sees — what
you do is limited. It is ridiculous that many teachers have no idea what the
students do. How many teachers enter my class? Nobody does.*
(Interview, 13 December, 1999)

Tamar did not perceive the other teachers in her school as partners with whom she
can share the School of Art’s discourses that constructed her ideas, problems or
successes. She regarded as colleagues other art teachers with whom she met rarely at peer
meetings organized by the TE superintendent. This perception isolated her (Naomi
described the same situation).

‘Being alone’ was presented by Tamar as a problem. She felt that sometimes it
was overwhelming to be solely responsible for addressing all the expectations of the
school and the students. She felt not only that being isolated was difficult for her
emotionally, but also that it denied her experience during her art studies at the School of
Art, where she felt it was important to be exposed to a variety of teachers.

*Occasionally I think about whether the fact that I am a single teacher is good.
Although as a teacher I try not to give assignments that go only toward one
direction. I compensate them [for being a single teacher] by providing a variety
of assignments.*
(Interview, December 13, 1999)

At the previous school where Tamar taught, she experienced working with a team
of art teachers, and found the situation to be problematic.

*The teachers didn’t take the other teachers into consideration. We shared the
studio classroom and no one was responsible, and I got annoyed. But there it was
a whole different atmosphere....*
And I think that if someone would come here to teach with me, it would really be difficult for me to work with. Because I feel that in this niche, there is no place for anybody else.
(Interview, December 13, 1999)

Maybe the previous experience made her think that she would give up some of her teaching hours to provide an opportunity for another art teacher only when she would feel burned out. But it seemed that although Tamar described her “being alone” as one of her teaching problems (interview December 13, 1999), being alone was also a shield that protected her. It provided her autonomy. She could decide by herself and have control over the art studies’ content. It prevented her from going through a process where she might need to compromise her beliefs about what she perceived to be valuable in art education. Tamar expressed her ambivalent feelings clearly:

*Being alone has advantages and disadvantages. The advantage is that I am the authority, and what I decide I can do without the need of someone else’s approval. But it has the difficulties that I am the solely responsible. I have to do everything by myself, like all the projects, everything, everything.... But, then, I think if someone else taught them- what would he teach? They might not learn the things that are important in my eyes.*
(Interview December 13, 1999).

Tamar’s perception of her isolation could be seen in part of the way she portrayed herself as "not belonging" ("I didn’t feel that I belonged to the Midrasha or to the high school") and solely responsible in other areas as well. For example, this was the way Tamar described her overwhelming motherhood experience.

Her perception of being alone was also enhanced by the high school's discourses that separate the disciplines (and the teachers) according to study areas. Believing that each area holds a different discourse could enhance Tamar’s feeling that the others would
not understand her. This perception was part of the hidden ideology of the School of Art, where it was believed that one needs a special art education to gain access to the separate art world (an education that the other teachers lack). This position provided Tamar with the problems and benefits of being solely responsible for representing ‘the art world’ within the boarding school.

Tamar’s Relationships with the Students

Tamar wanted to establish student-teacher relationships that were less hierarchical. She enjoyed her teaching most when she mentored her students. In these situations she felt that she did not need to have formal relationships with her students, and she portrayed herself as 'a student', an image that suggested a more equal relationship. (Unlike/like Noga, who described her students as teachers.) These desirable situations occurred when the students were motivated and interested in their art projects. Tamar felt that through consulting with the students, working with them to clarify their ideas and helping them to choose out of many alternatives the means to visualize those ideas, she could give them something she knew, and was meaningful for the students. In these situations, she fulfilled her teaching image. She used teaching methods that were used by the teachers-artists at the School of Art but she did it in her way and she felt self-creative. Tamar described her desire for these teaching situations whenever she talked about her expectations or disappointments from the processes her students went through during the studio projects. For example, when she argued that the final project of the 12th graders
was the most important thing for her that year, she described the process of the individual mentoring/creation they did together:

_We were looking for something consistent in the way of their thinking, or the subjects they were interested in.... So I did with them a small reflection process on what they have been going through [in the studio class]. I enjoyed it tremendously. I felt that it was a different kind of talk and thinking.... It is clear that the final project involved a certain level of awareness.... I didn’t impose on them one way [of dealing with the project] and each of them led the process differently._

(Interview, July 15, 2000)

Although her expectations were to be able to discuss things in a more equal relationship and to accompany her students on an inner journey that they were going through, in reality she had ‘to fight’ with some of the students. It seemed that the conflict was with those students who created their final projects just to get a grade, while Tamar expected something different. Feeling that she was almost equally involved in their final projects (maybe because the projects had the potential to fulfill her ideal image), she took their reaction personally.

_I took it very personally. It was very important for me. On the other hand, I have to accept it, that it wasn’t important to all of the students, that some just wanted to pass the test and not to invest and to do something meaningful. I can not force myself on them. There is a place where you have to cut and say, o.k., this is how he wants to do the project, and I have to accept it. There are many ways to do the project. There are those who work in one shot, and others that go through a process, and I have to learn to accept it, although I pressed them to examine alternatives, to try._

(Interview, July 15, 2000)

Tamar described students’ low motivation as one of the problems she had to face in this school, as well as one of her successes when she changed their attitudes (questionnaire, June 1999). The students’ motivation influenced the relationships she
could establish with them, and it became a main factor in Tamar’s negotiation of the image she could have as a teacher. When I asked her to describe her relationship with the students, she answered:

*It depends. For example, with L, and most of the 12th grade students I feel that I am still a student. I think we built a trust. I don’t have problems with exposing myself with them. In many things I feel that I don’t have a distance from them. But it depends. When the group is difficult, it causes me to be stiffer or at a distance—but usually it doesn’t help. In the 12th grade I achieved the situation that they understand that I can be joking with them, but still ask them to fulfill the requirements.*

(Interview, December 13, 1999)

With those groups in which Tamar felt that she established a more equal relationship, she felt that she could be flexible and could change her preplanned curriculum. She also permitted herself “to be more open emotionally with them. And I never did so before” (interview, December 20, 1999). Describing herself as being alone as a teacher, these kinds of relationship with her students had special importance for Tamar.

Tamar’s negotiation with her students was influenced by her beliefs about her role and goals as an art educator. She believed she needed to bridge between two worlds that aren’t connected - the art world which she was part of and her students’ world.

*I don’t think that they [the students] are very much connected [to art]. Eventually, they are disconnected. For example, the students learned that art can express protestation, that art can relate to the society, and to politics. They saw that artists react [to those things], that it was their [the artists] need. But the students do not come with these motivations and needs.*

(Interview, December 13, 1999)
Bridging between what Tamar believed to be separate worlds could be best achieved with students like those Tamar met at the School of Art. These students were highly motivated to ‘enter the door’ to the arts’ world. When she taught at the kibbutz, she had these kinds of students:

*For some of them art was a place of refuge, so their lives were centered around art. They saw art exhibitions, and came from families that have a culture that encourages it. ... It is clear to me that if I was working with students who were more open, maybe I would enjoy my teaching more because they would be more art consumers and I could enrich them more and more. Here this option is limited. You have the need to give and to give, and at a certain point you understand that you have to adjust to the limitations of the place.*

(Interview, December 20, 1999)

Although Tamar expressed the need to adjust to the reality at A-Y where the students were not highly motivated to create art and to become part of the ‘art world,’ she did not change her goals. The students challenged her to seek more innovative ways to bridge between the worlds.

*I teach them to become art consumers. You have seen [in the lesson] that after a vacation I ask them whether they went to exhibitions, but they didn’t. They also do not have the money for that. When they go home, they do not go out. They do not travel. When they get home, many of them do nothing. Maybe I should send them more to the computer, here, because they will not go and see [an exhibition].*

(Interview December 13, 1999)

But, for most part, these low-motivated students, some of whom were in the art program ‘against their will’ or as an easy solution to passing the matriculation exams, caused Tamar many frustrations. With them she felt that her investments as well as her knowledge were a waste.

*Although they are in the art program they are not sure that they want to be here. They do not want to make the effort it involves. Or there are those who like only the studio class. I explained to them that the art classes include theoretical*
Lessons. I explained that to study art it isn’t easy, and it includes submitting assignments... So maybe in the end I’ll stay with 6-7 serious students. I prefer it to the situation where they are here against their will. I do not mind giving up on them. It is a shame, but... It is frustrating because, you know, I put a lot of effort in them.

(Tamar’s description of her 10th grade students in an interview December 20, 1999)

Tamar’s image of a good art teacher was of a teacher who should teach art to all of the students, and not just those who are highly motivated. But in her school reality, Tamar felt frustrated with the efforts needed to persuade students to learn art against their will (Naomi expressed the same frustrations).

I can not press anymore. What can I do? I gave her all that I can. She came to a test unprepared, and didn’t do it. So I said to her, O.K. take the test home and, if you will return the answers you’ll get 65 [out of 100]. This way you’ll at least have a grade. But she didn’t turn it in this week. So what can I do? How much should I come toward her? It is impossible!

(Interview, December 20, 1999)

While it seemed that Tamar refused to negotiate her goals and expectations, there were areas where she felt she learned to listen to the students and to become flexible.

Today, I wasn’t sure if the students would be in the mood to learn with slides, so I brought them a newspaper. I wanted to discuss together how we could create a political artwork using the newspaper. So it would have been a preparation for the studio activity.

(Interview, December 13, 1999)

More than addressing her or the students’ mood, in her studio classes Tamar tried to take into account her students’ expectations. She described the influence of these expectations on her curriculum in the studio classes.

In the beginning of the year I asked the students what was important for them, because they are coming with expectations. So in the 10th grade it is very

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important for them to know how to draw a human figure, to know how to draw realistically, etc. So I need to give them the tools. I have here students that have a low level, and they can’t draw. So it is almost half a year that I give them the boring basic foundations.
(Interview, December 13, 1999)

Tamar believed that by providing a variety of media and techniques, she addressed her students’ needs. Throughout all our interviews, Tamar interpreted "students needs" as their needs in the process of art creation.

*If I was teaching just painting and I had students who hate painting, I had a problem. I discovered that something different suits each of the students. So it is important for me to teach a variety not only of subjects but also of techniques. I found out that it is very important to them that one time we do one thing, and another time we do something different. I think that I didn’t listen to these things before. And now I listen to the students more.*
(Interview, December 20, 1999)

Another strategy Tamar described that related to her students' expectations were to reduce them, and at the same time to provide the students with experiences of success.

*It is important for me to teach them techniques that will provide them with an experience of success. But there are those who do not have the patience to draw realistically. They didn’t think that it would be that difficult. So, I try to lower their expectations. I explain to them that Leonardo De Vinci or Michaelangelo were sitting every day for 8 hours to draw or paint or do sculpture. But we have only two hours per week. So I do not want them to expect that they’ll be like them. We do not have their techniques etc.*
(Interview, December 13, 1999)

According to Tamar’s perceptions of the students’ needs she tried to provide them with the processes of creation as close as possible to those that artists were going through. This included the exhibition of their works.

*It is a kind of a summit for them. They always enjoy seeing their exhibitions. It is very satisfying for them. In the planned art space I’ll have an inner patio and I will be able to place the sculptures there [referring to the Chair project].*
(Interview, December 13, 1999)
I was surprised that Tamar thought that she related to her students’ interests in a limited way and instead concentrated on teaching them ‘pure’ art. Her answers opposed the stories she told me when she shared with me her art projects in which the students were invited to examine their own reality. When I asked her about this contradiction, Tamar answered:

*Yes. Yes, it depends on how open the subject [of the assignment] is. When the subject is open it provide them a space to express themselves. And then they decide whether they want to put effort in it or not. There were students who went after their ideas and feelings, ...like the student that did the tree of wishes, or the forbidden commandments [see appendix – public sculpture]. These are works that express much more feeling. But there were others. I think that their needs can not be separated from my goals in teaching the language of art. Through the public sculpture that they created, one can see that some of them started with an idea they had in mind, and others started from their feelings and some.... So, maybe it addressed their need to chose, the freedom of choice. Within it, all my goals are integrated [goals such as] the language of art and [learning] the subject as it exists in art.*

(Interview, December 20, 1999)

This narrow perception of 'student's need' was part of the School of Art’s discourse in the studio classes that referred to the college art students through the professional lenses. Students’ needs, their lives, and reality were only part of the discourses of the marginalized art methods classes. Although I believe that Tamar's stories about her art projects show a wider approach to her students, she was not aware of it, and continued to think within the School of Art dominant discourses. I find Tamar’s answers an interesting example of how the discourses of the art community prevented her from understanding how her teaching practices addressed her students’ interests.
When Tamar read this case study as a member check, she expressed again her disagreement regarding my analysis that her teaching addressed her students’ interests beyond learning visual thinking. For example, she argued that some of the exercises she gave were just for technical skills. Exercises, according to Tamar, were smaller assignments that provided means for the art projects that were longer and more serious art creation processes. And although Tamar agreed that in all her projects the students had to relate to their lives (themselves, the school, or the state), she still didn’t accept my analysis.

**Tamar’s Art Program**

**Outlines of Tamar’s Art Program**

Tamar’s art program was divided between middle school students (7th-8th graders) and the high school department (10th-12th graders). In the middle school, art studies were part of the required curriculum at A-Y. The 7th and 8th art classes were taught to groups of 22 students (half a class) during two hours per week for half a year. Tamar’s high school art program was elective. She taught small classes that included (in winter 1999) 13 students from the 10th grade, 10 from the 11th grade, and 7 from the 12th grade. Tamar also provided 4 hours of studio workshops in the afternoon hours for students who liked to extend their art studies or wanted to finish their projects. Her position included one hour per week for decorating the school. Tamar explained that this
payment compensated for the many hours she dedicated to displaying the exhibitions of her students’ work, and other activities she was asked to do beyond her teaching.

Tamar’s main emphasis was on her high school program because “I feel more meaningful with the students that have chosen to study in the art department” (interview, December 20, 1999). The program included 5 hours per week for each of the grade levels: a sequence of 3 hours of studio classes and an art history lesson during a sequence of 2 hours. She prepared these students for the matriculation exams in art. The students took a test in art history for one credit during the 10th grade. They took a five credit test at the end of high school that included a final project in a studio exhibition as well as a statewide theoretical test in art history.

During the first year of her teaching, Tamar went to workshops provided by the Art Inspection of General Education as well as to those organized by the Art Inspection of Technological Education. Her choice to follow the Technological Education (TE) art program affected her teaching conditions and practices. She described in detail the difference between the two programs and articulated her decision to teach according to the TE program. At the same time she also described the limitations it imposed on her:

1. The TE program organized the material so that Tamar was not dependent on art libraries for articles and slides to which she did not have easy access.

   *In the TE they are very organized. They provide [the teachers] with articles and textbooks. You understand, I can not go very often to the School of Art’s library to get books, articles and slides. I have a problem of access. They [TE] provide everything, [they address] all the needs. All one needs is actually an exaggeration, since I have to do what they ask. Recently, they understood that*
they ask for too much, one can not teach everything. So they provided a prior focus, a list of slides that might appear in the final exam.
(Interview, December 13, 1999)

2. Through joining the TE program, Tamar was able to buy the equipment she wanted to have in her art room.

_The main consideration was the money.... The administration that we [the school] belong to supports the development of technological trends. In the first year I got 20,000 Shekel; this year they gave me this amount again. I bought equipment with this [money]. If I didn’t get it, what could the school buy? Nothing. [Now] I have books, textbooks, and slide projectors, come and see what I have here! I have [an electrical] saw, drill, [electrical] screwdriver, video camera, VCR, TV, projectors, whatever you can think about! It would never happen otherwise. So, I do not mind starting this way._
(Interview, December 13, 1999)

3. It seems that the program provided a clear set of requirements. Tamar believed that it was better suited to her students with lower learning skills and abilities.

_Another consideration was the students. I know what I want in order to enjoy teaching. But I was afraid that the [general education] program would be too open for the students. Especially in the beginning, when I didn’t know the level of the students here, I was afraid that if the material was not clearly organized for them, it would be too difficult for them to make connections. I see that for some of them it is very helpful that the material is organized step by step. So I thought that it might be more interesting for me to prepare the lectures, but I wasn’t sure it would be a benefit for the students._
(Interview, December 13, 1999)

Tamar’s choice to teach according to the Technological Education program was a decision that she would like to reconsider. She felt boredom while repeating the art history program (questionnaire, June 1999; interview, December 1999) that was required for the test and was aware of the benefits that the more flexible General Art Education program can offer her. Tamar hoped that in the years to come she would be able to reduce her efforts to cover the materials for the test and do more things according to her beliefs.
I have put a lot of effort and energy into developing the current curriculum, and I would like it to bear fruits for two three years, but after I get bored with it, I’ll use different ideas. Maybe I’ll learn to be less pressed and busy with the question of how much I succeed in covering the material, and to teach deeper and use different methods. (Interview, December 20, 1999).

While Tamar’s curriculum in art history was dictated by the test requirements, she could decide by herself on the art studio program, a working condition she perceives to be crucial for her teaching identity. Being able to change the program, to decide on its content, and to give ‘her voice’ through it were Tamar’s ways of rejecting the technocratic image of teaching.\(^{21}\)

\(\text{In the studio class, they [the TE Art inspectors] want to see what kind of techniques you provided, and what kind of themes. [But] it is left to my decision. If this program had been dictated [to me] I would not have agreed to be a teacher. Really, at least here I have a voice. It is boring to teach the same program the third year. In the art history class I can not change much. (Interview, December 1999)}\)

Tamar’s Main Purposes and Goals

One can define four main overarching concepts Tamar held that guided her teaching practices and goals in art history and the studio lessons: a. Exposing the students to the contemporary art world; b. Presenting the artworks as meaningful and evoking means to examine reality; c. Presenting the meaning of artworks as interpretations and not as facts; and d. Creating in a meaningful and thoughtful way through a 'problem solving' approach.

\(^{21}\) The "how to's" approach to teaching, that replaces the teachers as decision makers, is call by Apple deskilling; "The sensibilities and skills that were and are so very critical for justifying our educational programs for understanding why we should be doing x rather than y, and for building a more democratic set of educational institutions, atrophy and hence are ultimately lost" (Beyer & Apple, 1998, p.4).
A. Tamar believed that she had to bridge between two different worlds - the art world, which was perceived by her as a vivid and fascinating world, and the students’ world. Tamar exposed her students to the contemporary art world, through taking them to arts’ events, visiting artists’ studios, galleries, and museums. She guided them to discover the art world in the Internet, in newspapers, in buildings and in the visual world that surrounded them (though, in line with the art college discourse, Tamar distinguished between design and fine arts, which includes artifacts such as photography, video, and architecture). Since she wanted her students to gain access to the art world, she also incorporated in her studio program video-art installations and photography, which play an important part in that world. (“*It was very important for me to add video-art to the program. Because nowadays, almost one third of the exhibition is video – art.*”)

B. Tamar believed that it was important to present artworks that related directly to the students’ reality (“*Through bringing them this kind of photograph, I intend to connect them and evoke them.*”) She wanted to discuss “whether an artwork can be influential” and to evoke questions and moral conflicts relating to the students' present life.

C. Tamar created learning opportunities that contradicted the educational system approach to teaching art history as a sum of knowledge of facts she had to transfer and the students to memorize. Tamar explained the influence of the context on the meaning of the students’ work:
I like the students to perceive the art as something very isolated and personal, and, on the other hand, when it is placed outdoors it has a different context, meaning and influence. It was very important.
(Interview, December 20, 1999)

Tamar emphasized the potential of artworks as being open to many interpretations and the importance of accepting and respecting of the diverse opinions. She identified this as one of her goals when she articulated her purpose to initiate working within groups of students. She also emphasized that concept when the students and her critique students’ artworks. For example, she described the variety of students’ interpretations of a video art installation that was presented in the student work exhibition, as a success.

I was glad that when we discussed it [a video art installation that dealt with ‘time’] the students opened it to different interpretations. They talked about the time that seems to be approaching us, the feeling of the coming end, the banal in life, all kinds of interpretations that the students came up with when they saw this work.
(Interview, December 13, 1999)

D. Going through a meaningful process was the criterion implied by Tamar in her evaluation of her students’ work as well as of her own teaching.

There are students who I feel that I miss. They can be here for a semester, and they do not want to do anything and art doesn’t interest them. And I feel that I fail to reach them. I feel that at a certain point I give up. It gets to a point that I give up that they will do the assignment- and to the point that they would just do anything because I do not want them to wander around and make it difficult for others to concentrate. But, just doing something isn’t the goal. When I do an assignment with them - it is important for me that it will not be meaningless.
(Interview, December 20, 1999)

Tamar valued the criteria of the School of Art's discourses of a 'good' artwork as a work that was more than mastering skills, and included thoughtful artistic solutions. She discussed with her students the use of the language of art in a way similar to what she
experienced in her art studies and worked within the problem-solving paradigm. For example, her students learned "to think about the space, about the way they present their work...and how to create intimate relations with their audience. We talked on every detail" (interview, July 15, 2000).

But for Tamar, a meaningful art creation was more than creating an artwork with 'good' aesthetic decisions. Although she worked within the School of Art's discourses, Tamar’s goals in art education related to educational and moral issues that were excluded from the dominant discourse of the School of Art. They are related to Tamar’s desire to empower herself as an art student (she didn’t want to learn in Bezalel because she believed that study there might be an oppressive experience), and her goal to empower her students.

The Curriculum of Studio Classes

“It is Left to My [Personal] Decision”

An external representative of the Technological Education Art Inspection evaluated the 12th grade students’ final studio projects, which Tamar considered to be the climax of the art studio program. She also believed that her teaching would be evaluated through her students’ projects. Nevertheless, she felt that she could decide what to teach and how to teach according to her beliefs. Tamar perceived the art studio curriculum as a niche in her role where she could express her teaching identity and be creative.
In the studio class I enjoy teaching because I can do whatever I want. What seems to be good for me and good for them, most of the time. They enjoy it very much. Last year I had the idea of the chairs’ project.... In the exhibition [of that project] some other students asked me whether they also would do artworks with chairs, and I said, I don’t know; we will see what kind of idea I’ll have. (Interview, December 20, 1999)

In the following section I would like to present Tamar’s personal beliefs as constructed within and against different discourses she was part of. Tamar was aware that her beliefs about what she should and should not do in the studio program were influenced by different experiences she had. Generally, Tamar referred to three parts in her biography that influenced her practical theories in action (McCutchcheon, 1995): her art classes she studied in Jerusalem Museum during high school, her studies at the School of Art (the Midrasha), and her experience as art teacher. In the following description of Tamar’s studio curriculum, the discourses within which she was working/thinking are pointed out.

Tamar believed that she used her experience as an art student in the high school as examples and a resource to understand the students’ needs and difficulties at that age.

I constantly examine how was I as a student when I think about what I should do as a teacher, what I should demand from students at the same age, with similar needs. [I remember] what was important for me, how I took the challenges; these are resources for me as a teacher. Although I can not compare [the experiences] in a simplistic way since the teachers [in Israel Museum] had an old-fashioned perception of teaching studio classes, and the theoretical classes [art history] were didactic lectures we listened to. It was only lectures. (Interview December 20 1999)
She used her memories to understand the students’ approach toward art, although Tamar assumed that she presented to her students a different paradigm than the one her high school art teachers held.

*I have repeatedly reminded myself that they are students and that this [the art world] is not their world. I feel that I live in this art world. I prefer to see an exhibition rather than a film. But it is different for them, and it was different for me when I was in their age in high school. I wasn’t crazy about art. It was one more subject area that I studied. This gives me a clear perspective.*

(Interview, December 20, 1999)

Tamar perceived her studies at the School of Art, Beit Berl College, as the source for her methods. It was also a source for visions and goals that Tamar could not always implement in her teaching.

*In the Museum the teachers didn’t try to think about how to use a variety of teaching methods, so it will be interesting. These things I learned at the Midrasha. In the Midrasha I learned alternative ways of teaching.... There are things [teaching methods] that are still in my mind that I internalized during my studies at the college. They help me to decide what I want to do, although it is not always what happens in reality....
The fact that we studied [at the School of Art] with so many art teachers, with different approaches, exposed me to a variety of ways of studio teaching. It also gave me tools. I take something from each [teacher]. One [teacher] used open assignments. Another [teacher] used directed assignments. Another [teacher] emphasized the mimicking of reality – there were different teachers that went in different directions. I think that that was very important, and occasionally it makes me think about whether the fact that I am a single teacher is good. Although as a teacher I try not to give assignments that go only in one direction. I compensate them by providing a variety of assignments.*

(Interview, December 20 1999)

Thinking about the methods, the variety of media, and approaches to realities were the main influences of her studies at the School of Art that Tamar identified in her art program. In the art method courses, Tamar believed that she not only learned how to
develop a lesson as a practical technique, but also to rethink the art content and to find connection and learning processes. She referred to her designing of a curriculum as a student teacher when she learned how to develop a theme into many art lessons, from which she could choose those that suited her and her students.

But mainly what I got out of the art education studies were ways of thinking about how to create lessons, how to build and develop a subject, to find the wider connections and then to focus them back to a lesson, to think as a process – how to create a developing process.
(Interview, December 20, 1999)

From her accumulative experience as a teacher, Tamar believed she learned to listen to her students and to be flexible within her class and outside of the classroom, and to implement changes in her curriculum according to her students. She also tried to learn to be flexible with the high demands from herself. Feeling free to design the studio lessons according to her will, Tamar believed that it was necessary to negotiate with the students: “What is negotiable? Where would you agree to make changes?” (Interview, December 20, 1999). Tamar had learned to identify these questions in her accumulative teaching experience at the school and she believed that it was important that they would be part of the discourse of the arts teachers preparation program.

Tamar posed these questions to herself as part of what she believed she should do as a teacher. She believed she had to identify her students’ expectations and needs and to make them part of her deliberations (or ignore them) in creative and innovative ways.

I think that I didn’t listen to these things before. And now I listen to the students more. If they complain that we are doing a sculpture lesson, I think to myself, maybe next lesson we’ll start something else.
(Interview, December 20, 1999)
Structuring the Art Classes Within and Against the School of Art’s Discourses

Although Tamar presented her studio curriculum as doing "whatever I want," it was a structured process that developed from providing themes, techniques, and basic tools toward the end of the students’ expressing their personal ideas using visual means in a thoughtful way.

*I try to provide them first with some basic tools through subjects. And then they slowly develop till the climax when they are going through a thinking process in which they direct themselves, a process of planning and implementing.*

(Interview, December 20, 1999)

Tamar’s beliefs about what was important in art and about being an art teacher were articulated clearly through her stories about conflicts and the negotiations that she had in her teaching. Tamar opposed the paradigms of the TE representatives regarding art education as they were presented to her at in-service workshops. She rejected their goals of gaining drawing skills, and putting emphasis on the products (*a portfolio ready for Bezalel*) and pinpointed her views that she perceived to be in line with the School of Art discourses.

*When I was in En-Harod [at a workshop], a leadership art teacher told us how they direct the students to create very realistic painting, so they will have a portfolio ready for Bezalel [Art Academy]. But I do not think that this is the goal. Like in the Midrasha [the School of Art], I want to expose them to many techniques like computer, drawing, painting, digital photography, video, and sculpture – all in three poor hours per week. Some students really developed more skills. But, from my point of view this is not my goal. I had a student that painted more schematically, but it looked good. So who said that it should be in a realistic style? I think that this is an old fashioned approach. The criticism [of the external evaluator] was that the students are not talented enough. It insulted me.*

(Interview, July 15, 2000)
According to the School of Art's discourses, to teach art meant to teach to use the language of art for visual thinking (to make the students responsible for their creation process) and to appreciate the arts (to understand the different deliberations artists make in their creation process). In the following section, I describe Tamar's main practices and the goals she incorporated in her art program, working within and against the School of Art's discourses.

Providing basic tools.

Tamar described the basic tools she provided at the beginning of her program as "boring," but necessary foundations for more meaningful art creation. These "basic tools" were examples of Tamar’s working within the discourses of the art classes at the School of Art. She added some arguments that were marginalized in this discourse; she believed that through providing these tools and exercises, she addressed her students’ expectations and prevented their frustrations. Tamar believed that the structured lessons helped the students to get over their feelings of insecurity. She perceived the given themes that the students had to work accordingly, as a starting point for their creation. She assumed that without this starting point the students would feel that they do not know what to do.

In the beginning they are all insecure, and very dependent. Slowly, slowly they come with their own ideas. They become used to the situation that I provide them a subject. But most of the subjects are very open. It can be a technique or a public sculpture – these [subjects] leave them with a lot of freedom. Now, I give them a sheet with a list of techniques and subjects from which they can choose. I did it with the 12th grade, but towards the end of this year I’ll do it with the 11th grade as well. It includes an open subject as well. I just give the list to them as a starting
point. So the program from the 10th grade to the 12th grade gradually opens. In the 12th grade at the end they have a personal project.
(Interview, December 20, 1999)

Tamar implemented in her studio curriculum what was considered as a basic foundation in the discourses of the art classes at the School of Art. These discourses rejected the notion of training the students to master academic skills (such as eye-hand coordination) as a necessary base for art creation. Instead, the art teachers provided alternative techniques that could be used to draw in a realistic style-- if this style was desired and useful for creating in a meaningful way. Tamar taught her students these drawing techniques.

So I start with the basics, with drawing techniques. ... I teach them to use the squares technique. It gives them an opportunity to succeed in creating very exact [realistic] works. They work from photographs of portraits that have light and shade qualities, through which they learn to create the tones. Then I work with them on still life to learn to create proportions and to do measurement with a pencil. When we draw still life- I emphasize that we draw it in order to learn, not because it is interesting to draw still life.... The third technique is the use of overhead projector, with which they can enlarge things.... Then they can choose the tools they like to use...It is important for me to lower their expectation but to provide them with techniques with which they can draw at a good level. And they do it.
(Interview, December 13, 1999)

Tamar’s position, about what kind of techniques to provide as basic tools to her students, were also influenced by her memories of herself when she was in art classes at the high school. She described her painting studies during high school as more ‘conservative’ and based on academic skills (according to the academic paradigm). She recalled that she had to put a lot of time and effort into painting her own self-portrait, and still felt frustrated with the outcome.
The process also follows needs I had as a student... My teacher was less didactic. He came with his pipe, and didn’t have any curriculum. But I remember that there were things that were very important for me, like to be able to produce a very precise description. The climax was my portrait - I worked on it for such a long time! But still it didn’t come up good. I have remembered the disappointment till today.
(Interview, December 13, 1999)

Taking into account her own experience at high school, Tamar believed that she should teach differently. She embraced the school of Art paradigm that dismissed academic training, and provided her students with “something quick that will provide them with satisfaction” (interview, December 13, 1999).

*It is important for me to teach them techniques that will provide them with an experience of success. But exercises I learned later, after the army, I teach them earlier, in the 10th grade. It is important for me to give them the tools. I hope I don’t cause them to become stiff. But I wanted to emphasize that many artists just use slides and do not invest their time in learning to draw from nature, that they can concentrate on other problems like the composition and the colors, etc...*
(Interview, December 13, 1999)

**Problem solving exercises and 'visual thinking.'**

The foundations according to the School of Art discourses included more than techniques and being exposed to different media. In also included assignments that provided the students with problem solving exercises, which to solve them the students had to use elements of the language of art in an innovative way. Tamar incorporated some of these formalistic assignments in her curriculum.

*Last year I gave the 8th grade an exercise to work on formats. They worked on special formats and created diptych or triptych. They did wonderful things. In thinking of how to work on one piece that is combined from two or three formats, we discussed whether there is a connection between the parts or they are disconnected. So, in this work they brought up their ideas and I provided the story*
that framed it. It is an exercise that the subject is free.
(Interview, December 13, 1999)

Most of the exercises that aimed to promote the students’ 'visual thinking' were not based on presenting techniques, but were developed around themes that evoked problems. Within the given themes that Tamar presented to the class, the students were asked to develop their own individual ideas, and to express them visually. Tamar liked to work with the students individually, to mentor them and help them examine alternatives and to become aware of their decisions.

*I presented the big idea and within it I worked with each student on developing his own idea. We discussed what kind of process the work involves, what does it project, etc. I mentor each of them individually.*
(Interview, December 20, 1999)

Tamar believed that her way to help the students understand “visual thinking” was through making them aware of the visual effects of their decisions. It was important for her that during the students’ creation process everything would be thought through and that all the alternatives would be examined before the decisions were made. This was her way of planning her own artwork. Already during her student teaching, she had become aware that this was not the only way to create and that this process did not suit everybody. Some preferred to create in a less controlled way, through a process of playing, of trial and error, where the creator had to decide when the work was completed. In her studio classes, she tried to expose her students to both processes.
Group projects.

Although Tamar’s perceptions of the process of art creation were part of the discourse of the school of Art, some of her methods worked against this discourse. While she was in the college, the creation of an artwork was perceived as an individual enterprise, Tamar incorporated every year a project that involved group work. She explained her decision as a technical solution for working on big scale artwork. But, she also described how group work enhanced the students’ need to articulate and explain their decisions in the process of collaborative creation, as well as to learn to accept others’ opinions (a goal that was excluded from the dominant discourse at the School of Art).

*They need to work as team because of the technical problems. But it is important because it involves a process of acceptance. It is important to know to accept another opinion, that in a creation there can be several opinions, and they also have to discuss aesthetic deliberations. They have to talk and discuss what is suitable or not suitable. When they do it by themselves, some of the process of discussing different suggestions and making decisions is missing. When they work together they have to come to a decision and to explain why it is suitable. They have to give reasons for their aesthetic decisions during their discussions, although there is one that leads the process.*

(Interview, December 13, 1999)

Exposing the students to a variety of media.

Before Tamar entered the School of Art, her art experience was limited to painting. When she described her studies at the college, Tamar talked about her transition from painting through sculpture to photography, a transition that she perceived as an important experience.
I believe that the transition process was important for me. It opened you to many directions, and some teachers bring you to think intensely.

(Interview, December 20, 1999)

The concept of exposing the art students to various media is one of basic principles of the art program at the School of Art. In contrast to Bezalel Academy, where the students were accepted to a specific department such as ceramics, photography, or fine arts, at the School of art, every student learned many media, and only later in the studies had to chose one, or combine a few media to become his or her major. Tamar adopted the School of Art's approach and decided to expose her students to various media. She used the same language when she described her experience of “getting bored” with painting during her studies, and when she explained why she provided different media such as print making, sculpture, photography, video art as part of her studio classes.

It was important for me to give them different techniques. Some students really do not find themselves during the painting lessons. I soon will teach them printing, which is great fun for them. Working with students at these ages, some find it hard to paint and draw. They know what they want. All the years they painted, and painted and they want to do something else....

(Interview, December 13, 1999)

Integrating art and art history.

In some of the studio art projects, Tamar integrated issues that were raised during the art history lessons (as in the political works, or the outdoor sculptures). She was exposed to this approach during her art education courses at the School of Art. These courses emphasized the potential to enhance the understanding of the theoretical material through art creation and to deepen the art creation through the theoretical lessons.
In the 10th grade, they worked on the political works for two months. After we finished study of the theme of political and social artworks [in art history]. In which the students inquired into political works. [In the art project] each student looked for a subject, an article or a photo in the newspaper that interest him [and] that he would like to react to....
(Interview, December 13, 1999)

Exposing the students to complicated concepts.

Tamar exposed her students to complicated concepts she believed to be essential for understanding art. These were not necessarily part of the normative discourses of her art teachers at the college. These can be regarded as more postmodernist. For example, her goal to examine with students the different ways of representing the same issue/reality, which was developed during her final art education project as a student teacher, was incorporated in her studio curriculum for the 8th graders.

With the students from the 8th grade, I actually worked on different representations of reality. I taught it through using different styles in art, and then I did the chair project with them. Now I will work with them on the millennium. With this theme I wanted to work for several lessons. I wanted to work on their feeling towards the end of the world, through something more abstract....
(Interview, December 13, 1999)

Another example was Tamar's discussion concerning whether “an artwork can be influential” and to evoke emotions and moral conflicts. (Tamar discussed the student's work using the same criteria she used in her art history lessons when she discussed political and social artworks.)

I think that the outdoor sculptures' project I did with the 11th grade students was a trigger that raised many questions about the connection between the audience and the art because they experienced feelings that were evoked by the sculptures. There were those who were shocked by some of the sculptures, or who questioned [them]. The students could actually experience how the art affected the others. Till that point, the art was considered as something beautiful, or something that
existed in our art room. Suddenly they experienced that artworks can have an impact. It had a very strong effect. These reactions included a student who ripped down the cross from the “tree of wishes,” and the principal, who couldn’t bear having the sculpture of the “danger mines” in the school, and insisted on taking it down. (Interview, December 13, 1999)

**Relating to the art world and Students’ World.**

Thinking within the dominant School of Art's discourses and rejecting the guidance of the marginalized art methods courses, Tamar believed that the art projects she chose were related to the art world.

*When we learned to plan a lesson, we learned that one can start either from the knowledge of subject matter, or from the language of the art or from the children’s world. I think that in this place, when for example I did with them the chair project, I chose the subject because artists dealt with it. But, it might also, maybe, answer to their needs.*

(Interview, December 20, 1999)

From Tamar's descriptions of her art projects, I learned differently. She always found a theme that was relevant to students’ world and at the same time related to the art world. For example, she described in detail the 'chair project' she did with the middle school students. Although Tamar first described the notion of working on a chair as a result of other artists that dealt with it, the project was presented as "Transforming a student’s chair on which we sit on for so many years" (Tamar's video of the students' exhibition) and not just as any chair. Changing their own students’ chair invited the students to relate to their world.

*The project can’t be 100% successful to all the students. I enjoyed working on such a simple theme as a chair.... It was important for me to relate to their world. I took a student's chair as a specific chair, not just any chair, as the
starting point of the artwork. I find the process of working and creating to be cool and fun. Not everybody likes it, but it happens in any kind of work.... The main things that were important for me were the use of the student chair, the planning process, the originality, and the teamwork. It [the teamwork] is something that happens only once a year.

(Interview, December 13, 1999)

Although Tamar mentioned that she intended to relate to the students' world, when she proudly presented their outcomes, (such as a wounded chair, a bride, a chair for relaxation, a rudeness chair) she didn't analyze them as representing their ideas or emotions about themselves as students, or as teens.

Another example of Tamar's belief that the art project she designed was related to the art world discourses while Tamar's narration of her teaching presented an invitation for her students to examine their world was the 'outdoor sculptures' project. The theme was part of the TE art history curriculum but Tamar developed it to make it a project in her studio class. In this project, the students had to relate conceptually to their school or to the youth village, and not just to deal with how the colors and materials related to the sculpture's surroundings.

I gave the 11th grade students an assignment to create an environmental sculpture, which related to the village 'A-Y' as a place. I told them: you can relate to A-Y as a place and what it means to you, (many of them feel that it is like a prison with all its rules and frameworks), you can relate to it as an organic place and relate to this place conceptually. This will be the starting point to your artwork.

(Interview, December 1999)

Three weeks before the art exhibition, Tamar started to work with the students on the project of outdoor sculptures that were to be displayed in the village. In the brochure that Tamar produced for the audience (the students, the parents and the
teachers), she included the students’ statements about their artworks and a map of the sculptures’ locations. Examples of some of these can illustrate that although the students developed this project with Tamar’s guidance in different directions, they all examined their reality (as students, or as living in the village, or as Israeli citizens).

‘The flying table’
The artwork relates to the school environment and describes the situation that many of the students experience during the lessons – the wish to disconnect, to dream, to be, even for just a moment, in your own private world.

‘Danger - mines!’
The artwork defines through the signs invisible areas, places where one shouldn’t walk through. The work forces the audience to distance themselves from certain areas and it questions the site as a reservation, as a safe place to the environment and its population.

‘Warning - Smoking damages your health’
The artwork, which is presented in a well known [students’ smoking] area, raises the question as to whether an artwork can have an impact on the viewer.

‘Peace tree- wishes tree’
It is a custom in different cultures to tie ribbons or colored cloth to a tree as a way to express wishes. The artwork combines the wish for peace between all nations and different religions. The wishes were collected from different kids in the village and were written on ribbons hung from the tree. They present in a symbolic way the wish for unity.
(From Tamar’s brochure for the students’ exhibition, winter 1999)

These artworks were an example of Tamar’s individual mentoring process that helped her students first to articulate their thoughts and feelings, and then to examine different artistic solutions. Tamar explained that because of the large scale of the sculptures, students had to plan carefully ahead of time what they liked to do and how, and she enjoyed that thinking and planning process.
In the outdoor sculpture, they created meaningful works and they implemented very well the artistic thinking that we discussed all the time. It bore the fruix. They didn't stay in the aesthetic limitations, and it wasn't a random event. (Interview, December 20, 1999)

This integration between knowledge that was part of a visual thinking paradigm and the students’ world was not part of the dominant discourse of the School of Art. Maybe that was part of the reasons that Tamar did not agree to the way I presented these projects. In the member check meeting, Tamar related to my analysis:

You wrote somewhere here that I dedicate a lot of attention to the students’ world. But I think that it isn’t accurate. It is true only sometimes. It can be a byproduct of things I am doing with them. But the works are connected to the art world. And the students might even be afraid of being exposed and dealing with their own feelings. (Member check meeting, January 2, 2001)

Passion to be a meaningful teacher.

It seems that Tamar’s goals and practices pushed the boundaries of the School of Art's discourses because of her passion to be a meaningful teacher. This was her criterion when I asked her about her successes and failure.

I think it was important for me that the students left nothing meaningless. Everything was thought about and alternatives were examined.

N: And when do you feel uncertain that you are a good teacher?

When it stays in the level of teaching techniques. When it stays as technique and aesthetic things. Although I believe that it has its place because it is important to get exited from these kinds of things as well. I think one needs to integrate both. (Interview, December 20, 1999)

The desire to be meaningful guided Tamar's use of knowledge and concepts that she and the art college regarded highly, in a way relevant to her students and the school's
general curriculum. For example, she used her knowledge of contemporary art to relate to
the Holocaust, an event that is memorialized by the Israeli education system on a specific
day.

For example, on the Holocaust day, I brought them a very good and strong movie
about Christian Boltanski’s work. And I also showed the Holocaust memorial
piece by Tumarkin [Israeli artist]. We analyzed and discussed these works,
questioning whether one can mirror such great tragedy.
(Interview, December 20, 1999)

Using her art knowledge in a meaningful way created a clear hierarchy among the
different paradigms Tamar incorporated in her studio curriculum. The techniques and the
formalistic type exercises were just tools, and she tried not to teach them as ends in
themselves. It was clear that Tamar perceived as a meaningful art creation process what
she called visual thinking (School of Art discourse), as going beyond ‘aesthetic
decisions.’ Tamar used it as criterion to evaluate the successes or failures of her art studio
lessons.

When I gave them a technique, like print making, they opened the drawer, chose
an image they liked, and did their work. They didn’t have to make many
meaningful decisions. Although they had to made some aesthetic decisions. I felt
that it missed the point. It stayed at the level of learning technique. They learned
to print but not to think what does it mean to print. I felt I missed an opportunity.
In the outdoor sculpture they created meaningful works, and they implemented
very well the visual thinking that we discuss all the time.
(Interview, December 20, 1999)

When Tamar worked on what she called an ‘art project,’ she asked the students to
articulate their ideas, and then to examine visual ways to express them. The first part of
this process, the discussion of what one would like to express, was the part Tamar added
to the discursive practices she became familiar with at the School of Art. This process,
that Tamar called "thinking and planning," was her way to feel meaningful as a teacher. Although Tamar was very proud of her students' achievements (especially of those that were outcomes of the big projects such as the student chair, or the outdoor sculptures), she articulated that for her the process the students went through was more important than the outcomes. An illustrative story was her work with the 12th graders on their final projects.

Students' final projects

The final projects were required as part of the matriculation exams of the 12th graders. The students' art production achievements were evaluated through these final projects by an external evaluator. But the way to approach these final projects was left to Tamar's decision. Although some of the outdoor sculptures and the video arts installations bore artworks that were more impressive, the final projects were presented by Tamar as the climax of her teaching because of the process of their creation. Going through a meaningful process was the criterion implied by Tamar in evaluation of the final projects her students did.

I was pleased with the works when the students really expressed themselves. Other students frustrated me, because they didn't want to go through a process and everything was involved with fights. One of them did everything in the last three days. I saw her work for the first time during the test, and I told this to the evaluator. The external evaluator was very excited by the idea of the work, (on which we worked together), ... but I was disappointed. (Interview, July 15, 2000)
Tamar described the final projects as the climax of her teaching because it was the experience closest to her ideal image of teaching and learning art. It incorporated a change to open guidance and individually mentoring her students.

_They [the 12th graders] do not like when someone dictates to them what to do. And I do not want to dictate things. Everything had to be built together._

(Interview, July 15, 2000)

In a somewhat romantic way, Tamar regarded these projects as providing her students with the experience of ‘real’ artists or at least close to what she herself experienced as an art student at the college, since every student had to create from a defined area, or subject that interested him or her. Tamar described the dialogue with her students as a process of reflection and creation, and she believed that it had the potential to empower her students through making them aware of their decisions. These were the basic principles of the mentoring process Tamar went through while she was developing her curriculum as a student teacher. She had already incorporated these principles in her student teaching, but as a teacher she also became aware of working within this discourse.

_When they present their portfolio [for external evaluation], they have to explain [their works], and I’ll use the opportunity to do reflection with them. I tell them that they do not have to present to the evaluator only nice works, but a process. I will sit down with their portfolio in order to understand the process they went through. I think that I do with the students something similar to what you did with us – we reflect on the processes they were going through._

(Interview, December 20, 1999)
Building relationships in which the students had the mandate to decide challenged
Tamar’s ability to guide them to improve their artworks through reflection and examining
alternatives.

*But they do not always have the tools to create a process for themselves. And they
also do not always allow you to help them examine things.*
(Interview, July 15, 2000)

When Tamar reflected on her mentoring of the final project, she tried to
negotiate conflicting feelings and goals within herself. On the one hand, she wanted to
push the students to greater achievements because these final projects represented the
students and her teaching, and she took it very personally when some student did it ‘just
to pass the test’ instead of going through a meaningful experience. On the other hand, it
was a process where she gave the students the role to lead, a position that she perceived
as a necessary condition for a meaningful art creation.

*I wanted them to go through a process so the things would become clearer for
them. There were pre-talks about what we think on the subject and what do we
want to say about it, and we had discussions in the end. In the end discussions we
looked at the work and examined what came out. Some of them wrote about the
process, others about their ideas.... But we discussed many things that they didn’t
write about.... After they designed their work, I also showed them relevant
artworks that related to their works....
It is clear that the final project involved a certain level of awareness.... I didn’t
impose on them one way [of dealing with the project], and each of them led the
process differently. The mentoring process is difficult and challenges. There are
some that are in a vacuum, and for them to produce the beginning of the process
is very challenging.*
(Interview, July 15, 2000).

Tamar provided an example of the difficulties she encountered in guiding the
students when she described a student who, as her final project, created a series of
photographs on death. The student chose the subject 'death' because she wanted to evoke
an issue she believed that people usually do not talk about. She chose to explore three
different ways of death – natural death, assassination and suicide. The student staged the
scenes and took color photos of them (Tamar said that they looked like Cindy Sherman’s
works). Then she presented them in black and white because she thought that it would
suit her subject better. Although Tamar described the artworks as very impressive, she
emphasized that she was disappointed with the process the student went through. Tamar
believed that this process should include the examination of alternative photos as a way
of inquiry and a process that would evoke awareness and perhaps new ways of
understanding the subject.

I sat with her and we discussed many options that she could try to do and then she
could choose from them. But she resisted. She had a clear idea in her mind of
what she would like to do, and she opposed my attempts to offer her another way
[of working]. I explained to her the process of how one arrives at the right
photograph after looking and choosing from among many photographs, but she
didn’t want to invest in it.
(Interview, July 15, 2000)

When Tamar described the evaluation of the final projects by the Technological
Education representative, she felt that she could explain the students’ work. She did not
present any conflicts between her and the art teacher that came to examine the final
projects, and described their interaction as ‘good’ and ‘nice.’

When we talked, I tried not to defend [the students’ work] but to explain. I
expanded on things that the students didn’t tell her when they presented [their
work]. It was a nice talk and the interaction was good. You have a chance to
explain and even to share difficulties.... I got good feedback that each one did
something different with a variety of techniques.
(Interview, July 15, 2000)
However, it seems that at least in some cases she and the external evaluator held different criteria in judging the artworks. The importance of the inner processes the students went through and the understanding that they were gaining as an outcome of this process, were Tamar’s criteria. These criteria did not always match the formal criteria of a good ‘formal’ artwork used by the external evaluator. This conflict can be best understood through an example Tamar shared with me.

This example involved a student’s final project on her father’s death, an event which she had rarely talked about before. Tamar discussed with the student how she would like to deal with her father’s death and what she would like to expose about it. The student staged people in scenes and took photographs, which she used as resources for her paintings. Each painting related to her father’s memory and her experience of learning about his death. Her paintings came out schematic and flat. Tamar explained that instead of telling her- “you do not have the necessary skills,” she discussed with her why the schematic style, which creates a distance from reality, could suit the concepts of her work. It was important for Tamar that in the text attached to the artworks the student wrote that this process helped her emotionally to deal with her father’s death. Because Tamar was moved by the story behind the artworks and believed in the importance of the process the student went through, the criticism of the external evaluator made her angry.

_The criticism was that her artworks were illustrative. It really insulted me. I don’t think that one can use these criteria to judge this work. You shouldn’t say to a student you are not able, or you do not have the skills. Instead, I think that one should understand what this schematic style does. When someone comes from outside to look at a painting, he should try to understand why it is done in this_
specific way. She did the best she could. So what can I do. In my heart, I think I did what I could. I did not raise the issue loudly in front of them [the TE]. (Interview, July 15, 2000)

Tamar’s anger, although not expressed loudly, articulated that her main goal in art education was to go beyond creating a “good art work,” which could have been seen as the end product of the School of Art discourses.

_Tamar’s Negotiation of her Art History Curriculum_

_The Conflict with the TE Program: “I Feel the Pressure Constantly”_

The matriculation exams in art history that Tamar had to prepare her students for implied normative discourses embedded in transferring objective knowledge that the students had to memorize. In the domain of art history, this meant to present the story of the (Western) masterpieces. The normative expectations of the school’s administration were “that there will be good achievements in the Matriculation exams” (interview, December 20, 1999).

The Technology Education art program Tamar followed dictated the goals, content, and sequence of her art history lessons. She had to prepare her high school students for the matriculation exams. She did not question the normative practices employed by the educational system to reproduce the knowledge the student had to memorized, though she felt that they conflicted with the teaching identity she strove for.

_I have to prepare them for the tests and the specific program [the TE curriculum] limits me.... I feel the pressure constantly. All the time. Because of this I do not enjoy [teaching]. There is a plan that you have to fulfill. If you do not cover the_
material, the students will not pass the test. And if they fail, it is your failure [as a teacher], it is all the same. It really strangles me.
(Interview, December 13, 1999)

Although Tamar resisted this kind of teaching, most of her energy was directed to fulfilling her role as dictated by this program. She constantly tried to find strategies to cover the material required for the matriculation test, strategies that she believed suited her students’ abilities. She described her students’ academic capacity as limited, a condition that she had to plan for accordingly in her teaching.

Their capacity is limited. I worked last year in a kibbutz with good students, and I could to, to, to, to, [run through the material]. They were Israeli without language problems, so you feel different. Here, explaining one artwork can take a whole lesson, and it would have taken about 20 minutes with a different class. So it is a problem. I have to be careful not to get carried away in order not to teach them during the Passover vacation.
(Interview, December 13, 1999)

Most of Tamar’s practices were based on lectures and discussions around slides that were provided by the Technology Education program, followed by student testing. Since there was no textbook, Tamar provided her students with summaries of her lessons, explaining, “so I know that they have the materials.” She gave them a notebook she had prepared.

In the notebook I collect articles and handouts. Every time I choose something else according to what suits the class. They write papers using this book. We also read from it, since there is no textbook.
(Interview, December 13, 1999)

Tamar gave to each of her students another notebook she created which included black and white reproductions of the artworks the students had to know for the test. For some of the required material for the test, Tamar used a book that was recently published.
Using this book, Tamar could vary her methods. Instead of giving them her own summaries, the students wrote papers and shared them so that together they had all the necessary materials for the test.

For example, when we learned a style, I selected a few questions that seemed to me to be essential and important. I asked them to answer the questions according to artworks that were part of the focused list for the matriculation exam. And I created together with them a notebook that eventually prepared them for the test. I told them – do the summaries and they will be for your use when you study for the test, instead of trying to summarize all the materials in April, before the test. This was the preparation for the test. It focuses you and directs you.

(Interview, December 20, 1999)

Tamar’s description of the preplanned curriculum’s for the 10th graders critiqued it and at the same time defended its rationale of providing ‘basic understanding’ to the students.

One starts with [understanding] the motivations; why one creates artworks. [This part includes: public needs, political and social motivations, and expression of the artist’s inner world.] Then one comes to a boring part; one goes through material after material in order to understand how it serves the technique [used in the artwork], why the artist chooses to work with a specific material, and why he chooses a certain composition. It is a technical [formalist] approach to the parts of the artwork, but in the end the students learn to do an inquiry from all the different angles. Sometimes when we discuss the political motivation [for art creation], we have already asked the question how did the artist express his ideas. In this case we return to the same artwork in the second part and examine why he used these colors, or chose a specific material to work with, and then we connect it [to the previous discussion]. So sometimes there is a repetition that creates for me a fatigue, and also the students aren’t enthusiastic.... After the 10th grade, the art history is taught in chronological order.

(Interview, December 13, 1999)

Tamar did not use the term ‘conflict’ regarding her role of following the preplanned curriculum and her perception of teaching as a creative field, where she as a teacher could
think about what and how to teach. Instead, she named this situation “a problem of being bored.” She was also aware that the pressure of covering the material dictated her use of methods of teaching and learning she did not like.

> It even dictates to me the ways of learning and teaching. I can’t choose certain things because I know that it means that I will not be able to cover the needed material and the slides. So then I can not use creative things like giving them the assignment of being curators, and many other wonderful ideas I have. But I feel that the rigid program doesn’t permit me to teach this way. Sometimes I do these things instead of a studio lesson....
> The dictated program makes me stand in a pressured situation in which I have to cover the materials, and it doesn’t permit me the freedom to emphasize certain points and to enrich them in other things.
> (Interview December 20, 1999)

She was less aware of the existing conflict between her goals and the preplanned program agenda concerning what the students should be exposed to in an art history program. Tamar’s criticism of the content of the curriculum she had to follow included several arguments. Referring to the part concerning the motivations for creating art, Tamar thought that “they are doing generalization.” Her critique of the part presenting the artistic means (elements and principles of design “like space, composition, line, etc”) was that the students “it is important as basic information. For me, I get sick of it.” In another part of the interview Tamar repeated: “when you teach lines and shapes... the lessons kill me, it’s so boring” (interview December 13, 1999). Even though Tamar did not explain her strong reaction of getting sick, I believe that it is connected to the conflict between the formalistic approach to art (even if it “is important as basic information”) and her own beliefs. Her position of being a meaningful teacher for her students
dominated the lessons and goals she added to the curriculum, which are described in the following section.

Tamar’s Voice: “I Like to Teach Things that are mine”

Teaching her students to memorize knowledge (learned as facts) for the test was in conflict with Tamar’s own beliefs. Tamar did not talk about the conflict in a direct way during our conversations. Maybe she did not want to admit its existence. But, she was aware that she liked to teach material she had created; She said, “I like to teach things that are mine. I wanted them [the students] to learn how to plan, to think and to implement their thinking” (interview, December 13, 1999). This was a quote from Tamar’s description of the Internet site she built and added to the public sculpture theme, which she had to teach according to the TE art history curriculum.

Tamar negotiated the teaching reality the TE art history curriculum imposed on her by teaching it as quickly as possible, almost to get rid of it, and then to add to it.

[The curriculum] includes everything [that is required] and I add. I don’t have much time to add [beyond the 170 artworks they have to know for the test]. The students’ capacity is limited.

(Interview, December 13, 1999)

Her perception of what she must add to the rigid curriculum was based on three main beliefs: a. the importance of the variety of interpretations of any art work; b. the need to connect the students to the “real” contemporary art world (through magazines, Internet, and visiting exhibitions); and c. in order to be meaningful to the students, one has to connect the material to the students’ world and make it relevant. I have chosen a
few of Tamar’s stories as examples of the different kinds of things that she added to the required curriculum.

Designing the Internet site was a time consuming project for Tamar. She had first to learn the technical process in a workshop, and then it took her three months to design the site. Tamar described the benefits of learning using the site: “In this site the students could choose the sculptures from different sites. It is different from the situation when I choose the slides for the class.” Another benefit was that during class discussions “not all the students are equally active” (interview, December 13, 1999), and working with a computer activated all of them. A third benefit, that Tamar mentioned was not connected to the use of the specific site Tamar designed, but to the connection she made between the art field and the use of the Internet as another way to become updated in the contemporary art world.

In the site Tamar built, the students had to categorize the sculptures according to what they had learned and to do an inquiry on two sculptures they chose using written criteria Tamar provided them. Tamar perceived this assignment as an opportunity for the students to “realize that they have something to say.”

[I wanted them] to take an artwork that they do not know and to inquire about it. I wanted them to realize that they have something to say…. I wanted them to rely on their opinion…. And then, at the end of the process, each had to choose a landscape (I gave them sites with landscapes) and design a suitable sculpture. It is important for me to develop the students’ artistic thinking…. I try to do it all the time even with the limited opportunities that I have [because of the TE program]. So, now for example, with the sculpture exercise, they [the students] have to make decisions. Its not that we only look [at artworks] and analyze [them]…. What was important for me was their thinking about all the deliberations of how to create a public sculpture. (Interview, December 13, 1999)
Tamar's satisfaction was not because of her students' enthusiasm. Her students found the computer activity "another theoretical learning assignment they had to do," and many of them encountered problems due to a lack of necessary skills for using the computer. Although using the site created many teaching challenges, Tamar enjoyed the process of designing the site and learning to use new technology that enhanced her teaching. More than this, it was a way for her to voice herself as an art teacher. She was proud of her site, which included activities and learning processes that reflected her beliefs and goals. These provided the students with opportunities that the preplanned curriculum did not emphasize. The students were asked to be more active through choosing the artwork and conducting an inquiry. They were asked to give voice to their opinions through writing as well as through art creation that summed their understanding of the theoretical issues. Through the site, Tamar hoped to share her teaching with other art teachers and expressed her disappointment when the superintendent of the Technological Education program didn't know to access the address Tamar sent her.

Another example of Tamar's addition to the preplanned curriculum that aimed to expose her students to the art world, was field trips to art exhibitions.

*I take them to exhibitions. It is very important for me that they see contemporary art. It was very important for me to add video-art to the program, because, nowadays, almost one third of the exhibitions present video – art. It was important for me that they would see it.... I am going to things that interest me. But it was also very interesting for them.*

(Interview, December 13, 1999)
Being able to incorporate her own interests in the current arts events with her teaching contributed to Tamar’s motivation to expose the students to contemporary art. ("These things make me feel really good. These are the small freedoms I have.") These field trips were also a reflection of her beliefs, as well as the School of Art’s position, that as an art teacher she should expose her students to the art world and influence them to become art consumers.

_I also take the students to exhibitions that interest me Like ArtFocus. It is important for me because it is very contemporary but also because I like to see it myself. These things make me feel really good. These are the small freedoms I have.... I might take them to meet a local artist this year._

(Interview December 13, 1999)

But maybe the most important thing that Tamar added to the "modernist" paradigm of the preplanned art history curriculum was when, on a daily basis, she in practice presented an alternative position that questioned the objective official story the students had to memorize. In her art history lesson (December 13, 1999), I happened to observe an example of this.

The lesson was part of a theme called “political motivation for art creation,” that introduced the students to “political artists who devoted their work to protest and to advocate social and political ideas.”22 The lesson was on the painting of Guernica by Picasso. The students had to memorize for the test the following:

- The historical event that the artwork reacted to
- The artwork emphasized the description of the war’s outcomes
- The iconography: the bull, the soldier, the horse, the light bulb, the crying mother (pieta)
- The artistic means Picasso used to express his views (colors, shapes,

22 Quoted from the curriculum of art history of the Technological Trent, in Israel.
Once Tamar finished explaining the required material (it took her almost two lessons), she took a deep breath, and then showed the students a photograph from an Israeli newspaper of a Palestinian rebel that was taken in the Gaza strip during the Intifada.\(^{23}\) Next, Tamar showed them two staged photographs of Palestinian victims of the Intifada taken by an Israeli photographer, Micha Kirshner, read the stories of these innocent victims, stories that were attached to the photos (See appendix E, figure 4 and figure 5), and discussed with the students the means used to present the victims. She led the students to find similarities between the 'crying woman' by Picasso and the photograph of the Palestinian mother holding a baby ("Is the baby asleep or dead?" asked one of the students). Looking at these photos the students reacted with a violent and uncontrolled political discussion. It evoked a response that led the students to confront their own morals and values. They found it hard to accept the photographer’s position. Can the "other" be victim? If they are victims, who are the victimizers? These photographs evoked what Britzman (1998) calls 'difficult knowledge' that confront the students with moral conflict in their own reality. When I asked Tamar why she brought these photos, and what she felt about the political discussion that they evoked, she answered:

\[\text{I brought them artworks that evoke our emotions because we are Israelis that look at them. It might also suggest to the students that one should take into consideration the context and the place in order to understand the art. Without it, one can stay indifferent to the art. (Tamar’s Interview, December 20, 1999)}\]

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\(^{23}\) The Palestinian uprising in the West Bank and Gaza Strip against the Israeli occupation.
Tamar believed that it is important to engage the students with relevant political works that reacted to their own reality. More then this, she wanted to suggest that one ‘read’ the work within a context. She also wanted the students to understand that the same issues/situation can be represented differently from various points of view, using various media. She tried to present a complex concept of the role of interpretation in art. She presented the artworks as different representations of ways to interoperate reality, and at the same time she also presented them as subject to different interpretations according to the context and the viewers.

_I also brought the photos in order to show them ... how one subject can be interpreted differently through the use of different media, or how different artists that express it in different ways. One emphasizes the emotional aspect of it, another identifies with the victims, and another just describes the situation. So the students see how one subject can be presented through different perspectives._

(Interview, December 20, 1999)

In my research diary, I noted that Tamar’s goal to show different perspectives of the same issue was developed during to her work as a student teacher, when she wanted to present different approaches to reality and move beyond transferring knowledge (research diary, December 1999).

In another interview (Member check, January 2001), Tamar referred again to the connection she created between the Guernica and the photographs, and explained that she offered the students her own way to make meaning of this artwork. She explained that the Spanish civil war was an unfamiliar event for her, and in order to be able to understand its meaning she had connected it to a relevant event.
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Table 2 – Comparison of the preplanned and Tamar’s curricula

Comparing Tamar’s added curriculum to the preplanned curriculum (Table 2), one can see that Tamar implied a different approach to the lesson. The Guernica is an artwork that became a symbol of protest against unjust violent acts that victimized innocent people. But the artwork lost its radical agenda when it was presented within an objectified discourse that distances itself from the present and the students’ experiences. In Tamar’s added lesson, rather than presenting the knowledge as an idealization of a conflict embedded in a past event to which the students could not relate, she evoked a moral conflict, and confronted the students with its meaning in the learners’ present. In light of their conflict, Picasso’s painting got a new meaning, and, at the same time, their reality was reconstructed in a new, unpleasant perspective. Tamar’s act troubled the objectivity of the knowledge (of the school and the teacher as its representative) and raised the question of the construction of meaning by an audience in a specific political context.
Through this story, I believe that one can understand that Tamar did not just add things to the preplanned curriculum. Rather, Tamar resisted constructing her identity as a technocrat who poured out knowledge as facts. She looked for opportunities where she could construct meaning for herself and her students by employing strategies and discourses she became familiar with as a student teacher. Through this teaching practice Tamar declared who she was as an art teacher. Her story can be seen as an example of how “we construct not only our teaching practices and all the relationships this entails, but our teaching voices and identities” (Britzman, 1991, p.1).

Tamar's Negotiation of Beliefs and Teaching Identity as an Art Teacher

Teaching in a situation of ‘being alone’ helped Tamar to work in a niche where she could teach relatively according to her beliefs. But, as a teacher, Tamar had to negotiate her beliefs and teaching identity with the school administrators and other teachers' expectations. She had to negotiate with the TE preplanned art history program that dictated her content and practices and with the TE representatives, who held a different discourse of the issues what is art and what is the role of art teachers. She also had to negotiate with her students’ expectations and her own expectations.

When Tamar had to face conflicts with dominant discourses held by people with power positions, she usually tried to avoid the confrontations. It seemed that Tamar accepted the conflicts as a natural part of her working conditions, and she did not always present them as conflicts during our conversations.
But Tamar did not ignore the conflicts when she believed that they harmed her students. On some occasions she voiced her anger and confronted the authority (as she did in the story of censorship of the ‘danger mine’ work). On another occasion she tried to give voice to the students: she “didn’t defend” just tried “to explain,” to “tell what the student could not tell” (her encounter with the TE external evaluator).

Throughout her teaching, Tamar’s strategy was to fulfill the requirements that were imposed on her by the dominant discourses within the educational system, and then to add what suited her beliefs and professional identity. This was her way to handle the TE preplanned program in art history that conflicted with her concepts of being a creative teacher and demanded that she transfer knowledge in an effective way. She found ways not to give up but to voice clearly her position without annoying anyone. Tamar handled the school principal’s expectations that she decorate the school with the same strategy. She decorated the school by helping the other teachers and hanging the students’ work. On the other hand, she initiated large students’ work exhibitions that she displayed twice a year. Through those exhibitions that included artworks such as video art installations and outdoor sculptures, she voiced what she believed was the essential role and value of art, which were far from decorating the school’s walls.
How Have Tamar’s Beliefs and Practices Developed Since She Graduated?

Summarizing her student teaching experience, Tamar expressed her desire to provide her students with important knowledge and to become a meaningful teacher for the students through making this knowledge relevant to them:

In the process of [my] teaching I tried to relate to the goals -- to provide art history knowledge, the language of art and to relate to the students’ emotional world. But I realized that throughout the process it was important for me to be meaningful for the students.
(Interview, April 1996).

As a student teacher, Tamar felt the need to provide her student important knowledge. She chose her theme because she believed that it was important to understand that the invention of photography assisted in freeing painters from the traditional mimetic role, and thus had a crucial influence on the development of art in the first half of the 20th century. Tamar thought that through focusing her theme on portraits, instead of just discussing the different media of photography and painting and their mutual influences, she could make the subject more relevant to the students (August 1995).

As an art teacher with five years of teaching experience, Tamar still believed that the knowledge she possessed was important. She perceived her role as an art teacher as that of "supplier" and "mediator" of that knowledge and continued to choose themes for the art projects that would provide her students with important knowledge about the nature of the art.

My teaching goals, I believe have stayed the same. I still believe in the importance of the same things. It is important for me that each student go through a process of self-development in his thinking and in his beliefs in his/her ability. (I believe that this is one of my roles to encourage the students and to motivate them.) It is
important to create a curiosity for the art world, to bring them to want to see and understand artworks and to look for the meaning and intentions. I perceive myself as a ‘supplier’ of knowledge, and at the same time as a mediator to this knowledge.
(E-mail, March 28, 2000)

Resisting discourses other than those held by the School of Art, Tamar worked within and against these discourses, developing a clear set of goals and rich teaching practices. In line with the college's discourses, Tamar wanted to teach ‘purely’ the knowledge of this area of study:

*It is a very demanding job, and I do not like to deal with the discipline problems. I don’t have the patience for the disruptions. I like to teach the art purely, but it doesn’t work that way. You have to give tests and assignments.*
(Interview, December 20, 1999)

Using the School of Art's discourses, she wanted to teach the students to develop their visual-thinking through understanding the connection between their artistic decisions and their effects on the viewer. She felt that working with high school students she could achieve this teaching goal:

*I wanted to work with the students on thinking and planning. At young ages, they also have artistic thinking and take into account aesthetic considerations, but it is difficult to talk with them about it. I felt that I needed to work with students of older ages who are more equal to me.*
(Interview, December 20, 1999)

Although Tamar believed that she worked within the discourse of the School of art and wanted to teach “purely art,” the analysis of Tamar’s stories also revealed another approach to art education. As a student teacher, Tamar connected her theme to her students’ world through providing them an opportunity to “present themselves as they want and to create things that they are part of.” As a teacher, this connection to the
students’ world developed more fully. Striving to be a meaningful teacher, Tamar provided her students with opportunities to use the art language to relate to their reality and provoked the students to question themselves, their values. Her lessons about the Intifada, the students’ chairs, the outdoor sculptures, and the 12th graders’ final projects started in her mind as a challenge related to the use of the language of art, but they also addressed other educational goals in a very powerful way. In some projects the students related to their personal reality and in others to the local community or to Israel’s political situation. As an experienced teacher, Tamar could take the risk of confronting emotional and ‘uncontrolled’ situations in her classroom and deal with ‘difficult knowledge’ (Britzman 1998).

Maybe Tamar was not fully aware of that position of hers although it influenced most of her projects because they were excluded from the dominant discourse in the School of Art. But she was aware that she wanted to be a meaningful teacher, and art could be meaningful for her students only when it related to relevant issues to her students. Thus, in her practice, through which she materialized teaching in a meaningful way, she dealt with issues that went ‘beyond aesthetic decisions.’

Although Tamar did not change the discourses within and against which she constructed her teaching practices and goals, a comparison of her later goals and practices to those she held as a student teacher can emphasize some of the developments and changes that occurred. One of these changes was that as an art teacher, Tamar became
concerned with the students' self-esteem, and with her ability as a teacher to help the students believe in their ability:

_The climax is of course all the little things, when students experience successes.... When a student comes to me and says that he doesn't know how to draw, and then creates beautiful artwork, then I feel that I showed him that he can. It is important for me with many students and it is also makes me feel good._ (Interview, December 20, 1999)

Tamar’s belief in the importance of bridging between the art world and the students’ world was a modest goal during her student teaching. Her dual intention, to make the art world accessible to the students and, at the same time, to enlarge what they perceived as art, including the visual world that surrounded them, developed to become a clear statement. As a student teacher, she wanted to expand the students’ perception of art through exposing them to artistic photographs and to make them aware of the visual culture they consumed through the photographs in their magazines (July 1995). As an art teacher, Tamar expanded the same concept to many of her teaching practices in her theoretical lessons as well as in her studio classes. She not only used the photographs from their magazines as a starting point for their artworks, and discussed with them the artistic means used in newspaper photographs as well as in ‘artistic photography,’ but expanded her practices that enhanced the students’ access to and curiosity about the contemporary art world. Moreover, she tried to address the concept by providing her students with opportunities to participate in art events, visits to museums, art sites on the Internet, and artists’ studios, and including video-art installations as part of her studio
curriculum. At the same time, she helped the students to find the art in their own culture, in photographs, advertisements, and the buildings that surrounded them.

When Tamar was asked during her student teaching to articulate what she considered the importance of presenting her students the mutual developments of photography and painting, she became aware that it was not the knowledge itself. She believed that it was important to present different perceptions of reality and different ways of representing these perceptions (August 1995). As an art teacher, Tamar continued to use photography and painting for the same purposes (December 1999). Moreover, the importance of the interpretive character of the artworks and the meaning we construct through interpreting the artworks was developed into an overarching concept in her teaching.

Related to this concept, that there is no one way to represent reality or to interpret an artwork, was her democratic notion of the knowledge constructed through interpreting the art works. This was one of Tamar’s goals described in her written document of the final art education project she submitted to the college. She wrote:

*I believe that the interpretation of each individual student serves the freedom of subjectivity, that each student can express his views and hear opposing views about the same artwork.*

(Tamar’s final Art Education Project, January 1996, p. 32).

During her student-teaching, this concept was limited to the way Tamar believed that each student should relate to his or her work, and hear or participate when they critiqued together the students’ work. I believe that her emphasis on accepting diverse opinions in a democratic way was in contradiction to what she experienced as the
dominant discourse at the School of Art. The art critique at the School of Art done by the art teachers (mostly males) of the students’ work (mostly women) was a frightening experience to many of the students because of the unequal power that was involved in this process. It was an experience of being publicly judged in front of all the other art students at the college. Tamar, as student teacher, wanted to use the public art critique as a teaching method, but to establish a different discourse, based on listening and accepting all the different opinions.

At the boarding school Tamar had to negotiate the concept of democratic knowledge, which was not in line with her role of teaching ‘the knowledge’ to be memorized for the test. As an art teacher, Tamar emphasized the importance of accepting and praising different opinions in her studio lessons. She related to this goal not only during the process of critiquing their artworks with the students, but also through providing them an opportunity to create collaboratively. Tamar repeated a collaborative project with the middle school students every year, although she described it as a challenge and an overwhelming teaching process because the students did not know how to work together. This notion, which was not part of Tamar’s student teaching, contradicted with the individual creative process nurtured at the School of Art. May be the goal “to work on a common idea, to learn to share and to discover that one can create together” became an issue for Tamar in the boarding school, where her individual teaching situation and “being alone” were perceived by her as problematic. The importance of collaborative artwork could also be another way Tamar used to be a
meaningful teacher by relating to the learning community she encountered, a community that not only learned together but lived together at the youth village.

Tamar’s student teaching was based on reflecting on her own beliefs and experiences as an artist. In her written and oral reflections on her student teaching, Tamar was troubled by her emphasis on planning ahead for the artworks and examining all the alternatives before deciding what to do. This was her way of creation as an artist, and because she provided this way of creation to her students, she felt that they were going through a thoughtful creation process. But, at the same time, she was aware that this was not the only way to create. She realized already during student teaching that this process didn’t suit everybody, that some preferred to create in a less controlled way, through a process of a playing with colors and materials, of trial and error.

_I did not want to present one way. There were students who planned in advance and there were those who worked in the opposite direction and explained their works and what they did at the end. In my summary I wrote that it was important to accept both ways. That it was important for me as a teacher not to be too dominant and to make everyone plan in advance._

(Interview, April 96)

Continuing to be a reflective teacher, Tamar still felt that it was difficult to work against herself. She preferred that her students plan ahead and examine the alternatives before deciding what and how to create, even though she knew that for some students it was important to present the “opposite way” of creation.

_I try all the time to be in a dual position. I know the way I tend to think and work and try not to impose it, and to accept that some of them like to work more intuitively._

(July 15, 2000).
Tamar felt that she could be most helpful to her students when they had to examine alternatives and to become aware of their decisions when she mentored them individually.

*I provide the big idea and within it I work with each student on developing his own idea. We discuss what kind of process the work involves, what does it project etc. I mentor each of them individually.*

(Interview, December 20, 1999)

Although she used a similar process when she guided her students during the student teaching, it became much more meaningful when she worked with her students over a longer period of time and when she could develop a dialogue based on a more equal relationship. She described her mentoring of the 12th graders in the final project as the climax of her teaching because both she and the students could lead the process. This kind of mentoring process required Tamar, as a teacher, to be sensitive to the student’s intentions, even when they were just vague, as well as to use her broad art knowledge appropriately. In this unpredictable and uncontrolled teaching process, Tamar felt creative. She felt that she worked with the students on an inner process, helping them to articulate their thoughts or feelings, but also on a process of understanding what their artistic decisions projected to the viewers. This double work was her way of using the knowledge and the discourse she learned at the college in a way that enhanced her ability to be meaningful art teacher. This process pressured Tamar “to give and to give”. And although she understood that “you have to adjust to the limitations of the place,” she continued to work with her students as she would have worked in an art college.
Tamar's beliefs and practices were possible because of her deep understanding of the School of Art’s discourses. Working within these discourses in a separate domain and being alone created for Tamar teaching opportunities ("I have a lot of freedom") and at the same time limited them. She invested a lot of energy and thought to address in creative ways the system’s expectations as well as her own goals that conflicted with the system normative discourses. She kept reflecting on her teaching, and tried to provide meaningful experiences to the students. But it was clear that the discourses that provided her these innovative and energetic practices also prevented her from becoming aware of how her practices related to the students’ life experiences and realities, and push the boundaries of the School of Art's discourses.
CHAPTER 5

SHAPING THE SCHOOL WHILE BEING SHAPED BY IT

NOGA'S CASE STUDY

Introduction

Noga’s in-depth case study starts with the presentation of a general description of her, followed by an account of our relationship (1994-2001). The first phase of the case study relates to the process of Noga’s constructing her beliefs and teaching identity as a student teacher within and against the discourses of the School of Art and the Department of Art History at Tel Aviv University (1994-1996). In this phase I use data I collected over the period of 1994-1996. It includes my documentation of the mentoring meetings with Noga (January 1995 till June 1995), Noga’s reflective writing (submitted in June 1995), instructional materials she developed and used, Noga's final art education projects (submitted in April 1996), and an interview comparing her student teaching and her first year at the elementary school (April 1996). Using this data, I describe Noga’s beliefs during her student teaching as “a time of formation and transformation, of scrutiny into what one is doing, and who one can be” (Britzman, 1991, p. 8).
The second phase of Noga’s case study relates to Noga’s teaching at an elementary school (1995-2000), where she became part of a new team of teachers who started teaching at this school in 1994. During her teaching, Noga continued her studies in a three year Art Therapy Program.

Using data I collected over the period from June 1999 till January 2001, I examine how Noga constructed her beliefs and teaching practices within and against multiple discourses. The data was collected through a questionnaire (June 1999), interviews (December 1999, January 2001), school visits (December 1999), phone conversations and e-mail correspondence (June 1999- January 2001), Noga's instructional materials (1995-2000), and my research diary.

Noga's narration as teacher related to the discourses of the art history department, the School of Art, the Art Therapy Program, Noga's peer teachers, and the art inspection of the educational system. I was interested in understanding how Noga perceived the answers to the question concerning *why teach art?, what is the role of art in her school?*, and *how should one teach art?*, within and against these multiple discourses. In presenting Noga's art teaching practices, with which she transformed her school, I was interested in following the mutual process of how she shaped the school while being shaped by it.
Description of Noga

Noga, in her 30th year, was an art teacher at an elementary school that serves a new middle class neighborhood in Ramat-Gan, one of the cities in the Tel-Aviv metropolitan area. She started to work at that school immediately after graduating from the School of Art (September 1995).

Noga was born and raised in a kibbutz in the Galilee. Her parents were divorced. Her mother left the kibbutz and remarried. Her husband earned an MA degree in art history. After the army, Noga studied art history at Tel Aviv University. When she graduated, she went to the School of Art to earn an art teacher certificate. During that period she lived in Tel Aviv with her boyfriend, who later became her husband. In May 2000, she gave birth to a baby son. After the baby's birth Nega did not return to her teaching position.

When Noga described her early childhood (December 1999), she talked about it through the perspective of her elementary students. She studied art like all the other kids in her kibbutz:

I do not remember what I learned in the art lessons when I was in the elementary school. But I recall that the art room was a special place. It was in a different building and one had to cross the lawns to get to it, not like here. (Interview, December 28, 1999)

Noga described the aesthetic as being always part of her life and her family.

In my family they appreciate very much beautiful things. For example, they always showed me the color of the sky. Things that I believe are very important to show the kids today, because I think that this is art. (Interview, December 28, 1999)
Relating to her early connection with art, Noga explained that she loved to work with materials and enjoyed discovering new things, but never had pretensions of becoming an artist or an art teacher.

_The kids asked me many times if I was talented in art._

N: And what do you reply to them?

_I do not relate to the word talented. I told them that I loved to work with all kinds of materials and to try. But I didn't think that I would become an art teacher. I was maybe interested in touching materials but I never regarded myself as an artist. Never._

(Interview, December 21, 1999)

During her high school studies, Noga chose to learn art for the matriculation exams, which included studies in art history and studio art. She described these studies as “not serious,” explaining, “it wasn’t a real art department. We were a group of students that wanted to study art” (12.28.99). Nevertheless, Noga also described a wonderful art history teacher who taught in this program and influenced her to earn a Ph.D. in art history.

_I had in high school a wonderful art history teacher. And that’s why after the army I went to study art history in the university. I thought O would do a Ph.D. in this area. I was sure that this was my direction and that it was what I would like to know. I didn’t think about teaching in the university, but I wanted to become an expert in this area._

(Interview, December 28, 1999)

Noga cleaned houses in order to pay her tuition for the art history studies at Tel Aviv University. Noga wasn’t encouraged by her friends to study in this “impractical” area (but maybe her mother and her husband encouraged her). Nevertheless, Noga did not perceive this as a problem; rather, the problem was that she did not like the approach to
art in the Art History department. She felt that the emphasis on memorizing facts without creating an inner connection or depth, missed that what she loved about the area.

People always asked me ‘why do you study this nonsense, are you a Rothschild?’ [a rich person] .... They all asked me ‘what will you do with art history?’ And I didn’t know.... It didn’t bother me. I wasn’t practical. But in the university they spoiled it for me. From the beginning it was clear to me that it isn’t what I wanted to learn and that I would never do the second degree in the university.... This memorizing that you had to do in the university made me feel that once you graduated from there you would hate art. I believe that one should destroy that department. They stress the memorization of periods and ...and you do not create any connection with it. I was studying for the test with my husband and if he had gone to the test he would have gotten the same grade as I. It was learning by heart the slides from Johnson, History of Art. There was nothing more beyond it. There was no depth. And I didn’t like that method.

(Interview, December 28, 1999)

Earning a BA in art history, but disappointed with the studies at the university, Noga decided to “start to live” through doing a teaching certificate in art history. She chose the certification program at the School of Art (1994-95) because she learned that it included art and not just art history, and that it offered a different approach to art than the university.

Her one-year study program at the college was constituted of courses in art education and studio classes. Noga described her encounter with the School of Art as a shocking experience, in a place where “everybody had the pretension of being an artist.” At the beginning of her studies there, she strongly opposed the place’s normative discourses and attitudes.

Everyone seemed to me to be an artist. And I felt that I was not an artist, and I didn’t want to go there.... I thought that everyone there was very talented and there was nothing for me to do there. They had a different style. It was so different from the university. I also didn’t like it that everyone knew everyone else. I didn’t
like it. In the beginning, I was so opposed to the place. And I thought it was my fault that I didn’t think I was talented but still was interested in this area. I was interested in experiencing and looking at art but I did not want to become an artist.... I didn’t like it.... I suffered from this when I was in the Midrasha [School of Art] where everybody posed as artists. It was the place where I had the lowest self-esteem.
(Interview, December 28, 1999)

In the studio courses, Noga felt threatened because the students got an assignment to create at home and then brought their artworks to class for criticism. She explained:

“The analysis of every line makes you feel as if you are naked. I was not ready to expose myself” (April 1996). Nevertheless, she felt that she understood the exact meaning of the discussions in these lessons “sometimes better than the others” (April 96). She also felt that they broadened her art perception, as well as her knowledge of contemporary art (April 1996). After she felt less threatened in the School of Art, her love of art, even though she defined it differently than the dominant discourse there, could flourish again.

It was very difficult for me, especially the art studio classes. And then at a certain point I got the idea. I started to see works and how the art teachers related to them, and I understood that there was a gap between what I thought, that everybody was talented, and the reality. And then it became less frightening.... But the love for art was restored in the Midrasha [School of Art]. It took a while till I got to the point that I didn’t care whether the others wanted to become artists.
(Interview, December 28, 1999)

Noga’s student teaching experience, as part of her studies in the Methods of Art Teaching course, was adjusted to compensate for her lack of teaching experience (the other students spent one day a week during the two years prior to that course). During the first semester, she observed art teachers at elementary schools, as well as art education activities in two different art museums, and wrote a journal about her observations. In the
second semester, she did her final art education project, which included designing an art unit and teaching it at a middle school. Noga described her experience in this course as a complex one. She felt that “my head opened up” to approaches other than transferring knowledge through lectures with slides. But she also felt threatened because she could not yet imagine herself coping with the freedom of choice that was offered to her as an art teacher.

For three years at the Tel Aviv University I was looking at slides. And I remember that when the groups [in the art methods course] started to present their ideas and we discussed them at class, suddenly my head opened up. What kind of an archaic method is the lecture with slides? Why should we do it with children? One could use it from time to time.... So I felt that my head opened up, but I was also scared. I already saw the potential in art education, but I couldn’t picture myself as an art teacher.

(Interview, December 28, 1999)

[The studies at the art methods course] opened me to understand that a lesson doesn’t have to be a conventional thing, that there are a thousand possibilities.... Back then it threatened me to understand that there are a thousand options but I don’t know them. I think that this was very important to me.

(Interview, December 28, 1999)

During Noga’s student teaching, she suffered from lack of self-confidence and underestimated herself. Many times and in varying ways she expressed her fear that “I am not good enough,” although the cooperative teacher and I, as her mentor and supervisor, were very impressed with her teaching. Since her studies of education or pedagogy were limited, Noga felt that the Art Methods course gave her basic teaching tools.

I think that everything was important. I didn’t know anything when I came there. I hadn’t studied education before. I think that it is important to relate to the children’s age. Also, I think that it is important to keep in the back of your mind where the child is in the sequence of development. (Interview, December 28, 1999)
Beyond teaching tools, the final project in art education, which was based on Noga's beliefs, was a teaching experience in which she could start examine “what one is doing, and who one can be” (Britzman, 1991, p. 8). This relieved Noga from the approach of transferring knowledge, which was the normative discourse of the university. Noga explained the felling of "liberation" she experienced in her student teaching:

*The goals are not to transfer knowledge or material. The final project released me from that perception of teaching and learning which was worshiped at the university. At the university, the academic way of thinking praised the memorization of knowledge. We learned nothing there, in art history. And it is silly. Nowadays, every child can push a button and find all the material on Michelangelo. It is not our role. Our role is to be their mentors and to motivate them and show them the way they can reach the material.... It [the final project] was not only a way to overcome the fears. The final project gave me liberation. Even now when I feel under pressure [to teach knowledge], I tell myself, wait a minute, what did you learn? And then I calm down. No one will ask me on the judgment day what knowledge you have contributed to your students?*  
(Interview, April 96)

In September 1995 Noga started as an art teacher at an elementary school where she worked during the time this study was conducted. During our meeting in April 1996, she described the students and the principal as wonderful and as the reasons for her success. A year later she started a three year Art Therapy Program, and became familiar with a third approach to art education, which suited her beliefs about the role of the art in people’s lives in general and in her own.

*I think that the therapy [studies] made me even closer to my art. A year ago I did a huge artwork that I worked on for two months. It was the first time in my life that I felt that the art was inside me, that I needed to get up and work on it, that I could not act differently.... As art therapists we had to do an artwork on ourselves. It was a workshop in which we went through a sort of art therapy during the year, and at the end we had to participate in an exhibition. It was very meaningful. I think that the freedom to create that I permit the children here gave*
me a lot of freedom. It opened me. I enjoyed their creation and it gave me legitimization to create myself. To sit at home and to draw something without thinking what it will be.... It is for yourself, and not for a title that you are an art teacher and have to draw with oil crayons.
(Interview, December 28, 1999)

As an art teacher with four years of teaching experience, Noga still rejected any appreciation of her wonderful teaching accomplishments. As she said in our conversation: “Wonderful things? I do not think it is wonderful” (Interview, December 28, 1999). She thought that there was nothing to see at her school, although almost everyone who entered the school mistook it as an art school.

Every time it surprises me when someone says it.... I see that many appreciate the idea [of the gallery trustees], but to me it seems obvious.
(Interview, December 28, 1999)

Noga’s presence was strongly noticed, and not only in the way the school looked. Students and teachers constantly asked for her attention during the lessons as well as during the breaks between them. For an outside visitor like me, it seemed impossible to distinguish between her and the school community. She started her day at 7:30, cleaning and arranging the works from the previous day with the assistance of student helpers. This was necessary since Noga’s students worked with a lot of different materials inside and outside her classroom. From 8:00 o’clock, she started to teach. Each class in the building (1st grade – 7th grade) got two hours of art every other week so that Noga could work with a half size class for a sequence of two hours. (The normal class size in Israel is 40 students). During the breaks, children came to Noga with many individual issues. Some wanted to discuss with her the individual exhibitions that they were planning to
hang on the school walls, others to make sure that after school ended they had a meeting of gallery trustees (who were responsible for the art gallery at the school). Noga tried to listen to everyone, and felt that this demanded a lot of energy.

_Teaching demands a lot of energy, from the moment I enter the school. If we had just passed through the corridor, I would have met parents and children who came for afternoon activities. It takes a lot of mental energy. When I return to my home, I tell my husband I don’t want to talk with anybody. I talked today with 500 people. There were days that I would ask him: do you believe me?_ (Interview, December 28, 1999)

Noga, who was very reflective during her student teaching, continued to be a reflective teacher ("I look at everything in a critical way"), and raised basic teaching questions that relate to the different approaches she was exposed to during her studies of art education in the university, the School of Art and the Art Therapy program.

_Many times I get up in the morning and, say to myself, ‘what is this nonsense that I am dealing with. For what do I need it.’ I am not sure in my way.... Sometimes I think that they [the children] will not know what art is, or that I do not know enough.... Maybe I give too much freedom? Specifically I felt with the 7th graders that the free creation was for some of them very difficult, and they became violent._ (Interview, December 28, 1999)

Although Noga felt that she was part of a team of teachers in her building who worked together, she expressed the need to have a group of art teachers with which she could discuss these kinds of problems. She repeated her need for a team of art teachers in the interview (April 1996), and in the questionnaire (June 1999). In the member check meeting (January 2001), she explained that in the art therapy program she belonged to a group that discussed together problems and questions they encountered, and she believed that this kind of professional group discussion could be helpful for art teachers as well.
In the questionnaire (June 1999), Noga described as the main causes for her satisfaction in art teaching the freedom she had in her work, and her encounter with the children from whom she “learned every day something new.”

*I enjoy very much the encounter with the children. Every day I learn something new from them. I enjoy their creativity and their openness. My satisfaction is to see each child succeed in expressing himself freely through a media he likes in an independent way.*

(Questionnaire, June 1999)

**Description of our Acquaintance and Relationship**

My acquaintance with Noga started in 1994 during Noga's studies at the School of Art. She was my student in an Art Teaching Methods course. I mentored Noga in her final art education project, which was required as part of the art methods course and as part of the teaching certification requirements. We started the individual mentoring meetings in January 1995. In these meetings Noga developed an art unit she later taught at an inner city middle school in Tel-Aviv. She developed the theme she chose according to her goals in art education and her beliefs about her capability or lack of capability for teaching. Most of the meetings were conducted during the evenings at my home, but some were in the teachers’ room. Noga did her teaching from March till May 1995. During that period, we had four conversations over the phone, I observed her second and third lessons at the school and discussed them with her. I was also in contact with her cooperative art teacher. At the end of the year, Noga submitted a final report on her teaching experiences.
In September 1995, Noga started to work as an art teacher at an elementary school. During that year she sent me the written drafts of her final art project. We met again in April 1996, when Noga submitted her final version of her project. At that meeting we conducted an open-ended interview that was related to summarizing the process she went through as a student teacher. The summary interview was planned to take place at the end of the implementation stage (May 1995), but in April 1995 I was hospitalized and this meeting, along with further lesson observations, was canceled. The interview which was conducted eight months after Noga began working as an art teacher, included a comparison between Noga’s teaching experience as student teacher and her teaching experience as an art teacher.

During the mentor meetings I had with Noga, I felt that my role went beyond that of art education supervisor, or of a co-investigator to scrutinize an art education issue. Many of our conversations were not centered around helping Noga to reflect on her decisions or the assumptions she held about art education, since Noga projected strongly her feelings of insecurity and her lack of confidence in her teaching abilities. It seemed that developing the art unit also involved a necessary process of constructing Noga’s self-confidence. Going through this process with Noga made me feel that our relationship was meaningful to her, and I felt very satisfied when I learned that she had overcome her fears and decided to go to a job interview. Knowing her intellectual potential and her teaching abilities, I was not surprised that Noga not only accepted the teaching job, but also established herself as a unique and strong art teacher.
When I started this study, I was interested in including Noga as a research participant since I had documented the developments that occurred in her beliefs while she was becoming an art teacher (Cohen-Evron, 1999). I phoned Noga in July 1999. In this conversation she told me that she had married her boyfriend and that she was studying art therapy as well as continuing happily to teach at the same elementary school. I explained to her my research purposes and asked whether she would agree to be a research participant. She gave me a positive answer: "how can I refuse you?" Reflecting on our conversation, I wrote in my research diary:

*I had mixed feeling about Noga’s answer. I was happy to have her as a research participant—since I had rich data about the development of her beliefs as student. But, I also was afraid that she had agreed to participate in the research because she felt that she owed it me. I helped her as a student – and now it was her turn to help me. Or was she unhappy to be in the focus of a research in part because she underestimated herself? Even according to that interpretation, the problem of power positions existed.*

(Research diary, Israel, July 1999)

I went to Noga’s school twice during December 1999, on days Noga chose. Noga was in the early months of her pregnancy. She told me that she and her husband had just moved to a new town that was built in Jerusalem mountains, half an hour’s drive from her school. She was working very hard trying to finish the art therapy program and teach at the same time.

My feelings during the visits were mixed. I was amazed by her powerful practices and thrilled that I could study such a strong art teacher from whom I could learn so many things. But I also felt that I was a burden to her because she did not feel at ease to be in the center of my questions. I felt that it was not clear what Noga was gaining from my
research. While with the other research participants I felt that, although our conversations came on top of their busy schedule, they enjoyed reflecting on their teaching and getting someone’s attention to their thoughts and feelings, Noga didn’t need it. She had many opportunities to deal with herself and her teaching as part of her art therapy workshops. My feeling that I was an outsider entering a close and warm community without giving anything back was enhanced by one of the teachers in the teachers’ room, who asked whether I was the art inspector (In comparison, at one of the other sites a student mistakenly thought that I was the art teacher’s sister).

During my school visits (December 1999) I got the impression that Noga was an integral part of the community of teachers and children in her building. I also was amazed by her intensive and overwhelming interrelations with them. Their relationships with Noga were at the center of the tapes I recorded during these visits. She ‘covered’ herself with students and teachers, and I could hardly talk to her in privacy. Since the time I could talk with Noga was limited by the attention she constantly gave to the students and teachers, she suggested that I conduct some interviews with her students. I learned from them interesting and different perspectives on Noga’s art program, but I felt a bit frustrated that I could not talk more with her. Her situation enhanced my theoretical notion that one cannot study a teacher’s beliefs or identity separately from her context.

I was very happy when Noga scheduled a quiet interview in her school after her work and before she had a teachers’ meeting. During that interview, I found that Noga partially ignored or did not answer some of my questions. For example, when I asked her
where the notion came from to use art as a means to provide the children with a place where they could feel confident, she thought for a while and then replied: “I think I would need a yearlong therapy workshop to answer that question. (She laughed). I have to think about it…” (12.28.99).

After Noga’s baby was born (May 2000), I talked with her over the phone a few times and learned that she had decided to stay at home and not to return in September to her school (“How can I miss any of his new achievements?”). She also told me that the teachers at her school expected her not to return to school, because they assumed that she would be devoted to her son, as she was devoted to the school.

Our last meeting was held in Noga’s house in January 4, 2001, when I read to Noga the first version of my case study and asked her opinion about it. Noga’s rejection of being at the center of my attention, or any attention, and my feeling that she participated in the research only because she could not refuse me were confirmed during that member check meeting. She said: “I only agreed to participate in the research because it was you” (January 4, 2001).

Phase I

Noga’s Beliefs and Teaching Identity as a Student Teacher

During her final art project as a student teacher, Noga articulated her perceptions of art education and of herself as an art teacher. Through the process of dialogue and
reflection, which provided Noga with opportunities to reexamine her teaching goals and practices, she became aware of her positions and reinforced them.

In the first mentoring meeting (January 17, 1995), Noga explained her reasons for choosing ‘the dream’ as the theme of her planned art unit. She explained that this subject has the potential to relieve students from the need to mimic reality in a 'realistic style,' a need that can frustrate those who do not have the skill, while, on the other hand, those who have a tendency toward realistic description “can work like Magritte.”

Although Noga’s background was art history studies, her explanations about her choice of subject point out that she perceived the challenges of art education in studio activities. Her goals were directed toward supporting her future students’ self-confidence and overcoming the feelings of insecurity that some art studio activities can cause. Her arguments were broadened in the second (February 15, 1995) and third mentoring meetings (February 27, 1995), when Noga was asked to think about how her theme related to the various aspects of art teaching (e.g., the students, art history and cultural context, visual language, and techniques and skills).

*Noga brought to the meeting a table of possible lessons and a process she would like her student to go through. The table of possible lessons was very rich (23 different lessons). It related to various aspects - Freud, Surrealism, students' self-realization.*

(My notes from Noga’s mentoring meeting, February 27, 1995)

Noga’s written final project included a detailed reasoning of her goals and intentions in choosing ‘the dream’ theme (I coded the paragraphs for the following analysis):
[a] "The subject 'the dream' permits introduction of an important chapter in the modern history of art and culture.... The Surrealists believed that while dreaming, the human is freed from logical and emotional boundaries and he can express his imagination and talent. They believed that through addressing the human's inner world, the sub-consciousness, the dreams and their meaning, one can find a solution to man's problems in modern times and enrich everyday reality.

[b.] The non-logical combinations in the dreams, which according to Freud have an inner meaning, inspired the surrealistic artists. They looked for new connections between things, connections that are created from the combining of objects, and the connotation which this combining creates in the viewer's mind, according to his own inner world.

[c.] I believe that this subject is always relevant. We all experience dreams and therefore we can identify with the content and issues that this subject raises. The subject emphasizes and expresses in particular the unique inner world of each individual as a creator as well as a viewer.

[d.] I believe one can compare the door that opens to a man through his dream, according to the Surrealists, and the door that art education seeks to open. Both aim to provide the freedom, the imagination and the authenticity that will lead the human to the ability to express his inner world (e.g., his fears, memories, desires), and to create an individual expression that relates to cultural knowledge.

[e.] The subject 'the dream' provides the understanding and experience that art can include various aspects of the existing world and create a reality that is different from the one we see.

[f.] In addition, through the subject one can introduce the students to different ways of creation: an illusionary description that aims to break the illusion, non-logical combinations, using random occurrences and associations in the creating process, and creating an individual symbolic language with which the artists 'play' and express themselves freely.

(Noga's final art education project, April 1996, p.1)

Noga's explanation of her goals incorporates and expands those goals that were discussed during our dialogue in her student teaching planning stage and in the teaching experience. Analyzing her writing, one can find a repeated emphasis on enhancing the "inner world" and the "inner meaning" of the artists or the viewers (b & c). Dealing with
‘the dream’ provided Noga with an opportunity to present art as “the freedom, the imagination and the authenticity that will lead the human to the ability to express his inner world (e.g., his fears, memories, desires), and to create an individual expression.”

At the same time, her goals reflected a comprehensive approach to art education (Wilson, 1997) that was promoted by the mentoring of the planning process.

In her first two paragraphs (a & b), the goals related to exposing the students to the surrealist movement as knowledge of art history that was related to general culture development (the influence of Freud’s dreams theory). Her third paragraph emphasized the connection of her theme to her students’ experiences (“we all experience dreams”).

In the last three sections (d, e, & f), Noga explained the potential of her theme to deal with the nature of art and its relation to reality. Through "the dream" she could present different ways to create art and to perceive it; art can relate to the existing reality, as well as create a different one. Understanding this notion could enhance the feeling that one can create "freely" and "play." Noga's belief in the expressive aspect of art creation, which this theme could enhance, was already described in the first mentoring meeting (January 1995), but in her writing she expressed her position in a more detailed and persuasive way.

During the interview that summarized Noga’s student teaching experience and compared it to her teaching at the elementary school (April 1996), she repeated her main goal in art education: “that the kids will feel secure in their age and in what they are.” This perception of art education that was developed during her student teaching
continued to be part of her deep commitment. In this interview Noga referred to her beliefs about art education in a broader way. In part, she expressed a broader view because she was not asked to relate to her teaching goals of a specific theme (such as 'the dream'). But it can also be explained by the additional eight months of experience as an art teacher, in which Noga continued to reflect on her goals as art educator and to develop her practical theories in action (McCutcheon, 1995).

> What I perceive as important is not the outcome, what one can hang on the wall. I believe it is important that the kids will feel secure in their age and in what they are. This is my primary goal.... I don't think that the kids have to memorize terms and names. I think that it is more interesting to open other possibilities for them to look at the world and to express themselves.  
> (Interview, April 1996)

In the interview (April 1996), Noga presented her goal to enhance the self-confidence of her students in their ability to create and to perceive artworks as part of the practical theory she developed within and against the dominant discourses she was exposed to. She presented her goals as opposing the transfer of knowledge and memorization of terms and names, an approach to art education she was familiar with from her university studies. She also presented her goals as opposing the learning or teaching of a formalistic language taken out of context, an approach that she associated with the dominant discourse in the art classes at the School of Art. She found support for her approach in the discourses of the classroom teachers she worked with at the elementary school.

> In the elementary school I see that the teachers teach to read and to write the language in a holistic approach. They do not separate it. Rather they teach it within the context. I think that the color, the shape, the line are like the parts of
the language. And they need to be taught in a context as well. I see how the children look at the pictures at the school gallery, and suddenly discover how the painter has used the colors. They absorb the language. Why should I as a teacher take the line or the color out of its context? They are using them all the time anyhow. I am satisfied with the subject of my final project, which also didn’t tend to the formalistic aspect of art.
(Interview, April 1996)

In her explicit practical theory in action Noga incorporated her previous beliefs. For example, the goal "to open other possibilities for them [the students] to look at the world and to express themselves" was expressed already in her first mentoring meeting (January 1995). Following her student teaching experience and eight months of teaching, it seemed that Noga had become more aware of her beliefs that art education can enhance the child’s self-confidence. Noga not only became aware of her goals, but she also developed awareness and understanding of the importance of teaching art in a broader context ("I don’t want the art classroom to be a separate domain from the rest of the school," interview, April 1996). She believed that a meaningful way of teaching art opposed a formalistic attitude toward the language of art. This development was part of her reflection on her students’ reactions using the school’s discourses.

As student teacher and as beginning art teacher Noga looked for alternative ways to learn and teach the knowledge she gained at the university and at the college. These ways grew sophisticated once Noga got over her fear of teaching and felt more at ease with her identity as an art teacher. But the process of overcoming the fears was not easy, since Noga’s self-esteem as a student teacher was low. I believe it is important to
follow her process of overcoming her fears because it can provide interpretations of some of Noga’s notions regarding her teaching goals and practices.

In my notes from the mentoring meeting with Noga, ‘fear’ and ‘insecure’ were words that could be found repeatedly in different situations while she was planning the unit and teaching it. Although she felt more self-confidence once she finished her teaching plan in detail, Noga tended to criticize herself in a destructive way (“May be I am really not suitable for teaching” Mentoring meeting, March 27, 1995).

During the interview on April 1996, Noga described her teaching, related to her self-confidence:

"When I started the final project I was so scared. Everything was new to me, how to plan a lesson, how to analyze a subject. When you told me to think about 20-30 lessons, it looked impossible. It looked so difficult that I couldn’t believe that I would make it. But then you have told me that I have already done in my life things that were more difficult. And it was a key phrase for me, because I thought: yes, I have really done things that were more difficult.... Today I enjoy letting myself to follow the children’s direction [child centered]. Sometimes I think that I am not serious enough. I have a lot of debates and I think a lot.... The final project gave me confidence. My boyfriend said that if I didn’t do the final project I would never become a teacher. Without this experience I did with you I would never even go to a work interview.... It takes a lot of courage to go to a principal and to present yourself. You have to believe in yourself. The final project helped me in this issue. But I know I still have a long way to go. (Interview, April 1996)

As a beginning art teacher, Noga still feared that she might not be 'good enough' because of what she believed to be her limited knowledge. Her fears also related to other teaching challenges: "I was very anxious about how the students would accept me, what kind of relationships we would establish? And how the lessons would go?" reflective writing, June 1995). While these fears were the biggest obstacles that challenged her
student teaching, as an art teacher they did not prevent her from trying things that might be risky. Although she was only in her first year of teaching, she tried practices which she believed would serve her goals as an art educator: to enhance the self-confidence of all her students in their ability to create and to perceive artworks.

*I feel I was really brave this year. And I did try a lot of things. For example I have students who were nominated as the gallery’s trustees. I did not choose the good students. On the contrary, I chose some shy girls and a student from special education. And they are responsible. They decide on the exhibitions, hang them and do activities with the other kids.*

Interview, April 1996

While some of Noga’s goals, such as enhancing the children’s self-confidence, were consistent from the beginning of her student teaching, one can find changes in the way Noga constructed her identity (Britzman 1992) as an art teacher and the teaching practices she used. In the beginning of her student teaching, Noga was more aware of what she would not like to do (to transfer knowledge) than of what she would like to do. In my notes from the mentoring process of Noga’s teaching, I found that she was afraid of flexible teaching. She preferred to plan the lesson in advance rather than to plan options from which she could use the most suitable according to the class dynamic. She expressed fear of any ‘uncontrolled’ situation. But during her student teaching experience she learned the advantages of flexible teaching. Reflecting on her student teaching, Noga wrote:

*The mission to create 30 possible lessons to one theme looked first impossible. But after much thought and debate, when I succeeded, I discovered that there are an infinite number of ways to fulfill the goals. I felt that it was an advantage to have an arsenal of ideas on the same theme because it permits to use the methods in flexible ways so they would suit the students’ needs, and not to stay rigid*
according to a preplanned notion.... During the teaching I understood the
importance one should give to every individual in the group, and that one should
try to create the frame of the lessons as flexibly as possible in order that each one
will find in it his or her place.
(Noga's reflective writing, June 1995)

Noga repeated her ideas the importance of flexible teaching as her way to address
her students' needs as an art teacher.

[I want] to reach everyone, to be flexible as you taught us, and to find alternative
ways to teach. Each subject can be reached from so many angles. It may be that
each child will have a different way that will suit him/her. For one child it will be
equal to look in a book. He might not even touch the material in a studio activity,
or will do it briefly. Another child might want to work on the studio project for a
long period of time.
(Interview, April 1996).

I find it interesting that Noga used the same terms to describe the experience she
went through during her student teaching, and to articulate her own goals as an art
teacher. The student teaching experience was a process based on constructivist notions of
knowledge. Listening to Noga's views and feelings, and asking her questions about them
helped her to create a unit accordingly. In this process Noga felt that she had to
"overcome the fears," and had a sense of "freedom" or "liberation." To succeed as a
teacher, Noga felt that she had to listen to her students' thoughts because they know
everything ("you just need to ask them.")

It [the final project] was not only to overcome the fears. The final project gave me
liberation. Even now when I feel that I am under pressure, I tell myself; wait a
minute, what did you learn? And then I calm down. No one will ask me on the
judgment day what knowledge you have contributed to your students? .... So
today I can let myself teach in the directions of the children.... You only need to
listen to them. They see everything and see it rightly. You just have to ask them a
little bit and they all want to talk, to tell you what they think. They love to share
their thoughts.... (Interview, April 1996)
Phase II
Noga as an Art Teacher

Noga’s Art Program at the Elementary School

The two-story school building Noga works in was built in 1993 as an answer to the needs of the middle class neighborhood living in the tall, new tower apartments that surround it. Noga described that community as well educated, with high expectations. Students from a nearby low-income neighborhood were also part of the population of this school.

There are students here that travel in Europe and visit museums. Not all of them, but some do. The population here is mixed.... And the expectations [of the art classes] are very high, also of the community. There are serious people here. A lot of the parents are university people, people who know the world, and it isn’t their first time to see a gallery....
(Interview, December 28 1999)

The entrance of the school leads to a big roofed patio. The patio resembled a small amphitheater built around a stage. The original purpose of the patio was to serve as a gathering place for the school’s students.

It was built for school assemblies, but they found out that it wasn’t built very well. It is exposed to a lot of sun, and it is very cold in the winter. Now the assemblies take place in a new gym hall, and the open space is always used as an art space. In it the students can work on large-scale artworks.
(Interview, December 21, 1999)

When Noga joined the school staff, a year after the school opened, she turned the big open space of the patio into another art space. The small stage was transformed into an art gallery where exhibitions of reproductions borrowed from the Tel-Aviv Museum were hung. When I visited the school (December 1999), an exhibition about Greek Art
was being displayed. The Gallery trustees had chosen it. The gallery trustees were
students from second to sixth grade, who had volunteered to become the curators of the
exhibitions. They chose the exhibitions out of a list that the museum provided and hung
them. They also planned, with Noga’s guidance, learning activities for each of the
exhibitions and guided the rest of the students in their school.

In another corner of the patio, a “self-portrait” exhibition (of reproductions) was
hung. This was for the use of fifth graders who studied this subject in art and drama. In
the upper level of the patio, students’ works were on exhibit. These were big sculptures
that related to surrealist ideas created by sixth and seventh graders. The entrance to
Noga’s art room itself was from another corner of the patio. On the walls of the corridors
around the patio, students’ individual exhibitions were hung. They included the name of
the (student) artist, the name of the exhibition, and the artists’ statements on the
exhibition’s main ideas. Amazed by the art activities that extended beyond the art classes
in a non-art elementary school, I documented them during my school visit:

At 8:00 o’clock, when the school day started two students from the seventh grades
were building a small dark room in the patio from black covers. They wanted to
exhibit their sculpture in a dark place. Another seventh grader was helping them.
None of them was scheduled at that hour for an art lesson. They had gotten
special permission from their classroom teacher to work on their art project. On
the stage, in the gallery space, two fifth graders were teaching four kids from the
third grade. None of them had an art lesson at that time. The fifth graders were
excused from a Bible lesson. They had gotten special permission to guide in the
gallery, and they would have to complete the material they missed later. Their
four students were sent to the gallery space while their third grade classroom
teacher was working with different groups of kids in her classroom (They had
scheduled a flexible time for these group activities).
(Notes from the research diary, December 21, 1999)
Noga's art program was an outcome of her negotiation from the beginning of her work with the school principal. As in any elementary school in Israel, each class was scheduled to have an art lesson only one or two hours per week. And because Noga wanted to work only with groups of 20 students and not with a full class (40 kids), each student would have an art lesson of two hours only every second week. Noga felt that this framework was too narrow for her goals. She felt that it was important to give the students an hour to experience and to create freely with materials in a studio workshop. At the same time, she wanted to expose them to artworks created by other artists. Noga came up with an innovative solution to increase the limited time provided to art in the school schedule, and the principal accepted it.

From the moment I started to teach, it disturbed me that the kids got art just one hour per week. It seemed to me unbearable. I wanted to do so many things in this single hour. I wanted them [the kids] to get to know artists. And I wanted very much to work in a studio workshop, where kids could work [freely] in different centers with materials they chose to work with.... I gave a lot of thought to how to increase the time of two hours per two weeks the students got to deal with art, and how not to block them [the kids' free creation]. So I thought about the gallery as an extra activity. I couldn't use the limited time that was given to them as an art lesson for this. Once every two weeks is so little, and they love to create with materials. So, I couldn't say to them – now we go to the gallery for a didactic lesson like they have anyhow [in other subject areas].... The principal was very supportive of that idea [of the gallery]. I told her right away that I would like to have gallery trustees who would guide kids because there are kids here that I learn from and they know better then I do.

(Interview, December 21 1999)

Noga explained that she could not give a rigid syllabus to the principal, because it had open spaces for lessons taught by her students. She also could not know in advance what kinds of exhibitions the gallery's trustees would choose, with which she would also
teach. But Noga’s open art program included some structural themes she taught to each of the grade levels (1st through 7th). In the following section, I describe Noga’s art lessons, the gallery activities, Noga’s ways of providing ‘stages’ to her students, and themes connected to the curriculum of the classroom teachers and to school events.

Noga’s Art Lessons

Noga’s art lessons were conducted in a shelter on the first floor that was converted to an art classroom. The classroom setting was designed for studio working, with materials and papers the students could take freely according to their needs. One corner was devoted to art books (“a lot of them the principal brought from her home”). Noga designed her classroom in such a way that the students could work there independently. Its setting changed often according to the work with different materials and projects.

*Things always move and change around here. But I also keep some of the things stable in the room to enhance the kids’ confidence. For example, the place of the materials and the circle of chairs [for opening and closure of the lessons] are always here. So they will feel that they are in a safe and known environment.* (Interview, December 21 1999)

Since the size of the room wasn’t big, students could paint outside of the art classroom on easels that were prepared for this purpose, or work in the big open space of the patio on large-scale sculptures. Working outside of the art classroom with many materials and gouache painting caused extra work for Noga.

*I worked five years cleaning houses, and I never had to work as hard as here. Really, they are working with a lot of materials. But as long as the children are...*
cleaning, I would like to give them as many materials as possible. They need a place in the world where they can create a mess without annoying their mothers. (Interview, December 21 1999)

The students’ works were installed in the same art room, and when there wasn’t room any more, the teachers devoted their own teachers’ room for that purpose.

*I do not let students throw any work in the trash. They have a portfolio, and from it we hang exhibitions. The students choose whether to hang their works, or to take them home.*

(Interview, December 21 1999)

The contents of the art lessons were divided into structured lessons according to planned themes, studio workshops, and ‘open spaces’ that Noga left for unplanned lessons. In the following section I describe each of these kinds of art lessons.

**Planned units.**

The examples Noga gave of planned units developed around themes were all connected to other teachers’ curricula or school events, and will be described later in a separate section. But from interviewing Noga’s students I learned that part of Noga’s lessons were dedicated to art related units and were built in a process similar to her final art education project at the School of Art. For example, when I asked M., a student from the 7th grade, to explain her box sculpture that was displayed in the patio, she described it as an outcome of her study of the Surrealist unit. The sculptures were based on an individual inquiry of Surrealist paintings, guided with handouts and followed by a class discussion of the paintings.
M: Noga asked us to do a work that would relate to the Surrealist world. Me and my friend decided to take all kinds of animals. For example, a mouse that is chasing a cat, or a tree whose apples are bigger than the tree, a green whale, and things like that. We developed it to a world with an earth and a sea, and on this we display our things.

Nurit: Have you also learned about Surrealism through this work?

M: Yes. I learned that one can create in art things that are not necessarily rational. On the contrary, one can create things that develop the imagination. We did Surrealistic painting and all kinds of things.

Nurit: How did you learn about it? Did you see slides? What did you do?

M: In the beginning Noga gave us a handout we had to do during the Hanukkah vacation. We had to look in books for a painter whose paintings were Surrealist. She asked us questions on the painting. Then in class she showed us reproductions in books, like a drawing of a foot that is a shoe, and then she asked us to use clay and create a Surrealist sculpture. (Student's interview, December 21 1999)

While the student described a developed process aimed to build art knowledge (that sounded similar to Noga's final project), Noga didn't mention such structured processes. In our member check meeting (January 2001), Noga explained that she was not interested in talking about these things because they were obvious. She regarded this way of teaching as the normative practice in art education. More than this, she believed that these were easy solutions for art teachers, who can cover the school year with two or three units like these, an approach Noga opposed. Though Noga used the School of Art's approach, she saw it as missing important goals that her other kinds of lessons offered.
Studio workshops.

Noga emphasized in her narration her "free studio workshop." She described in detail her purpose of providing the students with opportunities where the "kids work freely in different centers with materials they choose to work with" and "can create freely without the teachers' guidance." Noga felt that these lessons addressed in a direct way her main goals as art educator. They provided the students opportunities to gain self-confidence in their creative abilities and to express "things they bring with them" without being "afraid of materials" or afraid of themselves.

*When I saw that the kid comes to the art room with his own things [ideas, interests, etc.], I felt wrong to suggest my 'smart' subject I had thought of a week prior, and tell him how to work — I felt that I block him [his creativity]. I constantly tried to think how I could give more without blocking the things they are bringing with them to work. This I perceive as the biggest accomplishment — that a kid or a person would not be afraid of materials and not be afraid of himself and would know that he is able of creating things. I constantly tell them, it isn't just art. It can be inventions, patents— it is [true] for everything.*

(Interview, December 21 1999)

Opposing the structured units she learned to design at the School of Art, Noga believed that she should provide her students with free studio workshops that enhanced the natural creativity of the children.

*So then I decided that it can not be that a child wouldn't be able for an hour or two to enter an art room and to decide for himself that he would like to do. To decide whether he would like to work with gouache painting on x or y, or to work on a big or small paper, or to use a transparency or to work on a box, etc.... I like very much to work in a studio workshop, where kids work [freely] in different centers with materials they choose to work with.... They can work with oil-pastel crayons, with clay, or gouache colors in any place they would like in the classroom.*

(Interview, December 21 1999)

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Another benefit Noga described was that through lessons where each student worked with a material he or she chose, she could identify the 'strengths' of the students, and their 'special expertise.'

*In these lessons, what immediately catches the eye is what area they are good at (the strength of each one of them). After this kind of lesson I write down and identify guides. For example, last week a girl from the third grade created wonderful animals from plasticine. So she already knows that this year she will guide the first or second graders (as she choose) in how to work with plasticine and will teach them how one creates animals.*

(Interview, December 21, 1999).

I observed (December 1999) three of these workshops and learned what Noga meant by "how could I give more without blocking the things they are bringing with them to work." These studio workshops began with Noga and the students sitting in a circle and talking about events (within the school and outside of it) that students found interesting. Sometimes these talks were around a subject the students could relate to in their work, expressing their feelings and ideas about it. For example, the approach of the end of the Millennium was a subject the kids discussed, and then Noga said: "*Each artist can think about the 2000 celebrations and communicate his feelings and thoughts with the materials*" (Noga's lesson, December 28, 1999). An example of the introduction of a more local issue was "*I heard that a student was wounded on a sports day, and that you were worried*" (Noga's lesson, December 21, 1999). It seems that Noga made the students’ concerns her interests as a teacher, and wanted to hear what they had to say about them. After this kind of discussion, Noga reminded them that they could work on any subject that interested them and that at the end of the lesson they would gather again
to present their artworks in an exhibition and discuss them. Sometimes during these lessons several students preferred to work in the art gallery, and when other students did not occupy it, Noga sent them there.

Noga’s child-centered or Self-Expressive approach was not a lassaiiz faire approach: “There is a need for guidance, but not one that dictates. I believe in guiding the thinking process” (December 28, 1999). In the workshop I observed, while students worked with clay, oil pastel crayons, gouache painting, plasticine, and leaves they glue to papers, Noga discussed with them their ideas and the ways their ideas were connected to the artistic decisions they made. Sometimes other students were involved in these discussions. For example, a third grade student felt that she had a problem with her gouache painting. Noga asked her to articulate the process of her drawing and what she did not like in her work. Then, another student offered her a solution. Noga asked the first child: “What do you think about your friend’s solution? Would you like to try it?” (Noga's lessons, December 21, 1999)

I asked Noga what happened when some students did not have an idea to work on. Noga answered that she never had such a problem with any of her students, and added:

*I think it is my failure if a child does not create. I tell them: ‘this lesson you didn’t work, and it is O.K. Most of the people who do art have days that they can’t work.’ This break is legitimate. But how can it be that a child in the first grade will not like art? It is the most natural thing for him to take a piece of paper and lie on the floor and draw. It can not be that once he enters the art room it is over. It opposes all his development.*

(Interview, December 28, 1999)
Although Noga believed that these free studio workshops were important to all her students, she found that for her older students (7th graders), these art lessons were more challenging. Still she believed that with fewer students and more individual attention she could find solutions.

_I had a student from that class [7th grade] who didn’t want to do a sculpture. I set up a meeting with him, and he had to choose what he would like to do that year. So he decided that he was interested in drawing from observation. He chose from the art books things he liked; we spent a whole hour, just us two. He has his color pencils, and he works on this subject. In the end, he will have an exhibition. I try to motivate him._

(Interview, December 21, 1999)

Towards the end of the studio workshop Noga gathered the students back to the circle of chairs. The students put their artworks on the floor in front of them. Noga reminded them of the procedure for presenting and discussing the works:

_Maybe today there will not be enough time to present all the works. We will start with the students who would like to present their works. And I remind you that each artist talks first and then other artists that are participating in the exhibition and would like to comment can join in. Students who are not be able to present today, we will keep their work and they will present them next week._ (Noga’s lesson, December 21, 1999)

From the situation of presenting the works Noga created an empowering process for the students. Each presenter had the attention of the whole class. But, at the same time, through her guiding questions to the presenter and his peers, she made this an interesting art learning experience. For example, I documented Noga’s guiding the presentation of a girl who had problems with her gouache painting during the lessons. The student was asked to share her learning experience with the whole class:
What were the difficulties you encountered during your work? What were the changes that you incorporated in the drawing? How do you feel about it now? With whom did you discuss the problems?

Then Noga asked the student who offered that girl the solution to her problem: Where did you get the idea? Have you encountered the same problem? How do you feel about helping another student?

Then Noga asked the rest of the class: What do we learn about the gouache paintings? If an artist would like to work next time with this material, what can he learn from her work? A kid answered that one can go over previous color with another paint. Noga: “Wonderful. We learn that like the clay, this is material that is flexible. It is not that if we did a line we can not change it. This is important to all the artists that will chose to work with gouache painting.”

(Research diary, December 21 1999)

Noga taught the third graders a lesson about the use of gouache painting. She did it not only without blocking their creativity, but through sending them a clear message that they can discover important things through trying, encountering problems, and reflecting on them. At the same time, the student who could have being frustrated because she could not control the outcomes of her gouache painting became the teacher of the class and, therefore, was rewarded for her efforts.

Ben's story; An example of a studio workshop.

Another powerful example I observed in these workshops was the way Noga dealt with Ben, a third grader who entered the class in the middle of the lesson. Noga asked him privately what had happened, and then explained to the rest of his 17 classmates that Ben came late because his grandfather died. I wrote the story of Ben in my field notes, and I believe that I learned from it how Noga combined her goal to deal with her students'
emotions through art and at the same time to discover important concepts about the nature of art.

Toward the end of the lesson, Noga sat down around a table with some students who had finished their works. She asked Ben to join the group. The students presented their works, explaining what were their feelings toward the coming millennium and how they used the colors and materials to express these feelings. For example, one of the students did two candles from clay. He painted one with black and red, "which are warning colors for insects" and another in colors that expressed "happiness and celebration with firelights." Noga asked: "So you have mixed feelings?" She applauded him for choosing a candle, an image that can express both joy and sadness. She asked the students: "When do we light candles?" She asked Ben whether his family lit candles when his grandfather died. He replied that they had lit memory candles.

Then, Noga asked Ben to explain his work (a schematic figure he made out of clay). "I did my grandfather," Ben replied. Noga asked him: "How does it remind you of your grandfather?" Ben could not talk. Noga explained to the other kids: "It is very difficult for Ben to talk about his grandfather, and how lucky it is that we have art to talk about things we can not express with our words." Ben started to cry. Noga hugged him and said: "It is OK to cry when one is sad. You probably also saw some adults crying at your home. Did it disturb you to see them crying?" Then she helped everyone to get over this drama by suggesting that some of the children help Ben to cover the sculpture with
glue, so that Ben could take it home and put it on a shelf and would be able to remember his grandfather.

While Ben got an opportunity to deal with his experience of grief, the other students learned about what Noga believed to be an important character of art creation. They learned through this experience that art could sometimes be the only outlet for emotions. Noga’s practical suggestion to help Ben to cover his sculpture with glue offered the students a way not to feel helpless in this intimate situation that they had become part of.

**Unplanned lessons.**

Noga left ‘open spaces’ in her curriculum for unplanned lessons. In some of these lessons, she took the students to work at the gallery, or introduced them to a new material. Other lessons were taught by students that Noga identified as “experts” in a technique. Noga believed that *these lessons are wonderful, much better than my own. There is something special when a kid guides other kids* (12.21.99). Noga helped her student teachers to prepare their lessons.

_Usually they are very excited and want to take home some material and prepare examples. Then they meet me to discuss their plan, and then they teach a lesson. This lesson is scheduled ahead of time. They have to get the classroom teacher’s signature, in order that she’ll know that the student will be absent at that hour. The school gives them an official document for being a guide in a lesson at the school. These lessons are wonderful, much better than my own. There is something special when a kid guides other kids._ (Interview, December 21, 1999)
Through these lessons the students expanded their knowledge of using different techniques. But beyond learning how to create a vase of clay, Noga sent a clear message to her students about her trust and respect for their knowledge and abilities. When I observed such a lesson (December 21, 1999) it seemed that this goal was more important for Noga than providing more accurate or broader information about the history of producing vases out of clay (though it was connected to the Greek Art exhibition hung in the gallery).

The Gallery Activities

The gallery activities were Noga’s solution in dealing with art appreciation without taking too much time from the studio workshop. The interesting idea of having the students responsible of choosing the gallery’s exhibitions evolved from Noga’s meeting with the kids, and “being astonished with their abilities.”

During the summer, when I built the gallery, I met two students who astonished me, two twins of the school’s secretary. She sent them to help me. They stood next to me, and according to their height I decided how to hang the reproductions.... This is how we hung the first gallery exhibition. When I came with the paintings, I was astonished by the way they reacted to them. I went to the principal and asked what kind of kids are here? ... When I saw their abilities I saw no reason not to have gallery trustees. I hadn’t yet thought of their exact roles. I just wanted to have students responsible for the gallery. Only later did I think that they also could choose the exhibitions. It seemed the most reasonable thing. But I don’t see it as extraordinary. It is like students that are responsible for the library.
(Interview, December 28, 1999)

As the curators of the gallery, at the beginning of the year these students (from second up to six graders) got a notebook with all the subjects of exhibitions they could
order from the Tel Aviv museum. The museum offered exhibitions of high quality reproductions about famous artists (Western and Israeli), styles (such as Surrealism, or impressionism), different historical periods, different cultures (such as Islam, or African art) and themes (such as masks or clowns). The gallery trustees got two weeks to think about which of the exhibitions they would like to order for the school gallery. After discussing it with their parents and peers they decided together on the exhibitions (each exhibition was loaned to the school for a month). Then they were responsible for hanging the exhibitions. To learn more about the curator's role, they did an extensive interview with the curator of Ramat-Gan Museum (see appendix F). The title of student helpers and the interview with one of the most important art curators in Israel emphasized that the gallery was a window to the 'art world' outside the school.

The idea of gallery trustees developed even further through enlarging their role to include designing activities for the rest of the students. The gallery trustees summarized their roles in a handout they wrote that was included as part of a notebook. This notebook included all the handouts the students prepared for the gallery activities and was used by them as a resource for further planning.

*The Gallery Trustees*

*Our roles as gallery trustees in our school are:*

*To choose the subjects of the exhibition*
*To hang the exhibition*
*To be responsible for keeping the gallery clean and neat*
*To prepare activities in art relating to the exhibition*
*To teach art*
Criteria for Choosing Exhibitions

We choose exhibitions according to subjects that interest us, according to holidays and according to educational subjects (for example – 100 years of Zionism).
(Handouts the students prepared, collected December, 1999)

Noga had many volunteers for the role of gallery trustees. She divided them into two groups, with whom she met once a week, either before school started or after it ended.

They have to know that it is a voluntary activity. I think that from an educational aspect it is important that they go beyond the school’s requirements. They have the privilege to get out of lessons, but it is also a responsibility, because they have to learn the material they missed by themselves.
(Interview, December 21, 1999)

During these meetings the students prepared handouts for the exhibitions with Noga’s guidance. Some of the activities were like quizzes (for example, identifying a painting through hints). Others suggested the students get to know an artwork through recreating it, trying to look carefully at the colors, the tones, and the composition. Two students in the fourth grade and one from the second grade wrote the following example:

Family Portrait

Do you think that the family is rich or poor? Explain why you think so.
What do you think, is the family in this painting sad or happy?
Give a name to the painting. Why did you choose that name?
What is the name of the artist who painted the painting?
In what year was it painted?
In what technique was the painting painted?

Assignment!!!

Compose a dialogue between the parents.
Try to paint one of the figures (ask Noga for a big paper!!!)
**Draw a big chart and compare the painting of the family portrait to another painting you choose in the gallery!!!**
(Handouts the students prepared, collected December, 1999)

The gallery trustees guided the other students according to a schedule Noga and the classroom teachers organized ahead of time. The classroom teachers sent a group of students to the gallery while they worked with other groups.

*Our classroom teachers work very openly, so I could do this activity as an addition. For example, when a third grade teacher works with one group she pulls out of the 40 students in their class, she can send to the gallery a group that already knows the material. This provides a solution for the teacher who has fewer students and more space in her classroom.*
(Interview, December 21, 1999)

Noga explained that only students who wanted to come to the gallery were sent to these activities guided by other students, but there were no problems because it was very popular.

*Usually it is popular [to go to the gallery] and I do not have any problems. Now all the class wants to go to the gallery. They perceive it as a privilege. They also are on a stage,...and everybody can see them. For a while they get out of the situation of being with 40 kids.... I also see in the gallery activity that the students are very cooperative with the gallery guides. These are natural connections for them. They have brothers and sisters at that age.*
(Interview, December 21, 1999)

Beyond the exposure of the students to the art world through the gallery activities, it seemed that the gallery expressed the central role art played in the school. The school recognized the gallery trustees’ status, and it was another way to enhance their self-image through art (though not through creating art but through understanding art).

*Children that have never guided before, now guide. The fact that they themselves plan the activities in the gallery gives them a status like mine, and even greater.*
(Interview, December 21, 1999)
Children’s Personal Exhibitions

Students could bring artworks they did at home ("but not from what they did at school or other art courses") and get a space in the school to present them. Noga wanted to give space and respect to what she perceived as to the students' authentic voices ("to give them the opportunity to exhibit what they are"). Noga explained her beliefs about the importance of the authenticity of the students’ work and related them to the personal exhibitions.

*I don’t want them to please me. They should please me only through doing their duty to work during the lesson, through their behavior. But not though their art.... This is the reason why it is important for me that the personal artist exhibition will be without any interference or input from me. That he [or she] chooses a wall and what to hang on it. That this is what he [or she] is now, without much advice or guidance from me or any other art course. This is where he [or she] is right now, and it is good enough to hang on the school’s wall and to be called an exhibition.

(Interview, December 28, 1999)

The students were responsible for choosing the wall, the background, and which of their artworks they would like to present. Then they hung the works and kept the exhibition organized and neat. Each student also had to write an artist’s statement that was hung as part of the exhibition. The school provided each artist with a certification that his or her exhibition had been presented at the school.

Noga’s story about how she came to the idea of children’s personal exhibitions started as usual with providing a practical solution to the students' need and interests.

*Only this year I started all these personal exhibitions. It started with two kids from the 6th grade who liked painting, and I told them to work over the summer vacation. I was astonished when two days before school started they came with
exhibitions.... When other students realized that these kids got solo exhibitions, they wanted to have one too.

(Interview, December 21, 1999)

But Noga was aware of her practical theory in action (McCutcheon, 1995), and presented the personal exhibitions as part of her belief in providing the students a “stage to present themselves as they are” and as another way to enhance their self-image.

*It is part of my approach to give the stage to the child.... For example..., I have an 8th grader who displayed her exhibition. You could see how much it is premature and how talented she is. But this girl, from the moment she hung the exhibition her self-image changed. The children shared with me their shock. They came and asked, ‘Did C paint that?’ So suddenly she was flourishing. She got a certificate from the school for presenting an exhibition.*

(Interview, December 21, 1999).

Noga’s goal to offer the school walls as a stage for students to express themselves ‘as they are’ was different from what she saw at other schools. There, the hung artworks reflected the art teachers’ goals and tastes or the school curriculum. For Noga it was important that the artworks would please the students who created them, and, therefore, she limited her guidance of these exhibitions. When I visited the school, I had an opportunity to observe her careful work with two students who came to her with questions relating to the personal exhibition;

*A student came to show a drawing she did for her coming exhibition. Noga asked her why she picked that drawing? Was it connected to the other drawings in her exhibition? Another student asked what should be included in her artist’s statement in her personal exhibition. Noga asked her: ‘What do you like to paint? What technique do you like to use? ... You have to think why you like to paint women. On Thursday you can show me what you wrote and we will go over it’.  
(Research diary, December 21, 1999)
Connection with Other Teachers’ Curriculum

For each grade level, Noga planned together with the other teachers a unit that was connected to their curriculum. Noga described these lessons as more structured than her studio workshops. Some of the themes related to the classroom teachers’ curriculum (for example, ‘fairy-tales’ and ‘my neighborhood’ were subjects explored in the third grade). Others related to a ‘yearly theme,’ a theme that was chosen by the Ministry of Educational Office every year, and the whole general educational system was expected to study it (for example, ‘the 50th anniversary of the Israeli state’). Some other themes related to holidays and ceremonies that were highly emphasized at the elementary schools in Israel (such as Hanukkah, or Passover).

For example the third graders worked on a theme that is called ‘my neighborhood’... They went out for an observation in the neighborhood with handouts I gave them, and had to collect colors and shapes. They like it very much. They have to try to get the exact tone of green that they saw. We talked about it, that when we are out of the art classroom we do want to try to get to the real color that we observe. They created a dictionary of colors and shapes. In order to create the shapes, they had to simplify for example the windows, and to abstract their forms. Then, in the next lesson in the classroom they had to plan from this a Hanukkah lamp. I showed them that many artists were influenced by architecture when they created Hanukkah lamps. So they planned lamps and they created with clay using the dictionary of colors and shapes they had made in the previous lesson.
(Interview, December 21, 1999)

The art lessons that were connected to the general school theme or to other teachers’ curricula were not providing an illustration of these subjects. Noga saw them as an opportunity to teach more about art in a different context. Sometimes this different context involved research of an area that was not typically art related. For example, when
the students worked on the 50th anniversary of the state, each one got a settlement in Israel and had to create a present to the place after researching it and finding out what its needs were and what it did not have (for example, for Tel Aviv they created a subway).

Some of the ideas for these activities came as answers to teachers’ needs, but Noga found innovative solutions to make these challenges into interesting art learning experiences for her students. For example, one of the teachers worked with Noga on the Tu-Beshvat ceremony (a spring celebration of nature and trees). The classroom teacher wanted to focus on the earth in this ceremony. For several weeks, Noga worked with the students during the art lesson on this "earth" theme.

*We went out to the schoolyard and did earth sculptures. And I photographed them. And the climax was with the classroom teacher. I built for them a big sandbox on the stage in the patio, and the whole ceremony of Tu-Beshvat was centered around that sandbox, where they did sand sculptures....* (Interview, December 28, 1999).

Another example of team planning was Noga’s description of the unit she planned together with the drama teacher on the subject of 'a portrait' for the 5th graders. The integrated unit they planned used art history, staged photographs, letter writing, and acting, as means to examine social and cultural issues of diversity and communication between people.

*In the drama class they are working on how one creates a figure - how one expresses the inner world and the outside presentation of it. In the art class they chose a figure they liked from a huge collection of reproductions and wrote her a letter. In the letter they had to write why they chose that figure, and do a research on the artist who painted this figure. Then they had to think about where else could this figure be. For example, the student that chose the person with a flute said that he would like to present him in the last part of the performance. They had to become that character in the painting and to chose a suitable pose. I took
their photographs. Later we would like these characters to meet each other, and to have a dialogue. We want to include people from various places that encounter something different, unknown. For example, an artwork from the 16th century will meet an artwork from the 20th century. But the emphasis will be on the portraits. (Interview, December 21, 1999)

Noga's Negotiation of the Status of Art in her School Discourses

After the first year, in which the school operated without art classes (1994), the teachers and the parents found that they would like to add art to the technology lessons that included working with materials. Noga felt that the decision to add her to the staff as an answer to the expectations of parents and staff was “a good starting point” that reflected their appreciation of art.

During my visits to Noga’s school (December 1999), it seemed clear that art had a central role in the school. The roofed patio, which was the biggest space in the building and the entrance to the school, was a place where students worked on large scale sculptures and displayed their artworks, as well as learned from exhibitions of artworks done by other artists.

Nurit: I told you in the morning that when one enters the school, one gets the impression that it is an art school.

Noga: Yes. Every time it surprises me when someone says this.

Nurit: Does it reflect the central role the arts play in the school?

Noga: Yes. I think that very much so.

(Interview, December 28, 1999)

The central role of art in the life of many students at this elementary school was clear from the many different activities so many of them were involved in. I observed students' conversations with Noga about the lessons that they would like to teach, their
work as gallery trustees, or their preparations for their personal exhibitions. Many students got released from the regular school schedule in order to continue their artworks or to teach and learn at the school gallery. Noga described the role of art in the children's life through their parents’ reactions:

_They [the parents] told me how much the kids love art, and how sad they are that this year I am not with them anymore.... A mother told me today that both of her kids do not want to skip any school day when they have an art lesson. So this is pleasant to hear. Many times I do not believe it. It takes time till I believe it. But it is nice to hear._

(Interview, December 28, 1999)

From Noga’s stories I learned about her explanations of the high status of the art in her school's discourse. She described the support of the parents, the staff and the principal for the art studies. She also felt that she was rewarded for her openness to the other teachers' views regarding the display of artworks in the school, and felt that she was part of a team that worked together to enhance the child-centered philosophy of the school.

I believe that the support of the principal and community, and the establishment of common discourses with the other teachers were important elements in promoting the status of art. From my observations, I also can assume that Noga’s investments and personal attention to the students had a major affect upon the students’ attitudes and their parents’ support. It seemed that her practices, which balanced a learner-centered approach and a comprehensive approach toward art education were well suited to the high expectations of the staff and the community.
Although Noga perceived the other teachers as her colleagues and described the collaborative atmosphere among the teachers, who were mutually open to others’ ideas, she had to negotiate her art vision with them in a process that took time. Noga wanted to dedicate her lessons “to hearing where they [the students] are, what happens to them, what interests them and to trying to connect with it”. Therefore she negotiated with the classrooms’ teachers to let the students work on the theoretical aspects of art independently in the gallery during other classes.

*It isn’t something that one builds in one day. I think that the teamwork and the support are mutual. In the beginning I had to persuade them to let students go out of other lessons to finish their artwork or for their activities as gallery trustees. I had to explain to them and to the parents the importance [of these activities].... Teachers also are ready to stay after school to hang things. But I think this is the [outcome of the] work of several years.*

(Interview, December 21, 1999)

*I don’t want them [the students] to work in the art lessons with handouts on portraits. So the handouts are out in the gallery in order that they will be able to work with them on other days. But one has to push for it. It is a challenge to an active teacher in the system. This means that you have to remind the classroom teacher constantly and to push that she will let them go out to the gallery activities. It is not out of bad intention, but because she has so many study areas to teach. I don’t think that it is done in the intensive way I want it to happen. And for this I need a lot of energy and time. I think that it can be improved.*

(Interview, December 28, 1999)

But Noga did not just ask the teachers to adjust to the vision. She perceived them and her students as partners. She asked the other teachers for their advice, discussed with them decisions she had to make, and respected their opinions. Noga was aware that her
position not to regard herself as more creative then the other teachers and to respect their aesthetic opinions helped build the mutual support that contributed to her negotiation.

   I think that the things here were not constructed in one day. I was open; I didn’t come with criticism and the feeling that the art teacher is much more creative and that she is less rigid than the other teachers at school. Everything that I do here is done after a lot of discussion with the students and the other teachers. I do not think that the art teachers know how to design better.... I come from a place where I do not think that I know better because I am an art teacher. I do not feel that way, as a person. I don’t know better what color suits the wall or how things should be hung. I feel that the teachers here appreciate art and aesthetics, and it is important for me to hear their advice. They enriched me with their ideas.
   (Interview, December 28, 1999)

A special relationship was established with the technology teacher. Noga explained that “the technology teachers replaced the craft teachers and they really know a lot about technical issues.” The technology teacher was responsible for art at the school before Noga’s arrival. In the beginning, Noga thought that the technology teacher felt threatened by a new teacher who entered her field. Although the approach of the technology teacher was very different from Noga’s approach, Noga immediately found ways to collaborate with her, to learn from her, and to co-teach with her.

   So from the art aspect, I had the technology teacher with whom I immediately established friendship. She worked with me for two years. And it worked well for us because they placed us one next to the other and each got half a class. So we started to work together immediately. And we team taught and created happenings like the creation of masks. We enjoyed working together as two grownups. She was very knowledgeable about working with different materials. I learned a lot from her about many materials I didn’t know anything before-- they are really experts in working with materials.
   Nurit: Like what kinds of materials?
   I don’t know. Maybe it was just my feeling that I didn’t know anything. Many things, like papier-mache and plaster casts and then each of us developed it differently. (Interview, December 28, 1999)
Although Noga did not take credit for the other teachers’ positions about the importance of art, it seemed to me that Noga’s position had a major effect on their understanding of the contribution of the arts to their students.

*I think that many teachers here like art. It is important to many of them. Last year it got to a situation that they complained that I worked with some teachers more than the others.*
Nurit: So, you believe that art became the center because many teachers appreciate the arts?
*I am sure that I also played a role in it.*
Nurit: Can you tell me more about that?
I think that the establishment of the gallery and the gallery trustees [influenced them]. So the teachers started to complain that I worked more with some of them. And I think it is good because the teachers want to let their students present through art.
(Interview, December 28, 1999)

How have Noga’s Beliefs and Practices Changed Since her Graduation?

In the following sections I describe Noga’s beliefs and practices as a process of negotiating her teaching identity within the school context and culture. Britzman writes that “culture is where identities, desires, and investments are mobilized, constructed, and reworked” (1991, p. 57). Furthermore, Britzman explains that within any culture, there is an array of contesting and contradictory discourses that compete for our attention.

In describing Noga’s beliefs and teaching practices, I was interested in the way they had changed since her graduation, and the way Noga negotiated them against and within an array of different discourses. These included the discourses of the Art History Department at the university, the School of Art, and the Art Therapy Program to which she was exposed to and took part in during her studies. As an art teacher, Noga also
encountered the normative discourses of art education inspection, and the teachers and principals' discourses in her building. While the in-services of the art education inspection seemed not to be relevant for Noga ("In the first year, I went to the in-service organized by the art inspection. It wasn’t very interesting" December 28, 1999), the discourses of her building played a big role in constructing her beliefs and identity.

Enhancing the Students' Self-Confidence

As an art teacher at the elementary school Noga developed further several notions she had already expressed during her student teaching experience. One of her most consistent beliefs was that the art teacher could enhance the students' self-confidence through accepting their views and creating opportunities to legitimize them. This notion was expressed already as one of the issues that caught Noga’s attention while observing other art teachers during the first semester she studied at the School of Art (October - December 1994).

In the second lesson, any student who wanted could approach the board and draw one of his lines, and the rest of the students had to discover the name, and the kind of the line. The teacher emphasized that all the names that they give are correct because there is not one answer. Whatever they guessed, reflected the association that the shape of the line evoked. I believe that this statement is very meaningful because it opened the art world for everyone. It also enhanced the students' confidence that whatever they feel when they look at a visual description is right and has its place.
(Noga’s reflective writing, June 1995)

Noga referred to the same notion when she explained her choice of "the dream" as a theme in her student teaching experience. She believed that it could help the students to accept their drawing abilities and prevent their frustration.
The subject emphasizes and expresses in particular the unique inner world of each individual as a creator as well as a viewer. (Noga's final project, April 1996, p. 1)

As an art teacher, these seeds of beliefs were developed to one of the guidelines of Noga’s teaching. Noga’s thought concerning how she could use as a teacher “what the kids bring with them to the class”, (their thought, their feelings and experiences) as a starting point expressed a child-centered approach to art education, or, more precisely, the version described as ‘learner-centered’ by Burton (2000). Noga aimed to increase the children’s self-confidence in their abilities and to raise their self-esteem through the arts but not in a laissez-faire approach.

I don’t want the children to fear a blank paper because this, I believe, is more important then the product. Their strength to cope with it, I believe leads to more unique products, that are more their own, and not dictated. (Interview, December 28, 1999)

The main assignment is to keep the will to create, to discover in each child what his [or hers] strengths are and his [or hers] interests and to develop these as much as possible.... I perceive as the biggest accomplishment that a kid or a person would not be afraid of materials and not being afraid of himself [or herself] and would know that he [or she] is able to create things. I constantly tell them, it isn’t just art. It can be inventions, patents, it is [true] for everything…. I see it much beyond art. I do not know how to explain it. The art is for me a channel to increase the self image of the child, so that he will discover who he is, that he will learn about himself.... (Interview, December 21, 1999)

As an art teacher working within this ‘learner-centered’ paradigm, Noga developed creative teaching strategies. She provided the students with many opportunities beyond the traditional child-centered approach to studio activities and encouraging them to work freely with materials (Burton, 2000) to discover their strengths
and to express themselves. These strategies included changing the school so that it became “children’s space” where they could hang their personal exhibitions and providing the students with teaching opportunities through their guiding in exhibitions and teaching art lessons. It was important for Noga to create situations where the students presented their works and discussed them with their peers, as another "stage" for personal expression. In the studio workshops the students were invited to talk about the process they went through while creating their works and about their feelings during that process. Noga used these presentations to help the students through reflection to construct their knowledge, to learn the joy of discovery, and to share those discoveries with their classmates (“I like it when during my lessons the students make all kinds of discoveries. We always announced our discoveries during the lessons, when someone created this color, for example...”) These dialogues that promote reflection followed one of differences between ‘learner centered’ and ‘child centered’ that Burton provides:

Teaching through dialogue is not a laissez-faire pedagogical practice, nor a free-for-all conversation.... Sometime a dialogue may be structured with specific learning in mind and at other times leading towards exploration and discovery. However, it is always presupposed that the teacher knows enough about children’s perceptions to pace the interchange to their needs, capacities, interests and levels of understanding. (Burton, 2000, p. 344)

Noga’s goal to provide a place for the kids where they could express their “own personal world” was further nourished and legitimized by the art therapy discourses. Noga believed that every teacher should learn art therapy, not in order to do therapy, but to gain the necessary tools to understand, to respect and to relate to the children’s world exposed through their creation.
I think that every art teacher should learn it [art therapy] .... I believe it is necessary for art teaching because I feel that beyond the content that comes from the top to students, the students bring their own world to art. They bring it in any case, whatever the subject of the lesson might be, whether it is Greek art, or Egyptian art. It doesn’t matter. Each one brings his personal world and really brings it to you. I never do therapy in the school, and will not enter the content (of the exposure). But it was interesting to know about it. I feel that the kids give me many precious things and I do not know what to do with them and how to relate to them ....

(Interview, December 28, 1999)

Ben’s story is an example of Noga’s practices that worked within the art therapy discourses. When we discussed the story and how it related to art therapy, Noga explained:

It doesn’t happen a lot. I will never enter the content of therapy in the school. It wasn’t a treatment. I provided a place for him to express his feelings, like I do with all the other students...

I didn’t feel that I was giving him therapy. I felt that he took one more step in the direction of expressing feelings. And I was surprised because he was not a child that usually expressed his feelings. I expected him to work at football. It didn’t suit him to share feelings. I had known him already for three years. I wanted him to know that it is legitimate [to relate to his grandfather’s death] but I didn’t intend to direct him to it. I was very surprised by what he did. I told him: ‘You can relate in art to what happened to you.’ But it was only a suggestion.... I think that the borders start to blur [between art therapy and art education] because they [the students] bring things that are very personal. So one can say that there was a therapy aspect to what happened today [with Ben]. But it was in a framework that he presented in his work, like all the others. Like T, who said that he was afraid of the darkness, and that was also something personal.

(Interview, December 28, 1999)

Noga’s position on the importance of creating opportunities for the students to reflect on their daily lives and to make sense of their world was not only her belief and teaching practice but also a way to construct her teaching identity. She desired to decentralize herself as a teacher in order to provide more space for the growth of her
students. Noga believed that the teacher should reduce his or her own ego. She believed that when the teacher provides a stage for the students, they “have a place where they can be shown as they are, in an authentic way, and not as if someone dictated them what to do, or directed them that this is the way to create beautiful things.”

I think that teaching is a profession that can raise the ego of the teacher. He [or she] is all the time on the stage and all the time people look at him [or her], and when he talks, everyone listen to him [or her]. This is something that boosts the ego because he [or she] knows what is right and what is wrong, what is beautiful and what isn’t.

(Interview, December 28, 1999)

Noga did not perceive her decentralized teaching identity as erasing her personality, or being in conflict with the students’ centered place. Rather through creating a place for her students, she also constructed her own identity.

I try to reduce my ego. I try to, and do not always succeed. When there is an exhibition the parents come and give me feedback. So I check myself: For what did I do the exhibition? Did I do it for myself? Or did I do it for the children? It is a mixture; it is never just that or the other. I enjoy that they have a place. I also feel that this also provides me a place that I like better. They are not taking my place.

(Interview, December 28, 1999).

Using a Constructivist Learning Approach

Another consistent notion in Nega’s narration was her rejection of the discourses she was exposed to in the Art History Department. She perceived the normative discourses there, as transferring knowledge without constructing a personal connection to it, and as such, the knowledge seemed meaningless for her.
Opposing the discursive practices of transferring knowledge and memorizing facts, Noga discovered as a student teacher at School of Art that there were alternative methods.

In the student teaching experience, I learned that there are alternative methods, and I tried to use some. For example, I used individual or group inquiry in learning centers.... After this experience, I feel that one should change the frontal lecture with slides to an open discussion guided by questions raised by the teacher and the students.
(Noga's reflective writing, June 1995)

The 'objective' and unchangeable knowledge that was taught in the art history department ("my mother's husband learned the same things twenty years ago") made her really angry ("one should destroy this department"). She explained how her rejection of these discourses influenced her goals as an art teacher:

It was just learning by heart the slides from Johnson, History of Art. There was nothing more beyond it. There was no depth. And I didn't like that method.
(Interview, December 28, 1999)

As an art teacher, Noga developed much further her teaching practices that related to her students' world and enhanced the constructivist learning approach toward art education. Listening to the students, learning from them and making them partners in the teaching process became part of Noga's goals and practices.

The goals seem to me more than transferring knowledge. I see them in a more comprehensive approach. For example, sometimes I sit with my students and start a conversation and let them talk about themselves. (Interview, April 1996)
For example, it is less important for me that a third grader will memorize artists' names. I believe that it is more important to let them be confident about opening a book or looking at a painting....
(Interview, December 28, 1999)
Noga did not oppose including knowledge from art history or art criticism as part of her art education program. She looked for ways to include them without the authority of the expert who pours knowledge into the students. She looked for teaching practices that would suit her beliefs about respecting the children's views and supporting their own ways to discover meanings.

In the beginning I felt all the time a pressure that I had to teach something. And I didn't know what to teach. It wasn't that I could not take a unit on a portrait and teach it. But in the first two years I was scared that someone would say that I hadn't taught anything. I didn't permit myself this kind of freedom. I thought that the [expected] goals were things such as what artist did they learn about in this lesson? And it was very difficult for me. Until today I debate these questions. I didn't give up on these goals. But these were the solutions [to build the gallery's space as a place where the kids will teach and learn art history]. And I am still not satisfied with these solutions. (Interview, December 28, 1999)

Within and Against the School of Art's Discourses

While Noga described the School of Art as a place that restored “her love for art,” she rejected the dominant discourses there. Noga opposed the hierarchy established by those discourses that appreciated art and artists and overlooked art education.

It took me a while till I got to the place that I didn't care that the others wanted to become artists. We were asked during several lessons why we came to study [at the School of Art]. And I answered that I came to get an art teaching certification. I felt that it was underestimated at the Midrasha [the School of Art]. It was not valued. But at a certain point, I didn't care anymore. This is who I am, and I can not pretend to be someone else. I had never done it, and I didn't find a reason to do it at the Midrasha. I didn't do it in the place I was raised, so why should I do it there? So then life became easier, from that aspect. I didn't come there to look for a social life. (Interview, December 28, 1999)
Noga expressed time and again that she never wanted to become an artist. She felt that because she held different discourses she was a stranger at the college. It seems that for her, the enjoyment one got out of art was not through what was offered by the School of Art. She did not believe that becoming familiar with the knowledge of experts, whether they were artists or art historians, was necessary for appreciating the visual qualities in everyday life as well as in artifacts.

_In my family they appreciate very much beautiful things like they always showed me the color of the sky. things that I believe are very important to show the kids today. Because I think that this is the art.... These things I had as a very strong part of me, but between them and being an artist there was a difference. I was never interested in becoming an artist._

(Interview, December 28, 1999).

In this discourse, the word ‘artist’ and the desire to become an artist opposed Noga’s understanding of “art as part of life.” The ‘artist’ was associated with the pose of someone who would like to gain recognition or others’ attention. As such, he or she used a separate language that only the educated artists or art historians could gain access to. Noga rejected that “artist's pose,” and described herself as one who “just like[s] to play with materials.” This position might be connected to her difficulty in seeing herself occupying any center of attention, or presenting herself as an expert. Being at the center of attention, holding knowledge, and even being an expert were the most desirable attributes Noga wanted her students to have.

_Noga: I think it is important for life, that each one will learn to build himself a place. A place in which one feels strong or good, where one can present himself [to other]. A place where one feels good._

_N: A place where one has self-confidence?_
Noga: Yes. Where he will believe in his strengths. (Interview, December 28, 1999).

With the students, Noga used the word ‘artist’ in a different way. Although its meaning was constructed within the School of Art as a teacher, the word ‘artist’ was used by Noga as a positive attribute. It helped her to emphasize that her students should feel like possessors of the knowledge of experts, and increase their self-esteem through being at the center of others’ attention. She used that word to express her respect for the processes of their creations. Regardless of the success of their outcomes, all her students were accorded the status of ‘artists.’ Within the discourse of the school, the meaning of the word had shifted. Britzman explains: “We do not have one voice but many. Our voice is always contingent upon shifting relationships among the words we speak, the practices we construct, and the community within which we interact” (Britzman, 1991, p. 12).

Noga rejected the more formalistic approach to art teaching that was associated with the School of Art’s paradigm. She emphasized that her goals in art education went beyond teaching the language of art. Her encounter with the classroom teachers at her school, who believed in teaching reading and writing within the context, helped her to clarify her rejection of teaching art language out of context through teaching elements and principles of design.

They [the classroom teachers] have a holistic approach to language. They do not teach syllables. So I understood that I couldn’t teach here a unit on lines or color because it means taking apart the language. And I understood that whether I take a work by Kandinsky or a work by a child, and I relate to lines, colors and shapes anyhow.... So it influenced me not to be interested in teaching a lesson on lines. I will relate to it and be aware to it, but I will put it in the context of the children’s work.... It is important but one has to understand it in the context. A line is part of
an artwork, and it has a meaning when it is next to another line; it is the language as a whole.
(Interview, December 28, 1999)

Although it seemed that Noga's child-centered or Self-Expressive paradigm opposed the School of Art discourses, a scrutiny of her teaching practice created a more complicated picture. When examining carefully her guidance of the students' art creation, one can find surprising similarities with the School of Art's discourses.

But I constantly try to guide less, because when they come to me from the kindergarten they always ask about their work - is it OK? Is it good? And I constantly trying to explain that the terms 'good' and 'OK' are terms that one should discuss and examine. What is 'good' or 'OK' is not defined and determined in one way. But, at the same time, I try to give them something, whether it is a technique or new materials to work with, to realize what kind of feeling the material projects. If I darken a place, for example, what kind of feeling does it create?
(Interview, December 21, 1999).

Noga believed that in any act of creation the students bring their world through their interpretations of the subject with materials, colors etc. But connecting to their world and feeling was not the end goal for Noga. Like Tamar, who fully embraced the School of Art's discourses, she wanted her students to use the language of art thoughtfully in expressing themselves:

He [or she] will always connect to his [or her] feelings but not always on the same level. I had a child who said that she was afraid of thieves. So she created a big flashlight from clay. So the fact that she expressed her fear was an accomplishment by itself. But now she had to learn how one says it in the language of art. So art is another tool of expression one has to learn, how one translates to art the written sentence 'I am afraid of thieves.' It is also the reason I like them to discuss the works of others. I like them to listen to their use of the language of art.
(Interview, December 28, 1999)
Using the School of Art's discourses, Noga thought that she could help her students through "guiding their thinking processes" and, like Tamar, established a method of dialogue that promoted reflection.

*I realize that when one gives more freedom, one can accomplish amazing things. There is a need for guidance, but not one that dictates. I believe in guiding the thinking process. For example, we started the creation of these sculptures in the gallery with a box. I told them [7th graders] to think where the box should be placed in the space. Then we started to think, we could hang it in the air, or we could.... We discussed why and how ... That student [Noga is pointing to a huge work in the gallery] hadn't decided yet where to locate his artwork. I suggested that he look at his work in the space and take his time before he decided. I want them to go and look and check.
(Interview, December 21, 1999)

Noga, then, used the discourses she was exposed to in the art classes at the School of Art in a different way. She taught the students about the language of art, or techniques, or even complex concepts about the nature of art through their discoveries and works. She was aware that her art concepts were changed during her studies at the college and that they influenced her teaching at the elementary school. For example, Noga described the influence of the School of Art's approach to artistic talent (as not necessarily expressed through the ability to create an illusion of the reality).

*For example, I have a child who is interested in drawing from observation, and he has a book about how to draw from observation. I didn't want to stop this kind of interest and on the other hand, I didn't want to present the student as someone who knows how to draw better or is a better artist. Because this is the way the children usually perceive it. I think that I got this understanding in the Midrasha [School of Art].
(Interview, December 28, 1999).
“It Felt Wrong to Suggest My ‘Smart’ Subject to the Students”

Noga also worked within and against the discourses she encountered in the art methods course at the School of Art. The final art education project provided Noga with an experience of structuring a learning process built around a theme that seemed to have interest or importance for herself and her students, using knowledge from art history, art making and educational theory and practice. As a student teacher, Noga designed and taught such a unit about 'the dream'. As a teacher, Noga also used such processes, for example, when she worked on surrealism. I learned about that structured unit, not from her, but from her students. In Noga's narration I found that she regards this as the normative way of art teaching. She perceived it to be an easy solution for art teachers who did not want to face the challenge of the questions ‘why teaches art’ and how should it be done (January 2001). Her criticism of structuring art lessons around themes went even further. She felt that this way of teaching could block her students’ creativity.

*When I saw that the kids come to the art room full of their own things [ideas, interests etc.], it felt wrong to suggest my 'smart' subject that I thought of a week prior, and tell them how to work – I felt that I would block them.* (Interview, December 2! 1999)

Noga did not express her rejection of the methods she learned at the art methods course directly. I learned about her criticism through a story she told me about “a shocking experience” she went through during one of the in-services training workshop held by the region arts’ inspection. Maybe it was easier for her because she associated me with those methods.
I have to tell you about a shocking experience I had. I visited an art teacher in an in-service training in her art classroom.... She had a beautiful art room, and I saw nice things there. She told us about a class she had worked with for five years and explained that she had taught them this technique, and that technique, and they worked on portraits, and this subject and another subject. And then, her students started to work on a personal project, and they didn’t know what to do. So I felt, with all respect, you failed. I returned home in shock—A child who has gotten so many tools to create with and doesn’t know what to do in front of a blank paper. Why? He needs a teacher who will tell him step by step what to do. I felt disappointed. I didn’t share my feelings with the art teachers. But I didn’t want to teach this way. I don’t want the children to fear a blank paper because this, I believe, is more important than the product. Their strength to cope leads, I believe, to more unique products that are more their own, and not dictated. I remember that it made me feel really bad. How come everybody appreciated that teacher? I don’t know what you think about what I am saying. But it was very hard for me.... I felt that what I saw was a kind of castration. I can not explain it. (Interview, December 28, 1999)

Noga’s story pinpointed her criticism of the School of Art’s methods, which enhanced art teaching according to themes that provided the students with structured processes. Noga believed that this way of teaching (like Tamar’s teaching practices), when the teacher directed the students step by step promoted the students’ dependence upon the teacher’s guidance. She believed that this method taught the students to follow instructions in order to create beautiful and successful products at the price of failing to cope with free personal expression. Further, Noga believed that the children’s visual narratives which they constructed to make sense of their world and express their feelings were far more important than the subjects or the “titles” of the art lessons. Yet, when she described that process of expression through the language of art, she again used the School of Art’s discourses.

There was a point when I started to understand that no one talks with kids about their feelings.... When a child cries, it is hard for us to see him in this situation, so
we try to calm him and tell him that it isn’t that bad or it isn’t frightening, etc. instead of relating to the situation that he is afraid.... [To relate to the feelings] means to relate to the child. [My goal is that] a child will tell me that yellow means happiness for me, and create a connection with how he expresses himself through the language of art. Because of that, I do not know how much the title of the lesson, whether it is ‘the year 2000’ or something else is meaningful. What is meaningful is what the child does within this title. It is much more important then the title itself;
(Interview, December 28, 1999)

Noga’s emphasis on being a meaningful teacher through relating to the students' emotions was her teaching practice whether she offered her students a 'free workshop' or a structured theme.

Relating to the Place of the Students Within Their Community

Working within the discourse of the learner-centered paradigm, Noga expanded the goals of expressing personal experiences and “make[ing] meaningful their own sense of self” (Burton, 2000, p. 330) to include not only their art understanding but also educational goals that relate to the place of individual students within their society.

I would like the children to learn through art about pluralism, respect, diversity and individualism. And on the other hand, I would like them to learn about collaboration and connection. How can I relate to a friend’s work, and when do we create a collaborative work?
(Interview, December 28, 1999)

When Noga described theses goals in our interview, she related a concrete story I had observed in one of her art classes, a story of two girls from the third grade who created similar artworks. This situation seemed to oppose the goal of self-expression of the individual student, or the process of discovering the self. But Noga explained that she
understood and respected their need to look alike ("I will never say in anger – do not copy! Because today it was within their power to look alike"), and at the same time turned that situation into an educational learning experience for the whole class. When the girls presented their artworks she asked them to describe who decided what to do, and what were their difficulties in creating the same work. ("Were there any disagreements? On what? So the works reflect your unity and friendship?") She also asked their peers to find differences between the works. Noga summed up the issue by explaining to the students that two people could not do exactly the same artwork even when they intended to, because each one was different and unique.

**Shaping the School While Being Shaped by It**

When Noga started to teach at the elementary school, she believed that the parents and the staff had high expectations of her as an art teacher, and this caused her anxiety. She worried that the community’s expectations might not suit her visions and goals as an art teacher.

_When I started to teach, I thought that it was a beneficial aspect that the community expressed a need for art. But it also caused me pressure.... So from one hand I was glad and from the other hand, I was anxious. For example, Rutty [the principal] had a very impressive knowledge in general and in the art field in particular. Half of the art books in my room are from her home. I couldn’t say to her whatever I wanted. And the expectations were very high, also those of the community.... In my first two years of teaching I felt threatened. I was afraid of being accused by the parents of not doing anything._

(Interview, December 28, 1999)
The need to take into consideration the principal’s and parents’ expectations was a natural outcome of Noga’s belief that “everyone knows something about art. I oppose the Midrasha’s [School of Art] approach that only the artists understand art.... They are snobs who believe that being a teacher is less than being an artist!” (January 4, 2001).

The negotiation with the parents was also encouraged by the school policy. During the first five years, the school operated as an experimental school in which the relationship with the community and strong parental involvement were emphasized.

*The parents are constantly asked to give us written feedback. It is part of the school policy.... They are surveys of the parents’ opinions and a teacher from the staff is doing a research on it.... Parents are very involved in the educational system. They criticize, but also say many good things.*

(Interview, December 28, 1999)

As an art teacher, Noga’s program was based on a learner-centered approach, but she also included goals from a comprehensive approach to art education and even a sociocultural approach. The development of these concepts, which could already be found in her position as a student teacher, can be understood as Noga’s construction of her position within and against the multiple discourses she was exposed to and part of during her long art and art education studies. Her position continued to be shaped through her negotiation between what she believed to be the expectations from her role and her beliefs (*"In the first two years I was scared that someone would say that I hadn’t taught anything,"* interview, December 28, 1999).

Noga was influenced by of the classroom teachers holistic approach toward the teaching of writing and reading. On the other hand, Noga explained part of her teaching
practices as an outcome of her wish to offer the students something different in her

lessons from what the other classroom teachers could provide them.

*When I started to teach I planned to teach on portraits, on Greek art ... and to let
them experience working with some materials. And then I thought how would my
lessons be different from the others. I thought about it not from the aspect of
being unique, rather I thought what would this hour give to a child who comes to
the art classroom. So then I decided that it could not be that a child wouldn’t get
the opportunity, during an hour or two, to enter an art room and decide for
himself what he would like to do, to decide whether he would like to work with
gouache painting on x or y, or to work on a big or small paper.*
(Interview, December 28, 1999)

When Noga was accepted as art teacher, she immediately presented her ideas to

the principal who supported her initiatives (“I told her right away that I would like to

have gallery trustees, who would guide kids” 12.21.99).

*I had already started to create the gallery during the summer vacation, before the
school year started. Rutty [the principal] agreed immediately. She is very
supportive. She supports every initiative and she gives a lot of freedom. She
doesn’t sit on our heads. I was warned that she can be very tough, and she comes
into the classes and checks on us. So it isn’t an easy life with her. But her policy
leaves a lot of space.*
(Interview, December 28, 1999)

Noga felt that the support she received was part of the principal’s policy to

encourage teachers to develop innovative ideas and to develop themselves, even at the

risk that these teachers will not stay in the building as a result of their professional
development.

*She took teachers without any experience or self-confidence and provided for
each of them the opportunity to go to her own direction. Any of your initiatives
will be supported here. She said from the beginning: ‘I do not build a staff that
will be mediocre so that I can preserve it here at the school. My goal is that each
one will develop and love her work, even if I have to pay for this the price that*
you’ll leave the school and continue on with your career.’
(Interview, December 21, 1999)

The principal’s support of the new teachers in their search for innovative teaching solutions affected the teamwork and the support among the teachers themselves. For example, on the board in the teachers’ room, there was a place for teachers to write good comments to one another. Noga felt that the teachers supported her and even took part in the responsibilities traditionally left to the art teacher (such as organizing the students’ exhibitions). She perceived their reaction as an outcome of her inclination not to present art as a separate domain that only she, as an art teacher, has access to, and the atmosphere of collaboration that characterized the team. She had to volunteer many hours beyond the school time to organize the students’ exhibitions, but she felt that she was not alone in this, and accepted it as part of her role. Noga appreciated the collaborative atmosphere among the staff.

*I have enormous support from the staff here, from the principal and the other teachers. They are very positive, and like what I do.*
(Interview, December 21, 1999)

*I volunteer many hours, but I am not the only one.... You should have seen how 20 teachers worked with me to move a [sculptured] animal from one corner to the other because they thought that it wasn’t yet in a suitable place. They worked with me till 9:00 o’clock in the evening although they have kids at home.... Each one of them [the teachers] has stayed with me after school during the four years more than she should.... But do not think that it is an idyllic place. There is jealousy and gossip, and competition like in any other place. Even when there is a collaborative effort, there is always someone who the principal gives more credits to and people get jealous, like in any human place.... But there is something that supports you, and if you know to value it, you know that it is not because everyone can always provide support.... So I think that although it isn’t an idyllic place, there is something in the base that works well with the team.*
(Interview, December 28, 1999)
Noga explained the good relationships among the teachers as an outcome of their accepting of their differences and at the same time working together to establish common teaching discourses and teaching philosophy (that followed the principal’s leadership).

This atmosphere encouraged the teachers to share and to learn from each other.

_They are not all my friends but the base of the relationship is to accept the differences of the others. I met a new teacher who I didn’t like. So I said to myself, it isn’t right. And I really learned from her to set limitations. And now she helps me; at the end of each lesson I write the students evaluations and she read them loudly in her class. So the kids really started to try to clean up now. I learned from her the importance of being constant in the reports._

(Interview, December 28, 1999)

Noga described how these relationships, based on accepting differences, open the teachers in her building to mutual influences:

_Before I explain what the differences are between my lessons and the others’ lessons, I would like to point out that there is a lot of influence. I think that things I did when I took the children to work in the open space and the gallery had an influence. And teachers that are here in the staff influenced me. There isn’t a rigid approach to instruction. It isn’t that all the other teachers are rigid and I am unique. I see it as teamwork._

(Interview, December 28, 1999)

The team’s discourses, goals, and teaching philosophy matched Noga’s child-learner approach and reinforced it. They were guided by the school principal “to see the bright side in every child,” and to try to answer the students’ individual needs as well as to relate to the children’s social interests and problems. Noga described the teaching practices used in her school through which this policy was materialized:

_There is a lot of collaboration. We mutually support the kids. Like today, a teacher asked that N, from the 7th grade, should be with me [in the art class] and I asked him to videotape the activity in the gallery. This means that when a teacher finds out that it is difficult for a student in a specific situation, she tries to_
find an alternative lesson that will suit [the students’ situation]. I am not always
the answer [to students’ difficulties]. I may also find someone who has difficulties
in my lessons and offer to him to go to the computer lab.

Nurit: So the attitude of listening to the children’s needs and adjusting to their
needs is not an attitude limited to the art classes? Is it a school policy?
Noga: Yes. And I have tried to become part of this.
(Interview, December 28, 1999)

The principal asked us first to deal with the problems the kids have when they
come back from break, with what is on their minds. It maybe a fight they had in a
football game. Then you can teach them the Bible, or anything else. The policy is
not to start a lesson before you solve the students’ problems. The most important
event in history can wait.
(Interview, December 28, 1999)

Noga’s position to respect the students’ needs was expressed from the beginning
of her student teaching. This position became even stronger in her work as an art teacher
and was enhanced by the school discourses that enhanced the notion of respecting the
children’s needs. Taking part in this school culture, Noga influenced the practices through
which this teaching philosophy was materialized. For example, she provided the children
with teaching roles, and changed the school discourses to value the students’ voices, not
only in the arts, but also in any other medium. She persuaded the classroom teachers that
the exhibitions of students’ work, which traditionally included only artworks, should
include any works of children in any media and subject areas. She believed that “all the
works have equal value” and that the goal was that each child would be presented though
whatever he or she chose.

In the two big exhibitions I did, I told the classroom teachers that each student
must have a work in it, no matter in what kind of medium. This is the goal. It can
be a work on a computer, or a presentation of a research, but that there would not
be any parent who would not find his kids work, and that all the works are equally
valued. And each of the students decided what he wants to present. (Interview, December 28, 1999).

Another example of how Noga shaped the school while being shaped by it was the issue of school decoration. The technology teacher was responsible for the decoration of the school. Noga did not agree that it was her responsibility to produce nice things or hanging things that other teachers created in order to decorate the learning environment. But she felt that it was part of her role to collaborate and to take part in those efforts. When the technology teacher left, and Noga became solely responsible for it, “the decoration issue terrified” her. Noga looked for different solution, which would answer the school’s demand for decoration, but would not require her to produce “nice things.” She came up with a powerful solution and transformed the school into “the children’s space” by perceiving the school walls as another stage for the students. Developing this approach changed Noga’s perceptions of the decoration job from “really scary” to “ridiculous.”

I didn’t like to deal with decoration. I agreed to collaborate, but I didn’t like it. The teachers did a lot [of what was hung] and it disturbed me.... Then the school was different. I think I learned from that difference. I didn’t just oppose it. There were children’s work, but fewer. ... The issue of school decoration was really scary for me.

Today I think it is ridiculous. Now the children exhibit. I do not have to be talented in anything. Today the school is the children’s space. (Interview, December 28, 1999)
How Has Noga Negotiated her Beliefs and Teaching Identity?

Opposing the dichotomized positions of theory and practice, knowledge and experience, Noga’s stories provided examples of how she shaped the school while being shaped by it. These mutual relationships suggested that neither school culture nor teachers identities should be perceived as static and emphasize the interrelationship between them.

As a student teacher, Noga combined goals that enhanced student self confidence and goals related to a comprehensive approach to art education, including the exposure of the students to art history and art appreciation. As an art teacher, she found in her school's discourses support for both approaches, and she developed them, using a variety of teaching practices.

Although it seemed that Noga’s teaching identity incorporated contradictory paradigms, such as learner-centered, comprehensive approach (including teaching art as language and art history) and even a more social perspective to art education, her central position was clear. She wanted to provide her students with opportunities to construct meaning and express themselves. She perceived art as a means for the children to reflect on themselves as individuals who are part of a community of learners. Noga’s clear message was reflected in an interview I conducted with a 7th grader, who described what she learned from a well-structured unit on Surrealism.

N: What do you think were the most important things in the art lessons?
M: Noga gives us a lot of freedom of expression. She doesn’t limit us with materials. She gives us materials and tells us to use them in any way we would like. It is fun and it helps you to express yourself on many issues.
N: What do you think are the most important things you learned when you created this work?
M: I learned that one can work collaboratively.
(Student's interview, December 1999)

Noga’s teaching position demanded that she pay attention to each of the 100 students she taught every day as individuals and relate to their learning communities and learning environment as well. She tried to listen to each of her students, and to make a stage for her or him as if he or she was not one of a group of 20-25 other students who were learning simultaneously. This created an inner conflict between Noga's beliefs and her teaching reality, and was described by her as a demanding and frustrating situation.

But it is very demanding. It is a lot of individuals. Even if the whole class is working on the same assignment, it still demands personal attention. One needs a lot of patience. And I don’t know how much I have. It takes so much energy. ...
One of my difficulties as an art teacher is that I like to give students freedom, and I know that I pay a high price for it, to be with students creating 20 different works, and to give attention to each one and listen to each one.... I do not know how much I succeed in implementing it. This is my biggest frustration. The gap between what I believe should be, the ideal situation or the goal, and the reality of 25 children and that I didn’t have even time to get to some of them. I am very aware to this, that I didn’t have time to listen to them, or that I had to schedule an appointment with them at a different hour.... In reality, I can not give to 508 students [the place I wanted to]. This is my biggest frustration.... I have problems with being a teacher. It is difficult that I have to see so many kids each day. I feel that it is too much. I see around 100 kids every day.
(Interview, December 28, 1999)

In sum, while some of Noga’s goals related to enhancing the students’ self confidence were consistent from the beginning of her student teaching, one can find changes in the way Noga constructed her identity as an art teacher and in her teaching practices. While as a student teacher, Noga's main investments were to overcome her own fears and her low self esteem as a teacher she centered her attention on her students. She
helped them to “overcome their fears,” and feel “freedom” or “liberation,” to feel “secure in what they are,” through a process of dialogue and reflection not only during art creation but also when they were learning to perceive and understand art. Noga’s descriptions of these feelings that she wished her students to have, were similar to her words describing her own feelings during the process she went through as a student teacher, when she created an art unit according to her beliefs.

*It [the final project] was not only that I overcome the fears. The final project gave me liberation. Even now when I feel under pressure, I tell myself: wait a minute, what did you learn? And then I calm down.*
(Interview, April 1996)

Noga was not aware of the similarities between the way she perceived the process she went through as a student teacher and the goals she held as an art teacher. By suggesting these similarities, I do not intend to narrow the origin of her beliefs to her experiences as student teacher. Rather, I suggest that her teaching position and rich practices were constructed within and against an array of discourses including those she was exposed to during her studies of art and art education as well as those she encountered with in her school. Noga explained that she came to the school “open” to school discourses, without holding a position that she was different from the other teachers. With the principal’s support, she shaped her teaching practices according to her beliefs, and developed innovative solutions in trying to address the expectations of students, parents, and other teachers (as she perceived them).

Noga succeeded in shaping the school and influencing the school’s atmosphere and philosophy, and simultaneously she was shaped by its culture. Her inner conflict, of
trying to relate to each student as an individual while having to cope with 400 students, was not resolved, and caused Noga to feel overwhelmed after five years of intensive teaching. Maybe this was one of the reasons for Noga's resignation.
CHAPTER 6

SHIFTING OF BELIEFS - ADA'S PARTIAL STORIES

Introduction

Ada's case study is relatively short. Ada answered the questionnaire I sent in June 1999, and added a letter that described the special vocational high school where she was teaching. When I went to visit her school, on December 1999, I felt that Ada had her own agenda for my visit. She wanted to show that "the reality" is different from the experience student teachers went through during their studies. From her teaching experience, she recommended that student teachers programs should "expose all the preservice art teachers ... to classes or schools devoted to students with difficulties, and to the methods that are used in those schools" (Ada's questionnaire, June 1999).

Ada's story, which is interesting in itself, has a special importance in comparison with Tamar's case study. Both came to the School of Art in order to become artists, but became interested in art teaching during their studies. They both constructed their beliefs within the School of Art discourses, aiming to teach the students the language of art. But while Tamar continued to hold to the same set of beliefs as an art teacher, and developed
her teaching practices accordingly, Ada shifted her beliefs, and reconstructed her teaching identity.

**Description of Ada**

Ada was a 40 year old art teacher, married to a veterinarian and raising two school age children. She lived in a new middle class settlement near Natania (in the center of Israel). Ada held a full time position as an art teacher and homeroom teacher at a vocational high school. When I visited Ada (December 1999) her main role was to prepare 19 students who were in the 11th grade for the matriculation exams in art history, being the students’ homeroom teacher, and teach them art (studio).

Ada had a busy life. Apart of her full time teaching position, once a week, in the afternoon she studied ceramics and another afternoon she devoted to studies at the Open University, working toward her first degree in Humanities and Sociology. Every Friday was devoted to her art. She spent the day in her studio preparing for a solo painting exhibition (November 2000).

**Ada's Art Studies and Art Creation**

Ada studied photography at Hadassah College in Jerusalem for two years. After spending seven years with her husband and children in Italy, where she took some courses in computer graphics, she began to study at the School of Art. She came to the college to study art. Art was very important to her. She perceived it to be a field of independence, where she could express things that did not address the social expectations surrounding her.
I came to art out of my own initiative. Nobody directed me there. I conquered it myself. I felt that it is a change, and a feeling of growth. It is mine. Whether I'll succeed or not- but it is mine.
(Interview, December 15, 1999)

She described her artworks as dealing with her womanhood, “where nobody is saying to me- take the stool and be quiet” (interview, December 15, 1999). In the invitation to her exhibition, the curator wrote:

A woman obedient to her father and her husband, beautiful and foolish, small and despicable – an eternal reason to murder women here and everywhere. The artist’s protest reflects, thought, in a disciplined analytical composition, geometric patterns and the idea itself.
(Dorit Kedar, November 2000)

**Becoming an art teacher**

During her first year of her studies at the School of Art (1991-1992), Ada enjoyed being exposed for a whole year to first graders at an elementary school, and decided to become an art teacher. As a student in my Art Methods Course, during her third year of her college study (1993- 1994), Ada was an average student. She established nice relationships with the students she taught at the middle school, and learned to reflect on her overwhelming and unfocused art lessons. She designed an art unit around the issue of “borrowing” in art. Her unit concentrated on providing the students many techniques with which they could copy and borrow from other artists’ artworks, and the conceptual aspect of the issue received less emphasis. In her short summery of her teaching experience, Ada wrote:
The process gave me an opportunity to examine, from a different angle, an issue that interests me as an artist and as art consumer, and it was interesting to see the students’ solutions to that issue....

The concept of ‘borrowing’ permitted me to work with techniques that gave opportunities for the students at this age to express themselves. The techniques addressed the students’ desire for realism. In the process I went through, I learned the importance of listening to students, of stopping the lesson in order to answer questions and solve problems.

(Ada’s final art education project, 1994, p. 39)

Ada felt threatened by my presence at her art lessons while she was a student teacher. Six years later, she referred to my critique of her teaching and her writing style on the final project:

It was an unpleasant memory that lost its weight as time passed, especially when I realized how many things I learned from you. I am referring to the informal things I learned from you, things that perhaps were said during the lessons. For example, your interest in working with the student teachers at a middle school, the emphasis on getting to know the children’s world, the importance of respecting them, etc.

(E-mail, February 26, 2000)

Previous teaching experience

During the fourth year of her studies at the college, Ada worked at an elementary school next to the School of Art. And although she enjoyed it and the school’s principal asked her to stay, she moved on to teach at a new middle school in Natania because it was closer to her home. In this school, Ada established a good status as an art teacher and as a homeroom teacher and had good relationships with the other teachers. She left the middle school after two years because she had an opportunity to teach as a substitute teacher at a high school, and because she disliked the principal’s attitude. ("The principal used to scream all the time, and I also
understood that he was not going to permit me to teach art at the 9th grade level"). A year later she looked for a teaching position at another high school in the area, and found “by chance” this vocational high school. During the first year, Ada had only a 10 hour position at the high school, so she began teaching at an elementary school in her settlement. She left the elementary school after one year because she disagreed with the role of the art teachers there, as it was dictated by the art district inspector.

*I started to teach here [at the settlement] and said to myself that I’d try both places, and then decide. I wanted to leave the elementary school after two days, but I felt unethical about doing it. In the elementary school the art inspector changed the role of the art teachers to designers of the educational environment. All the time you are busy with this and with decorating the entrances.*

(Interview, December 15, 1999)

Ada as an art teacher at the vocational high school

During my visit to the school, Ada was in her second year there. She was very proud of her teaching achievements. These were mainly defined by the close and meaningful relationships she established with her students. Ada’s general description of her work at the school was: “The work is very demanding, but every day I enjoy more the relationship I have with the students” (E-mail, February 26, 2000). She was also satisfied with a growth process she went through at this school (which later on will be described further). It was interesting that, although the challenges at the vocational school were huge, Ada did not plan to leave this place as she had left the previous school.
The vocational high school (grades 9-12) was located in some old and neglected buildings, part of which had converted to a school at the edge of a town an hour and a half north of Tel Aviv. Most of the teachers I met in the teachers' room were middle-aged men wearing blue work uniforms. This vocational school was part of the Amal network. Ada described the student population learning in this school as students at risk who were thrown out of the regular education system. This school was their last chance for any kind of educational framework. It tried to keep the students out of the streets and to provide them through training some of the skills and knowledge needed to become mechanics and vehicle electricians or bookkeepers. The school tried to advance as many students as possible to take matriculation examinations (of the technology education trend) in the departments they learned, in order to enable them to continue their study for a higher education. In 1998, the school opened a department of Product Design. This department included classes in art history, painting, drawing, computer graphics, sculpture and design.

The school absorbed many new immigrants, and its programs were designed to prevent students from dropping out of school. For example, classes in this school had maximum of 20 students in a class, while the other schools in Israel had a maximum of 40 students in a class. Also, the teachers stayed after school hours for an afternoon

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24 The Amal vocational network is a system of colleges and high schools for technologies, sciences and arts established by the Histadrut, the General Federation of Labour in Israel. "During the various stages... the Amal network skillfully adapted itself to the needs of the country... We aspire to ensure that the capabilities, professionalism and educational background of our students will contribute to Israel's economy and welfare" (Ra'anan Sharir, Director General of Amal Network, Amal 70th Anniversary, May 1998).
program and gave additional classes to those students who had difficulties in English or math.

Ada described the school principal as "the most human person" she ever met, one that understood the students' needs as well as the teachers' needs and frustrations.

*When I came in the first year and complained about the students, the principal explained to me that they are tired, they have no energy. He was so human. He also related to us as teachers that way. For example I flew to New York on Friday to see art exhibitions, on the day that one had to give the grade reports. So he permitted me to give them the reports a day earlier. And then, in the Hanukkah party on Thursday, I thanked him for it. He replied that he hoped I'd enjoy the trip and have fun. Usually you do not hear this. He relates not only to my needs, but also to the children's needs, and to the other teachers.*

(Interview, December 1999)

The principal encouraged the teachers to teach according to the demands of the Ministry of Education but to take into consideration the students' needs and to understand their situation. Under the principal's guidance, the teachers worked within a special balance between demands and understanding of the students. An example of Ada's use of these practices can be seen in a story she told me:

*They are good kids. One of my students lives with his big brothers because there is no father around. I told one of them that R is wonderful. R is kind and good and helps the others. So he answered me: 'How come nobody told me about such things before?' and he was so pleased to hear it. Today I asked the same kid 'what is going on with you?' He looked down. They all smoke heavily. We also smoked, but for them the cigarette is more important then the classes. They return ten minutes after the lesson starts. I told them I also smoked when I was at school, but it never crossed my mind to be late for a class because I needed to finish a cigarette. So I told R, I do not agree to this cigarette. You have to get over the temptation. I talk very directly with them, and so do the other teachers.*

(Interview, December 15, 1999)
Ada believed that most of her students did not have learning disabilities, but were “students that the educational system missed somehow.” She explained that many of her students had never experienced any success in their lives before coming to this school. She believed that their success was possible at her school, mainly because in this building they found the time to relate to each individual student. Another reason for their different feeling at the vocational school was that they were not referred to as the “others” and the “troublemakers” as they were in their previous schools.

_Here they are all like this. So somehow they feel better. The school here is on one hand very supportive but on the other hand maintains strict borders. For example, these punishments, or their schools uniforms, which they have to wear or else they are sent home to change. I believe that this framework helps them a lot._

(Interview, December 15, 1999)

The Status of the Arts’ Studies

Ada explained that the principal wanted to develop art in the school because he believed that “through art we can help these students and the school” (interview, December 15, 1999). He also encouraged Ada to do big art projects with her students so “one would see that there is art in the school” (interview, December 15, 1999).

Ada began to teach at this high school when it opened the new department of Product Design. She prepared her students for the Matriculation Examinations in art history that they have to take in the 10th grade and the 12th grade. She also taught computer graphics classes and painting classes. In the second year of her teaching, two other art teachers joined the department and taught sculpture, drawing, and
design classes. The students’ final studio works would not be in visual art but in product design. Ada explained that she did not know how many students would get to the stage of submitting final works “because they came here not for the art’s sake, but because it is their last place to learn at all.”

**Ada’s negotiation of beliefs and identity**

Ada described her first four months of negotiating with the students in this school as a shocking experience. She looked for ways to reach her students, and gain their trust.

*In the first four months that I taught there, I was shocked. I didn’t think that such a population would learn art. I had no idea what to do with them.... In the beginning they were very suspicious. They were not cooperative.... In the first tests I gave them high grades, and they felt that they succeeded. And this was important because it raised their self-image. And once they believed that they could do it, things changed. The relationships were established only after they had an experience of a kind of success.* (Interview, December, 1999)

While she was teaching at the previous schools, Ada’s teaching position matched the School of Art’s discourses. She believed that as an art teacher she should expose the students to contemporary art, make them knowledgeable about art history, and make them feel ‘at home’ as consumers and creators in the art language and the art world. With an ironic tone, Ada described the beliefs she held while she worked at a previous middle school:

*My goals there [in the middle school] were to expose the students to art. I wanted them to know how to speak the language of art, and maybe to understand this language better, so that they would become part of an audience that consumes the art... all these fancy words that I do not know whether they exist in reality....* (Interview, December 15, 1999)
However, when Ada encountered the students and the discourses in the vocational school, she shifted her beliefs, and changed the way she understood her role and goals as an art teacher.

*I needed to change my whole perception and my way of thinking. My ideal of art teaching was to come to a high school and to transfer all of my knowledge, to expose the students to all kinds of contemporary artistry, to discuss with them what was happening in the art world and in the painting, all this philosophy. These are things I would like to do, but I have to do it in a different way. It also cannot be the primary thing. Here, the primary thing is the education, the child, and not the discipline.*

(Interview, December 15, 1999)

During Ada’s student teaching and her art teaching at the previous schools, she believed that she should expose her students to the art world. Believing in teaching art as a discipline, she could use issues that interested her as an artist and an art consumer as resources for her teaching. But Ada found these goals to be secondary in the reality she had to negotiate with at the vocational school. According to Ada’s new position, the art became the means to educate the students and to raise their low self-image through providing them with an experience of success.

*My goals today are only to raise the students’ self-image. And I do it through their success in their studies, and also through listening to them. I pay attention to them, and I am sensitive to them -- these are trivial things. But through the art I provide them academic achievements. These achievements raise their low self-esteem.... I do not try to make them big painters, and not even to make them an art audience, that will consume art or talk the art language. Art is just the means to support them. To expose them so they will be part of the culture, that they’ll know things.... If you want to be a person who is part of the culture, you have to know something, some kind of general knowledge.*

(Interview, December 15, 1999)
The work at the vocational school with students who had never been exposed to art, and had no basic background, changed Ada’s definition of a success as teacher:

*I perceive a successful lesson as a lesson that the students listen to, one in which they watch [the slides] and are involved in the questions I raise. This is the success. I can not say that we got to a stage that we had an in depth discussion, or a dialogue that brought us to unexpected places. But when I see that they say that ‘it is beautiful’ or ask me ‘what is it made of,’ that they begin to ask about things I show them, I see it as a success.... When they answered me, and they participate actively in the lesson, it is a big success in my eyes. Because these are children who were never exposed, they have a very shallow and narrow basic knowledge, and their capacity for verbal and written expressions is very limited.... In any other high school, the art teacher would demand more from the students. I am satisfied when the student did the assignment. And then we can think how to improve the work if the student wants to improve it. If he doesn’t want to, it is OK with me.*

(Interview, December 15, 1999)

As a teacher at the vocational high school, Ada also changed her discursive practices:

*Here, I also had to understand that mainly I have to adopt the banal methods of frontal teaching. Sometimes I give them worksheets or questions. But I combine watching of slides and writing on the board, and I give them typed copies of the material.... When they have to copy from the board they have to concentrate. Today, for example I gave them a typed page after I explained the material. I read it aloud, and told them what to mark. Sometimes they build connections to their own world. I ask them specific questions.... The homework is to paint. For example, to paint their own death world, according to the Egyptian canon. So it helps them memorize this. I cannot give them an assignment to sum up by themselves. They are not capable of doing it. I feed everything right into their mouth, and sometimes even open their mouths.*

(Interview, December 15, 1999)

Proudly Ada told me about one of her students who last year got 90 (out of 100) on the matriculation exam in Art History ("He learned by heart everything I gave them"), an unbelievable success for a student from such a school. But the successes were not
defined though the art knowledge, but thorough what a success, any success meant to the students. ("The goal is only to support and the art becomes a means to it" December 15, 1999.)

Today, my identity is first as an educator and second an art teacher, although they are very close to one another and complete one another. For example, in the last education [advisory] lesson, I discussed issues such as tolerance and relationship among people, stereotypes, and biases. The trigger for the lesson was an article in the newspaper about the lynching that was done to the blacks in US in the beginning of the century. I showed them the article and told them its content, and connected it to terms I used. I also related to the way the article was designed, its title, and the purpose of the photograph as documenting and exposing things in order to evoke the public awareness. (E-Mail, February 26, 2000)

Although Ada used the most traditional methods of transferring knowledge, such as lecturing and dictating facts to be memorized, she did not establish herself as authority. She liked to show her students her own weaknesses.

When I write on the board, I miss letters. So they correct me. They enjoy correcting me, and they say how lucky they are that I am their teacher. I also have no problem saying to them that I do not know, or that I am wrong, that I need to check this issue. (Interview, December 1999)

Ada explained that the knowledge of the discipline was not meaningful in her views as relating to the students’ reality.

When I first heard it from you [at the School of Art], I didn’t understand why should I listen to the students. I wanted to teach them art! I remember this sentence although I didn’t understand it in the beginning, and didn’t know what to do with this. But it returned to me when I entered this school. [I understood] that, first of all, I need to know what bothers these children, not to go into detail, but to know that their behavior is an outcome of something. To know to listen to them and to be able connect to their reality. (December 15, 1999).
Facing a situation, where the dominant discourses of the School of Art seemed to be unsuitable, Ada returned to the discourses that were enhanced in the art education courses during her studies. These were in line with the discourses she found at the vocational school.

Within the discourse of the vocational school, Ada defined her teaching identity as an educator who used art as a means to create successful experiences for students that had lost a trust in their abilities. Her relationship with the students, the individual attention she gave to each one of them, and the trust and love she gave and received from her students made her feel that she was as an art educator in the right place.

*In the first four months I was shocked. But now it is fun, and I enter the school with a smile. I needed to change. You want to go to an elitist place, and suddenly you find yourself in this place. So you have two options. I can say to myself that I am not worth more and that this is the reason I find myself in such a place and not a better one. Or I can say just the opposite, that this is a much more challenging place with much more satisfaction, a place which is the reality. It was an outcome of a process that I understood that I enjoy the educational part of the work, the interaction and the talks with them. I don’t know how I would feel if the work were only to repeat year after year the same material necessary for the art history test. Here there is a combination of things that make teaching really exciting and different.*

(Interview, December 1999)

Changing her beliefs concerning her goals as an art educator and reconstructing her teaching identity was a process Ada went through, listening to and adopting discourses that she found in her school. I believe that in part the reason for her openness to the discourses she found in the vocational teachers’ room was that they gave place to the teachers as well as the students.
In retrospective I can tell that the school’s character and its staff were what caused me to crystallize the position that art is more the means than the goal by itself, and that the goal is the education. I don’t know whether I told you that in the beginning it was very difficult for me. Only after I crystallized my position did things began to move in the right direction. The teachers’ room talks here are different than in other high schools. I might be wrong, but from my encounter (with not so many) other teachers’ rooms, I think that this is the case. In this teachers’ room one talks more about the students’ behavior, about their many absences from school, and about ways that might solve this or how one could handle it. We talk about how we can enhance the students’ motivation to learn and also we take out frustrations that are outcomes of the enormous efforts that the teachers make, many times without students’ cooperation. Most of the teachers give the students many chances to redo their work in order to raise their grades. But at the same time they are very rigid when the students exaggerate.

(E-mail, February 26, 2000)

Ada's description of the process of reconstructing her identity within the school’s discourses went even beyond her teaching position. She believed that it had impacted her as a person — learning to accept that “I cannot demand that the students reach for get high achievements,” to become flexible, “taught me to take it easy, to be more understanding with myself.”

When Ada constructed her teaching identity during her student teaching within the School of Art's discourses, she described a strong connection between her interests as an artist and her position as an art teacher. She believed that she should bring the students to be interested in the world she was part of, and which was meaningful for her. I asked Ada whether there were any similar connections after she reconstructed her teaching identity within the vocational school’s discourses. Ada described a different kind of

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25 An example of her special caring attention was a homemade cake she brought to celebrate each of her students’ birthdays.
connection between her teaching and her art creation. She described her identification with her students, "who did the forbidden things," who crossed the legitimate borders. Ada described her identification with the need to rebel in revealing "a very personal story" about her childhood at school ("I hated to study and did many forbidden things that my parents never knew about" December 15, 1999). I believe that one can also find a connection between her love for these "outsider" students and her artworks that protest against "obedience" as a woman. The connection, then, was not the themes of the lessons, the issues that were discussed, or the language of art. Rather Ada's motivation to teach the "outsiders" was similar to her motivation for her art creation. She hoped that the role art played for her would also help her students.

I wish that the art would raise their spirits. So I came to the conclusion that this framework suits me very much. I prefer it to the places were you are pushed to run after achievements.

(Interview, December 1999)
CHAPTER 7

DON QUIXOTE LOOKING FOR A PERFECT AUDIENCE

NAOMI'S PARTIAL STORIES

Introduction

Naomi's partial tales are part of a relatively short case study (June 1999 - March 2001). The contribution of her stories to my study is imbedded in Naomi's awareness of the conflicts that influenced her teaching practices and the strong images she used to describe them. The other art teachers in this study did not live their conflicts as an everyday struggle they had to face. In her answers to the questionnaire (June 1999), Naomi had already raised her conflicts with the educational system. She expressed the conflict between her identity as a teacher, who was supposed to have "freedom" according to the School of Art's educational view of a teacher as a creator, and her role that was defined by the school discourses.

*I understand the education system better, and this is why constantly I feel conflict between the freedom I am supposed to have and the conditions of the system (the administration, the school, etc.)*

(Questionnaire, June 1999)
During the interviews conducted in December 1999 and in January 2001 and in our e-mail correspondence, Naomi elaborated her explanations of these conflicts. This chapter describes the ways Naomi reconstructed her identity when she became an art teacher and the ways she negotiated the conflicts she encountered as an art teacher in the public school system.

Description of Naomi

Naomi was a woman in her middle thirties with short blond hair and blue eyes. Her parents lived in a kibbutz, and she lived by herself in a rental apartment in the Tel Aviv metropolis, riding a motorcycle from place to place. She had a very busy life, teaching art at two different schools (coded as B.Y. high school and E.D. middle school), studying for the first degree in literature and women’s studies at Tel Aviv University, and keeping up with her painting, participating in group and solo exhibitions.

Naomi sent me her busy schedule, and let me decide to which of the schools I would come during my visit to Israel in December 1999. For five years, she had been teaching art history in the fashion design department and architecture department at B.Y. Ort (vocational) high school, where she prepared the students for matriculation exams. Naomi described the student population in her classes as children from low-income families and new immigrants from USSR. They were “the weakest classes in the whole school. These are girls who, if they weren’t at this school, would have worked in industry” (interview, December 17, 1999).

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Her other position was at a middle school located in an upper middle class neighborhood in northern Tel Aviv, where she had taught art (studio) classes for two years. The middle school was affiliated with a highly regarded high school. Naomi explained that students were bused from the south of Tel Aviv to the middle school, but they did not make it to the high school. So, in the higher grades, the demographic was only the upper middle class children from northern Tel-Aviv, while at the middle school the diversity was huge. The high school students at this school came from families that were “more pushy” and “enriched their children.” But Naomi felt that as an art teacher she did not benefit from the parents’ attitude since the art studies did not continue beyond the 10th grade and the students could not chose art for the matriculation exams. This administrative decision limited the arts to the status of an enriching activity and an unimportant study area.

Naomi compared her work in these two schools:

The students age factor is very important, so that I feel better among high school kids. There is also a great difference in my teaching subject since in B.Y. I teach only art history. Those two - age and subject - allow me to discuss different things with my high school students, such as politics and religion. For example, when I taught about the churches we talked about the Pope’s visit and change the subject to include a more actual and intellectual direction. I feel very much at ease in that environment. On the other hand, at this high school there are very low norms for education per se - why study art, why study at all, why make an intellectual effort? This attitude has a lot to do with the parents at B.Y. At E.D., the atmosphere is far more pushy and competitive. But I barely feel that, and this is part of my frustration - that the students don’t feel obligated to this field. They love to work, maybe, but in the higher classes they simply quit. (E-mail, March 2000).
Naomi didn’t feel that she had partners to share her frustrations with at the E.D school. She indicated her feeling of isolation as one of the reasons for her agreement to participate in this research. Another reason was her expectation of enhancing her reflectivity:

*I agreed to participate in the research because I myself feel that I have checked and examined every step of the post-Midrasha [School of Art]. How do I choose things, have I made any progress, have I changed my views and thinking. I think that your research has introduced an opportunity to look at my work from other aspects and angles. And of course, I think that my “isolation” (I can’t think of another word) at E.D pushed me to take part in your study. I think that the art teacher needs an audience more than other teachers, since he is dependent on visual products. Therefore I was really glad and keen to join up.*

(E-mail, March 2000)

Naomi started to teach at the E.D. school because she understood that its administration planned to develop an art department. She thought that in a school with students who have high learning capabilities and motivation, an art department could provide her a place where she could teach according to her beliefs. After a while, she realized that the school’s intentions “were not serious” and were not in line with her expectations.

*And I realized that the school was just trying to solve schedule problems through the art classes. And, on the other hand, they came up with demands for visual outcomes.*

(December 17, 1999)

In the summer of 2000, realizing that her wishes for an art department at that school were not going to become a reality, Naomi left this middle school very disappointed. She transferred to another vocational high school, to prepare more classes
for the matriculation exams in art history. Her reasons for quitting the middle school became part of Naomi’s story of negotiation.

**Naomi’s identity and beliefs as a student teacher**

Naomi was 24 years old when she came to study at the School of Art. She did not have extensive knowledge in art prior to her studies at the college, although she had studied some art classes at another college near her kibbutz in the Galilee. Naomi explained her decision to study at the School of Art as a result of her vague feeling that art was something of interest to her and her desire to get an art teaching certification. She planned to leave her kibbutz and wanted to have a profession. She did not plan to be an artist when she started her studies, but bought into this idea during her second year of her studies.

Coming from the small and closed community of her kibbutz in north of Israel, Naomi described the experience at the School of Art as an exposure to the world and a place where she reconstructed her identity. She had the opportunity to meet a diverse group of people there, and she felt that she got legitimization for being different. She also discovered that she liked to learn and that she was a good student.

*It was an important period for me. I developed emotionally, I articulated my direction in life, and discovered other people. The kibbutz closes you and this was the first time I really lived outside of the kibbutz (although I took a trip by myself to China, but it didn’t open me up). I didn’t feel any competition in the Midrasha [School of Art] because I came from the kibbutz and there was no such thing as being excellent. Everybody was the same. In the Midrasha I was surprised that I was a good student.... I also got legitimization to be different in the Midrasha. And this seems to me the most important thing.* (Interview, December 17, 1999)
Naomi loved the School of Art and regarded that period as very important in her life, a period that changed her emotionally and intellectually. She described her reconstruction process as an "ignorant kibbutznik" (a term in Hebrew for one who lives in the kibbutz), for who the cultured world was finally opened. The studies at the School of Art offered multiple experiences in art creation, art history and art education, which Naomi absorbed intensively.

*I learned about Modernism and Postmodernism with the art teachers. I studied the introduction to Ancient Egypt and went to a contemporary! exhibition, I also took some photos and painted, and learned some techniques -- one thing enriched the other. At the university you do not have this. You don’t have the studio part and you have no connection to what is going in today’s world. You do not have analysis of articles that relate to what is going on now.*

(Interview December 30, 1999)

Naomi was considered a very good and serious art student at the studio classes as well as in the art history classes. After the first year at the School of Art, she decided to continue her study of art history at the university. Studying at the university after graduating from college gave her perspective on the advantages and limitations of the School of Art. For example, she appreciated the support and personal attention she got from the teachers at the college.

*The relationship between the teachers and the students at the Midrasha [School of Art] were very constructive. Without romanticizing, you were built up there in a very personal way, [through] the final educational projects and the mentoring, and the art criticism. From an early stage you got a lot of attention. And it was very good for me, and encouraged me to succeed. I think in a way it modeled for me what the relationship between a teacher and a student should be.*

(Interview December 30, 1999)
On the other hand, Naomi had some criticism of the institute and its curriculum. Naomi believed that the art history department at the School of Art as well as at Tel Aviv University had a limited view of their study area.

At the university I took an introduction to theory and criticism of the culture. I think that this should have been part of art history studies. But this course was part of cultural studies within the general literature department.... They started with Marx and the Frankfurt School, and talked about Benjamin and Freud and a little bit about Nietzsche, all this story. And this was missing in the Midrasha [School of Art]. In the Midrasha they adopted the approach of art history at the university, and this is very narrow. They did not ask about any connections beyond the field itself.

(Interview December 30, 1999)

Constructing her teaching identity, Naomi had to overcome her resistance to working with children. The kibbutz normative expectation was that girls who were 12 years old and older were to work with younger children. But Naomi preferred to have a “boyish” image and worked in the fields.

I think that I was afraid of children since the time I was in the kibbutz. They expect you there already when you are 12 years old to go and work with kids. And this influenced me. I never worked with kids. I was boyish and went to work with the animals and in the fields. And I thought that I could not do what everybody else can. So only in the Midrasha [School of Art] I did start relating to children. I was afraid that there would be a big mess. I am afraid of losing control.

(Interview December 30, 1999).

Surprisingly, Naomi learned during her student teacher experience that she can communicate very well with children. Yet, even as a teacher she continued to believe that she could communicate better with high school students or adults.

Naomi’s final art educational project at the School of Art provided an example of her goals in art education as well as of her intellectual ability to design a sophisticated art
curriculum. In her final project (1994), entitled “representations of landscape in Israeli art,” she explored the subject from its artistic aspect as well as from its political and cultural aspects. Her use of the term ‘landscape’ went beyond reference to the description of a specific place and people. She explored the theme from its political and cultural aspects as well as its artistic aspects. In her inquiry into that theme, she explored the following theoretical questions and connected them to her middle school students’ world:

a. How does the Israeli artist relate to the landscape and how does he express his attitude toward life in Israel?
b. Which parts of the landscape got the artist’s attention and why?

c. How did the artist chose to describe different motives during different periods? [For example the image of the Arab]
d. What is Israeli in the landscape?

In the curriculum I designed, I tried to connect these theoretical questions with the children’s world. I tried to raise the same questions that the artists dealt with, but through the experiences of living in Israel (and not through the artistic questions):

* Why am I an Israeli? what do I integrate from other cultures?
* How do events, opinions, views etc. influence my attitudes toward the life in Israel?

* How could I express my identity and being part of Israel through artistic means?

( Naomi’s Final art education project, 1994, p. 2)

Naomi’s goals and beliefs as student teacher included the School of Art’s normative discourses that related to art as learning a language through the problem solving approach and cultural knowledge (art history). But she integrated these new voices with some of her political agenda and awareness that were not emphasized in the School of Art’s discourses. The assignments she gave her students were not about the
language per se but about exploring their Israeli identity using the language to express themselves. From her perspective of a teacher, Naomi explained the limitation of the School of Art's discourses:

*In the Midrasha [School of Art] you find art for art's sake. Language, language, language. Visual or verbal – all the time language. And there is no connection to what is really happening. My background, which is more socialistic, triggered me to look for this connection. But also the transition to the city made me more involved in social issues.*

(Interview, December 17, 1999)

Naomi related her awareness of social issues to the “socialistic” and normative discourses at her kibbutz. She constructed her teaching identity within and against the discourses of the School of Art as well as those she encountered at her kibbutz.

**Naomi as an art teacher**

**Naomi's Construction of her Identity as an Art Teacher**

Naomi described her development as a teacher after graduating from the college as influenced by three additional sources: her teaching experience, her art practice, and her studies at the University. She felt that through gaining experience as an art teacher she became more professional and less pressed in her relationships with her students. She became more self-confident and more tuned to the students’ world and culture.

*I learned to use a variety of methods in my teaching, to give more interesting exercises, and to activate more instruments like video, or to tell the students to

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26 These discourses were embedded for example by the emphasis on equality of education and property that existed at the kibbutz. For example, the children lived in “children’s houses” and not with their parents, where they shared the same clothes and toys which belonged to all of them.
summarize at home on Gothic Art so we will be able to watch some films.... After I graduated from the Midrasha [School of Art] I think that I learned to relate more to the world. I relate more to the students’ world including their video-clips, their parents, their fashion and their life. They all influence me more then theories. I now adjust myself to the students and the teaching conditions and to their culture.
(Interview, December 17, 1999)

While Naomi described her familiarity with the students’ culture and background as one source of influence on her teaching practices, she also perceived her own art creation and involvement in the art world as important sources. In line with the School of Art’s dual perception of art teachers as artists and educators, Naomi described:

And I feel that my art contributed a lot to my teaching. It gave me experience to look at things and to know all kinds of practical things. For example, when I guide them in exhibitions, I feel immediately in contact with the vivid contemporary art world. I would not like to be an art teacher who is not dealing herself with art, because I feel a symbiotic connection that is very constructive. It constructs the teaching as a tool that is fruitful for the teachers and for the students.... When I teach studio workshops, I can speak about colors, and drawings and things I’ve learned, that I believe for a person who comes from the academic world, and is not active in creation- it would be difficult.
(Interview, December 17, 1999)

Her general direction of Naomi’s studio program at E.D. school was constructed partially within the School of Art’s discourses. Her goals were to give the students basic knowledge through exercises in techniques, to know using different materials and to teach the language of art:

In the beginning of the year my method is very dogmatic. I start from drawing.... I gave them an exercise with three steps. The first one was to draw like kids. The second was to add as many lines as they could with different styles, and the third one was to add tones and shadows. So it was for them a way of trying to use the pencil in a variety of ways. But it also showed them the progress they made and what they can create with lines. Only later do we start to work with colors, and
we work on sculpture only after three months. I put emphasis on the basics. I saw that, for example, they do not know how to clean their brushes, or to mix colors. I want them to know the materials.
(Interview, December 17, 1999)

Although Naomi gave the students exercises that interested herself as an artist, such as relating to composition and other ‘problem solving’ approaches to art education, she kept asking herself questions that problematized this School of Art’s approach.

What interests me is to develop the child. I want them to find themselves in the art. But what does this mean? You can be on one hand a very developed child or know a lot, but it doesn’t mean that you have found yourself in the art. I want them to go through a process of development. It can be a visual development, or something very emotional. Their excitement with their work is for me more important than that they’ll achieve good outcomes. Then I know that they internalized the language through all the exercises we did.
(Interview, December 17, 1999).

After Naomi graduated from the School of Art she “got bored with all the galleries,” and “felt the need to distance [her]self... from the local swamp.” Separating herself from the School of Art’s discourses and studying literature at the university, Naomi enlarged her interests to include other cultural formats beyond the visual art world, such as films and literature, and she also became more political.

Today I am more interested in films, literature, texts. The separate isolated art world of the Midrasha [School of Art] became less attractive. Now I am interested in other art fields. I am very much interested in an interdisciplinary approach to the arts: films, music, TV programs, or video-clips. I am interested in this approach- in the transition between different media. And the social aspect got much stronger. I am interested in the students’ world and the life in Israel. This is also because I left the kibbutz and moved to live in Tel Aviv, and started to be interested in things that relate to my life...
(Interview, December 17, 1999)
Naomi’s Goals as an Art Teacher

Naomi’s goals related to different discourses she was exposed to and was part of during her college studies, her life in the kibbutz, her teaching at school and her studies at the university. They expressed a diversity of voices that presented her identity itself as a site of conflicting beliefs, concepts, and feelings (Britzman 1991, 1992; Weedon, 1987).

*I see myself as an intellectual who has something to transfer to them. I want to open their heads to widen their horizons, to teach them a new language, so that they will see things in the streets and will come and tell me.*

(Interview, January 3, 2001)

Naomi identified three areas that her goals and teaching practices were related to: “the culture, the society and the children’s world. And these areas influence my lessons” (Interview, December 17, 1999). She wanted to expose her students to knowledge of the Western culture, knowledge she believed to be important not only as facts but also as representing the Western ethic and ideas of democracy and human rights. She herself became familiar with this knowledge later in her life, during her studies at the college and university (though she was exposed to the Western normative discourses at the kibbutz).

Teaching about the Western culture was part of the required materials Naomi had to teach for the matriculation exams in art history at B.Y. high school. Naomi believed that knowledge of the Western culture was important and opposed the fragmented narrow interests of the students.

*I believe in providing these materials to the students. They do not get it through the Internet, as people think. They do not widen their horizons through the Internet. They do not have creative thinking... I succeeded in enriching them. It is extremely important for me to enrich them to widen their horizons.*

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Nurit: What do you mean by ‘widen their horizons’? Do you mean that they’ll know more facts?

No, that too, but it is important that they go beyond their narrow world. It is hard to perceive how much their world is on the surface and narrowed to one spot. They cannot make a connection between ... the Guernica and the history of the 20th century. And beyond that, they do not draw connections between the Guernica and the human conditions in the 20th century.

(Interview, December 17, 1999)

Naomi provided some examples of how this goal affected her art history lessons at B.Y. high school, and what she hoped to achieve.

If my goal is to enrich the students’ world, I can permit myself to stop the sequence about the Renaissance architecture and to show them other things. In the Fashion Design department, where only girls study, I opened the year with a lecture on the woman’s body. And then I talk with them about the things that are interesting to them....

For example, when I teach them on the [building of] Capitol Hill on one hand, and on the Arch of Triumph in Paris, on the other hand, I like them to understand the modern revolutions. I want them to understand what democracy is. I want them to understand these things because it is so much more interesting than what kind of relief is there. (Interview December 17, 1999)

The second area that constituted Naomi’s goals and practices was the Israeli society and its moral and social issues, which she wanted her students to be aware of and to critically examine. Naomi described her social and political awareness as having been developed within the kibbutz’s discourses as well as in her university studies.

From time to time we discuss social phenomena and issues from life in Israel. I am especially interested in the social life.... This doesn’t come from my own art but from my interest in society, and the [role of] art within the society. This is something that is missing at the Midrasha [School of Art].

(Interview, December 17, 1999)
In projects such as “the Other in art,” “tolerance” or “protesting against violence against women.” Naomi discussed with the students social and political issues and explored the relationship between social issues and art.

In both of the schools I displayed exhibitions of students’ work against violence against women. ... It is a subject that interests me more as I articulate my political views. The feminist things are not from home or from the kibbutz.... But my interest in it came later, as part of my search after individualism. Since every year I need to do a project in the high school, I decided to take this issue to both schools.

(Interview, December 17, 1999)

The third area, the children’s world, was an area Naomi started to explore during her student teaching, but she became familiar with it during her work as an art teacher.

Naomi’s goal to “enrich the students’ world” included the creation of relevant connections to the present world, to social and ethical issues, to encourage creative and critical thinking, and to make her students see their own reality differently.

Naomi could relate more to her students’ world in her studio lessons, where she planned ahead of time in order to change her plans and to flow with the students’ needs and the dynamics of the classes.

Last year I prepared slides of each one of them, and they created big posters out of their own images. They liked it very much. It was 8th graders who had very low self-esteem, and this is why I chose this exercise. All that year I did with them exercises that were connected to their portraits. For example, they drew their rooms, we worked on their names, they brought personal objects they liked and we created an assemblage.

(Interview, December 17, 1999)

The seeds of these three directions Naomi identified in her teaching were already part of Naomi’s final art education work at the School of Art. But as an art teacher she
developed her ideas in these areas and articulated her views. Unlike Tamar, who wasn't aware of the limitation of the School of Art's discourses, Naomi was aware that relating to the social issues, and the children's world meant to teach beyond the art language and relating to different discourses.

"I Feel Like a Racehorse who Can Not Run"

Naomi’s goals of teaching Western art history as a way to understand values and the Western discourses were not part of the preplanned curriculum that the students had to memorize for the test, and she had to struggle to find time to incorporate her goals in her lessons. These beliefs confronted her with the educational system’s expectations to cover the material for the test and the teaching practices of transferring knowledge.

The lessons are frontal because I need to cover a lot of material. The frontal teaching is a linear teaching. You need all the time to progress. You cannot be side tracked and take time to compare things. It isn't flexible. There is a goal - to pass the matriculation exams. The goal is not to enrich you, to make you more flexible. It is very difficult to develop discussions. And I also have big classes 28 – 39 kids in a class .... I give them many guided watching of TV art programs I record and bring to class. It is still a frontal lesson. They have handouts, and the TV is instead of me with the slide projector.

When we learned about the Gothic [style], I gave them two different versions of the 'hunchback of Notre-Dame' and we talked about the society, and I brought them an example of a Gothic film. It was very nice, but it is not built into the preplanned curriculum. The preplanned curriculum for the matriculation exams is very dry. And it isn’t interesting unless you are a magician who can transform it to make it interesting for the kids. To me it is interesting when I succeed to reach deeper levels, beyond the level of this looks this way and the other that way. (Interview, December 17, 1999)

This need to cover materials for the test instead of building connections to present life and understanding the bigger issues and values that the artworks represent and are
part of has put Naomi in a conflictual situation. Naomi was very disappointed with the expectations of the system toward her role as an art teacher. She felt that the system did not let her express her potential as a good teacher who has a lot to offer, and pushed her to become a mediocre teacher. The system turned her into “a machine” in “a grade factory” that stood in front of 40 students who she had to prepare for the matriculation exams.

*I have nothing against developing excellent students. I think it is an important goal. But when it turns you into a machine that has to cover material, it is so frustrating and disappointing because it is meaningless. It causes the teacher to have a guilty conscience...* (Interview, December 17, 1999)

This conflict between Naomi’s role to prepare the students for the matriculation exams and her belief that as an intellectual she would like to enrich the students and to discuss with them issues on a different level caused Naomi to feel that her teaching was a terrible missed opportunity. Time and again she had debated whether she wanted to continue to be an art teacher in these conditions, which Britzman (1992) identifies as a conflict between teacher’s identity and teacher’s role.

*What disturbs me is that if you are a good teacher, you do not use your potential, because the educational system demands something else. It changes you to become a mediocre teacher. It isn’t just the demand to cover the material, but also the whole attitude.... In the first year I felt like a racehorse that can not run. And I have felt so till now.... From the moment I started to teach, I thought about how could I quit it. I thought about developing learning CDs, or switching to computer graphics. But somehow at the last moment, I don’t want to change my job....* (Interview December 17, 1999)
"There are Constantly Conflicts"

Because Naomi did not have to plan her studio curriculum according to a preplanned curriculum, she did not face a conflict with an outside required plan. But she identified other conflicts. These related to the school administration’s expectations that she decorate the school walls according to the normative discourses of schooling.

But even when you teach studio class, you are considered to be the national decorator. It is such an archaic approach! I think that there is a problem when one relates to art as the production of endless outcomes. I also have a problem with decorating according to holidays....

But there are constantly conflicts between what I believe to be more important [and the school’s values]. For example, I believed that it was important to relate to a day that was devoted against violence against women and the principal thought that Hanukah, which was just celebrated, should be on the walls....

(Interview, December 17, 1999)

Being in a situation of ‘constant conflicts’, Naomi felt isolated and that she did not have partners with whom she could share her discourses.

In the teaching room there is no point to talking about art or problems that are connected to art classes. Even with a good friend of mine, who is a history teacher, I can not talk about art lessons, or achievements in the art. She doesn’t understand anything about it.

(Interview, December 17, 1999)

Another area of conflict in the studio classes was Naomi’s disagreement with the middle school’s approach to require students to learn art even when they were not interested in it. Naomi felt that she could not raise their motivation at this age. On the other hand, she also did not want to fight with them and cause them to have bad memories of the art classes when they became “grew up high tech people.”
If they don’t want to learn art – they don’t have to. I feel that not only does this not enrich me, it closes me as a teacher. I try to find solutions according to the audience’s satisfaction. For those students that do not like to learn, I try to find ‘instant’ solutions so that they will learn. I do not like to fight. I do not wish that as grown-up high-tech people they would remember how much they hated art.... I take materials that are more accessible such as video-clips, and through this I teach the whole language of art. But when I ask them to do an analysis or an exercise so that they will internalize the language, then they start to resist. They expect not to learn and not to do anything. And I think that behind it stands their resistance to schooling. They are angry at the system. This is why I don’t want to teach there anymore.... I don’t think it is my role to cause someone satisfaction.... They do not know how to be creative and they do not want to be creative. It doesn’t interest them. And I do not find it interesting to convert them to be creative.

(Interview, December 17, 1999)

As a teacher Naomi identified with the students’ resistance to the forced situation of learning something against their will. Her solutions were to do things that “pleased the audience” but were meaningless in her view and caused her dissatisfaction and inner conflict. Naomi’s conflicts between her identification with the students’ resistance and anger against the schooling and her efforts “to convert them to be creative” or to please them provided another example to what Britzman (1992) identified as a conflict between teachers’ role and teachers’ identity. Naomi’s main frustration in teaching these unmotivated students was that these were not the challenges she looked for as a teacher. With these students, she did not use her knowledge as an expert in art and art history.

Naomi’s Story as a Don Quixote Looking For a Perfect Audience

Naomi described her frustration with working in what she perceived as "impossible conditions". She taught art history to students who had chosen to do their
matriculation exams in art, but they were at the lowest level in the vocational high school.

With these students Naomi felt that she could not talk about complex ideas or fulfill her goals as "an intellectual." With them, she had to fight for her "honor as a teacher."

> It is a fight over your honor as a teacher and your professional authority. I think I have a lot to say and to offer, and I know how to say it. I know that I can be a very good teacher, but in these conditions I am a mediocre teacher. I can not articulate what I want to say because they stop me every second. And this situation is unbearable....

(Interview, December 1999)

In seeking to teach according to her goals as an art teacher and "to open their heads to widen their horizons and to teach them a new language," Naomi was frustrated with the students' ability, but with the teaching conditions that both she and her students had to face. Naomi described it as "an educational fight."

> The diversity is enormous. There are 10 out of 40 that come from enriched homes. And all the rest...do not know to read or to write.... I think that many students are frustrated. They cannot cope with anything new. They come with feelings of failure, and from worlds that do not challenge them in any way. They are survivors who can not face any intellectual effort. And I am tired of that.

(Interview, January 3, 2001)

The students at the middle school, who had higher learning abilities and "pushy parents," were without motivation to learn an unappreciated study area such as art ("I have students in the 9th grade who told me that they were switching to computer because it is functional") or could not relate to art beyond afternoon enrichment because there was no art department at their high school. Although Naomi faced different situations in her two schools, in both of them she felt that she could only rarely express her potential as an art teacher who would like to challenge her students intellectually.
But Naomi described a conflict at another level, at the ground level. She felt that these everyday conflicts she encountered were merely a reflection of it. She felt that the arts and she herself as an art teacher were in a conflict with a pragmatic society and its values that were expressed through the parents and the school’s attitude toward art.

My feeling of being an underdog is connected to the society. As an art teacher, you teach something that is not important; it is not functional, and it is not interesting. Who needs art anyhow?...
I feel that the educational system’s orientation is in one direction that includes achievements, productions, computers, pragmatism, high-tech, and nothing creative, or critical thinking. To know how to analyze something, to map it, to think in a logical way, understand what things are related to, get in tune with your feelings— all these are opposed to this pragmatic approach. And the education system is oriented to pleasing the parents and the capitalism in our society. And you should feel good about learning the computers. Then you are 'in'. But when you learn art, you have to be very strong, not like now, when those who come to learn art are too weak to learn computers.
(Interview, December 17, 1999).

What Naomi called the ‘bigger conflict’ can be identified as a discursive conflict that is embedded in the principal’s practical expectations of her to decorate the school for the holidays or the educational system’s expectations that she cover the material for the exams. Naomi pinpointed the ‘big conflict’ as the conflict between her values and what she believed to be important, (which included the kibbutz's discourses, and the School of Art’ discourses as aspects of the Western culture) and the values of the school and the society in general.

The biggest conflict in art teaching is between the educational system (and each school by itself) and the values I am coming with. The worldview that I am bringing and my philosophy are in conflict. And it is hard for me. I do not understand the educational system deeply, but you constantly know that something is wrong....
I feel like Don Quixote. In a way, I like this feeling of fighting against windmills like a martyr, but I also know that I fight windmills. So you feel ridiculous. The feeling is that I am alone, without partners.
(Interview, December 17, 1999)

It is interesting to read Naomi's image of herself as Don Quixote, who fights against windmills, through Foucault's (1970) description of that image. According to Foucault, Don Quixote entered a reality that consisted of signs of text.

His adventures will be deciphering of the world: a diligent search over the entire surface of the earth for the forms that will prove that what the books say is true. (Foucault, Order of things, 1970, p. 47)

Naomi described the 'text' she entered as an art teacher as a society that was in deep conflict, in the midst of a fight about culture and values. She, as a teacher representing the Western world and its ideas of democracy and human rights, found herself in an authoritative position and part of the official institutes of the state. But she also identified herself as part of a minority threatened by a popular culture that holds a different set of beliefs and values. Naomi described that deeper conflict between two cultural discourses that fight for hegemony in the Israeli society in a paper she did about her teaching in B.Y. high school. She portrayed herself as a white looking teacher who had a background of secular education with a socialist orientation, and was raised in an environment immersed in nature in her kibbutz. Further, she graduated from the School of Art (which symbolized Western culture), and lived in northern Tel-Aviv (which symbolized the middle class). In B.Y. high school she found that most of her students were dark skinned, from Jewish families that immigrated to Israel from Arab (non-
Western) countries, mostly with religious orientation, and products of the urban education. Many of them grew up in difficult socio-economic situations.

A differentiation of visual oppositions was established, oppositions that include cultural components. When one enlarges these oppositions, one can identify two representations. One is identified with the Western dominant culture, and partially with the education system and the state (freedom, democracy, explorations from the concentrations camps in Poland, from ancient Greece to Van Gogh). The other represents a culture that struggled for decades to be recognized, and is identified in the general public as an under popular culture (oriental singing, soap opera, malls, looking for origins in Morocco, pilgrimage to Rabbi graves, etc.).

( Naomi’s paper on ‘B.Y. – a case study; The question of the subject in the work of Haggag and Althuser,’ Tel Aviv University, April 1999)

Finding herself in this text of conflicting discourses, Naomi faced a violent atmosphere she repeatedly described when she talked of her fights or her avoidance of fights. Her armor as an intellectual who wanted her students to see their own reality differently was too thin. Her only solution in the overwhelming situation of teaching nine classes of forty students was to dream of a utopia of an ideal audience, an audience of students like the ones she met in the School of Art, who appreciated art and with whom she could function as an agent of change. With the ideal audience, she could discuss feminist and other issues that seemed to be important to her.

The violence is connected to the atmosphere. Sometimes you have to ask for 10 minutes for the class to be quiet. These small things overwhelm you. It doesn’t interest me to work this way. This is why I want to work with students in higher education. I want to talk about interesting things. I am wasting my time with these unimportant issues. Maybe if I would have to work less, I would feel different. If I didn’t feel that I constantly overwhelmed, I could invest more in the classes. When I teach 9 classes of 40 students, everything gets mixed up. I have too many students.
So my ideal is to teach an audience that comes to learn, that I do not need to fight with, so that their comments and their questions are relevant, and we can discuss
things together.... If I could build [a syllabus] for students, I would teach them about women artists. I would include feminism in it. I think that this area is ignored.
(Interview, January 3, 2001)

Naomi’s dream of a perfect audience was her way of negotiating her everyday lonely fight against the windmills. Her wish for an ideal audience can be perceived as her resistance to her impossible situation. Her story provides an example of a teacher who can not be described as a passive site of discursive struggle, but as an “individual who has a memory and an already discursively constituted sense of identity [that] may… produce new versions of meaning from the conflicts and contradictions between existing discourses” (Weedon, 1987, p. 106).
CHAPTER 8

SIMILARITIES, DIFFERENCES AND IMPLICATIONS

Introduction

Although I perceive each of the art teachers I studied as a unique case, I am interested in finding similarities and differences in their stories. In the first part of this chapter, I discuss the common changes I found in the art teachers beliefs. I compare their answers regarding the questions why teach art and how to teach it to those they held as student teachers at the School of Art.

In the second part I discuss the art teachers' beliefs and teaching identity in the light of the common conflicts and challenges they encountered in the public schools. I summarize how the teachers interpret the conflicts and the ways they negotiated their beliefs and teaching identity in light of their interpretations. Specifically, I am interested in the ways they employed different discourses to make sense of their teaching role and its relation to who they are, and who they are not. In the last part of this chapter I draw some implications from this study.
Changes in the Art Teachers' Beliefs and Practices

The stories I collected from the four art teachers present an array of answers to the questions why teach art and how to teach art. The teachers' goals and practices addressed the needs and the conditions in their specific school settings as interpreted by the teachers, using various discourses to define them. Thus, in this section I discuss the common features I found across the cases in examining the changes and development of the teachers’ goals and practices.

Negotiating Within and Against Different Discourses

In the four cases I examined, the student teachers defined different goals in art education. Although each one of the student teachers came to the School of Art with different practical theories about what art is and what art education means, their teaching beliefs as student teachers at the School of Art were constructed mainly within and against the dominant discourses of the art classes. To a lesser extent they also used the discourses of the art education courses. As art teachers working within the school and their communities, the art teachers constructed their beliefs and practices within and against a variety of discourses. Thus, it seems that after graduating from the School of Art, the transition to different positions opened the teachers to hearing other discourses, or what Britzman called a "cacophony of voices" (1991), including those of their schools.

When one compares in a general way their goals and practices as teachers to those they held as student teachers, one can find that only Ada shifted her beliefs from one
paradigm to another. While as a student she wanted to teach the students the language of art, as a teacher she defined herself as an educator who used art as a means to enhance the educational processes. (Although she embraced her school's discourses in defining her goals, even in Ada’s goals one can identify other discourses and voices concerning art and art education.) The other three teachers I studied developed the notions of art education they held as student teachers at the School of Art in a more continuous way. A closer examination of the practices they employed, reveals that each one of them developed a rich repertoire that enhanced their goals using an array of voices and discourses. Their complex positions consisted of a blur of different theories and paradigms that were typically presented in the literature as distinguished from each other.

For example, Noga, who as an art teacher could establish meaningful relationships with her students, developed the notion of the child-centered approach she already held as a student teacher. Although her teaching practices can be perceived as a powerful example of a learner-centered paradigm, they also addressed goals from other paradigms associated with comprehensive art education. Thus, Noga worked within and against many other discourses she was exposed to during her long studies in art and art education, as well as those held in her school.

Naomi was the only teacher in this study who was aware of working within and against a variety of discourses. As she moved from the kibbutz to the School of Art, and then to teaching positions in schools and to the university, different discourses were added to her perceptions. Her political agenda on one hand, and the need to extend the
visual arts knowledge of the students on the other hand, can provide an example of constructing teaching identity through the use of different, and even contradictory discourses. Incorporating these different voices, Naomi developed a clear view about her goals in art education, which she perceived to be in opposition to the pragmatic values of society. Thus, her role as an art teacher was defined by this conflict as that of an agent of change, a Don Quixote who fights against windmills.

These findings of the complexity of teachers' implicit theories enhance the descriptions of teachers' practical knowledge found in previous studies. Previous studies describe teachers' implicit theories as tending not to be neat and complete reproductions of educational theories found in textbooks but eclectic aggregations of propositions and values, expressed in the language of stories which is temporal, historical and specific (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995; Fuller, 1994; Clark, 1988; Lux, 1999).

Using a Variety of Practices to Teach Beyond Art as a Discipline

The four art teachers who participated in the study sought to be meaningful art teachers, aiming beyond the goal of being "good" art teachers who taught disciplinary knowledge and language, goals that were promoted by the School of Art's discourses. Striving to fulfill this goal, they used a variety of teaching practices.

In this study, Ada and Noga provided examples of teachers who constructed their primary goals in opposition to the School of Art's discourses. Both described their main goal as raising their students' self-image. Although they had similar goals, they used
different and even contradictory practices. While Noga’s learner-centered approach guided her construction of open workshops and limited her role to providing a secure space for her students to express themselves, Ada used teaching practices associated with transferring knowledge. She wanted to provide her students with opportunities to achieve high scores in the matriculation exams as a means of raising their low self-esteem. She also wanted to teach them basic knowledge that is perceived by the society to be a part of the culture. Both Ada and Noga believed that listening to their students was a key practice in fulfilling their goals. Noga, who perceived art to be an integral part of life, integrated art studies with other study areas in her school as a means to enhance students’ understanding of the issues discussed and of themselves. Ada found art to be a natural way to discuss with her students educational issues such as race, stereotyping or violence.

Less obvious examples of teaching beyond art as a discipline were provided by Tamar and Naomi. Both built their identity as experts in art, and believed that their knowledge of the field was valuable to their students. Tamar, whose teaching practices were embedded in the problem-solving paradigm of the School of Art discourses, found her meaning as teacher in helping her students critically examine their reality. Thus, in the structured art projects she designed, she did not limit her goals to enhancing her students' understanding of the language of art. She also disagreed with limiting the evaluation of the students' outcomes to the formal criteria of "good" artworks.

Naomi tried to challenge her students' ways of thinking about their life and their world. Using artworks as a means to reexamine things they took for granted, she wanted
to reveal deeper levels of various visual forms including films, TV shows and advertisements, buildings and paintings. Like Ada, she found art to be a natural way to raise political and moral issues.

Striving for practices that would provide the art teachers to feel meaningful art teachers, they all related to the students’ life experiences. But these practices were not limited just to those associated with the constructivist learning approach, or the child-centered approach. Rather, they included transferring knowledge, integrating art with other study areas and life issues, providing the students opportunities to examine their own reality, and providing the students ‘a stage’ for expressing their interests.

Using Dialogue and Reflection

In the variety of practices that enhanced different approaches to art education, I found one repeated method. Noga, Tamar and Naomi used dialogue and reflection as a means to evoke the students’ awareness of their ideas and the artistic means to express them during the process of art creation. Ada, who worked with students at risk, referred to this method when she described her studio classes. She explained that many of her students interpreted the process of dialogue and reflection as a form of critique. Therefore, she used this method only with those students who were not threatened by it.

Dialogue and reflection was used as the main discursive practice during the student teaching experience in the Art Method Course. This process was also used in the studio classes in the School of Art, though the emphasis in the art lessons was on raising
the awareness of the possible use of alternative artistic means. The method of dialogue and reflection as was used by the art teachers in this study referred to awareness of both the ideas or feelings one holds and the artistic means to express them.

**The Ways the Art Teachers Negotiated the Conflicts and Challenges**

The conflicts and the challenges that were described by the art teachers were specific to the situation of each school. But one can identify some common problems that emerged across the cases. These include the question of "Who needs art anyhow?" the feeling of 'being alone,' and the conflict between the art teachers' role as defined by the education system and the art teachers' identity.

"Who Needs Art Anyhow?"

Noga, who worked in an elementary school in a middle-class neighborhood, felt that the parents and people in her school building (especially the principal) appreciated art, and had their own views about what art education should look like. Her challenge was not to justify the need for art but to justify her perception of art education as part of everyday life. Her crystallized position that art is a way to nurture each child increased the value of art in this community, guided her teaching practices, and helped her to create a situation where art became the core of her school. This perception of art education challenged her to provide each of her 400 students with the personal attention she
believed they should get. (At the same time she related to the students as part of a community of learners, and felt that she should enlarge their art knowledge.)

In this respect, Noga's story was different from those of the other three art teachers and provided an opposite example. The other teachers, who worked with middle and high-school students from different socio-economic backgrounds, had to confront the question Naomi raised: *Who needs art anyhow?* For them, the question of why art should be taught was not a curricular question or a theoretical one; rather, it was a question framed by a discursive conflict, which questioned the legitimacy of the study of art. But each one of the teachers interpreted the question differently.

Ada interpreted the question 'who needs art anyhow?' as part of a broader problem. Her students, whom she believed the educational system had failed, questioned the study of any subject. Thus the question 'who needs art anyhow?' was interpreted as questioning the need of any kind of education or schooling. Ada, then, understood the question as a way for her students to deal with the failure of the educational system that was placed on their shoulders. She believed that by providing her students a success in learning art, they might change their perceptions of themselves and reestablish their trust in the educational system. She also perceived her role as art teacher and educator as providing her students an entrance to the culture and society.

*But through art I provide them an opportunity for academic achievements. These achievements raise their low self esteem.... If you want to be a person who is part of the culture, you have to know something, some kind of general knowledge.*
(Ada's interview, December 15, 1999)
Tamar and Naomi did not perceive the devaluation of art as a problem of their students but as a conflict they had with the values of the general pragmatic society, which the students and their parents were part of. Tamar perceived the matriculation exams as an opportunity to present art as a legitimate study area at the high school. The matriculation exams gave a practical answer to the question 'who needs art anyhow?' Tamar did not think that this answer was satisfying in itself, and was frustrated by the efforts she had to make in order to justify the teaching of art. But, she could understand the "others" points of view, and felt the urge to educate the parents, the students and the teachers about the 'real' value of art.

But the parents influence their children to learn computers, physics, chemistry, etc. Art for them, although it is culture, doesn’t seem to be serious. And I can understand them. In the competing business world there are certain demands so that if they choose to study art they'll have to complete the subject areas they haven’t studied.... I cannot tell a student that your parents are wrong because if you like art, they shouldn't send you to learn physics.

(Interview, December 13, 1999)

Naomi felt that she had to deal constantly with the question 'who needs art anyhow?' because this question represented a discursive conflict she had with the society. She felt that dealing with that question had taken over her teaching. She had to fight for the honor of her profession and the values that art is associated with, instead of teaching the way and the content she wanted to. She perceived the education system, including the matriculation exams, as tools that regulated the society's discourses that opposed the values associated with art.

The education system's orientation is in one direction which includes achievements, productions, computers, pragmatism, high-tech, and nothing
creative, or involving critical thinking. To know how to analyze something, to map it, to think in a logical way, understanding to what things are related, tuning in to your feelings, all these are opposed to this pragmatic approach.

( Naomi's interview, December, 1999)

In fighting against the windmills, Naomi felt like an underdog who could never win. She planned to teach in higher education, as a place she believed to hold different discourses than the public education system. In this dreamy place, she hoped not to have to deal with the question 'who needs art anyhow?'

One can summarize that the question concerning the need for art education, as well as the answers, were interpreted through the different discourses the art teachers employed to understand their reality. Their negotiation of this question was a key in understanding the art teachers' goals and practices as well as in understanding how they gave meaning to their work and constructed their teaching identity.

"Being Alone"

Naomi, Tamar, and Noga described in this study their feeling that as art teachers they were isolated. That feeling was expressed even in the case of Noga, who portrayed herself as being part of a team of teachers at her elementary school. Still, she felt the lack of having other art teachers with whom she could discuss curriculum questions and share her debates about the goals of art education. She felt that in a field that does not have an imposed curriculum, but is heavily influenced by the teachers' deliberations, the art teachers' group work was particularly necessary.
While Noga described a framework of art teachers as something desirable that would enhance her reflection and help her to develop herself as an art teacher, Tamar and Naomi described their isolation as a problem they were facing. They felt that no one could understand the problems they encountered or appreciate their students' successes beyond their grades in the matriculation exams.

*In the teaching room there is no point in talking about art or problems that are connected to art classes.*
(Naomi's interview, December 1999)

The isolation of Naomi and Tamar was part of their perception, enhanced by the School of Art discourses, that as art experts their discourses were profoundly different than of the other teachers in their building. Therefore, in order not to be alone, they believe that they needed other art teachers in their building. But Tamar felt that, although her isolated teaching situation was hard, it also provided her with the freedom to create the art programs according to her beliefs. Naomi had no ambiguity about her need to be able to share and get feedback from others. She pointed out as one of the advantages of the new building to which she moved after leaving the middle school the collaborative teamwork there (January 2001). The team did not threaten her creativity as a teacher, maybe because she could feel that she was not shaping her own role, which was defined by the expectation that she prepare the mass number of students for the matriculation exams.

Ada, who changed the way she perceived herself as an art teacher to being primarily an educator, did not feel isolated. She felt that the discussions in the vocational
teaching room of students' problems as well as the teachers' problems were very important in creating an atmosphere of acceptance and sharing.

It seems that the art teachers' approaches toward the School of Art dominant discourses had a major influence on the ways the art teachers' negotiated their places within their schools' discourses. Working within and against the School of Art's discourses, the teachers constructed their expectations of themselves as teachers, as well as of the school and their students. While the specific art discourses connected the art teachers to the art world beyond the school, provided them with a deep understanding of their subject area and rich art teaching practices, and helped them to resist authorities that devalued art studies and voice their teaching positions, the art discourses also isolated them. The other teachers had no access to their separate artworld discourses.

At the same time, the isolated situation, at least in the case of Tamar and Naomi, was also an outcome of their schools' discursive practice. They worked in schools that did not encourage the teachers to work collaboratively in finding common goals and values or to share their problems. Therefore, they found themselves and their art studies not only isolated in separate discourses like the math or science teachers, but also limited to the marginal place of an unimportant area of study. As Tamar described it:

_No one knows what is going on the art studio. If no one knows and sees, what you do is limited._ (Tamar's interview, December 13, 1999)
The Conflict Between Role and Identity

The art teachers' awareness of the conflict between their role and their teaching identity varied. So did their interpretation of this conflict. But I found that in each of the four case studies the art teachers encountered a conflict between what they believed they would like to do to become meaningful teachers and what they understood they had to do in fulfilling their roles.

Noga believed that to be a meaningful art teacher meant to provide each of her students a stage to express themselves and to get her and their peers' attention. She believed that through art she could help her students to accept themselves as well as to examine their world and their interpretations of it. When she had to face a conflict between her role as school decorator and her beliefs, she found a way to interpret her role in a meaningful way for herself and her students. Opposed to hanging 'nice things' that pleased her or others' taste, she turned the school walls into another stage for the students' expressions. Noga's way of negotiating with this imposed challenge was another example of her way of using the space the principal gave her to shape her teaching role according to her beliefs, while at the same time shaping her school.

Noga was much more troubled by the conflicts between her beliefs and the discourses of School of Art and the Art History Department at Tel Aviv University, discourses that perceived art as a field of experts. Although Noga felt that she could shape her teaching role according to her beliefs, I believe that this did not prevent a basic conflict that existed between her child-centered approach and the school's structure.
According to her role as a specialist teacher, she had to work with the whole population of her school. This meant working with 400 different individual students, and, at the same time, according to her beliefs she wanted to relate to each of them as if he or she was the only one. After five years of succeeding in reaching many of them, she felt overwhelmed. I believe that this conflict contributed to her decision not to return to her school after giving birth to her first baby.

Tamar, Naomi, and Ada were aware of the conflict that existed between what they were expected to do as art teachers, and what they believed they would like to do. Accepting the School of Art discourses, they all believed that as art teachers they would like to introduce the students to the language of art, with which they could create or appreciate artworks done by others. But each one of them interpreted this conflict, and the ways to negotiate it, in a different way.

*My goals there [in the middle school] were to expose the students to art. I wanted them to know how to speak the language of art, and maybe to understand this language better, so that they would become part of an audience that consumes art....*  
(Ada's interview, December 15, 1999)

Ada found that the discourses she held as an art teacher who was expert in her field did not fit the role of an art teacher in her vocational high school. Working with students who were labeled by society as failures and who felt themselves to be outsiders, she questioned the relevance of her agenda. After a few months of being at that school, she shifted her beliefs about what she would like to do as an art teacher. She found that her role as defined by the discourses of the vocational school, suited better her identity as
a teacher and as a person. She identified with her students' resistance and their 'outsider' position and found meaning in her work, using art as a tool to enhance their damaged self image.

*Today, my identity is first as an educator and second as an art teacher, although they are very close to one another and complete one another.*

(Ada's e-mail, February 26, 2000)

*This was the outcome of a process through which I understood that I enjoy the education part of the work, the interaction and the talks with them. I don't know how I would feel if the work would only be to repeat year after year the same material necessary for the art history test. Here there is a combination of things that make teaching really exciting and different.*

(Ada's interview, December 1999)

Tamar related to the conflicts that were created by her school's expectations versus her beliefs as a normal situation. She accepted it as part of being an art teacher in the educational system. Her way to negotiate the narrow perception of her role to transfer knowledge, or to decorate the school, was to accept it as part of the assignments she had to do. She tried to minimize her efforts in fulfilling these expectations in order to have more time and energy to add things that suited her beliefs, and that made her feel creative and meaningful.

The conflict between her role as an art teacher and her identity caused Naomi to feel that her teaching was a terrible missed opportunity. Naomi's role of covering the material for the matriculation exams through lecturing to four classes of 40 students with diverse abilities, or of decorating the school for the holidays, opposed her beliefs concerning what she would like to do as an art teacher and could do as an expert in her field. While Naomi regarded herself as an intellectual who could enrich her students to
enable them to understand their world and their culture (or the Western culture) differently, her role was defined by discursive practices, and these threatened her identity.

*But when it turns you into a machine that has to cover material, it is so frustrating and disappointing because it is meaningless.*  
*I know that I can be a very good teacher, but in these conditions I am a mediocre teacher.*  
(NAOMI’s interview, December 1999)

As a mediocre and meaningless teacher, with rare occasions of satisfaction, NAOMI debated time and again whether she wanted to continue to be an art teacher in the public educational system.

The detailed descriptions of conflicts between the art teachers’ roles and their teaching identity in this study enhanced the importance of the distinction Britzman (1992) made between these terms. The conflicts between the art teachers’ roles and their identity were an outcome of their opposing the discursive practices of schooling such as teaching a massive number of students to memorize facts. Thus, the art teachers acted as agents of change, through promoting the development of personal creative and critical thinking, becoming aware of oneself and others’ feelings and opinions, or dealing with ‘difficult knowledge’ (Britzman, 1998).

**Implications**

1. The four art teachers in this study strived to provide meaningful learning experiences through a process of connecting art to their students’ life experiences.

Although as student teachers they constructed their teaching identity with and against the
problem-solving paradigm that dominated the discourse of the School of Art, as teachers they reached out to their students using a variety of teaching practices embedded in different art education paradigms. The variety of approaches the art teachers used to become effective teachers suggests that art teacher preparation programs should not promote one paradigm or the other. Rather, they should expose the prospective teachers to various approaches and help them to understand the differences among them. This will provide the art teachers with the ability to use the different approaches in a flexible way according to the possible opportunities within the reality of their schools.

2. The conflicts found in these case studies can provide some understanding of why good art teachers find it hard to stay in the public school system. The art teachers who felt that the principals and the schools system provided them with space to negotiate their roles, found ways to feel meaningful and creative as art teachers. Others that felt that their role imposed on them a teaching identity that opposed their beliefs perceived their teaching position as a temporary solution or a mistake.

3. In some of the schools, the art teachers felt that they were not marginalized. In these schools teachers worked collaboratively on common goals and shared problems. I believe that further research is needed to examine the influence of a collaborative policy in the schools on the place of the arts in them.

4. The stories of the art teachers' negotiation of their beliefs and teaching identity imply that being art teachers is an ongoing process formed within socially and historically specific discourses. They enhance the feminist poststructuralist position that
suggests that being a teacher is a constant process of becoming. Understanding the complexity of the way teachers’ identity and beliefs are constructed and deconstructed can contribute to the notion that becoming a teacher, and being one, is more than learning to fulfill a function, gaining experience in the classroom, or learning updated theories. They emphasize that becoming a teacher is not a product of art teacher preparation programs, or of roles and functions defined by the Ministry on Education. Rather, the meaning of being an art teacher is constructed through taking up or resisting the meanings and values that are proposed by different discourses.

The study also implies the importance of the method of dialogue and reflection that helped the student teachers to become aware of the process of constructing their identity and express it during their student teaching. Further research is needed to study what is implied for teachers’ preparation programs when becoming a teacher is perceived not as an issue of behavior, but rather as a social process of negotiation.
REFERENCES


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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW WITH THE STUDENT TEACHER

Questions for Interview with the Student Teacher - Summarizing the Student Teaching Experience

1. What do you perceive as the most meaningful thing that occurred in the process of planning, teaching and assessing the process?

2. What do you perceive as the most important success in the final project?

3. What was the most difficult thing for you in the final project?

4. How would you describe the role of the mentor in this process?

5. Is it important for you to get feedback on the work? From whom? (students, peers, tutor, mentor)

6. Are you involved in art creation? Can you describe it?

   If yes, questions 7 & 8 are relevant. If no, questions 9 & 10 are relevant.

7. Do you find connection between your involvement as artist and the studio lessons you provided to your art students?
8. Do you find any connection between your involvement as artist and the art teaching process that you created? If yes, when did you discover it?

9. How would you describe your involvement with the art field?

10. Do you find any connection between your interest in art and the process you designed for your art students?

11. How would you characterize the process you have been going through?

12. Is there any connection between the process you have gone through and the process you provided your students?

13. What will you take from this experience to your future teaching?

14. Have you changed your perceptions of art teaching? The way students experience art? Or your own art creation?

15. What are your comments and/or questions on the process?
APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE

Sent to students who graduated from the Art Teaching Methods course in the School of Art, Beit-Berl College

To: 6.20.99

During the course of your studies at the Art School, Beit-Berl College, you participated in an art teaching methods course I instructed.

As part of my studies in the U.S., I am conducting research on my previous work at the Art School, Beit-Berl College. I would appreciate it if you would be willing to help me in this research by answering the following questions and sending them back to the address on the enclosed envelope.

All the information gathered will be confidential, without revealing the identity of the research participants.

Thank you,

Nurit Cohen Evron
Questionnaire for graduated students of the art teaching methods course
At the School of Art, Beit-Berl College

1. Do you teach art?

2. Do you have another job? Yes/No. Where do you work? ________________

3. If you do not teach, could you articulate the main reason for it? ________________

Would you like to teach in the future? Yes/No
Why? ________________

4. If you teach - At what institution are you working? ________________
   With which ages are you working? ________________
   How many years have you been teaching in this place? ________________
   What are the main difficulties you encounter as an art teacher?
   ________________
   ________________
   ________________

What causes you satisfaction/enjoyment in art teaching?
   ________________
   ________________
   ________________

What main changes in your art teaching since your graduation can you identify?
   ________________
   ________________
   ________________

5. Have you taught in the past? Yes/No
   If you did, where did you teach? ________________
   What was the main reason for quitting the job? ________________
   ________________
6. Did the Art Teaching Methods course contribute to you as an art teacher? Yes/No
   How did it contribute to you / or why didn’t it contribute to you?
   ______________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________

7. From your present perspective, what do you recommend should be included in the Art Teaching Methods course as part of art teaching training?
   ______________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________

8. What question would you add to this questionnaire?
   ______________________________________________________________

9. If you are currently teaching, would you agree to participate in a research project during the year 1999-2000?
   (The research project includes my observations in the art classes, interviews with you, and collection of curriculum and instructional materials if they are available.)
   Yes/ No

   Your address for further contact:

10. Would you like to comment on the Art Teaching Methods course or this questionnaire?
APPENDIX C

THE QUESTIONNAIRE FINDINGS

Introduction

In June 1999, the questionnaire (Appendix B) was mailed to 72 former students. They graduated from the same art methods course at the Art School, Beit Berl College, in Israel between the years 1991-1996. Twenty-seven former students (37.5%) sent the questionnaire back to Ohio.

The questionnaire served two purposes. The first purpose was to find art teachers who would agree to participate in that study about the art teachers’ negotiation of their beliefs and teaching identity.

The second purpose of the questionnaire was to collect information from a larger group of teachers who completed the art methods course that I taught during their art teachers training concerning questions to be examined in an elaborate research project on the developments and changes in the art teachers’ beliefs. I was curious to know how many of the former students eventually became art teachers? What were some of
the reasons that caused them to teach or not to teach? How did the art teachers develop professionally and personally? I wanted to learn about their views on what they believe to be important in order to become successful art teachers. I tried to learn such information through asking them about how they perceived the art methods course and what they suggested might be added to it or changed in it from their current perspective. I believed that the art teachers’ points of view on their own teaching and the changes that had occurred in it since they graduated from college would assist me in understanding the questions I had chosen to examine.

I was aware of its limitations of using a mailed questionnaire (Jaeger, 1988) sent according to an address list provided by the School of Art. I was aware that I would get a partial picture and not a representative one on any of the issues I sought to study. Being aware of its limitations, I did not use the questionnaire’s results as a representative sample of my former students’ beliefs but as an opportunity to get a first glance at the answers to the further questions to be studied through qualitative methods. There were five areas in which I found valuable information from the research participants:

a. Research participants’ current occupations.

b. Difficulties and satisfactions the art teachers found in their teaching

c. Self reflection on changes that occurred in the art teachers’ teaching during their teaching experience

21 I sent 79 questionnaires to addresses I got from the School of Art, Beit-Berl College. Seven of the envelopes were returned marked addressee unknown. It is possible that more of the former students had changed their address since the time they graduated college.
d. Research participants' views of the art methods course as part of their teaching training from the perspective of their present experiences

e. Research participants' comments concerning my research

Research Participants' Current Occupations

How many former students were currently art teachers?

Seventeen former students (63%) were holding positions as art teachers (see Figure 1). They were teaching in different educational institutes (see Figure 2). Five taught at elementary schools, two at middle schools, three taught at a combined middle and high schools, five at high schools, one was a teacher in higher education, and two taught private art lessons.

Ten former students (37%) were not holding positions as art teachers for various reasons. Five of them (18.5%) taught a year or two and decided to leave the educational system; their new occupations were usually art related. Three former students had not finished their teaching certification requirements. Two of them were active young artists who wrote that they planned to finish the requirements and would like in the future to become art teachers in the school system. The third did not plan to finish the certification requirements. She had found that she did not want to become a teacher although she had had a good experience during her teaching training.

Two other former students were continuing their art studies. One was in a program for young artists in Amsterdam. After she finished her final art education
project, while she was still a student at the college in Israel, she taught sculpture at a middle school. She planned to teach art when she returned to Israel, in the year 2000. The other was completing his second degree in contemporary art and museum studies. He never taught after graduating from the collage and wrote that he never planned to teach in the educational system (K-12), though he might teach in higher education.

Another former student had just returned from three years in Paris. He had accepted a teaching position as a high school literature teacher. During the time he was completing his college studies, he taught film studies at an elementary school (grades 4 and 5).

Figure 1 - Questionnaire Findings
Formed Students Who Are Art Teachers

Figure 1 – Questionnaire Findings: Former Students Who Are Art teachers 371
Figure 2- Questionnaire Findings: Institutes and Teaching Experience

Reasons the Participants Gave for Quitting their Art Teaching Positions

Two kinds of reasons were brought up as reasons for quitting art teaching by the former art teachers who had left their teaching positions: a. personal preferences (some preferred to become graphic designers, or curators); and b. dissatisfaction with the educational system (including low salary, schools, expectations, and school's attitude toward arts classes).

- I discovered that I prefer designing the school environment and doing stage design to teaching and I decided to follow a profession that includes only designing. (Worked for two years at an elementary school).
- I left because I felt there was a huge waste of energy that caused me a feeling of emptiness.
- It was hard to create a creative and open atmosphere in the education system.
- The low salary and my dissatisfaction with the bureaucratic system caused me to change my occupation.

Nine current art teachers (33%) changed their art teaching positions, and moved to another educational institute. The reasons they provided for their decisions were the following:

1. Personal changes such as moving to live at a different location, or becoming a mother and thus reducing the number of teaching hours (3 teachers).

2. Art teaching conditions and relationship with the school administrators and the other teachers (3 teachers)

   I left because the school's administration was stiff and the students had low motivation (high school art teacher.)

3. Personal/professional development (2 teachers)

   I wanted to teach art history at a high school.

4. Teaching problems (*discipline problems*)

**Summary**

From the information about the research participants’ occupations, I learned that almost 2/3 of my former students became art teachers in various formal and informal art programs. Most of the participants that were not holding art teaching position found art-related occupations as graphic designers or curators or continued their art studies. The
relatively small percentage (11.5%) of teachers who quit their art teaching positions at schools can be explained by the fact that many of the participants were still in the first year of their teaching. Another explanation could be the options that were open for the art teachers to find alternative frameworks where they felt they could be more effective. This explanation may be supported by the example of one of the teachers who left the middle school, where she had discipline problems, to teach private art lessons in her studio. This notion is also supported by the high percentage (34.6%) of art teachers who changed their positions. Among the reasons they provided for leaving their former positions were dissatisfaction with the art teaching conditions, their relationships with the school administrators, and their search for opportunities for personal/professional development.

Difficulties and Satisfactions the Art Teachers Found in Their Teaching

The Main Difficulties the Art Teachers Encountered

I found differences in the problems and the ways these problems were described between the eleven beginning art teachers and the eleven more experienced art teachers (see figure 3). This group of beginning art teachers included six art teachers that were currently teaching (June 1999), three art teachers who quit teaching after one or two

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28 In the U.S. "more then 20 percent of new teachers leave the classroom within three years" (August 27, 1999). New strategies to curb teacher flight from the classroom are gaining momentum nationwide. Source: www.rmt.org. E-mail: naea@dgs.dgsys.com.

29 Other participants did not answer that part of the questionnaire; two of them could not relate to this part because they never taught art after graduating from the college. The group of eleven beginning art teachers was comprised of those who taught one or two years.
years, and two artists who did not compete their teaching certification, yet taught art for one year in non-formal art programs.

The differences between the more experienced teachers and the beginning art teachers can be related not only to their teaching experience but also to the different contexts of the educational institutes where the teachers in these two groups worked (see figure 2). Almost half of art teachers who had only one or two years of experience were elementary school teachers (45%) or teachers in non-formal art programs at museums or in private art lessons. The majority of the more experienced art teachers were middle and

![Figure 3](image-url)

**Figure 3**
Difficulties Art Teachers Encountered

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas of Difficulties</th>
<th>No. of Art Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>curriculum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conditions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>discipline</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>st. learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3 – Difficulties Art Teachers Encountered
high school teachers (77.7%). Thus, a closer examination of the problems can suggest that the art teachers at the elementary schools encountered problems that discouraged them from continuing with their teaching.

**Discipline problems**

The beginning art teachers described discipline problems that they encountered. One of the beginning art teachers explained: “Sometimes I find it difficult to use authority since I find myself identify with the students.” This difficulty is well documented in the literature on beginning teachers. It was also described as a problem by one of the more experienced art teachers as a problem she had when she began to teach: “When I began to teach, I struggled with discipline problems, but today they do not bother me any more-- I solved the discipline problems.” The discipline problems mentioned by the beginning art teachers had for the most part disappeared or were described as specific problems by the more experienced art teachers (e.g., “lack of routine in cleaning up after work”).

**Students' learning style**

The experienced teachers described their students’ difficulties as their teaching challenges. (This attention to the students’ difficulties did not appear in the writing of the beginning art teachers.) They expressed concerns such as students who learn only for the tests, or new immigrants that have difficulties in understanding the language.
Teaching conditions

Both groups of teachers encountered difficulties regarding their teaching conditions. But there was a difference in the kinds of problems they described. The beginning elementary art teachers described being under pressure caused by teaching large classes and problems of time management. As elementary art teachers, they were expected to decorate the school environment and design the stage for school events—beyond teaching art to the whole school and without adding time/money for the additional responsibility. The teaching conditions of the more experienced high and middle school art teachers included lessons that lasted at least 90 minutes per week (versus 45 minutes per week for art lesson at the elementary school), and the expectations of their role as art teachers had put less emphasis on the schools’ decoration and stage design. Two of the elementary teachers mentioned the low salary as a difficulty. The extended hours for a full time position at the elementary school might be a possible explanation for their complaints (a full time teaching position at an elementary school consists of 36 hours versus 24 at the high school).

Part of the challenge described by teachers from both groups related to the limitations in budget and materials for the art classes. The more experienced art teachers analyzed the insufficient budget as well as the misleading expectations for the art classes (as “free lessons”) held by students, parents or administrators as aspect of people’s lack of understanding of the role of art in the school system and its low status there. For example, some of the more experienced teachers commented:
- [I have] difficulties in developing the art department because of the parents’ resistance to a ‘non-practical’ study-area
- [I] feel as not respected by the institute that express its attitude through providing ‘not perfect’ conditions like many over hours working and scheduling the art lessons at the end of the day.

Other teaching conditions that were portrayed as difficulties by the experienced art teachers were related to the isolation of the art teacher in the school system and distance from the center.

**Curriculum difficulties**

Teachers from both groups, the beginner and the experienced, described curriculum problems that they encountered. For the beginning art teachers who worked in non-formal art programs the problem was to find a curriculum that appealed to their audience and at the same time contained their own teaching goals in art education. ("It is difficult to compromise between the students’ wills and what I believe is important to teach, because they can leave the art lessons whenever they want.") The other beginning art teachers, who were mainly elementary teachers, referred to the lack of nation-wide guidance to construct an art curriculum. This challenged them with constructing their own curriculum for the whole school according to the different grade levels.

For the more experienced art teachers, mainly for the high-school teachers, the difficulties were caused by the rigid nation-wide art curriculum they had to follow in preparing their students for the matriculation exam in art history. The difficulties related to this curriculum were: imposed frontal teaching techniques, the need to teach a broad
scope of material, and boredom on behalf of the teachers with repeating the same preplanned curriculum.

The Satisfactions from Art Teaching

Teachers from both groups, the beginning teachers as well as the more experienced art teachers, mentioned four areas that caused them satisfaction from their art teaching: a. students' creation processes and products; b. relationship with the students; c. being able to impact the students; and d. personal satisfaction.

Differences were found in the kinds of description the teachers used. Most of the beginning art teachers' descriptions of their satisfaction from students' products were related to the outcomes from the students' studio activities. For example, one of the teachers commented: "I enjoy seeing them express themselves and being proud of their work." But some of them also described students' developmental processes that were not necessarily studio specific. For example, one of them wrote: "I enjoy to see the students create and speak using the language of art, [I enjoy] to see them interested in the art, identify artworks and artists, analyze artworks, etc."

The more experienced art teachers' descriptions included satisfaction with their students' outcomes as well, but their descriptions were more detailed. Their descriptions were tuned to the processes their students went through during the learning and creative activities. For example, the experienced art teachers commented:

- [I enjoy] looking at the students - seeing them motivated and interested, seeing them going through a successful process starting with thinking and being able to implement their ideas, going through a process of learning.
I enjoy seeing those students who at the beginning of the year didn’t believe in their ability to create go through a process of creating and thinking, and in the end believe in their ability, and as a result it raise their self esteem.

Relationships with their students

The beginning art teachers, and the experienced art teachers as well, described the relationships with their students as a cause of satisfaction and enjoyment. Their explanations included: “I like the children,” “interaction with the children,” “I like the students, and when they open themselves to new things, and create new discoveries, it is really exciting.” Some of the more experienced teachers related also to their relationship outside the classroom with other teachers and the educational system. For example, they described a process of “mutual fertilization” with the other teachers in the building or “the professional appreciation from the system (which happens rarely).”

Impacting the students

Another cause of satisfaction was the feeling of the beginning art teachers as well as the more experienced art teachers that they have been able to impact their students. They described their successes in “bringing them closer to art” and “creating motivation and enthusiasm related to art.” The beginning art teachers’ descriptions centered on their own actions as teachers that impacted their students. For example:

-[I enjoyed] presenting to them different views and ways of understanding, and seeing their success in implementing them.
-[I enjoyed and felt satisfaction from the students’ appetite to learn. Suddenly I felt that I have a lot to contribute.
The more experienced art teachers’ descriptions emphasized their students’ reactions. For example, one of them wrote: “I enjoyed their discovery, their look when they succeeded in expressing or accomplishing something they wanted.”

The art teachers from both groups did not ignore the satisfaction related to their own ‘selves’ as teachers and persons. The two art teachers who became graphic designers enjoyed “decorating the school.” A first year elementary art teacher wrote: “I also enjoy the ‘performance’ in front of the class.” The more experienced art teachers reflected on their teaching as a process that was “interesting” or a process that caused them “surprise” and “learning experience.”

- Relating to myself, I enjoy creating interesting and stimulating lessons, lessons that are interesting to me.
- Being surprised by them, by their creativity, and by myself as a teacher and as a human [is valuable to me]. [I like] the change- [that] each lesson is different and surprising.

Changes that Occurred in the Art Teachers’ Teaching During their Teaching Experience

The beginning art teachers, as well as the experienced art teachers, reported on changes in three areas: improvement in their teaching, personal and professional development, and adjustment to the school system.

The improvements in their teaching included using a variety of methods, constructing better lessons, understanding and taking into account students’ needs, and overcoming discipline problems. These improvements were related to the process of gaining teaching experience.
Personal and professional developments that were reported by the teachers included gaining self-confidence, becoming more flexible, and becoming clearer about their art teaching goals. Their development also included the expansion of their knowledge of the arts and their activities as art teachers. Some of the more experienced art teachers mentioned the development of self-reflection and self-criticism as important changes in their teaching.

One can identify a difference between the beginning art teachers and the more experienced teachers in these personal and professional developments. The beginning art teachers who reported gaining self-confidence as teachers felt that they could “dare” to do more things and “use a variety of ways to teach.” They became less preoccupied with their own needs as teachers and started to understand their students’ needs. The more experienced art teachers who reported having more confidence as teachers allowed themselves to become more flexible in their teaching. Their flexibility was demonstrated by their changing pre-planned lessons, becoming more attuned to their students and collaborating with them. Some of the more experienced art teachers felt that their goals as art teachers had become clearer and more fully articulated.

The beginning art teachers reported that they had become familiar with the students and the educational system in their efforts to adjust to it. The experienced art teachers related to a more complex interaction with the educational system. Some felt that the school context helped them to develop themselves, other criticized the system, or reported on having a conflict with it.
Research Participants’ Views of the Art Methods Course

Twenty-three of the research participants (85%) found that the art teaching methods course had contributed to them as art teachers. I find it interesting the former students described a variety of things that the course had contributed to them. Their descriptions of the course's contributions, as well as the issues they believe should be added to such a course, reflected their beliefs about teaching, at the same time that they helped me to reflect on the course I have taught.

In their answers to this part of the questionnaire, there was no difference between beginning art teachers and more experienced teachers. The research participants’ descriptions referred to three areas that were related one to the other: a. the theoretical and practical aspects of the curriculum planning process; b. the teaching experience; and c. the effects on their thinking and personal growth. Their comments reflected a mixture of these areas, and the separation was done for analysis purposes.

Their comments about the courses’ effects on their thinking and personal growth have a particular interest for the study of the changes in teachers’ beliefs and the negotiation of their beliefs. The research participants mentioned that the course had contributed to their thinking and reflection processes. Some referred specifically to their thinking and reflection before, during, and after their student teaching experience. Others (not necessarily the art teachers) related to the contribution of the course to their thinking in general or beyond the teaching process.
Most of the research participants’ recommendations for the art methods course related to the components of the existing course but suggested different emphases according to their teaching experience. For example, the course dealt with principles and practical aspects of designing an art curriculum based on the students-teachers’ goals in art education. Some teachers suggested adding also practical school perspectives to the curriculum design such as "constructing a yearlong curriculum," and "correlation between range of instructional materials and different ages." Some of their suggestions related to constructing an art curriculum through an integrated approach. (This approach was part of the existing curriculum of the course).

Other suggestions that emerged from having a practical school perspective were to deal more with practical teaching problems through simulations and additional teaching training time. Some of the research participants suggested dealing with practical teaching problems as part of the art methods course. They provided a list of “concrete examples of solutions to practical problems during the lessons.” The list included “ways to communicate ideas; how to stand in front of a classroom; modeling lessons on various subjects; school design, etc.” Three suggestions made by the experienced art teachers referred to inclusion of the use of technology (like computer, Internet, video) and other resources outside the school building.

Many participants referred to the importance of the teaching experience and, specifically, the experience of the final art education project. Some referred to it as an opportunity to find their way of teaching, and others emphasized the importance of the
feedback and the coaching of the mentor. I found it interesting that two of the teachers emphasized the importance of selecting a wider range of student populations.

Other suggestions that were reflections of the participants' beliefs about teaching and learning related to issues in students-teacher relationships—"dependence, independence, authority, creating boundaries — and the conflicts that exist in it." These suggestions went beyond dealing with "discipline problems," "ways to motivate the students" or "ways to communicate ideas," and emphasized that "[the teacher] can give to each student to decide on his own way and direction."

Among the suggestions that reflected the participants' beliefs were their recommendations on methods that should be used in the course. The methods suggested a democratic approach to knowledge. They viewed the peer teacher-students and the cooperative art teachers as resources for knowledge, and suggested that it was important "to deal with dilemmas that come out of the practice from a philosophical viewpoint, and to create simulations of situations and to examine them from different points of view."

A high school art teacher added an interesting comment. She had found that the course had not prepared the pre-service teacher to deal with the political aspect of art education in the context of the Israeli school system. Another aspect of that issue was found in two other teachers' suggestions to include in the art methods course some discussion of how to get along with the education system, with other teachers.
Research Participants’ Comments concerning my Research

The questions the research participants suggested should be added to the questionnaire were related to three areas: teachers’ personalities, the status of art in the schools and its relationship with the system, and art teaching problems and challenges. Interestingly, one can fine connections between the teaching experience the participants described in the first section of the questionnaire, and the questions they suggested adding. For example, an art teacher at a high school that serves “difficult” and marginal students suggested asking "What kind of students population attends your school?" An artist suggested adding the question "Have you developed as a young artist?" An art teacher who wrote she had a conflict with the educational system added the question: "Is the art teacher perceived as autonomous, as a specialist? Do they [administrators and other teachers] ignore him? Has the traditional role of decorator changed?"

The questions that the research participants suggested adding were another opportunity to learn about their beliefs, expectations and challenges. They reflected changes, developments, satisfactions and disappointments as part of their expectations from teaching. And this was another place where they raised questions about the status art education and the art teacher in the educational system.
Conclusions

The first purpose of the questionnaire was to find art teachers who would agree to participate during the winter (1999-2000) in a more extended study. Twelve art teachers agreed to participate in the research. Three art teachers did not want to participate and eleven participants were not appropriate because they were not teaching or were not sure whether or where they would teach during the next year.

The second purpose of the questionnaire was to collect preliminary data on the issues to help me in designing the extended research on the art teachers’ negotiation of their beliefs. Three themes emerged across the answers to the different questions on the questionnaire: The difference between beginning art teachers and more experienced ones, the status of art in the schools, and my relationship with the research participants.

Differences Between Beginning Teachers and the More Experienced Teachers

In many parts of the answers to questionnaire, there was a difference between the beginning art teachers and the more experienced art teachers. The feeling that the initial period of the transition from college to schools had received relatively a lot of the researchers’ attention influenced my preliminary decision to concentrate on the more experienced art teachers. I was curious to study about the ways art teachers negotiated their beliefs after they established their position in the school system. The findings of this questionnaire on the differences between the experienced art teachers and the beginning art teachers enhanced my decision to study the more experienced art teachers.
The beginning art teachers reported on dealing with discipline problems, gaining self-confidence as teachers that allowed them to “dare” in using "more methods" and adjusting to the school system. Similar findings were reported in other studies on beginning teachers. The more experienced art teachers who described gaining more self-confidence as teachers allowed themselves to become more flexible in their teaching. Their changing pre-planned lessons, and becoming more tuned to their students and collaborating with them demonstrated their flexibility. Some of the more experienced art teachers felt that their goals as art teachers became clearer and clearly articulated. The more experienced art teachers got satisfaction from teaching as a process that was “interesting” and “surprising” and which provide them with a “learning experience.” They included their becoming more reflective and more self-critical as part of the changes that occurred in their teaching. A high percentage (34.6 %) of the art teachers had changed their teaching place. It seems that they needed time to decide if they wanted to teach in the educational system and/or find a school where they could teach in a way that related to their beliefs. It seems that after a period of “surviving” in the system, those who stay can teach in relation to their beliefs. They were able to express in their theories of action (McCutcheon) their goals and beliefs as art educators only after they were released from the problems of beginning art teachers. Since the extended study would not deal with beginning teachers’ challenges, I found that those who had taught less then three years were less relevant for this research.
The Status of Art Education

A noticeable theme was the status of the art education and the art teachers’ relationship with the educational system. It appeared as a cause to quit the teaching position: “The low salary and my dissatisfaction with the bureaucratic system caused me to change my occupation.” It also appeared as part of the difficulties, of teaching -- "being isolated and not appreciated, having conflict with the administration.” This theme appeared again in the suggestions of issues one should deal with in the art methods course and as questions I should add to the questionnaire. It seems that after graduating from the School of Art, where art was regarded highly, the low status of art at the schools was one of the main problems in the transition to their teaching position.

The answers in this questionnaire reflected a difference between the status of art education in the elementary schools, where the existence of art classes is a requirement, and its status in the middle and high schools, where these classes are an optional decision of the school’s administration policy. The low status of the art education at the elementary schools, where the art teaching conditions and the administrative expectations seemed to pose obstacles to application of the art teachers’ beliefs, might be a possible explanation of the low number of experienced elementary art teachers identified in the questionnaire (18%). One can also learn about this issue from the comments of one of the elementary teachers who provided an opposite example in terms of the conditions at her school. She was a highly enthusiastic art teacher, who described her freedom to decide how to act as an art teacher because she had her principal’s support.
The low status of art seemed to pose a greater difficulty for art teachers at the elementary schools than at the high schools, where the art teachers were teaching another discipline for the matriculation exams. Still the high school art teachers felt that the low status of art held by the parents and the schools prevented them from developing the art department, or having an adequate budget for art supplies.

The problem of the status of art was found in a different variation at the non-formal art programs, where the students expected the art lessons to be "fun activities." Although some variations in the appearance of the low status of the art education could be found, it seems that for many art teachers across the different educational institutes, the marginal place of the art was a strong contradiction to their expectations and beliefs.

The art teachers’ reactions to the low status of art and their relationship with the education system were not one of the categories that emerged from analysis of the art student teachers’ concerns while they were doing their teaching training. It seems that in the elaborated study, I will have to enlarge the area of study beyond the relationships between the teachers and their students within their classroom, and examine also the relationships of art and the art teacher in a school system context.

My Relationships with the Research Participants

A third theme emerged from the comments of the research participants on my questionnaire and the course. A number of my former students used the last part of the questionnaire to write me a more personal letter. Some discussed their frustration with
getting a formal questionnaire that did not relate to our personal teacher-student
relationship, others thanked me, or discussed the relationship we had. Many of them felt
they would like to help me with the research and express their thanks through it.

Using the questionnaire as a way to select the primary list of potential research
participants provided me with an opportunity to contact former students with whom I had
not kept in touch since they graduated. Nevertheless, I became aware that our former
student-teacher relationship influenced our research-researcher relationship even in the
questionnaire form. These former relationships would probably influence further the
extended case studies. It seemed that I would have to take into account that their
motivations, expectations, and my own bias have a history in the teacher-student
relationship we once experienced. Being aware of this issue added to the importance of
involving the art teachers in the research through member checks in the study.
APPENDIX D

ART TEACHER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

A. Perception of art education

- How do you decide what to include in your art curriculum?
- How do these decisions relate to your main goals in arts education?
- Describe a successful lesson (why/how is it successful?)
- What are your main problems as an art teacher?
- What are the relationships between your art lessons and the "art world"? How do you feel about it?
- How would you describe your relations with your students?
- What do you believe to be the contributions of your lessons to your students?

B. Biography

- Tell me about yourself.
- How did you decide to study at the Art College? Did you plan/want to become an art teacher?
- How would you describe your experiences in the Art College?

30. The following questions were not asked in a particular order. They were the issues discussed as part of informal and formal unstructured interviews during my visit in Israel, in December 1999. The interviews were about five hours long and were conducted during two to three visits at each site. The interviews also included unprepared questions that were evoked by my observations of events and dynamics in the schools.
C. Being an art teacher

-How do you like being an art teacher? (Why?)
-How would you describe your teaching? Would you like to change anything in your teaching?
-Can you describe the schools’ expectations for you? (How do you feel about it?)
-What do you think are your students’ expectations for you? (How do you feel about it?)
-What are the parents’ expectations for you? (How do you feel about it?)
-With whom do you talk and discuss issues/problems you encounter in your art classes? (What are the main topics of these conversations?)

D. Other influences

-How do you see the relationship between your private life (other roles, motherhood, studies, being an artist, etc.) and your teaching? (How do they affect one another?)
-In what ways do you think that your studies in the Art School affect your art teaching?
-How does your teaching experience influence the way you teach now? (examples)
-What are some other things that influence your art teaching (within the school or outside of it)?
APPENDIX E

TAMAR'S LESSON ON THE GUERNICA BY PICASSO

Once Tamar finished explaining the required material the students had to memorize for the test, she showed the students two staged photographs of Palestinian victims of the Intifada taken by an Israeli photographer, Micha Kirshner. She read the stories of these innocent victims, stories that were attached to the photos, and discussed with the students the means used to present the victims. She led the students to find similarities between the 'crying woman' by Picasso and the photograph of the Palestinian mother holding a baby ("Is the baby asleep or dead?" asked one of the students). Other questions Tamar raised were: Can an art work talk about universal issues? Do we as Israelis read the artwork differently?

The following photographs and the texts that were shown by Tamar to her students are from the book The Israeli Photographs by Micha Kirshner, a collection of his photographs, most of which had appeared in Israeli magazines.
Hiasha Elkut

Mother of five children. On the 27th of April, 1988, Machmud, her husband, was arrested for six months. On May the 10th she was arrested as a suspected member of a terrorist organization and for taking part in a terrorist attack in Rishon-Lezion. Her husband had drafted her. When she was arrested, she was in her last month of pregnancy. Her half paralyzed mother-in-law took care of her children. While the couple was under arrest, as an additional penalty, their house was destroyed. No trial was held before the destruction of the house for either of them on any charge.

In her last month of her pregnancy, Hiasha encountered some difficulties: for four days she was locked in solitary confinement in Ashkelon Prison. Then, bleeding, she was hospitalized at Ashkelon Hospital. From there she was taken to Neve-Tirza Prison, and from there to the delivery room, where she gave birth to her fifth son- Yasher.

Two days after giving birth, she was released to her home. She built a tent in the yard of her destroyed house for her family residency. The tent was destroyed.

(Micha Kirshner, 1997, The Israeli Photographs)
Huda Massud

Huda Massud, a one year old, was born at Jibellia refugee camp, in Gaza Strip. She joined 60 thousand residents who are crowded into one square kilometer. The refugees of Jibellia, Shaty and Sigiya, who are much more bitter than in the West Bank, lead the aggressive tone of the uprising in the Gaza Strip.

During a demonstration, a gas grenade was shot toward the house of Huda. Her mother, carrying Huda in her arms, rushed out of the house, which was full of gas. When they ran out of their house, a rubber bullet hit Huda's eye. She lost the eye. Only two months later, the Israeli army was forbidden to drop tear gas grenades into closed spaces, because it can be life threatening for anyone to be exposed to CS gas in an enclosed space.

(Micha Kirshner, 1997, The Israeli Photographs)
APPENDIX F

THE GALLERY TRUSTEES INTERVIEW
WITH THE MUSEUM’S CURATOR

The interview with Ramat-Gan Museum’s curator, who was one of the most important curators of Israeli art in Israel, was conducted by 18 of the gallery trustees in November 1996. The interview with a curator of a local museum was an example of Noga’s practices to expose her students to the ‘art world’ and at the same time enhances their self-confidence and raises their self-esteem. The interview included discussion of the curator’s role and a fascinating conversation about the relationships between art and society.

Noga gave me the transcription of the interview during my visit to her school in December 1999. It was documented as a 13 pages handout, and parts of it are translated in this appendix (any descriptions and names that could identify the school were taken out).

*As part of our role as ‘gallery trustees’ in our school, on Nov. 27, 1996, we went to interview Meir Aharonson, the curator of the Israeli Art Museum, Ramat Gan. As young curators in our school, we wanted to listen and learn more about the importance of the role of the curators at school and in the big world outside of it.*
The interview was done by [here was the list of names and grade levels -- The list included 4 second graders, 2 third graders, 4 fourth graders, 5 fifth graders, and 3 sixth graders].

**H: How would you define your role?**
My role as a curator [Otzar in Hebrew] originates from the word treasure [Otzar in Hebrew], which means something valuable. My role is to keep the treasure. We define art as a treasure, and the role of the curator is essentially to keep the treasure. This role expanded during the years, and the role of the curator now is also to prepare exhibitions. So my role includes nurturing the museum’s collection and changing exhibitions.

**D: How were you chosen for this role: who chose you?**
I think that I was chosen for this role because I am good in it. The museum management chose me. The management is a group that includes people from different areas: physicians, lawyers, accountants, etc. Publicly, they run the museum, and they were looking for someone who could do the work I described -- guard the museum’s collection and prepare exhibitions. They knew me from what I had done in the past, and asked me to send them my vita, and decided to choose me.

**C: Why did you choose in this occupation?**
I don’t know. Many years ago I did completely different things, but I have to tell you that I always liked art.... Many years ago I was bored with what I was doing and decided to go back to the university, where I studied art history. I decided that that was what I wanted to do, and since then this is my occupation.

**A: Do you think it is an important role?**
I would like to expand my answer to this question.... There are several kinds of art curators because there are different kinds of art. There is art that is done today, which we call contemporary art. There is art that was done fifty, sixty or eighty years ago, which we call Modern art.... As a curator of contemporary art, I prepare data for the researchers and the historians to come. That is why my role is very important, because if they do not have this data, they will not be able to write the history.

**D: Do you like your job?**
Very much so. I think that one of the most important things is that a person should love what he does....
E: Do you have a professional team that you are working with? With who do you discuss your work?
That is a very interesting question.... I have a professional team that works with me, and we discuss things all the time. But I also ask for advise from artists, other curators who are friends, along with historians, psychologists, and sociologists. I discuss issues with people whose occupations relate to the social sciences, since art is eventually a way to communicate among people....

A: How do you choose the works that you include in the exhibition?
That is a tough question because the selection process is not separate from the exhibition itself. For example, if I do an exhibition on landscape, it means that paintings that are not landscapes are not included even if they are good. So first, there is the choice of the theme of the exhibition. The second choice is subjects within the theme, for example, agriculture landscapes. Then I choose good works, and this is something that is hard to define. Sometime one calls it taste, what I like, but we imply other deliberations, because I can like a painting that might not be a good painting. There is a difference between something good, and something I like....

R: What are your goals in choosing the exhibitions?
You have very smart questions.... When I choose an exhibition, I usually try to bring the news, what is going on today, what interest the artists today. On the other hand, I choose exhibitions that can provide a historical perspective on what is happening. I try to establish a dialogue between the audience and the museum that moves in between today and the history.

Q: What do you perceive as the role of the art museum?
This is a complicated question because you are asking what is the role of the art and what is art, and it is very difficult to answer these questions. Art is a language that artists use to express things that bother them. When they write or create, they do it so that someone will read and understand what they said. Therefore, the role of the art museum is to be like a school for the language of art.... In order to understand art, you have to learn the language that is called art and you can do it in a museum in a guided visit. And this is the most important role of the museum to its audience.