

Life Orientation for Professionals
A Narrative Inquiry into Morality and Dialogical Competency in Professionalisation

Levensoriëntatie voor professionals
Een narratief onderzoek naar moraliteit en dialogische competentie in professionalisering.
(met een samenvatting in het Nederlands)

Proefschrift

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Sicut enim maius est illuminare quam lucere solum, ita maius est contemplata aliis tradere quam solum contemplari. (Thomas Aquinas in S. Th. II-II, 188, art 6.)

For even as it is better to enlighten than merely to shine, so is it better to give to others the fruits of one's contemplation than merely to contemplate.

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Preface

On August 1, 2010, the Catholic Domstad University for Teacher Education merged with the HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht. In the merger agreement, the small Catholic university stipulated the instalment of a research group on normative professionalisation and the development of an educational programme in philosophy, religion, and spirituality – to safeguard its spiritual legacy. One of the three research interests was the relationship between worldview education and normative professionalisation (cf. Structuurrappport, 2011). This kairotic moment in time has created an exceptional opportunity for this research in an even more peculiar educational context, namely education in philosophical, religious, and spiritual sources at a public university of applied sciences.

My interest has always been in people's narratives and how they respond to the questions about the meaning of life. What interests me most is the language people use to address thought-provoking questions about what makes sense in life. As a theologian, I regard myself as an intermediator between the meaning-making and articulating process of a human being and the languages of the various wisdom traditions in philosophy, religion, and spirituality. These old traditions need a translation to gain relevance for people nowadays. A translation, which begins by putting their life questions in the front row. That is the ultimate starting point. My life motivation is to help people relate to one another by creating space and time to have a dialogue on these ultimate questions, to walk along with them in developing awareness and insight into their view on life, and to explore the rich human sources of wisdom together.

At this moment, I am a teacher-educator for primary education with a specialisation in the didactics of religious and worldview education. For six years now, I have worked at the public HU University of Applied Sciences in Utrecht, in the Netherlands. Besides my function as a teacher-educator, I have developed – together with my colleagues Helma de Rooij and Gertie Blaauwendraad – a minor programme in philosophy, world religions, and spirituality for students of all disciplines. Every academic year, we welcome approximately 120 students from different backgrounds and studies, who freely choose to follow this half-year specialisation during their studies. For both teachers and students, each of whom has a unique story to tell, mutual inspiration and enrichment takes place. My colleagues and I have seen something happening to the students. This has taken many forms: a sudden insight causing a sparkling in their eyes, a meaningful silence, joy and frustration, and everything in between. The students have evaluated these moments in a range from a special and precious moment of time during their studies, to a life-changing event. This educational experience of the students is an important motivation to investigate what is happening in this specific form of education, within which we envision developing the professionalisation of students.

Introduction

a. Motivation for this Research

The subject of this research project is the relationship between professionalisation and the articulation of a personal life view. The research objective is to describe what the articulation of a personal value orientation, as part of an evolving life narrative, means for the professionalisation of students and young professionals. As part of our research aim, we explore personal narratives, thereby focusing on experiences and related meaning-giving values. For the research of professionalisation processes, these narratives are interesting, in the sense that they promote an understanding of what the relationship is between personal meaning-giving values and professional decisions. Professional decisions have their ground in professional beliefs, but are somehow interrelated with a personal value orientation that refers to morality. This interrelatedness is relevant, especially in a post-modern society characterised by a mixture of value systems. This is a characteristic of post-modern societies that requires professionals to foster dialogical competencies, and to be aware of their personal value orientation, because as professionals they need to agree on what their common and shared value orientation is. A shared moral common ground is the foundation for building trustworthy relationships among each other as professionals, and for building relationships with the people who rely on them (cf. Cruess et al., 2004). The description and articulation of a personal value orientation is part of moral education, which is substantially connected with worldview education (cf. Van der Kooij, 2016). The perspective of worldview education, or of the humanities in general, that is taken as a starting point in this study, is used as a comprehensive perspective that encompasses every personal view on life, whether it be secular or religious.

Some people claim that religion should be a private affair and has no place in the public arena, let alone in schools, which are funded by the state. The catch phrase 'In the Netherlands, there is a separation of church and state,' is often used as a 'dialogue killer' to shut down religious voices in the public domain. The argument of the separation between church and state assumes that neutrality is a possible stance in a personal life view. However, the unsolvable tension between religion and neutrality applies to all views on life, and should not be attributed solely to religious affiliations. This tension touches upon an important theme for professionalisation, because people who are entrusted to professionals should be able to count on equal treatment. Similarly, it is highly unlikely that in every single case a professional will interpret a situation unambiguously. Some professional activities, such as medical interventions, follow standardised procedures, which are also inherently normative. Other professional situations, which allow less standardised procedures, provide room for different interpretations and, consequently, different professional actions. This challenging reality is relevant to all kinds of professional contexts in which individual interpretations are partly subjective within a larger historical and social context. This context functions as an encompassing and complex framework, consisting of countless interrelated personal meaning-giving frameworks that influence people's thinking and acting. More important is the question whether professionals are aware of these influences, i.e., of their inseparable connectedness with these meaning-giving frameworks, whether religious or secular. The attention for this awareness is a significant part of personhood formation in professionalisation.

b. Research Issues

Recently, the concept of personhood formation, and also that of value orientation, receive more attention in Dutch education (cf. Onderwijsraad, 2011, 2013; Platform Onderwijs2032, 2016). In Higher Professional Education (in Dutch: *hoger beroepsonderwijs – hbo*), this growing attention generates a need for more insight into students' moral and existential learning processes, and into how these could become part of a curriculum that intends to develop the professionalism of students. In professional education, there is a growing insight that a one-sided focus on the development of competencies will not lead to a better functioning of students and professionals (cf. Evelein & Korthagen, 2011, 11). In the 1990s, the economic discourse, which introduced controlling concepts like accountability, efficiency and profitability, became dominant in the societal welfare and healthcare domain (cf. Bakker & Wassink, 2015, 10-11). This societal development also took place in education, the context of this research. The philosopher Nussbaum has critically stated that education has become a means to deliver 'work capital' for an increasing gross national product (GNP), at the expense of *Bildung* that is needed to form democratic citizens (cf. Nussbaum, 2011). At the very least, Nussbaum's remarks bring up the normative question of what education should aspire to. Biesta has designated this societal development as *learnification*, which neglects the educational aspects of content, relationship, and purpose (cf. Biesta, 2013, 64). "This emptiness of the notion of 'learning' has made its rise in educational settings quite problematic, as the point of education – be it school education or the education of adults – is never just that students learn, but that they learn *something* and that they learn this for particular *reasons*." (ibid., 63) The growing interest in values and normativity in education should lead to equal attention for qualification, socialisation, and subjectification, as interrelated educational aims (cf. ibid., 129). This triple objective should lead to practical wisdom, i.e., an increasing ability to make wise judgements, which answers the question 'What is to be done?' (cf. ibid., 133/4). The overall normative question in Biesta's work is confined to 'What is good education?'. Biesta argues that more attention should be given to subjectification. His philosophical thought-provoking contribution leaves open in what way subjectification could be possible and workable in practice. How does subjectification work in practice, and what are the possible results in terms of personal and professional development? What is an appropriate way to describe this type of development? These questions are part of the concern of this qualitative research.

These days, the question about good education figures within a broader societal movement and an interest in a value-based, rather than controlling, orientation. Already in the 1990s, philosophers and theologians began to reflect critically about the dominant economic paradigm in different professions (cf. Van Ewijk & Kunneman, 2013, 10). The Dutch philosopher Kunneman coined the concept of *normative professionalisation* to stress the normative and moral dimension of professionalism, next to the instrumental or technical dimension (cf. Kunneman, 1996). If both professional dimensions are taken equally seriously, there should be attention for reflectivity in professionalism that enhances the pursuit of questions that improve professional acting, and questions about the meaning and ultimate goal of professional acting in general. In the meantime, different perspectives on the content and the process of reflection have opened up various avenues of research. Korthagen (2004, 2009) has explored 'core reflection,' which is used to connect different layers of professional identity. Kelchtermans (2009) has focused on the biographical perspective of what he calls 'professional self-understanding.' Schön (1983) introduced the concept of the 'reflective practitioner,' who must develop flexibility within complexity, and awareness of value conflict. All these perspectives show that reflection in professionalisation draws on personally experienced, and meaningful values, which contribute to a personal body of knowledge, that is inherently contextual and part of an encompassing and evolving life narrative. Kunneman (2009)

denoted this type of professionalisation as the result of moral and existential learning processes, which relate to Polanyi's concept of tacit knowledge (cf. Van Ewijk, 2013, 26). This tacit knowledge is embodied and difficult to detect. Therefore its detection requires the development of awareness of, and reflection about the link between tacit knowledge and professional thinking and acting. Nevertheless, the more professionals recognise the tacit knowledge embodied in their professional practice and become aware of it, the better they function (cf. *ibid.*, 27). Various studies on tacit knowledge are available nowadays, but a worldview educational project designed to explore this embodied knowledge of normative professionals has scarcely been subject to further investigation. The combined research group 'Normative Professionalisation and Worldview Education' of the Utrecht University and the HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht is elaborating this research tradition, and has claimed that normative professionalisation is a form of worldview education (cf. Bakker, 2013, 27).

If, as Kunneman (2009) has stated, moral and existential learning processes are essential for normative professionalisation, there might well be a connection with religious or worldview education, which historically has had moral and existential topics as its 'core business.' A relevant approach in worldview education is the focus on its transformative character, which includes personhood formation (cf. Jackson, 1997; Miedema, 2014). Few researchers, however, have focused on the possibilities and the transformative function of worldview education for professional development in higher professional education. In Canada, at the public University of New Brunswick, Valk (2009, 2010) has developed a worldview educational programme that is designed to help students to get to know themselves, and others, better. His primary concern is fostering the awareness of one's personal worldview position. Valk's approach to worldview education is predominantly verbal and cognitive, with less interest in experiential learning through the use of a type of didactics that is used to make students aware of, for example, physical sensations and affections. Unlike Valk's approach, a type of research into (worldview) education, which is characterised by a didactic mixture that addresses multiple human capacities, can be expected to yield more insight into the transformative character of worldview education, in relation to tacit knowledge as an aspect of normative professionalisation. Such insight can meaningfully contribute to the clarification of the conceptual relationship between worldview positions and professional development.

Before a clarification of the conceptual relationship between worldview education and professionalisation can be attempted, it is necessary to connect with the recent international academic debate on religious education, which shows an increasing interest in using the term 'worldview' over 'religion' (cf. Valk, 2007, 2010; Van der Kooij, De Ruyter, Miedema, 2013; Miedema, 2014; Van der Kooij, 2016). The general intention with the implementation of this new concept is the inclusion of secular worldviews besides religious worldviews. Van der Kooij (2016) has conducted thorough conceptual research on the concepts of worldview and moral education. Still, there are two important issues that need to be addressed. First, for the term 'worldview,' there still do not exist sufficiently accurate translations in various countries. Secondly, the conceptualisations of Valk and Van der Kooij tend to be predominantly cognitive, and do not address a holistic view on the human being. A comprehensive work on religious and worldview education in Europe is *Signposts*, written by Robert Jackson for the Council of Europe (CoE). In this publication, Jackson signals the terminological minefield and the translation problems that occur in this educational domain (cf. 2014, 27). In his conclusion, he identifies two concepts that are workable and usable: worldview and life orientation. The latter, however, has not yet been made the subject of a conceptual study, in the way 'worldview' received a conceptual investigation in Van der Kooij's research. A comparison of the two will contribute to the current academic debate, and will be supportive of the insights raised in *Signposts*

concerning the need to be inclusive regarding secular and religious orientation – an approach that overcomes Jackson’s pragmatic solution to speak of religious and *non*-religious worldviews. The prefix ‘non’ does not sound very inclusive.

The goal of this research project is to describe the conceptual relationship between the discourse on normative professionalisation and worldview education. Kunneman (2009) claims a significant role for moral and existential learning processes in normative professionalisation, which refers to a connection between morality and identity. Van der Kooij (2016) conceptually shows how a school’s moral education, in terms of a broad morality which also encompasses different ideals and values, influences the personal worldview of pupils, which may be intentional or unintended depending on the school in question. In both discourses, the self (or identity) and morality appear to be overarching concepts. Philosophical studies on the conceptual relationship between morality and the self describe how both evolve in a spatio-temporal context (cf. Taylor, 1989; Ricoeur, 1994; Kunneman, 2009). Various scholars situate the self in a historical context, which relates to traditional, modern, and post-modern times (cf. Taylor, 1989; Kunneman, 2009; Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2012). These different historical eras play a role in the articulation of a meaning-giving narrative, which develops from an orientation in moral space (cf. Taylor, 1989). Taylor states that this moral space consists of pre-existent questions, which induce people to determine and to articulate what is good, and valuable, and what makes life meaningful. Taylor designates these articulations as hypergoods, or qualitative distinctions, which refer to various notions concerned with human dignity (cf. *ibid.*, 15). The articulation of hypergoods requires taking a personal position, which tells something about who you are, and what your identity is. In a different way, Ricoeur describes how we learn about ourselves, and how our identity relates to ethics and morality. Both philosophers develop a narrative and a dialogical approach to describe how the self and morality are related. Taylor states that it is characteristic of our times that people face difficulty in articulating where they stand (cf. *ibid.*, 10). Roebben’s concepts of *redefining* and *redignifying*, for their part, are further theoretical explorations to describe the articulating and hermeneutic process of a meaning-giving narrative (cf. Roebben, 2014, 23). The question is how these philosophical insights and concepts of *redefining* and *redignifying* work in practice, and what we can learn from them regarding professionalisation.

Various narrative studies on identity development have been conducted, which reveal how people narrate their lives (cf. Hermans & Hermans-Jansen, 1995; Hermans & Hermans-Konopka; 2012, Van Knippenberg, 2002, 2008). Hermans and his various co-authors developed the *Dialogical Self Theory* (DST), which started as a psycho-educational theory within the framework of describing the valuations and experiences in the formation of the self, by using the *self-confrontation method*. This method, which originally started as a co-research instrument between client and psychologist (cf. Hermans & Hermans-Jansen, 1995), proved to be usable for research into identity and personhood formation. Vloet (2015), for example, applied the self-confrontation method to provide a deeper insight into how experienced teachers develop their professional identity. She used a narrative-dialogical approach to describe how a person’s multi-voiced narrative, which is described by DST, evolves and elicits in every-day practice. Besides applying the self-confrontation method outside its original psychotherapeutic context, various scholars began to explore core concepts of DST as elements figuring in their narrative research instruments, which also proved to be compatible with other research contexts (cf. Hermans & Gieser, 2013). Zock (2013) researched religious voices in self-narratives by using concepts of DST, which enabled her to acquire a deeper insight into the function of religious voices. A next step in the application of DST-concepts for narrative-biographical research is to explore how life orientation as a personal meaning-making process could be inductively described and analysed. By conducting such research, we expect to acquire a deeper methodological

insight into the use of DST for narrative research, and about the use of workable instruments for analysing and describing life orientation narratives. So far, little qualitative research is available on how young adults articulate their life orientation, let alone related to their professionalisation. Gustavsson (2013) conducted a study on the meaning-making process of young adults. Her research interest centres around the young-adult's own words behind given life-view concepts, as part of the process of meaning-making, for which she uses the terminology 'existential configuration' (cf. *ibid.*, 2013). Van Dijk-Groeneboer et al. (2010) added one open question to their longitudinal quantitative study on life views among teenagers in the Netherlands. They described their effort to explore a semiotic research instrument which enabled them to cluster the various answers. Our narrative research, in turn, provides contributions to analysis, research instruments, and a description of themes that emerge from the students' articulations, which will benefit further qualitative research into the meaning-making processes of adolescents and young adults.

c. Research Objective and Questions

The objective of this qualitative-narrative study is, first of all, to explore the conceptual relationship between worldview education and normative professionalisation. In order to make progress with this, further conceptual clarification is needed for each of these processes and their reciprocal relationship. This conceptual research runs simultaneously with empirical research on a worldview educational programme designed to develop the normative professionalisation of the students. The conceptual and empirical research will influence each other iteratively, in describing how students from various disciplines at a confessionally neutral university articulate their view on life. By proceeding in this manner, we expect to acquire a deeper insight into the way students articulate their view on life, which will provide detailed information about different dimensions of the self and identity. The narrative-dialogical approach that we practice in this study will provide information on how the ethical and moral orientation of students is rooted in a meaningful life narrative.

This research has a hermeneutical interest in students' self-written documents about their personal view on life, which they articulate during half a year of worldview education. Of special interest regarding these evolving documents is the process of articulation, the function and the characteristics of these expressions, and the emergence of narrative connections between different values. Moreover, this study has a longitudinal character, in the sense that it follows students during their post-graduate period, i.e. their juniorship, which takes place 3 or 4 years after documenting their first articulation. We expect that the analysis of the articulations in these narratives will generate knowledge about how young professionals continue their normative professionalisation. The results are helpful to improve the preparation of students for their future profession, but also to understand how life views change during intentional worldview education, and during unintentional moral and existential learning processes taking place in and through their professional life.

The central research question of this study:

What is the meaning and contribution of a personal life view articulation to professionalisation?

This general question is split up into four sub-questions, which are:

1. What is the conceptual relationship between worldview education and normative professionalisation?
2. What personal life views do students at a confessionally neutral university articulate, at the beginning of a formal worldview educational programme?

3. What are the characteristics of the development that occurs in the life view articulations of students, in relation to their professionalisation while attending a formal worldview educational programme?
4. What are the characteristics of the development that occurs in the life view articulations of students, in relation to their professionalisation during their juniorship period?

d. Societal Relevance

The societal relevance of this research project centres around educational practice. We expect that this study will yield information, which will prove useful for the innovation of an educational practice that intends a normative professionalisation. A growing interest in value orientation nowadays, requires the availability of reflection instruments that help students to articulate the roots and the functioning of their normativity, as part of an encompassing meaning-giving narrative. With this research project, we intend to describe the hermeneutical and redefining development of students and post-graduates, a process which should improve their moral decision-making capability and normative professionalisation (cf. Roebben, 2015, 73). Moreover, this research offers a contribution to the improvement of the educational practice of deep-reflection coaching, which proves beneficial to students, in helping them explore levels of awareness regarding their embodied value orientation (cf. Evelein & Korthagen, 2011, 133).

Recently, various professions face societal criticism for lacking a moral compass, which might be seen as a criticism of education as well (cf. Luyendijk, 2015). The qualitative-narrative research conducted in this study focuses on what kind of life views students at a confessionally neutral university articulate, which should reveal aspects of their moral and ethical orientation. The development of the students' capacity to articulate such personal life views contributes to the extension of a vocabulary that addresses ultimate questions, morality and meaning-giving issues, which is a useful asset in a society characterised by diversity. In this manner, this research project contributes to a better understanding of how we can improve the dialogical competencies of students.

An educational consideration that is associated with this research project centres around the so-called 'pedagogy of interruption' (cf. Biesta, 2012). Interruption is a didactic strategy that is applied in the educational programme of the minor *Philosophy. World Religions. Spirituality* that is closely linked to this research. These three subjects interrupt the ordinary life of students in different ways. For example, the tutorials belonging to the spirituality track of this programme interrupt at the level of experience. The lessons in world religions and worldviews interrupt the obviousness of the students' personal worldviews, by providing them with new knowledge and by letting them take part in various dialogues. The narrative approach used in this research project is employed to describe how these interruptions stimulate an educational and dialogical process.

Because this study follows students during their post-graduate period, we expect to gain insight into the development of young professionals. We expect that this narrative-biographical approach will give a detailed insight into personal and professional development processes which revolve around continuity or discontinuity in the young professional's life orientation.

e. Scientific Relevance

The goal of this research project is to describe the relationship between the articulation of a personal life view and the process of normative professionalisation. As a study, it is positioned at the crossroads of different disciplines: religious education, (educational) philosophy, social psychology, psycho-education, and practical theology. We expect that these various perspectives will contribute

to the conceptual clarification of the concepts 'worldview' and 'life orientation,' which Jackson (2014) regards as two workable items in religious education. Van der Kooij (2016) has already conducted thorough research on the definitional and terminological concerns of the item 'worldview.' This study will shed light on the alternative item of 'life orientation.'

Various concepts from the philosophical and religious educational discourse call for more practical-empirical exploration, to discover how normative professional development takes place in relation to ultimate or meaning-giving questions. In the field of philosophy, Ricoeur and Taylor have described a close narrative relationship between the self and morality. Nevertheless, the question arises what this relationship looks like, how it works, and more importantly, how these philosophies can be explored in qualitative research. In the discipline of religious education, Roebben (2014) has introduced the concepts of *redefining* and *redignifying*, of which the latter has close philosophical connections with Taylor's preliminary assumptions about the self and morality. With this study, we intend to provide greater insights into the relationship between the self and morality, and into the process of *redefining* and *redignifying*, or within the scope of this research: the interface between the articulation of the personal life orientation and normative professionalisation.

On the level of development of methodology, this research might prove relevant in the sense that it applies and explores concepts of DST in a narrative inquiry approach. This offers new opportunities to explore the DST-approach for analytical aims. This kind of narrative inquiry requires the development of analytical instruments, which could benefit the discourse in this type of qualitative research.

f. Ontological and Epistemological Perspectives of this Research

In qualitative research, it is explicitly necessary to describe the ontological and epistemological perspectives of research, because this informs the reader about the researcher's context and philosophical assumptions that influence the research process (cf. Creswell, 2013, 18). In this research project, the critical stance is taken that religion, worldviews and life orientations should have a place in general professionalisation. Despite this critical and emancipatory stance, we position this research within the interpretative paradigm, which is used to make sense of how people construct their meaning, and further to describe the content of this meaning (cf. Creswell, 2013, 25; Swet & Munneke, 2017). Within the interpretative paradigm, this research has a social constructivist ontology and epistemology. A social constructivist ontology is open to different realities without a single worldview dominating. The starting point is the individual process of meaning-making and individual understanding of the world. "These meanings are varied and multiple, leading the researcher to look for the complexity of views rather than narrow meanings into a few categories or ideas." (Creswell, 2013, 24) The presupposition is that meanings are constructed in a historical and social context. "In other words, they are not simply imprinted on individuals but are formed through interaction with others (hence social construction) and through historical and cultural norms that operate in individuals' lives." (ibid., 25) One of the incentives of this study is the interest in what kind of meaning-giving answers people articulate to moral and existential questions, and how they go about this. Characteristic for this research is the stratified structure between the educational programme of the minor *Philosophy. World Religions. Spirituality* (PhWS) and the research project. This stratified structure makes it possible to relate the students' self-conducted inquiries about their personal life view to this research into professionalisation and worldview education. The students' inquiries, which started as an educational exercise, later became, after their consent, the data for this qualitative narrative research.

Kunneman criticises the social constructivist tendency to downplay the meaning and the sense of constructs, and to deprive concepts like transcendence, inspiration and hypergoods of their existential and moral significance (cf. Kunneman, 2009, 129). However, the narrative approach employed in this research project opposes this downplaying tendency by taking the articulated meaning in personal existential and moral learning processes seriously. In regard to the epistemological perspective of this study it is therefore relevant to remember, that the twofold philosophical background of the interpretative paradigm is hermeneutics and phenomenology (cf. 't Hart et al., 2005; De Boer & Smaling, 2011, 15). More specifically, this study takes up a narrative approach within the hermeneutical tradition, which presumes that it is impossible to reach the original meaning through interpretation. Every interpretation is the product of a *Wirkungsgeschichte* (cf. Gadamer, 1972). The interpretation of the researcher in this qualitative study draws on a methodology that starts from individual experiences and individual meanings as the reality to be studied. "Reality is co-constructed between the researcher and the researched and shaped by individual experiences." (Creswell, 2013, 36) The objective of this interpretative narrative research is to describe what participants articulate as their view on life and how they go about this, related to their professionalisation.

g. Reading Guide

In Chapter 1, conceptual research is discussed about the concepts of religious and worldview education, as well as about adjacent terms within a changing societal context. Mindful about this changing context, we focus on individualisation, diversity and secularisation. Within the academic discipline of religious education, a vivid discussion is going on about adequate terminology due to a changing society. Adherents of worldview education claim to be more inclusive regarding secular views of life than the original concept of religious education implies. In this discussion, we critically describe the different positions and conceptually explore the item of 'life orientation,' as an alternative.

In Chapter 2, we introduce the discourse on normative professionalisation, which is the second conceptual interest of this research. After a general introduction to the concept of professionalisation, a description of the normative and subjective character of professional education will follow. Finally, we relate the concepts of life orientation and normative professionalisation to each other.

Chapter 3 is an intermezzo and consists of a description of the minor programme *Philosophy. World Religions. Spirituality* (PhWS) at the HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht. This worldview education programme is closely linked to this research. Moreover, it is the research context of our study. In this programme, students describe and articulate their view on life, articulations that are part of the data of this study.

In Chapter 4, an introduction to the research methodology follows. The narrative inquiry that is conducted, employs an inductive approach and aligns with the social constructivist ontology and epistemology of this study. This narrative inquiry has two different cohorts, of respectively 35 and 33 students. We developed two research instruments to analyse the content of students' life orientations that relate to their professional beliefs. First, we designed a narrative-dialogical analysis instrument to analyse the articulation of meaning-giving topics within a narrative about life orientation. Secondly, we developed a narrative-competency analysis instrument to describe the hermeneutical and redefining development within a narrative, and to analyse the relationship between articulations with respect to life orientation and professionalisation.

In Chapter 5, the results of the first qualitative-empirical research are discussed. The first part consists of the preliminary articulations documented by the students regarding their life view, specifically related to their professionalisation. The second part consists of a thematic cross-over analysis of the development of their articulations.

In Chapter 6, the results of the second cohort are presented. These results offer a detailed look at the development in the life orientation articulations. In this cohort, we operationalised the concept of life orientation, which resulted in a more detailed insight into the function of ambivalence, as a boundary experience, during the students' articulation processes.

Chapter 7 starts with a discussion which draws on the conceptual results of chapters 1 and 2. The second part consists of conclusions and a discussion concerning the empirical research, the theories, and the applied methodology. This section continues with recommendations for education in general and for professionalisation at universities of applied sciences in particular. The chapter ends with critical remarks about the research methodology and recommendations for future research.

The epilogue consists of a short theological consideration, which reveals something of my personal life orientation, which for narrative investigation is an important element to share. A life orientation which pleads for an education through life orientation, which takes place on the *agora* by leaving the *narthex*. It is a plea to safeguard the relevance of theology, which is dear to me.

This thesis concludes with an English and a Dutch summary.

Chapter 1 Life Orientation in a Secular Context

Dutch society, like many Western societies, has changed rapidly in the 20th century and at the beginning of the 21st century. The impact of these processes takes place at a societal (macro), educational (meso), and individual (micro) level. Within the scope of this research project on the meaning of worldviews, religion, and values for professionalisation, we consider three societal processes at the macro level to be relevant: individualisation, diversity and secularisation. There are also other, even related, societal processes, such as industrialisation, digitalisation, urbanisation, the forming of a service economy and a network society. Moreover, all these processes are interconnected. In section 1.1, a brief description of the three societal developments we will focus on, outlines the context of religious education in contemporary Dutch society.

Section 1.2 addresses the educational (meso) level, in which ‘pillarisation’ is a particularly Dutch phenomenon. Although the original objectives of pillarisation have largely faded as a consequence of secularisation, the Dutch education system still has a compartmentalised worldview organisation. The remaining pillarisation predominantly manifests itself in primary and secondary education. In higher education, only a few schools or universities still belong to one of the ‘pillars.’ This research project took place within the context of the HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht, which has a confessionally neutral mission statement that closely matches the confessionally neutral mission statement of public education. The worldview educational approach (rooted in the humanities) to normative professionalisation practised in this research project is something new at the HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht, and makes a rather peculiar impression on some teachers. However, this situation provides the unique opportunity to study how education in philosophy, worldviews, religions and spirituality could function with respect to the professionalisation of students in a secular context.

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Individualisation, diversity, and secularisation as societal processes all have their impact on the personal and individual (micro) level. In section 1.3, we discuss this micro level by focusing on the transition taking place – in most parts of the Dutch education system – of the subject of religious education (RE) to the subject of worldview education (WE). In this section, our research will be positioned with respect to recent studies on religious and worldview education by addressing some core concepts and course objectives, and by presenting and proposing the concept of ‘life orientation.’

1.1 A rapidly Changing Dutch Society

Dutch society has changed rapidly in the past century and is still changing. In this section on the macro level of societal processes, we focus on three societal concepts: individualisation, diversity and secularisation. These concepts refer to changes and processes in Dutch society that are somehow interrelated, in particular individualisation and secularisation, as will be explained later.

Individualisation is crucial because fewer people nowadays – compared to 60 years ago – share an organised worldview that comes with a specific vocabulary, symbolism, narratives, and a shared value orientation (cf. Van den Brink et al., 2012, 49). Because fewer people participate in an organised worldview, the possibilities and opportunities to develop a language to articulate a personal life view become exceptional. The articulation of a personal life orientation is the main subject of this study.

The concept of diversity refers to ethnic, cultural, and religious backgrounds, as well as to societal emancipation processes of various minorities regarding their sexual orientation, and corresponding

emancipation processes of people with disabilities. Diversity requires an inclusive pedagogical approach. One means to address inclusion in the classroom is the creation of a safe space where students can practice their dialogical competencies at different levels (cf. Roebben, 2014, 23). Relevant here is that our research context is an educational programme that wants to justify, and even benefit from, diversity in society.

Moreover, we will describe and position ourselves here in the debate on secularisation, a dominant process in Dutch society. However, there are different approaches to qualify and characterise secularisation, which seems to be a relevant theme with regard to the articulation of a personal life view.

1.1.1 Individualisation

The etymological meaning of individual is 'un-divided,' which sociologically means an entity that allows no further division. In this section, our main focus is sociological, because the aim is to describe the societal context of this research project. The process of individualisation in Western societies has a strong conceptual connection with individualism, though there is a significant difference. In cultural sociology, individualism is the opposite of collectivism, which could be a useful contrast to describe different cultures. "Typically, individualism is conceptualized as the opposite of collectivism especially when contrasting Western and East Asian cultures. Social scientists assume that individualism is more prevalent in industrialized Western societies than elsewhere, arguing that Protestantism and civic emancipation in Western societies resulted in social and civic structures that championed the role of individual choice, personal freedom (including the right not to follow a religion), and self-actualization." (Inglehart & Oyserman, 2004) In Western societies, individualism and individualisation have a long history, the onset of which most scholars situate at the beginning of the Enlightenment, the start of the era of modernity (cf. Taylor, 1989, 393). The founding fathers of sociology, Durkheim and Weber, observed that the process of individualisation was stimulated by the process of industrialisation that began in late modernity (cf. De Beer, 2007, 391). During this period, the freedom and autonomy of the individual, and the free agency of the person became, and still are important values. Since the beginning of modernity, each period has shown its own particular characteristics in the process of individualisation. "'Individualization' now means something very different from what it meant 100 years ago and what it conveyed in the early times of modern era – the times of extolled human 'emancipation' from the tightly knit web of communal dependency, surveillance, and enforcement." (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002, xxiv) The central feature seems to be the emancipation of the individual from communal prescribed norms. In sociology, these different periods have resulted in a wide variety of approaches and descriptions of this phenomenon. A further look into these classic studies at least conveys a more complex definition than a one-sided account of a free market choice for every individual.¹ Although a certain connection exists between 'individualism' and 'individualisation,' a significant difference is that individualism has to do with personal preferences and attitudes (cf. De Beer, 2007, 405/6). In short, the difference lies in the discernment between the micro level (individualism) and the macro level of the sociological phenomenon of individualisation.

¹ Beck & Beck-Gernsheim make the following discernment "(...) it is necessary to establish and keep in view the distinction between the *neoliberal idea of the free-market individual* (inseparable from the concept of 'individualization' as used in the English-speaking countries) and the concept of *Individualisierung* in the sense of *institutionalized individualism* as it will be developed in this book (EZ: Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002). The *social-scientific* sense of 'individualization' should thus be distinguished from the neo-liberal sense." (ibid, p. xxi)

For this research project, the study by Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002) is useful in relation to their claim that a central feature of individualisation processes is the responsibility for personal choices. “One of the decisive features of individualization processes, then, is that they not only permit, but they also demand an active contribution by individuals. As the range of options widens and the necessity of deciding between them grows, so too does the need for individually performed actions, for adjustment, coordination, integration. If they are not to fail, individuals must be able to plan for the long term and adapt to change (...).” (ibid., 4) The process of individualisation became entrenched as a result of increasing economic growth and prosperity. As a result of family planning since the 1960s, which led to smaller families, people began to have more opportunities in education. In addition, the Dutch government began to reform and democratise the educational system in the early 1960s, which opened up higher education for children from lower classes (cf. Matthys, 2010, 17). In the Netherlands, children from so-called working-class families were finally given the opportunity to study at the university. This educational reform stimulated the emancipation and levelling of large groups in Dutch society.

Beck and his co-author argue that the individual ought to be able to plan for the future, which is not possible for every single person. They characterise this ability with a new concept: ‘individuation,’ which means that individuals, as agents, are capable of planning and coordinating their individual lives. In addition to individuation, they discern the individualising individual who is left with many choices and fails to make use of the countless opportunities (cf. 2002, xvi). Beck and his fellow author seem to uncover a paradox in the process of individualisation. It is the paradox of becoming unfree by having to make so many choices, which is part of what they coin ‘individuation.’ Being responsible for every choice among so many opportunities, can lead to a certain ‘imprisonment’ of one’s own free choice. A type of imprisonment that seems to be the result of the dominant claim to authenticity. Together with other sociologists like Bauman, and Giddens, they characterise the process of individualisation as fate, a sociological phenomenon on a macro level, which leaves the individual with no choice but to participate (cf. De Beer, 2007, 391). Being part of this sociological process “[t]he human being becomes (in a radicalization of Sartre’s meaning) a choice among possibilities, *homo optionis*. Life, death, gender, corporeality, identity, religion, marriage, parenthood, social ties – all are becoming decidable down to the small print; once fragmented into options, everything must be decided.” (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002, 5) The *homo optionis* has so many choices and simultaneously bears full responsibility for all of these choices. At the same time, the context of the multi-optional human being is a network society, which asks individuals to present themselves positively on social media, like Facebook. Taylor (2007) frames our time as ‘an age of authenticity,’ which burdens the *homo optionis* with decisions that benefit an authentic identity. What is the right choice, and what if it happens to be a wrong choice? These choices also form a part of a personal meaning-making process, which is the subject of this study. Taylor frames the contemporary search for the spiritual as a kind of individualised bricolage. A search which is focused on self-fulfilment, on finding one’s own path. (cf. Taylor, 1989, 2007) In any case, the question arises whether each period has its own emancipating challenge, as an inherent dimension of individualisation.

Emancipation is an implication of individualisation among two other characteristics, namely detraditionalisation, and heterogeneity (cf. De Beer, 2007, 406). In his search for a suitable definition of individualisation, De Beer discerns these three elements, which seem to be apparent in most sociological studies. First of all, detraditionalisation is the process of diminishing adherence of individuals to traditional institutions, including family, class, and church. A second implication is emancipation, which means “(...) a declining influence of social groups and institutions on individual attitudes and behaviour, resulting in a greater *freedom of choice*.” (ibid, 392) Simultaneously, group

influence or peer pressure does not disappear, making emancipation a constant challenge. It is clear that detraditionalisation and emancipation are conceptually connected and refer to the function and influence of traditional groups, which nowadays have their equivalents in post-modern group structures. In sociology, there is an ongoing academic debate on the question of how individualisation can be analysed most reliably in comparison with social structures (cf. Woodman, 2010). For example, the category 'class' may be too narrow, underestimating the way in which young people are agents of their biography. This point of biography brings us to De Beer's third implication of individualisation, namely heterogenisation. This implication entails that individuals are free to make own choices and therefore effectively make different choices. Nowadays people construe their identity through constant reflection, because it is not possible not to choose (cf. Giddens, 1991). In this sense, Beck and his co-author no longer speak of a standard biography, but prefer the concept of 'choice biography,' which emphasises the individual's agency versus an identity construction that reflects societal processes. This contrast is addressed in the same sociological debate about the most effective way to study individualisation in relation to identity construction (Brannen & Nilsen, 2005). In this case, we follow Matthys (2010), who claims that a choice biography should still take social structures into account, and the limitations they impose on identity construction. Again, the emphasis is not on freedom of choice, but on the ability to plan, to coordinate one's own life in an increasingly globalising and open society. A society that reflects diversity in a variety of aspects, as the following paragraph will describe.

1.1.2 Diversity

In this paragraph, we deliberately discuss the multidimensional concept of diversity, because it offers the possibility to describe different forms of heterogeneity in the Netherlands, some of which have deep historical roots. Another reason is linked to the idea of inclusivity in education, which will be the subject of the next section. In addition, the item of diversity emphasises the societal importance of dialogicality in this research project, which takes societal and social diversity seriously, especially in worldview education.

The section on individualisation concluded with three implications, namely detraditionalisation, emancipation and heterogeneity. Heterogeneity implies a diversity of possible meanings because the individual is no longer bound by the conformity pressure of traditional groups. The traditional groups, which showed at least some homogeneity, no longer have the same influence as before. These conventional groups were part of the typically Dutch societal horizontal segmentation structure, called *pillarisation*. This principle of societal organisation consisted of at least four significant 'pillars': the Catholic, the Protestant, the Liberal, and the Socialist pillars. In the next sections on secularisation and education, a more detailed explanation follows. Although the pillarisation system started to break down in the 1960s, it was the blueprint for Dutch government policy on the establishment of a multicultural society (Spiecker & Steutel, 2001, 296). The multicultural society was the effect of a significant influx of labour immigrants from non-Western countries, such as Turkey and Morocco.

The multicultural society was the objective of Dutch policy in the second half of the 20th century. Multiculturalism intends to create a society which treats every single culture as equal. "Multiculturalism as an ideology has been defined as aspiring towards a plurality of cultures with all members of society seeking to live together while maintaining separate cultures." (Schrover, 2010, 333) In her historical-sociological research, Schrover shows how the Dutch experience with pillarisation fuelled the policy of multiculturalism. Dutch policymakers expected that the creation of special pillars for immigrant groups might foster a peaceful coexistence, which was originally the objective of pillarisation. In fact, in the early 1960s, the labour immigrants were expected to leave

the country within a decade (cf. Gorashi, 2010, 7). Actually, 'pillarisation' as a Dutch solution for creating a stable nation state was based on essentialist thinking. "Essentialist beliefs about groups are central to racism, but are also used for self-identification and can play a role in the process of group emancipation. However, the history of Dutch integration policy shows that categorisation not only influences how people define themselves or are defined by others, but also – and more importantly – leads to fossilisation of ideas about the culture of immigrants, and that of society at large." (Schrover, 2010, 329) Schrover claims that the long tradition of essentialist thinking in society has led to, for example, modern Islamophobia. The strong rise of the Dutch populist politician Pim Fortuyn in the early years of the 21st century – who later became the victim of murder – paved the way for an open expression of resentment against the multicultural society in general and Muslims and Islam in particular. During this period, the populist politician Geert Wilders started his political movement the Party for Freedom (PVV), which identifies Islam as a dangerous ideology. "The burning issue, then, is to understand why and how a country, which has institutionalized the acceptance of difference and has a reputation for its high levels of 'tolerance', can shift from multicultural policies to what might be perceived as a coercive and assimilationist policy and public discourse [.]", according to Vasta (2007, 714). One of her explanations is that, together with a failed multicultural policy, an institutionalised racism in Dutch society has marginalised immigrants. This explanation seems to be in line with Schrover's remark about the essentialist approach to (sub)cultures within the pillarisation system.

In regard to this research project, this context of cultural and ethnic diversity is relevant for the educational situation in the Netherlands. Although the pillarisation system continues to manifest itself in education, the pupil, student, and teacher populations show a heterogeneous composition, especially in urban areas. Cultural differences coexist with a diversity of personal views on life, as an effect of individualisation. This requires the setting up of dialogues to address possible tensions. Taking diversity seriously in education implies an inclusive pedagogy, which aims for inclusiveness in the areas of culture, religion, worldview, sexual preference, and physical or mental disabilities (cf. Roebben & Kammeyer, 2014). One of the challenges in worldview education is to respond to the process of secularisation in Dutch society, and the current function of Islam in construing personal identity among young people (cf. Van Dijk-Groeneboer, 2010, 161; Visser-Vogel, 2015, Gürlesin, 2018). If inclusive pedagogy is the objective of (worldview) education, a teacher should be able to facilitate a dialogue that enables pupils and students to express their experiences, feelings, and meanings; a dialogue that enables them to encounter and to explore differences, and even to firmly and peacefully disagree among themselves. We favour this open dialogical approach on secularisation, which is the last societal process described here as a relevant societal aspect of the research context of this study.

1.1.3 Secularisation

Secularisation is a contested concept in sociology. Since the decline of church influence and personal church attendance, the study of secularisation became relevant. Wallace (1966) was one of the first sociologists who defined secularisation as the extinction of religion. This rather radical position seemed to be 'wishful thinking' rather than reality. In fact, his claim was a teleological premise. Moreover, the statement that religion is an archaic replica which will sooner or later disappear in favour of rationality was a modernist claim. The Italian philosopher Vattimo (1998) claims precisely the opposite, which means that modernity has its limits. According to Vattimo, secularisation is the ultimate goal of Christianity, which is the incarnation, the humanisation of God. In Christ, this humanisation takes place through the command of loving your neighbour. In the line of Vattimo's thinking, secularisation is a 'weakening' of the metaphysical God as represented in nature religions. This process of weakening began with the kenosis of Jesus; which allows at least a positive view on

secularisation. Positive because it frees human ratio from the violence of an absolute God, the power of the Church, and the natural legislation of moral rules (cf. Vattimo, 1998, 31). This secularisation process, as a process of weakening of metaphysical power, will continue, which might be interpreted as the fulfilment of Jesus' commandment of love. In any case, in the process of secularisation, a clear opposition between Christianity and modernity is not possible.

After the attacks on the Twin Towers in New York, the German philosopher Habermas even spoke of a post-secular age. In this post-secular age, religions do not disappear, but their representatives will coexist with secular citizens and have the duty to translate their tradition into a generally accepted 'moral' language. "The truth content of religious contributions can only enter into the institutionalized practice of deliberation and decision-making if the necessary translation already occurs in the pre-parliamentarian domain, i.e., in the political public sphere itself. This requirement of translation must be conceived as a cooperative task in which the non-religious citizens must likewise participate, if their religious fellow citizens are not to be encumbered with an asymmetrical burden." (Habermas, 2006, 11) This claim results in a common task to show a willingness to understand each other, and marks the assumption that religious and secular worldviews are equal. In a post-secular age, a dialogue between different worldviews is a necessity within the boundaries of the separation of church and state. A shared insight nowadays is that religion will not disappear, but is subject to transformation (cf. Van den Brink et al., 2012, 64). The question remains what might be a proper approach to describe secularisation, or to construct a theory on secularisation.

Gorski and Altinordu (2008) conducted thorough research on secularisation theories and state that one-dimensional concepts are useful for quantitative analysis. A good example, according to both authors, is the religious economies model of Stark and Finke (cf. 2000) who define secularisation as a decline in individual religious demands. Other theories focus on the reduction of institutional power and the decline of religious authority, such as the theory of Chaves (cf. 1994). All these one-dimensional approaches have fuelled sociological research, but do not encompass additional levels of secularisation. A reaction to these narrow-focused theories is a theoretical multi-dimensionality, which discern at least two, or three levels. According to Gorski & Altinordu (ibid., 58-59), some theorists, such as Yamane (cf. 1997), combine different levels but lock themselves up in the dichotomy of modernisation and secularisation versus religion. This dichotomy is teleological and, according to this theoretical viewpoint, ultimately results in the extinction of religion. Van den Brink et al. add to this dichotomy the thesis of privatisation, in which another disunion is included (cf. 2012, 46). One specific approach states that religion should remain within the private sphere, whereas other approaches claim that religion and religious institutions have a public role to play.

In this study, we favour a historical perspective on secularisation rather than a strictly sociological perspective. In the same vein, Gorski & Altinordu (2008), and Vattimo (1998) propose to include a pre-sociological point of view on secularisation because such a perspective exposes different layers of this sociological process. One layer of meaning concerns the difference between *eschaton* and *saeculum* (etymologically the Latin primitive root for 'secularism'), which has a connotation of time. Another layer of meaning concerns the use of *saecularizatio*, which signifies the monk's definite departure from the monastery, which includes the dimension 'place.' The third layer of meaning refers to the Reformation and revolves around an emphasis on rationality. The last and most forgotten layer is tied to the political dimension of secularisation. It refers to the phenomenon that, since the end of the 19th century, the secularist movement is combined with political power, which continues to the present day. "There is a danger, in other words, that secularization theory becomes a vehicle for a secularist politics in which religion is aligned with tradition, superstition, and supernaturalism and kindred categories, whereas secularity is aligned with modernity, rationality,

and science, with the terms operationalized so as to deliver the most resounding possible verdict on the future of religion.” (Gorski & Altinordu, 2008, 61) A historical approach to secularisation exposes the old layers of meaning, which still play a role, without running the risk of getting caught in one of the dichotomies. However, the historical perspective reveals that contradictions are an inevitable part of the sociological debate on secularisation. “Some sociologists insist that secularization is an outcome or an effect; others prefer to conceive of it as a cause or a process; and some tacitly treat it as both, leading to circular or tautological forms of analysis.” (ibid.) A historical approach also makes it clear that thinking about secularisation is situated in the Christian history of the Western world. For the present study, two aspects of secularisation are essential, namely the institutional dimension and the dimension of personal meaning-making.

In regard to the institutional dimension, there has been a significant quantitative decline in church attendance and a decrease in the power of official religious institutions in the public, political and private sphere. Whether this is a process or an effect is less important. At the very least, we see a parallel with the historical opposition revolving around the dimension of ‘place.’ Today, more people favour a place outside the official churches for their meaning-making. Clear indicators for the spatial dimension are formal membership of a church community and church attendance, which, according to The Netherlands Council of Government Policy (*Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid*)), are both in decline among the Catholic and Protestant population (cf. Van den Donk, 2006, 43). According to research of Statistics Netherlands (*Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek*), 50% of the Dutch citizens in 2015 were affiliated with a religious institute (CBS, s.d.). However, more research shows that making a clear division between church membership and being religious or spiritual is not possible (cf. De Hart, 2014). Research by The Netherlands Institute for Social Research (*Sociaal-Cultureel Planbureau, SCP*) shows that faith in God or in a higher being is crumbling less than affiliation with a church community, or that church members can turn out less religious or spiritual than people who are not official church members (cf. ibid., 70). Although studies are difficult to compare because of different research questions and research items, De Hart shows that 53% of the Dutch population defines itself as religious, spiritual, or believing in some way, and that 37% of the population probably does not, because this group considers itself as agnostic or atheist (cf. ibid., 72). These figures show some similarities with the statistics from the CBS research and the Bernts & Berghuis analysis (2016). From an institutional point of view, the conclusion is that secularisation is still increasing in the Netherlands and might continue to increase in the following years. However, these figures only tell a part of the story, because the other crucial aspect of secularisation is personal meaning-making.

First of all, there is a connection between secularisation in the institutional sense and personal meaning-making linked to the process of individualisation. According to Schmeets and Van Mensvoort (2015), the process of an individualising society is an effect of secularisation. In the era of pillarisation, members of the Church had to adjust to the values and norms of the faith community and had to obey them. There was little personal freedom, and social control was part of the societal system. With the decline of pillarisation on a macro level during the 1960s, people began to free themselves from moral, ideological and institutional chains on a micro level. This increasing personal freedom had consequences for individual meaning-making as well. In this sense, on a micro level, faith in a personal God fell from 47% in 1966 to 14% in 2015 (cf. Bernts & Berghuis, 2016). Still, this result is closely linked to an institutional, Christian view of God. In fact, this research shows the effects at a micro level, which have clear parallels at the macro level. The insight that most research into secularisation has its roots in a Christian discourse, led some scholars to distinguish between horizontal and vertical values (Van den Brink et al., 2012; Kunneman, 2009). By letting go of the orientation towards a personal, transcendent God, who represents so-called vertical, sacral values, a

broader perspective opens up on higher goals. Van den Brink and his co-editors broaden the concept of God into the idea of 'the Higher', which nowadays has two other manifestations in sociality and vitality. Whatever the subject of devotion is, the orientation always goes beyond the boundaries of our natural life world, according to Van den Brink et al. (2012). The social orientation is directed towards the known and unknown other. People in the Netherlands continue to care for relatives, but also for unnamed members of society, and even for people in other parts of the world. Van den Brink et al. state that the vital values have an ambiguous character. The orientation on vitality might limit itself to physical, biological, and natural aspects of human life. However, this orientation could also have relations with higher spiritual and cultural values (cf. *ibid.*, 443/444).

The research of Van den Brink et al. (2012) shows that a short one-dimensional statement about secularisation in the Netherlands is not justifiable. This highly contested concept is multi-dimensional and has its roots in Christian history, of which modernity is an integral part. According to the perspective of this research project, the discernment between horizontal and vertical values is critical and should be part of the dialogue in which every citizen should participate, as Habermas (2006) proposes. Concerning personal meaning-making, the starting point for this is existential questions. These kinds of existential issues are part of the human condition. That is why the Belgian theologian Roebben (2014) calls people storytellers when they deal with vulnerability and a longing for wholeness. In this sense, secularisation could even be considered a myth, because people will always have existential questions with answers on different levels. From a historical point of view, however, it would be too radical to regard secularisation as a myth. Secularisation could at least be defined as the loss of a meaning-giving vocabulary and literacy, made up of stories, rituals, symbols, and shared practices, referring – although not necessarily – to transcendent experiences. These transcendent experiences can be horizontal, as Kunneman (2009) proposes, or vertical, as is the case in many religious wisdom traditions.

To conclude, Dutch society has changed considerably as a result of secularisation and the processes of individualisation and diversity. In general, the homogeneous pillars have disappeared mainly in their aspect of socially divided segmentations. Religious institutions no longer have a monopoly on the search for answers to existential questions, nor do they still have a significant influence in the public and private sphere. As a result of these changes at the macro level, organised religion does play a less encompassing role in society, and an equally diminished role in the meaning-giving function at a micro level. Figures show that 50 % of the Dutch citizens affiliate themselves with religion, spirituality, or a belief in a transcendental reality. In the debate on secularism, the teleological perspective, which consists of the expectation that religion will die out, seems to be weakening. This weakening of the teleological view is partly a result of historical research into the process of secularisation, and partly the result of a somewhat more inclusive approach of younger generations, who no longer need to liberate themselves from ideological chains. Unfortunately, the historical event of 9/11 has put religion back at the centre of the debate in a negative way, and this negative connotation continues to dominate the news. In this rapidly changing society, the education system is one of the remainders of the pillarised society. In the next section, we will describe the characteristics of the Dutch school system, and the function of religion or worldview education.

1.2 The Educational Context in Post-Pillarised Society

Since the end of the Second World War, the influence of official religious institutions in Dutch society has changed considerably. Characteristic of the twentieth century in the Netherlands was the pillarisation of society. This system of sociological segmentation grew in the last quarter of the 19th century, and began to decline rapidly from the 1970s onwards (cf. Spiecker & Steutel, 2001, 294). People with a certain view on life – secular or religious – organised themselves in a 'pillar,' which

structured life from the beginning to the end. Together with different moral, ideological and doctrinal lines, these pillars formed a societal framework. The four main pillars were the Roman-Catholic, the Protestant, the Socialist, and the Liberal. Among the religiously oriented pillars, the Roman-Catholic was under Episcopal supervision in accordance with the Catholic hierarchical tradition. The church influence in the Protestant pillar was different because their ecclesiological structure is communal. In addition to the Catholics and Protestants, the liberals and socialists 'pillarised' in a similar way. Each 'pillar' consisted of various institutions like a political party, a newspaper, a broadcasting company, a youth movement, a labour union, which played a dominant role in public and political life (cf. Geurts et al., 2014). In villages and towns, it was even a custom to buy your daily bread at the bakery of your own pillar, as an unwritten rule. Even sports clubs and other leisure associations had their place within this segmented societal organisation. Within these 'pillars,' hospitals, health centres, and welfare organisations took care of the lives of every single member. In their turn, primary schools, secondary schools and universities belonged to a 'pillar,' which educated pupils and students according to the principles of the corresponding life view. "One important function of pillarization has been to establish a subtle balance between the autonomy of different social groups, on the one hand, and the integration of these groups within the encompassing framework of the national state, on the other." (Spiecker & Steutel, 2001, 295) In 1917, the system of educational pillarisation became an official part of the Dutch Constitution under Article 23, which safeguards the freedom of education. In the Netherlands, confessional and public schools have equal financial rights, and both are under state supervision in regard to the quality of their education. "The Dutch educational system is a dual system: public education (initiated by the government) and confessional/denominational education (founded by private initiative). Public education is thought to be ideologically neutral, and should be accessible and open to everyone whatever the religious or secular tradition to which the parents adhere." (Geurts et al., 2014, 176) Besides confessional/denominational schools which adhere to a religious or secular view on life, this privately initiated education also consisted of schools adhering to a specific pedagogical approach, such as Dalton, Montessori or Jenaplan pedagogy, or other particular views on education. In the Netherlands, these schools with a particular educational philosophy receive the same amount of money from the government, and are subject to the same quality control executed by the Inspectorate of Education.

Although the process of de-pillarisation is still ongoing, and the Catholic and Protestant educational umbrella organisations merged, the pillars still exist. In 2016, 32% of the pupils in primary education went to a public school, 30% to a Catholic school, 30% to a Protestant school, and 8% to one of the other privately initiated schools (cf. OCW, s.d.). In spite of secularisation, the confessional schools still cover two thirds of the total market for primary education. The choice for a confessional school is partly based on distance, but religious affiliation or historical familiarity still plays a significant role (cf. Ter Avest et al., 2013). In secondary education, 22% attend a Protestant school, 24 % a Catholic school, 27% a public school, while 12% attend a so-called 'collaboration school' (*samenwerkingsschool*) or a merger between one or more privately initiated schools. The remaining 15 % of the pupils attend a private initiative school, the largest group of which are general-particular schools (*algemeen-bijzonder onderwijs*) (cf. Stamos, s.d.). The main characteristic of these general-particular institutions (still financed by the government) is their neutrality regarding confessional views on life. However, most of these schools have a discerning pedagogical perspective, like the Montessori or Waldorf schools, which also coincides with a particular view on life. In practice, they are comparable to public schools, with the exception of their legal status, which is private for historical reasons. In higher education, most institutions have this general-particular legal status (28 on a total of 56), of which fourteen have a Protestant or Catholic identity (cf. DUO, s.d.). With the

exception of a few small organisations, like teacher training universities, the historical confessional roots of Catholic and Protestant universities seem to have less of an impact on their educational policy.

The changes in the educational context have led to changes in the subject of religious education as taught in primary and secondary education. Within some ‘pillars,’ this development led to a new name, for example ‘worldview education’², and to different educational goals and subject contents for primary and secondary education. The following section briefly discusses this change and joins a recent debate in the academic discipline of religious education. This debate is in line with our interest to pay attention in higher education to philosophy, religion, worldviews, and spirituality, subjects that are part of the educational context of this study into professionalisation.

1.3 The Subject *Religious Education in Transition*

In this section, the first paragraph summarises the situation of the subject ‘religious education’ in primary and secondary education. Although the context of this research is higher education, a short reference to the situation in the lower levels of education helps to understand the research background. The second paragraph discusses the relationship between the content and the educational objectives, which are constitutive of the name of the school subject. Societal changes have led to a transformation of religious education into worldview education. Question is whether the English word ‘worldview education’ is the most suitable description of the school subject, because from a Dutch perspective some aspects seem to get lost.

1.3.1. The Subject *Religious Education in Primary and Secondary School*

In line with societal changes, the educational context has undergone changes over the past fifty years. The end of the pillarised society and the ongoing secularisation inevitably led to a different educational setting (cf. Stolk et al., 2016, 190). Regarding religious education (RE), changes have been substantial in confessional schools, except in some Protestant Orthodox denominations. Historically, the three loci or domains of RE were the church, the family and the school (cf. Ploeger, 1995, 207; Vloet, 2002, 295; Geurts, 2014, 182; Elshof, 2015). In the pillarised society, these three domains had a complementary relationship, which in most cases disappeared due to societal changes. In general, the educational goal of RE was mainly ‘learning into,’ as Grimmitt (2000) characterised this form of introducing pupils into a particular religion. In most mainstream Protestant and Catholic primary and secondary schools, the course objective has shifted from ‘learning into’ to a combination of ‘learning about’ and ‘learning from religion’ (cf. Geurts et al., 2014, 183). ‘Learning from religion’ means that students with personal existential questions have other religious and worldview perspectives as sparring partners in their search for answers (cf. Grimmitt, 2000; Alii, 2009, 78). Jackson (2011) speaks rather of the ‘interpretative approach’ in RE, which differs from Grimmitt’s ‘learning about’ in emphasising the student’s interpretative and hermeneutic activity because RE should focus on the hermeneutical relationship between the individual and religion. Jackson’s model, drawing on ‘interpretive anthropology,’ builds upon Grimmitt’s model, which has phenomenological roots (cf. Grimmitt, 2000, 38). The remaining category of Grimmitt is ‘learning about,’ which means the transfer of knowledge by taking a phenomenological perspective on religion, which shows interest in the appearance and characteristics of a religion and its adherents.

A brief description of the subject of RE in primary and secondary Dutch education helps to understand what the initial situation of students in higher education should ideally look like. In primary education, there is a legal obligation to teach about six worldviews, namely Christianity,

² Worldview education as an arbitrary translation of the Dutch term “*Levensbeschouwelijke vorming*.”

Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and Humanism. All pupils at Dutch public and confessional primary schools should not only learn about, but also from these six worldviews (cf. Meijerink, 2012, 44). Hence, the objective is not merely a transfer of knowledge, but to show attention for person formation as well (cf. *ibid.*; Bertram-Troost et al., 2015, 14). To date, there has been no recent research into how primary schools – both public and confessional – meet this legal obligation to teach these six worldviews. Next to this mandatory attention for religions, and secular views on life, denominational primary schools have the freedom to teach RE according to their own principles. Public schools are obliged to facilitate RE and/or humanist education organised by the various denominations, which means that this type of RE is predominantly ‘learning into’ (cf. Dienstencentrum GVO en HVO, s.d.). If parents of pupils ask for specific RE or humanist education, the public school must provide it. So far, little research has been done on the situation of religious and worldview education in primary education. The most recent studies investigated how school principals in Protestant schools shape the identity of their school, which resulted in three types of schools: tradition schools, diversity schools, and sense-making schools (cf. Bertram-Troost et al., 2012, 2015). More research should be done among teachers in Protestant, Catholic and public primary schools. It would be interesting to know what the relationship is between the legally prescribed attention for the six worldviews and RE according to the school’s own denominational principles.

In secondary education, there is no legal obligation to pay specific attention to religion or worldviews. However, the 2006 Act on Active citizenship and Social Integration calls for attention to be paid to diversity. In secondary education, only confessional or denominational schools reserve space in their curriculum for RE. Bertram-Troost & Visser (2017) recently conducted a study in secondary education to describe the situation, objectives, content, and didactics within the subject of RE in Protestant and Catholic schools. The main conclusion was that RE teachers in Protestant and Catholic secondary schools have a wide variety in views regarding the objectives and content. There is not a clear majority in favour of one particular view on RE. Some emphasise the transfer of knowledge, others personhood formation, while another group focuses on improving the ability to deal with religious and worldview diversity. Bertram-Troost & Visser argue that for the benefit and continuity of the subject RE in secondary education, an unambiguous description of the objectives is necessary. However, most teachers would prefer a global description, provided that sufficient freedom is guaranteed for the individual teacher, which they describe as a “flexible central framework.” (*ibid.*, 47)

1.3.2 It’s All in the Name: Religious Education or Worldview Education

The meaning of religion in Western societies has changed considerably, which in the Dutch context resulted in a depillarising society. Despite depillarisation, the education system remained organised according to pillarised principles. Nevertheless, the societal changes entered the classroom, which asked for a reconsideration of the school identity in general and of the subject of RE in particular. This reconsideration also had consequences for the name of the subject, because the old terms seemed not to correspond with reality. In the Catholic tradition, the subject was called ‘catechesis, or religious education,’ which referred to the triangle ‘family, church, and school.’ The school supported the catechesis of the church and the RE of the parents. The priest visited the school on a regular basis. This triangle no longer exists. Moreover, most pupils and teachers at Catholic primary or secondary schools are no longer active members of the Catholic Church. In primary and secondary Catholic education, the subject is called *levensbeschouwing* or *levensbeschouwelijke vorming*, which is usually translated into ‘worldview education.’ In the Protestant tradition, the situation seems to be somewhat different. In the past, the subject was called ‘religious education,’ *godsdienstonderwijs*, and a majority of 49 % is still in favour of keeping this title. An additional 25% prefers the contraction

‘religious and worldview education’ (cf. Bertram-Troost & Visser, 2017, 12). Bertram-Troost & Visser assume that RE teachers in secondary education conceptualise ‘religion’ in a relatively restricted way, and associate it with a specific religion or organised religious tradition, while ‘worldview’ (transl. EZ: *levensbeschouwing*) would probably function as an elaborated concept for them, referring to ‘broader view on life’ (cf. *ibid.*, 48). These suppositions have to do with the nature of their research, a quantitative study using a structured questionnaire. Bertram-Troost & Visser recommend qualitative research to clarify their cautious suppositions. Nevertheless, these results point to a recent (inter)national academic interest in the conceptualisation of ‘religious education’ and its alternative ‘worldview education,’ with countless national varieties in other languages.

It is impossible to provide an overview of international differences in RE and worldview education. To make it even more complicated, even in the United Kingdom, the four countries show differences in their curricula, which is a similar situation to that of the various *Länder* of the Federal Republic of Germany. Various international co-researches have provided more detailed insight into the differences, such as the REDco project (2006-2009), published in the series “Religious Diversity and Education in Europe” (Waxmann, Münster), and the REL-EDU project (2014-), published in the series “Religious Education at Schools in Europe” (Vienna University Press). This variety of national and international approaches to RE and worldview education provides an incentive to define the concept of RE or worldview education, and to find a suitable equivalent term in the English language.

Within the current academic reflection on ‘worldview education,’ which aims to include ‘religion,’ the central assumption is that the concept of ‘religious education’ is too narrow because it does not automatically include secular worldviews (cf. Miedema & Bertram-Troost, 2014, 74). In the Netherlands, as in other non-English speaking countries, the name of the subject says something about the objectives and approaches in religious education. In Norway, for example, it is called *religionsundervisning* (transl. religious education) or *religions- og livssynsundervisning* (transl. religious and life view education, cf. Skeie, G., personal communication, Oct. 10th, 2017). Bråten describes that *livssyn* is the usual, but ambiguous translation for worldview (cf. 2018, 2). The broader ‘life interpretation,’ *livstolkning*, “(...) is connected to each human being’s ability to interpret and understand cultures in society.” (Bråten, 2018, 8) This Norwegian concept is often compared with the ‘learning from’ perspective, and is interpreted in the Norwegian context as the fostering of religion, for which there is a historical explanation (cf. *ibid.*, 16). In Sweden, Gustavsson (2013, 2018) describes that the discussion on how best to describe the process of meaning-making already began in the 1960s. Two concepts have dominated the Swedish discourse: *livsåskådning* (life view) and *livstolkning* (life interpretation). So far, the research interest has focused on the content of the meaning-making process, but less on the process itself. Gustavsson has introduced the concept of ‘existential configuration’ in order to capture the dynamic and functional character of the ongoing meaning-making process (cf. 2018). “The concept existential configuration, summarizes the understanding of an individual, both in terms of a process and a content, it is a concept that has a social as well as personal side.” (2013, 162) In *Signposts*, Jackson claims that the Norwegian *livssyn* as a ‘view of life’ is synonymous with ‘life orientation,’ and is connected with the Swedish *livsåskådningar*, explained as an interpretation of life (cf. 2014, 70). Bråten discusses the difficulties with translation, but also the different perspectives on religious education that lead to different objectives.

Opting for an elaboration of RE or the replacing of RE by worldview education, could be inspired by at least two different insights. First of all, worldview education covers both religious and secular worldviews, justifying the replacement of RE by worldview education for reasons of inclusiveness. This insight could be inspiring for countries where RE used to be neutral and was taught according to

the model of ‘learning about,’ such as the Northern countries for example. In such cases, the addition of *livssynsundervisning* (better known in English as ‘worldview education’) has the advantage that information about secular worldviews is incorporated in the subject. Secondly, in cases where the objective is not merely ‘learning or teaching about,’ but also ‘learning or teaching from,’ the exploration of the student’s personal view on life becomes an objective as well. In view of the fact that a considerable number of pupils and students no longer affiliate themselves with organised religion, using the broader concept ‘worldview’ is justified, which, however, is not a well-fitting translation from a Dutch perspective either. In this research project, the choice for the elaboration – or even replacement – of the concept of ‘religious education’ is linked with specific objectives, but also with the wish to take recent societal changes into account. In order to address societal changes and to give equal room to secular life orientations, various scholars propose to broaden the concept of religious education (cf. Valk, 2009, 2010; Bakker & Ter Avest, 2014; Van den Berg, 2014; Miedema, 2014; Roebben, 2015; Van der Kooij, 2016). How some of these scholars position themselves in the academic debate will be the subject of the following section.

1.4 Academic Debate on (Inter) Religious and Worldview Education

In this section, we will describe recent academic, pedagogical approaches to religious and worldview education. As shown in the previous section, the name of the school subject RE is likely to be modified or even replaced by the name worldview education. Systematic academic reflection and research on religious and worldview teaching and learning used to be called ‘religious education.’ Although the concept of ‘worldview’ is slowly gaining more ground, international conferences like the International Seminar on Religious Education and Values (ISREV) are not expected to change their name anytime soon. In the United Kingdom, scholars tend to speak of ‘Religion and Education,’ rather than religious education. In the Netherlands, the academic discipline is called *godsdienspedagogiek*, which is conceptually even smaller than ‘religious education.’ The word *godsdiens* literally means ‘worship of God,’ which reveals the historically close links between school and church in regard to catechesis, the initiation into church life and church doctrine. Bearing in mind that the conceptual relation between different concepts is a matter of definition, a critical reflection on the name of this academic discipline is relevant because of societal changes (cf. Van den Berg, 2014, 399). In the following subsections, we present and evaluate three recent studies that are relevant for our research project, in terms of positioning our project in the discipline of religious education. First, we will introduce Valk’s model of worldview frameworks, which he implements in an educational context comparable to that of our research project. Secondly, Van der Kooij’s conceptual research on ‘worldview education’ offers a level of conceptual clarity that is helpful for the following section, in which the concept of ‘life orientation’ is elaborated. Thirdly, Roebben’s thought-provoking concepts of ‘redefining’ and ‘redignifying’ as part of an interreligious pedagogy, shed light on the possible objectives of worldview education.

1.4.1. Worldview Education: Knowing Oneself and Others.

In this subsection, the main focus is on the study of Valk, who is a professor of worldview studies at the Renaissance College of the Canadian University of New Brunswick. A description and evaluation of his research are helpful for the introduction of the concept ‘life orientation’ in the next section. Valk strongly advocates the use of the terms ‘worldviews’ and ‘worldview education,’ instead of ‘religion’ and ‘religious education’ (cf. Valk, 2010, 106). Yet he writes that synonyms such as ‘frame of orientation,’ ‘*Weltanschauung*,’ ‘plausible structure,’ ‘great unifying systems,’ and ‘visions of life’ are interchangeable (cf. *ibid.*, 107; 2009, 70). As a scholar in religious studies, he is in favour of the term ‘worldview study,’ for which he draws on a similar approach by a fellow Canadian scholar, Ninian Smart. Smart (1989) warns against defining religion too narrowly. “It is important for us to recognize

secular ideologies as part of the story of human worldviews. It is artificial to divide them too sharply from religions, partly because they sometimes function in society like religions, and partly because the distinction between religious and secular beliefs and practices is a modern Western one and does not present the way in which other cultures categorize human values.” (ibid., 9) Similarly, Valk intends to defend the relevance of religion in education, and also the equality of secular perspectives, by using this functional approach to religion and worldviews (cf. Valk, 2010, 106). What remains unclear in Valk’s writings are the conceptual boundaries between ‘religion’ and ‘worldview.’ To say that ‘worldview’ is more inclusive than ‘religion’ leads to the question whether worldview encompasses religion, or whether it is better to distinguish between a religious and a secular worldview. In that case, a religious worldview would be a conceptual part of a religion, and the study of worldviews would then have a more limited scope than the study of religions, because religion would then encompass more than a worldview. These critical questions help us to understand what is at stake in research on objectives of education that seek to enhance meaning-making.

Teaching at a state university, Valk is very much in favour of the broader concept ‘worldview.’ His research context is comparable to that of this study, public higher education that educates students from various disciplines. The difference with our research project, which focuses on a minor programme in philosophy, world religions and spirituality that students freely choose to attend, is that Valk’s worldview courses are a foundational and compulsory focus of the Interdisciplinary Undergraduate Leadership Studies Programme (cf. Valk, 2009). In Valk’s educational context, there is a strong link between moral education and teaching about worldviews. Worldview education is inclusive and points out differences without being reductionist. “All offer direction, wisdom, and insight into some of life’s most difficult challenges. The hallmark of the educated person is recognition that the human is complex, and worldview study gives students glimpses into that complexity.” (Valk, 2010, 116) This complexity calls for the practising and development of a ‘language’ that is conducive to the discussion of wisdom topics. Valk (2007) states that before the second half of the 20th century, there was a traditional relationship between moral education and religious education. This connection has disappeared, at least in Northern American public schools. In various publications, Valk justifies why secular and religious worldviews should receive equal attention in every kind of education. He is strongly opposed to a secularist approach in education that quietly excludes religion from the public domain, and shrinks the meaning of a religious worldview to the private sphere. This approach ignores the historical contribution of religions to our recent moral thinking and acting. Valk equally rejects an exclusively religious approach that tends to narrow our scope on religious worldviews. Moreover, he favours an inclusive perspective that encourages all of us to examine our various beliefs and values, both secular and religious, critically. A critical examination prevents simplifications of religions, but also reductionism, which tends to reduce worldviews to interchangeable paths to the same ‘top of the mountain.’ This reductionist perspective is untenable because it offers no explanation for the formative influence that different worldviews have had, and still have, on the shape of cultures and identities. The use of an inclusive concept like ‘worldview’ is necessary for the challenges we face in the public domain, which is far from neutral or objective (cf. Valk, 2007, 2009). In this study, we favour an inclusive approach, because the exclusion of any worldview, view on life, or religion from education – with the exception of abhorrent ones like Nazism – would lead to an impoverishment of the public debate. The question is whether inclusiveness should be limited to a more cognitive approach to worldviews, which is concerned with beliefs and values, or whether there should be room for experiences and feelings as well.

The attempt to exclude religion from the public school curriculum was part of an emerging new educational paradigm that focused on reason and science. “This modernist worldview took centre

stage in the academic world, asserting that reason and objective, value-free science were the most reliable determinants of what was true, right and moral. Grounding moral education in traditional religious worldviews was sidelined, with religion often reduced to opinion and particularity.” (Valk, 2007, 276) During the 20th century, moral educationalists such as Brezinka tried to ground moral education from an empirical pedagogical perspective, which was meant to be value-free (cf. Roebben, 1995, 38). Various attempts were made to anchor moral education in a shared rationality that predominantly emerged from a liberal and secular worldview. In these liberal and secular worldviews, moral individualism dominates the paradigm of moral education (cf. Valk, 2007, 277). Valk’s concern is that no worldview, be it secular or religious, can claim supremacy in the grounding of moral education. If diversity is an integral part of civic and democratic society, all worldviews should be given equal attention (cf. Miedema & Bertram-Troost, 2014). A democratic society should take plurality seriously, which means that the expression of differences in perspectives and worldviews must be safeguarded. Students and pupils should be given the opportunity to respond to these differences, which give them the opportunity to deepen their personal values, to get to know themselves and, consequently, others better. “Worldview study is crucial for a greater understanding of the world and is a valuable resource for the academy and a tremendous asset in our current global context and the challenges it presents.” (Valk, 2007, 282) In a globalising world faced with border-crossing challenges such as climate change and migration, it would be detrimental to see liberalism and secularism as the only options and to exclude other worldviews, as sources of wisdom, as dialogical partners. Besides, all worldviews are particular answers to commonly shared ultimate questions, as Valk quotes the theologian Paul Tillich (cf. 2012, 161). Valk affirms that taking diversity in worldviews seriously means a challenge in relation to some controversial moral issues. However, moral education should not look for conformity and consensus, and should stop desiring some kind of universal and inclusive moral vocabulary (cf. Valk, 2007, 281). Education should nurture “(...) commonality through particularity, attempting to ‘find agreements *within* moral diversity not in spite of it’, encouraging students all the while to work together despite their deeply held differences.” (Valk, 2007, paraphrasing Hunter, 281) This last quote reveals something of Valk’s goal with moral and worldview education, which first requires him to describe his definition of a worldview and his perspective on worldview education.

Valk’s short definition of worldview is ‘a framework by which we order our existence and make sense of our lived reality’ (cf. Valk, 2007; 2009; 2010; 2012; 2013). He uses ‘framework’ to describe “(...) mental models that shape our thinking which serve to orient or ground people individually or communally, battle for our hearts, and define who we are as human beings.” (Valk, 2013, 27) These mental models function as lenses to view the world, as ‘visions of life,’ which have their counterpart in ‘ways of life.’ Ways of life, according to Valk are “(...) actions and behaviours that reflect or reveal what we feel to be important in the way we live our lives, either individually or in the various relationships or communities in which we find ourselves.” (ibid.) The structure of what we feel to be important in our lives consists of beliefs, values, and principles, which are rooted in a worldview (cf. Valk, 2013, 25). The relation between vision and way of life is like the difference between ‘substance’ and ‘function.’ The mental model functions as a means to guide action and behaviour, without prescribing how it (should) function. Thus, Valk’s definition looks descriptive. Moreover, he states that every human being has a worldview (cf. Valk, 2010; 2013). Although he discerns that a worldview orients people individually or communally, he does not make a clear conceptual distinction between a personal and a communal worldview. Nevertheless, there are a couple of references to this difference in his work. First of all, a reference to Dewey, who discerned religion associated with organised religion, and defined the religious as the ‘flower and fruition of the human spirit’ (cf. Valk, 2007, 275 quoting Dewey, 1908, 804). Secondly, a reference to Berger, who discerns

individual and collective worldviews (cf. Valk, 2009a, 7 quoting Berger, 1999, 22). The conceptual lines between a personal and communal worldview are fluid, which becomes clear when Valk writes: “We are all each immersed in and shaped by a worldview, which becomes foundational and authoritative and in which we ground our beliefs, values and principles.” (Valk, 2013, 25) This means that we not only *have* a worldview, but are also *‘immersed and shaped by’* one, which suggests that we are adherents of a transcending worldview in which we make personal variations. The words *‘foundational and authoritative’* have a prescriptive character, which seems to be missing in his definition. The reason for this somewhat latent prescriptive character could be Valk’s concern that due to the omnipresent liberal and secular worldview in the public domain, students are unaware of its formative influence on their lives. That is why he developed a frameworks model to recognise and analyse different worldviews.

Valk’s model of worldview frameworks is designed to enhance the understanding, knowledge, and awareness of secular and religious worldviews. “(...) [S]tudents explore various worldviews as they reflect on their own, in order to enhance their understanding of life, as among other things, an intricate set of relationships between individual, community and beyond - across the domains of the physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual.” (Valk, 2010, 108) They get a sense that worldviews have a formative influence on economy, politics, education, cultural life, and other areas of the public domain, and on their lives as well. The assumption is that the application of this model of worldview frameworks in higher education would deepen the self-understanding of students, by increasing their understanding of the other (cf. Valk, 2009). Valk claims that experiential learning is an important focal point for reaching this objective. Students learn through engaging in a dialogue with representatives of various religious and secular worldviews, and through visiting sacred places, for example. Experiential learning didactics should go hand in hand with learning contents from multiple worldviews, through which the process of connecting this material with the lives of students, by articulating meanings from their own experiences, is started (cf. Selçuk & Valk, 2012, 445). The model of worldview frameworks helps to identify, describe, and analyse various secular and religious worldviews, for which experiential learning – by engaging in dialogues and visiting sacred places – seems the appropriate method. It seems that these experiences should enhance a cognitive awareness of worldview(s). Although the model helps to describe a student’s worldview, the goal does not appear to be entirely inductive because, at the end, the result of an individual analysis shows which worldview she or he adheres to. After all, the students need to become aware of how worldviews influence economy, politics, and their lives, which makes their worldview always a sort of deduction of a communal worldview. In this research project, we are looking for a more radical inductive approach.

In addition to worldview frameworks, Valk also discerns worldview types in his courses, which reveals his Smartian phenomenological approach and consequently his preoccupation with communal worldviews. This typology is the subject of the next paragraph, after a closer look at the frameworks model. “Worldview frameworks assist in distinguishing the ideas, functions, structures, and features common to all worldviews. Worldview types assist in classifying worldviews in terms of similarities and differences.” (Valk, 2010, 110-111) Initially, Valk discerned three worldview frameworks: *‘ultimate questions,’ ‘ontology & epistemology,’* and *‘worldview dimensions.’* Later, together with his Turkish co-author Selçuk (2012, 451), he added two other frameworks, *‘universal/particular beliefs’* and *‘personal/group identity,’* of which the latter disappeared again in the next article (cf. Valk, 2013). The first framework is *‘the ultimate, or existential questions’* framework, which consists of major questions that “loom over us individually and/or collectively.” (Valk, 2013, 25) This framework is the legacy of the theologian Paul Tillich, who discerned questions of ultimate concern such as the meaning and purpose of life, life after death, the existence of a transcendent being, the nature of

human beings, and the difference between right and wrong. The second is the 'ontological and epistemological' framework, which helps students to deepen their knowledge and understanding of worldviews, in relation to questions about the nature of being and reality. In philosophy, ontological questions are closely interwoven with epistemological exercises, trying to describe the nature of knowledge and the certainty of knowing. Each worldview more or less deals with these kinds of questions in a different way. By means of this framework, "(...) in particular, students realize that no one stands at a pinnacle of a mountaintop able to discern with ultimate knowledge or certainty the nature of reality: we all take a 'leap of faith'." (Valk, 2010, 111-112) Here again, the inclusive approach of worldview studies becomes clear in the shared leap of faith, which refers to a certain trust in the assumptions of a secular or religious worldview. Third comes 'the worldview dimensions' framework, which is largely based on the work of the religious studies scholar Smart, who intends to describe phenomenologically different dimensions of religions. This framework helps to explore the rituals and practices, the narratives and myths, the doctrines and philosophies, the social aspects and institutions, the ethical and legal dimension, as well as the experiential commitments. As outlined above, Valk and Selçuk designed two additional frameworks, the first of which is the 'personal and group identity' framework. This framework consists of a sociographical, socio-economic and biographical description of contexts and circumstances that construct a personal, social, and cultural identity. The second supplementary framework consists of 'universal principles,' such as justice, the dignity of all people, equality, and diversity. These universal principles are not abstract entities but always incorporated in a particular cultural context. This may lead to different interpretations of these principles as a result of different embedding worldviews belonging to the particular cultural contexts. This second supplementary framework remained part of the model in later articles (cf. Valk, 2013), which shows that Valk's model is open for adjustment in function of new research results and further educational needs. "Mapping a worldview also comes with the risk of being perceived as definitive or prescriptive. Yet heuristically it serves to illuminate and demarcate particular (EZ: individual or communal) beliefs, values, principles and at times even behaviours." (Selçuk & Valk, 2012, 450) Although Valk argues that his model of worldview frameworks is merely descriptive, it becomes clear that the purpose of this model in education is prescriptive. In his co-production with Selçuk, he advocates challenging students to think critically about their own beliefs, or generally accepted cultural convictions, which may differ from the views prescribed by institutions. The model promotes the emancipation of individual and critical thinking, which is in keeping with a Western, humanistic worldview (Selçuk & Valk, 2012, 453). The implementation of this model in non-Western cultures, for example, the Turkish culture, entails an ethical responsibility and an awareness of culturally determined educational objectives.

In the previous paragraph, the focus was on worldview frameworks, but another part of Valk's educational programme is the attention for the worldview types. With the help of the frameworks, students can recognise similarities and differences between various worldview types. These types are ideal images of worldviews that serve to describe and analyse worldviews. Valk states that worldview types are dynamic and capable of change. "Yet they are less dynamic than personal worldviews in that they have been shaped by a longer history. While personal worldviews may be a blend of many things, worldview types reveal defining and distinctive features." (Valk, 2010, 112) Here, Valk makes a distinction between a worldview type and a personal worldview, but again he does not articulate a conceptual difference between the two, other than by referring to a longer history. The four types are monotheism, polytheism/non-theism, exclusive humanism, and consumerism/capitalism. The first two types are primarily religious and have a transcendent ontology, the last two are secular and proclaim an immanent ontology. At first glance, there are similarities between the first three worldview types, while consumerism/capitalism seems to be another category. The first three types

are mutually exclusive, but could be merged with consumerism and capitalism, making this categorisation weak. However, if the discriminating factor would be 'the formative influence on life, education, culture, and politics', then it is more plausible to make this distinction. But why not add a fifth category, like nihilism, or socialism/communism? Regarding the concept of 'worldview,' Valk starts from the old paradigm used for the study of religions, and he wants to extend this paradigm to include other worldviews, views of life and ideologies, which puts him at risk of defining everything as a worldview. His approach suggests that consumerism could stand alongside Christianity, while consumerism is indifferent to most ultimate questions. Moreover, the juxtaposition of personal worldviews and worldview types raises epistemological and consequently methodological questions. Describing a worldview type requires a different approach than sketching a personal worldview. At this point, we need a clearer definition of a worldview in general, and of a personal worldview in particular.

1.4.2. Discerning Personal and Organised Worldviews

The concept 'worldview' is gaining ground in the academic field of religious education. The increasing popularity of the concept has stimulated the Dutch scholar Van der Kooij to conduct a thorough conceptual research into 'worldview (education)' and its relationship with 'moral education.' In her PhD thesis *Worldview and Moral Education. On Conceptual Clarity and Consistency in Use* (2016), consisting of peer-reviewed articles, she starts by showing that 'worldview' is used differently in many disciplines. She concludes that worldview, as used in academic religious education, is not a highly contested concept according to the seven conditions of Gallie (1956). "Although authors have provided different definitions of the concept, they seem to have the same linguistic intuitions about the appropriate use of the concept." (Van der Kooij, 2016, 18) However, it looks as if she avoids the translation problem too easily by adding a footnote that she translates the Dutch word *levensbeschouwing* (transl. EZ: 'view on life', or 'contemplation of life') with 'worldview.' In this case, we wonder whether the English 'worldview' is sufficient, despite the fact it is the most dominant translation in academic RE research. Her preliminary definition of worldview is "(...) a view on life, the world, and humanity." (ibid., 29) From a conceptual point of view, we come across a rule in logic that states that the '*definiens*' should not be a part of the '*definiendum*,' which does seem to be the case here. The explanation could be the equalisation of the Dutch *levensbeschouwing* and the English 'worldview,' but here too this rule of logic would be ignored. In the Dutch context, Roothaan (2007) conceptually distinguishes a worldview (transl. EZ: *wereldbeschouwing*) from a view on life (transl. EZ: *levensbeschouwing*). Roothaan (cf. 2007, 65) sees the concept worldview as a phenomenon of modern times, in which scholars became aware that a human view on reality determines the conditions for the experience of this reality. A view on life has a broader meaning because it also consists of behavioural norms that are linked to a conception of reality. Roothaan also states that a 'view on life' is largely synonymous with an ideology, without explicating the qualification 'largely' (cf. ibid., 67).

Besides problems of translation and logics, we notice a third problem, which is the categorisation of religion as a worldview. Van der Kooij follows Vroom in his conceptual subordination of religion, by calling religions a subclass of the concept 'worldview' (cf. ibid., 30). A close reading of Vroom's conceptualisation, however, justifies the conclusion that his definition of worldview seems much broader than Van der Kooij's more precise conceptualisation, which will be discussed in the next paragraph. Our main problem with this conceptual subordination is the predominantly cognitive approach to religion, which is inevitable here in relation to the conceptualising of 'worldview.' "A worldview is one's view of life. (...) A view of life includes insights on being human, on one's own life and on living in community with others, insights of the world and nature, and insights of the great connection of all things. A worldview is the sum of all of a person's insights (...) that give direction to

one's life." (Vroom, 2006, 10) Some of the notions in Vroom's definition will return in Van der Kooij's more elaborate conceptualisation. Drawing on Van der Kooij's definition, Vroom distinguishes religious worldviews from secular worldviews, which gives rise to some confusion, which also seems to be the case in Van der Kooij's line of reasoning. Confusion occurs when religion seems to be equated with 'religious worldview.' "Every religion can be called a "worldview" but not all worldviews are religious." (Van der Kooij, 2016, 30) At this point, we would argue that it is possible to distinguish a secular worldview from a religious worldview, by taking into account that a religion is conceptually not the same as a religious worldview. Both scholars state that the difference between a religion and a worldview is the acceptance of a transcendence, which makes religion a subclass of worldview (cf. Vroom 2006, 2; Van der Kooij, 2016, 30). At one point, Van der Kooij recalls Smart's view that religion also has something to do with the mythical, or the ritual (cf. *ibid.*, 29), which at least seems to refer to something more than just cognitive insights. However, if a worldview is considered to be a "cognitive-reflective view on human life" as Van der Kooij classifies it by quoting various scholars (cf. *ibid.*, 15), then religion must be reduced to a purely cognitive reality, otherwise, it cannot be a subclass of 'worldview.' Although Van der Kooij appreciates experience in the field of worldviews (cf. *ibid.*, 37), she, in any case, stands on the shoulders of more cognitively oriented scholars. In the next section, we present a different classification of religion and worldview, which is more accurate. Nevertheless, despite these three critical remarks, Van der Kooij's in-depth conceptual research is relevant and useful for this study, particularly for the distinction between an organised and a personal worldview.

To explore the concept of worldview is necessary for this research project, because it is important to define what the exact subject of our study is. The use of 'worldview' is intended to be more inclusive, which means that education should go beyond institutionalised religions and take secular worldviews into account. This extension to teaching about secular worldviews requires defining the constitutive elements of worldviews, whether religious or secular. Van der Kooij discerns four elements that are part of the concept 'worldview' (cf. *ibid.*, 31). First of all, existential questions, which play a significant role in a worldview. These type of questions express cosmological, teleological, ethical, ontological, and theological notions. Secondly, a worldview has some influence on a person's thinking and acting. In other words, it should not be a mere cognitive undertaking, without consequences for everyday life. Thirdly, Van der Kooij distinguishes between moral values and ethical values. Moral values are about people's well-being and therefore include the relationships with other people. Ethical values relate to the good life, and these pertain to the existential questions, mentioned in the first place. The fourth element is about meaning-giving in life, which could have a general articulation (meaning *of* life) and a particular articulation (meaning *in* life). Van der Kooij states that in order to speak of a worldview in religious education, these four items must be part of the whole concept (cf. *ibid.*, 42).

These four elements are helpful to describe a worldview from a religious educational perspective, but Van der Kooij makes a second distinction. This distinction, though it looks very simple, is very useful and justifies recent societal developments like individualisation and secularisation. She makes a difference between an organised and a personal worldview. An organised worldview provides answers to existential questions, which consequently means an influence on the way adherents should think and act. The prescribed answers to the existential questions are in fact moral values, which means that the first three elements are closely intertwined and connected. The fourth element, the intention to give a meaning to life, is part of an organised worldview as well. Again, this purpose in life certainly has a connection with the other three elements, but differs from worldview to worldview. The final definition of an organised worldview according to Van der Kooij is:

“(…) a view on life, the world, and humanity that prescribes answers to existential questions. This way, organized worldviews aim to influence the thinking and acting of people. Organized worldviews contain moral values and aim to provide meaning in people’s lives.” (ibid., 35)

The question regarding this definition would be why ‘life,’ ‘world,’ and ‘humanity’ are separated. Originally, these three notions are the content of earlier definitions designed by other scholars (cf. ibid., 29). But no further explanation is given why these notions receive this special conceptual preference. The question for an explanation is relevant, because these three notions also fall under the existential questions that are an integral part of a worldview, which leads to a conceptual reiteration in the definition. These questions refer to eschatological, theological, ethical, ontological, anthropological, cosmological, and teleological notions, which are indeed aspects of ultimate concern (cf. Tillich, 1957). At this point, we are not opposed against the preferential place of these three notions, but for conceptual and educational reasons it would have been helpful to know the underlying arguments.

Describing these four elements in relation to a personal worldview is more complicated, because in that case it is more difficult to delimit exact boundaries. Moreover, so far little conceptual research has been done on personal worldviews. Van der Kooij distinguishes between what a personal worldview *means* and what it means *to have* a personal worldview (cf. ibid., 35). What a personal worldview *means* is at least related to the discerning elements of the answering of the existential questions and the having of moral values. So far as these moral values are concerned, these should be more or less comprehensively related to the other elements that identify as parts of the person’s worldview. Otherwise, it is better to speak of a moral philosophy (cf. ibid. 37). The answers to existential questions can be implicit or explicit, but for there to be a personal view of the world, a person must have some answers ready – however vague or tentative – when these questions are raised, because it is a conceptual requirement that a worldview influences a person’s thinking and acting. “If a person states that s/he does not have any answers to existential questions, s/he might, for example, be in search of a worldview, exploring a worldview or be in an existential crisis but we would not say that s/he has a personal worldview.” (ibid., 36) Although precise articulation is not a requirement for having a personal worldview (cf. ibid., 35), it seems that Van der Kooij’s conceptualisation prescribes that a person should at least have some type of answers, however vague or tentative (cf. ibid., 72). In conclusion: in order to understand what a personal worldview *means*, it is necessary to understand what it means *to have* a personal worldview. This is the subject of the next paragraph.

The two remaining elements – worldviews as a source of meaning, and their influence on thinking and acting – have to do with what it means *to have* a personal worldview. According to Van der Kooij’s conceptualisation, *having* a worldview means experiencing a source of meaning in life. This source consists of the beliefs that fall under a personal worldview. The example of a person suffering an existential crisis because of the loss of a loved one, can be illustrative here. During the period in which this person is undergoing an existential crisis, his/her worldview cannot be a source of meaning. He/she might still have a personal worldview, but it can no longer function as a meaning-giving source. Two words seem to be relevant here, ‘experiencing’ and ‘source.’ In short, having a personal worldview means experiencing meaning in life. “Thus, having a personal worldview does not necessarily mean that a person has a view on the question why s/he does not experience meaning in life. If someone answers the question whether s/he experiences meaning in life in the negative but is unable to explain this, it is difficult to state that s/he has a personal worldview.” (ibid., 38) To make this clear, Van der Kooij gives the example of someone that has an extreme nihilistic worldview – an example that is necessary to demarcate the boundaries of what it means to have a

personal worldview. If someone resolutely denies that life has any meaning on the basis of a nihilistic or hedonistic perspective, this person still has a personal worldview (cf. *ibid.*, 39). The question to Van der Kooij could be: if someone answers positively to the question whether he/she experiences meaning in life, but is unable to explain this, then would there be no personal worldview either? It seems that a minimum of articulation and explanation is a requirement after all. Finally, there is the element of 'having a personal worldview means that such a view should influence thinking and acting.' "If someone acts consistent with his beliefs and views we would say that he has a personal worldview." (*ibid.*, 39) In other words, the influence of a personal worldview would manifest itself as a consistency in thinking and acting. The consistency refers to some continuity in thinking and acting, which is understandable, whether, a person always thinks and acts consistently according to own beliefs, is at least questionable (cf. Vroom, 2006, 10). Wierdsma, who quotes Argyris & Schön, mentions the difference between what people do and their beliefs, which he calls the difference between espoused theory and theory-in-use (cf. 2012, 459). Describing 'consistency' as a norm in relation to the concept of a personal worldview, automatically leads to a deontological prescription of what having a personal worldview should entail. Although the definition refers to 'influencing one's action and thinking,' which is a decidedly weaker statement, Van der Kooij is not entirely clear on the matter whether her definition is prescriptive or descriptive. Her explanation seems to be more prescriptive than her final definition turns out to be. According to Van der Kooij, the final definition of a personal worldview is formulated as follows:

"(...) we state that a personal worldview is a view on life, the world, and humanity that consists out of norms, values, ideals that can be but are not necessarily moral and out of answers to existential questions. When a person has a personal worldview, these norms, values, ideals, and existential notions influence his/her thinking and acting and either give meaning in life or, in the nihilistic case, deny that there is meaning in life." (Van der Kooij, 2016, 40)

The distinction between a personal and an organised worldview is useful for making didactic choices in RE and worldview education. Most of the religious education in secondary schools in the Netherlands aims to implement Grimmitt's 'learning from' model, which should take students' personal worldviews into account (cf. Bertram-Troost & Visser, 2017, 24). 'Learning from' asks pupils and students to reflect on their worldview position, which places them in a dialogue with what they 'learn about' organised worldviews. Moreover, Van der Kooij is able to broaden the 'learning about' model by first of all stating that students must also learn about how organised worldviews influence personal worldviews, which is comparable to Valk's approach. Secondly, the 'about' should not confine itself to organised worldviews, but can also include education about personal worldviews, which deepens the insight that *the* Christian or *the* Muslim does not exist (cf. Van der Kooij, 2016, 41). A fluid transition from 'about' to 'from' takes diversity within organised worldviews into account. In contrast to what the later reception of Grimmitt might suggest, Grimmitt, in fact, envisioned a more organic connection between the phenomenological 'learning about' and the dialogical 'learning from.' 'Learning about' has only an instrumental value, which serves to make 'learning from' possible. The process to reach that goal is an interactive process between learning about and from religion, between studying content and responding to it in a reflective manner (cf. Grimmitt, 2000, 34-35). The distinction between a personal and an organised worldview justifies the smooth transition from 'learning about' to 'learning from,' because 'learning about' can trigger personal reflection. When a teacher teaches about a specific organised worldview, there is a good chance that pupils or students will start thinking about a particular aspect of this phenomenon. If 'existential questions' are the core element of worldviews, it is even very unlikely that students will not start thinking implicitly or explicitly about their answers to these questions. Whether the process of

reflection concerning a personal worldview is implicit or explicit, Van der Kooij states that there is at least overlap with moral education.

The second part of Van der Kooij's research is about describing the influence of moral education on the personal worldview of students. In order to describe the influence of moral education, Van der Kooij first distinguishes between a 'narrow morality' and a 'broad morality.' "Narrow morality can be described as the basic rules and principles that make it possible for human beings to live and work together." (Van der Kooij, 2016, 92) A narrow morality has to do with basic rules that structure daily life with others in society. Examples of such rules are not to kill others and to stop at a red traffic light. These rules give each citizen duties and responsibilities that protect the interests of the individual and of the community. A conceptual comparison shows that a narrow morality and a personal or organised worldview can exist independently of each other. The rules that fall under a narrow morality do not necessarily require a basis in a worldview. On the other hand, a worldview always contains rules of a narrow morality.

"Broad morality focuses on living a flourishing life and surpasses moral rules necessary to live together. Broad morality contains the body of ideals, principles and values that indicate someone's most important aims in life, which influence their acts for realizing these aims and give meaning in life." (Van der Kooij (2016) quoting De Jong, De Ruyter, and Mackie on p. 73) A broad morality surpasses the rules that structure daily living together in a society. Moreover, such a type of morality is not only focussed on the other but also on the individual and aims to give meaning to life. A closer look at the notions of 'broad morality' and 'personal worldview' shows that these concepts are closely related. That a broad morality is part of a personal worldview becomes visible through the phenomenon that both focus on existential questions, at the very least, in dealing with ethical and – some – teleological notions. Not all teleological questions are part of a broad morality. Van der Kooij, for example, sketches the difference between *meaning in life*, which is personal, and *meaning of life*, which is more general. Questions about the *meaning of life* are not necessarily part of a broad morality (cf. *ibid.*, 78). Conceptually, a personal worldview encompasses more than a broad morality, because such an outlook on the world includes all the existential questions, covering all ethical, teleological, ontological, cosmological, theological, and eschatological notions. Having a personal worldview is thus constitutive for a broad morality. The conceptual relationship between broad morality and an 'organised worldview' is different, because the availability of an organised worldview is not required for having a broad morality. Yet, every organised worldview contains a broad morality.

In moral education, narrow and broad morality are the object of educational activities. Van der Kooij shows that a narrow morality can be part of a minimal version of deontological ethics which does not influence personal worldviews. These are just rules on how to behave at school, and for constructing a workable school atmosphere. However, a maximal version of deontological ethics and a moral education based on virtue ethics is inevitably influenced by ontological notions (which are part of existential questions) originating from a personal worldview. In particular, anthropological notions are at stake, because the choice of a specific ethical position reveals a specific view on humanity. Some forms of moral education can even – unintentionally – influence religious views that are part of a personal worldview (cf. *ibid.*, 107). Van der Kooij rightly asks, "(...) *why* discussions about worldviews in public education focus almost exclusively on religious and non-religious organised worldviews instead of on personal worldviews. This is an interesting empirical question for further research." (*ibid.*, 108) The conclusion that there is a close conceptual relation between broad morality and personal worldviews, inevitably leads to questions about a connection between moral education and worldview education. If a worldview education is designed to assist students and pupils with the

articulation of their personal worldview through a pedagogy of encounter, then the inevitable conclusion is that broad morality should be addressed in the course as well. In such cases, moral education is included in worldview education. Moreover, if a school provides only a form of moral education that centres on broad morality, then this school inevitably organises some part of worldview education as well, i.e., according to Van der Kooij's definition, which we endorse in this study.

1.4.3 Redefining and Redignifying Yourself: A Theological Focus

So far, the concept 'worldview' has been the subject of evaluation. The Belgian Catholic theologian and religious educationalist Roebben introduces the concept 'inclusive religious education.' This concept bears the connotation of being an in-between concept that connects the inclusive notion of worldview with the attention for religion and theology. The prefix 'inclusive' refers first of all to a pedagogy that includes all pupils equally, which is a theological point of reference concerning human dignity, as Roebben states (cf. Roebben, 2015, 2016). In the co-edited publication *Inclusive Religious Education*, Roebben and Kammeyer (2014) emphasise the importance of inclusiveness in RE and worldview education by paying special attention to people with physical disabilities or so-called psychological disorders, such as autism and ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder). With this publication, they intend to raise awareness of what inclusiveness could mean, and what consequences should be drawn for RE in schools and church communities. This awareness is also part of broader Dutch educational policy, called 'inclusive education' (transl. EZ: *passend onderwijs*). Roebben and Kammeyer's publication should be read as an invitation to reflect on a personal and professional view on inclusiveness, not only with regard to RE, but with regard to the whole education system (cf. *ibid.*, 9). The prefix 'inclusive' is normative because it goes beyond a mere neutral transfer of knowledge as prescribed by the 'learning about' model, in the sense that it has implications for the teacher's pedagogical and didactic choices. In the discussion about terminology for religion and worldviews, Roebben sheds a theological light on the notion 'inclusive,' a concept that is itself normative because of the prescribed Catholic view on humanity. Every human being shares in the same, in an equal dignity. This fundamental presupposition must orient all thinking about education, pedagogy, and didactics in whatever form, before the conceptual difference between religion and worldview is brought up for discussion. Within this theological orientation, narrativity and vulnerability are two constitutive concepts for further educational research.

An inclusive form of RE should be dialogical, because it should enable pupils and students to become aware of their own position. Every human being is a storyteller, which means that humans employ narratives to structure existence and give it meaning (cf. Ricoeur, 1994; Roebben & Kammeyer, 2014; Van den Berg, 2014). Each person has a unique story, which simultaneously encompasses parts of stories of a multitude of others. "We 'share' our 'otherness' with 'each other'. Being at home in one's life story and respectfully dealing with the stories of others are complementary tasks of human existence." (Roebben & Kammeyer, 2014, 7) Roebben speaks of tasks, which in education take on the form of pedagogical objectives. This dialogical perspective coincides with the psychological 'dialogical self theory' (DST), which is built on the fundamental assumption that there is a permeable boundary between the self and the other (cf. Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2012, 1). Being at home in one's own story requires a dialogical approach, because it is in the encounter with the other that I become aware of the uniqueness of my 'narrative home.' Being at home refers to a feeling of being comfortable, which requires a safe educational environment. The educational task of making pupils and students feel at home 'narratively' requires the creation of a safe environment that invites participants to be vulnerable. Creating a safe environment in which one can be vulnerable is the challenge of every teacher, who has to cope with diversity as a logical consequence of taking inclusiveness seriously. However, the relation between diversity and inclusiveness can create tension

in the classroom because of the prevalence of opposite and exclusive perspectives. In practice, these educational challenges serve a higher purpose, that of defending human dignity in education. “Through the intercultural and interreligious encounter I am challenged to *re-define* myself, which means to know myself better, and *re-dignify* myself, which means to respect myself more, as a human person with dignity, who makes a difference through the encounter with others.” (Roebben, 2014, 23) In another Dutch publication on inclusive RE, Roebben extensively discusses the objective of *redefining* and *redignifying* (2015). This publication is a follow-up to an earlier work, in which he defines RE in an eschatological way (cf. Roebben, 2007). From a theological perspective, RE should be concerned with hope and the future aspirations of pupils and students.

This hope should be the object of a RE and a worldview education that is designed to assist young people with the creation of a comprehensive view on life, and with successfully connecting with each other (cf. *ibid.*, 14). RE should unveil traditions, because children and adolescents have the educational right to familiarise themselves with religious and worldview traditions (cf. ICCPR, art. 18, 4; CRC, art. 14; cf. Schweitzer, 2005, 106). They have the right to disclose these traditions through their own theologising, which follows the models of ‘learning about,’ ‘learning from,’ and ‘learning in/through’ (cf. Roebben, 2015, 11). Roebben calls for the commitment to respect the human dignity of children and adolescents, who have the right to theologise in their own way. Recognising this dignity is to connect as closely as possible to individual and existential questions, as a way for RE and worldview education to serve the pupil’s particular search for meaning. For this reason, Roebben favours the Dutch term *levensbeschouwing / levensbeschouwelijke vorming* (transl. EZ: view on life/view on life education) as a suitable name for the school subject, instead of the term religious education (cf. 2015, 13). Nevertheless, he reserves the concept ‘religious education’ for academic, pedagogical research. Roebben proposes to call the subject *levensbeschouwelijke vorming*, in which the existential questions of students are taken as the starting point for communication. From a theological point of view, we wonder whether the cognitive term *levensbeschouwing* takes the dignity of every human being into account. Roebben’s preoccupation with the disabled, which encouraged him to design a ‘theology of otherness,’ is an invitation to come up with a concept that is more inclusive. Particularly a concept that is more inclusive with regard to individuals who have less developed cognitive talents, and who are verbally less equipped. If communication is of paramount importance, then we ought to look for a theology that calls for an inclusive communicative approach that is verbal, non-verbal, ritualistic, and leaves room for silence.

Theologically speaking, the difference between religious and non-religious disappears when taking vulnerability and diversity as a focus point. In his theology of otherness, Roebben critically asks on what ground people with limitations should receive respect from us. “What is the value of such an existence, if we ground the modern human condition on self-realization and self-direction – on “get yourself a life?” (Roebben, 2014, 25) In his critical approach to views of humanity that are dominant in our society, Roebben draws on the work of the Dutch ethicist Reinders, who deconstructs various modern theologies that continue to approve images of a self-confident humanity. These theologies run the risk of excluding or categorising people, which is, in fact, the opposite of what these theologies try to achieve. A theology of otherness should be truly inclusive, which means to “(...) become receptive for other experiences, such as vulnerability and diversity, and for the possibility of being accepted unconditionally, for healing that comes from elsewhere (from God and other people) and is not solely the product of my agency.” (*ibid.*, 25) A theology of otherness departs from the radical equality of all human beings, which is a challenge in our relationships with, for example, people with severe mental retardation (cf. *ibid.*, 27). Their vulnerability asks us to be in their presence, without imposing anything that ought to be, besides simply being. “The intrinsic worth of this person lies theologically in his being-loved by God and ethically in his being loved by fellow

human beings, who consider him/her radically being loved by God.” (ibid., 27) This extreme example helps to outline what a theology of otherness seeks to be for education. It requires the creation of a safe environment where vulnerability is given the opportunity to learn in the presence of another, from another, and through dialogue within the self (cf. Roebben, 2015, 71). At the very least, this example determines the direction to take for a dialogical model in a classroom context, which calls for the awareness that is necessary to appreciate human beings as intrinsically equal. Bearing in mind that safety and vulnerability in a classroom full of adolescents or young adults are far from everyday reality, teachers should be vigilant in order to recognise and answer the desires of pupils, who want to be seen, heard, and known. A theology of otherness goes beyond the dichotomy religious/non-religious, and should always begin in the presence of an ‘other’ with a unique view on life.

The prefix ‘inclusive’ refers to a second insight in Roebben’s work, next to his emphasis on the importance of theological inclusiveness in all subjects, in any form of education. Because the pedagogical focus is first on the pupil’s life questions, before unveiling any traditions, Roebben proposes a paradigm shift regarding Grimmit’s learning about, from, and into (2000). Inspired by Dewey’s ‘learning by doing,’ Roebben speaks of ‘living and learning in/through religion,’ a pedagogical approach that aims to get pupils acquainted with lived experience, language, and community (cf. Roebben, 2015, 27). This pedagogical intention serves a narrative identity formation, which is more complex in our contemporary heterogeneous, individualising society due to the existence of a large variety of perspectives. Bearing in mind this heterogeneous context, Roebben draws on an interactionist approach to identity formation, and discerns a diachronic and synchronic multi-voiced identity (cf. ibid., 60). People construct their life narrative up to the present day (diachronic), and try to unify various ‘voices’ within themselves (synchronic). According to Roebben, a paradigm shift is necessary because interreligious learning no longer takes place between representatives of religions or worldviews, but is primarily a worldview dynamic taking place within the self (cf. ibid., 60). This intrapersonal dynamic should be the subject of RE, which could foster communication between people and with traditions. To explain how this interreligious learning should work nowadays, Roebben modifies the paradigm by proposing that interreligious learning as ‘learning by meeting’ encompasses *learning about, from, and in/through religion* (cf. ibid., 74). Learning by meeting takes the ‘other’ seriously as another human being who is entitled to dignity before religious and worldview differences come into view. Interreligious learning was previously conceptualised as ‘learning from,’ but according to Roebben, the three models cannot be separated from each other. The reason why these models are interwoven is that Roebben gives the three models a complementary function. *Learning about* is still about information, about getting to know the other person better, which is needed for ‘*learning from.*’ In this ‘*learning about*’ model, students develop their heuristic competence because they become acquainted with diversity in worldviews. In the ‘learning from’ model, students improve their social competence through communication, which they need to value others in their otherness. The third model, ‘learning in/through,’ actually means ‘learning in the presence of the other,’ it aims at confrontation. This confrontation invites students to discern differences, which overcomes indifference. Roebben is a strong supporter of a dialogical model, which does not mean that consensus must be reached. Students are able to re-evaluate their position when they are confronted, which Roebben calls their existential competence (cf. ibid., 73 + 75). Intra-religious learning combines information, communication and confrontation and requires safety in the classroom and attention to ‘language,’ which connects the students’ daily practice with their questions. In conclusion, we note that Roebben’s proposal of ‘learning by meeting,’ which reinterprets ‘learning about/from,’ and ‘in/through,’ has a dynamic character and that his concepts of redefining and redignifying require further exploration. It is precisely the dynamic, communicative

approach in Roebben's 'learning by meeting' that demands a better concept than the rather static 'worldview.'

In the next section, the concept of 'life orientation' is a suggestion to overcome some of the issues that became visible in these scholars' work. Nevertheless, their contributions have brought great insights and an invitation to carry out further studies to answer questions raised by the specific context of this research.

1.5 Conceptual Positioning of 'Life Orientation'

Our contribution will be to introduce the concept of 'life orientation' in the academic discussion on RE and worldview education. Our reason for exploring this concept in greater depth is the result of a hermeneutic process in this research, which demanded a different dynamic concept than 'worldview.' Although we encountered this concept in various publications, for example as a translation for the Dutch *levensbeschouwing* (cf. Bakker & Ter Avest, 2014; Geurts et al., 2014) or as an indication for a meaning-constructing process (cf. Roebben 2015, 24), it was not envisioned as a possible conceptual alternative in these contexts. Jackson mentions in *Signposts* that the concept 'life orientation' is an alternative for worldview and suggests further conceptual research in this terminological minefield (cf. 2014, 75). However, few reports, mainly South-African, have envisioned life orientation as an umbrella school subject which would cover RE and worldview education in addition to other subjects, such as civic, moral, physical, and human rights education (cf. Diale et al. 2014; Roux, 2013; DESA, 2008, 2011a, 2011b). Miedema & Bertram-Troost (2014), inspired by the South African experience with life orientation and its transformative pedagogy, propose to reconcile the civic, the sacred and the just in a critical-pragmatic education project. This reconciliatory project goes beyond a mere enhancement of the concept 'worldview': it paves the way for further exploration of the concept 'life orientation,' by combining the critical remarks in the previous section with possibilities for addressing inclusion on the conceptual and the substantive level.

In this section, we conceptualise 'life orientation' within the academic discipline of religious education, as a supplement to the literature review in section 1.4. Before we define 'life orientation,' we will go deeper into 'religion,' since the reflection in section 1.4 yielded the result that a conceptual clarification of the relationship between religion and worldviews is necessary. In addition, we also discuss the concept 'ideology,' which addresses our critical remark concerning Valk's apparent equation of religion and consumerism.

1.5.1. Religion

There are many definitions of religion, depending on the type of academic discipline and their related methodologies. In philosophy of religion, Caputo claims that religion in the singular is nowhere to be found, it does not exist because religion is "(...) uncontainably diverse." (2001, 1) His simple stipulative definition is 'religion is for lovers,' by which he means that even people without a theology or an affiliation with religion can be religious people. In psychology of religion, Wulff observes that a general trend in defining religion was towards reification: "(...) religion became in time a fixed, objective entity and each of the traditions a definable system." (1997, 3) This reification was practical for researchers and especially from a Western point of view, which compromised the reliability of descriptions of non-Western religions. Another consequence of this reification was the tendency of scholars to overlook "(...) the dynamic personal quality of religiousness and leave out the crucial factor of transcendence." (ibid., 4) In order to overcome difficulties with the concept of religion, Wulff follows Smith's (1979) example, who suggested to replace the concept 'religion' with two alternatives: 'tradition' and 'faith.' In addition to these alternatives, Wulff continues to use the notions *religious* and *religiousness* (and piety) as "(...) referring to an inner state or process and its

outer expressions.” (ibid., 5) In the field of education, Fowler elaborated on Smith’s groundbreaking work in his *Stages of Faith* (1995). In the field of comparative religious studies, Smart (1989) and Mbiti (1991) stated that an essential definition of religion would result in vagueness, due to the fact that religion consists of multiple incomparable aspects. For the purpose of comparative research, a phenomenological approach discerns different dimensions of religion, such as practices, rituals, objects, experiences, narratives, and organisation. At first glance, an essential definition does not seem possible without running the risk of becoming too abstract and overlooking significant aspects, and fitting ‘traditions’ and ‘faiths’ in a Western mould. These conceptual difficulties call for a well-considered position.

In this study, we primarily draw on the definition of Meyer (2006, 2012), who studies *contemporary* religion from a post-secularist point of view. A post-secularist approach implies an overcoming of the religious/secular dichotomy. “We need to develop alternative theoretical frameworks that do not approach contemporary religion as an anachronism that is expected to vanish or become politically irrelevant with modernization, but instead seek to grasp its appeal, persistence and power.” (Meyer, 2006, 5) Such a post-secularist approach is in line with the position on secularisation we described in section 1.1. However, a post-*secularist* approach differs slightly from a post-*secular* approach, because the latter still presupposes the religious/secular dichotomy. Post-secularism means that secularism is no longer the dominant perspective in the study of religion, but opens the way for new perspectives. In her inaugural speeches, Meyer (2006, 2012) states that Weber’s theory of disenchantment, which positions itself in liberal Protestantism, is the catalyst of a predominantly cognitive approach to religion within rationalising modernity. The majority of research into religion is characterised by a preoccupation with, and even a privileging of inward immaterial beliefs and values, at the expense of attention for outward forms and ritual manifestations of religion (cf. Meyer, 2012, 8 + 11). Meyer also points to the work of James (1841-1910), who was interested in the affections, experiences, and emotions connected with religion. Although James’ work might seem like a serious counterpart to Weber’s focus on rationality, Meyer notices two problems. First of all, James draws on the Cartesian distinction between body and mind, which inevitably has the result that James disregards the rational dispositions which are connected with the mind (cf. Meyer, 2006, 8; Meyer, 2012, 11). These rational dispositions cause feelings and emotions as well. Secondly, James sees feelings as private and subjective, which ignores the fact that feelings take place within a broader, constructed context. “Without the particular social structures, sensory regimes, bodily techniques, doctrines and practices that make up a religion, the searching individual craving for experiences of God would not exist. Likewise, religious feelings are not just there, but are made possible and reproducible by certain modes of inducing experiences of the transcendental.” (Meyer, 2006, 9) In other words, what makes a feeling ‘religious’ is that similar feelings can occur in another context. For example, the feeling of unity among fans of a football club is comparable to the feeling of unity among Catholics on World Youth Day. Yet, there are differences. It is the context, which consists of both material forms and ideas, that marks a feeling as a religious experience. In this way, it becomes clear that religion is always situated in a specific time and place.

The contextualisation of religion dissuades Meyer from developing a universal definition. Nevertheless, she continues to use the concept of religion. In her 2006 inaugural speech, she said that religion “(...) refers to the ways in which people link up with, or even feel touched by, a meta-empirical sphere that may be glossed as supernatural, sacred, divine, or transcendental.” (ibid., 6) This description focuses on experiences and feelings in their orientation towards the transcendental, which seems to be a discriminating factor. Whether the transcendent is a reality or whether God exists remains irrelevant, because it is about the way in which people materialise this orientation. On the other hand, although this theological question is not a priority in this material approach to

religion, theology can benefit from the findings of this approach. We could argue that academic theology can reveal how people make the transcendent present in and through the world. In Christian theology, the doctrine of incarnation provides enough opportunities to reevaluate the material side of faith. Moreover, a material approach to religion could promote interreligious dialogue by adding different perspectives other than just the doctrinal, or cognitive. Within religious education, as a subdiscipline of practical theology, intra-religious learning (cf. Roebben, 2015) and radical inter-faith education (Wielzen et al., 2017) are open to this material approach.

Meyer's material approach to religion opens up new perspectives. Later she moderated her initial reference to religion, which mainly focused on feelings and not so much on religion as a practice of mediation from a material approach. Moreover, the formulation 'feeling touched by' seemed to suggest that God was self-revealing. In her inaugural speech of 2012, she stated that she took a mediating position between an approach that minimizes religion to mere artefacts and the position that God is self-revealing. In this 2012 speech, she asserted "(...) that 'religion' refers to particular, authorised and transmitted sets of practices and ideas aimed at 'going beyond the ordinary,' 'surpassing' or 'transcending' a limit, or gesturing towards, 'the rest-of-what-is.'" (Meyer, 2012, 23) In this description, practices and ideas, the outward and the inward, context and personal experience are brought together. Religion makes the invisible visible and tangible. A material approach should not replace an immaterial, cognitive approach, but should incorporate both (cf. Meyer, 2012, 12). In our research project, a material approach to religion underlines the difference between religion and worldviews, which represents the classical mental approach in the study of religion (cf. *ibid.*, 13). Within a material approach, experiences, affections, emotions and religious sensations that become present in outward 'sensational forms,' take priority over inward immaterial and private worldviews. Meyer brings up this new concept of 'sensational forms,' which "(...) have the double aspect of streamlining or shaping religious mediation *and* of achieving certain effects by being performed." (*ibid.*, 26) Sensational forms are heuristic tools that help discern how people reach for or orient themselves towards the beyond. Using 'sensational forms' in research is to focus on the process and practice of mediation, which is different in every religion because of its temporal and spatial context. "A material approach takes as its starting point the understanding that religion becomes concrete and palpable through people, their practices and use of things, and is part and parcel of power structures." (*ibid.*, 7) This inclusive material approach is of decisive importance for our two-part project, which has an educational component and a research component. Students visit holy places, participate in or observe rituals, do meditations exercises, have various sensory experiences, etc., which induce new perspectives and evoke ongoing meaning-making (cf. Meyer, 2012, 28). Their encounters with 'materials' and 'sensational forms' in religion are significant for the results of the articulation of their life orientation. For a detailed description of this educational context, see chapter 3.

1.5.2. (Loud and Silent) Ideologies

In our evaluation of Valk's concept of 'worldview,' one of our main criticisms was that, based on his conceptualisation, nearly anything can be qualified as a worldview. To safeguard the position of religion in education, as well as an inclusive approach to other worldviews, he conceptualises 'worldview' as generally as possible. Although we are very much in favour of Valk's inclusive approach, there is a risk that the equalisation of religion and consumerism, or religion and capitalism, leads to the overlooking of relevant differences. Although there are sociological and phenomenological similarities between religious practices and capitalist practices, for example, it goes too far to equate both practices from a religious educational point of view. Our reason for resisting this equalisation, although it is useful for phenomenological research, is not that we value religion over other meaning-giving narratives or social constructions, but focuses on the

epistemological need to justify the particularity of both. To take capitalism as an example: using the concept 'ideology' as a qualification would be better in this case. In her PhD thesis on civic education, Blaauwendraad (2018) draws on the definition of Kuypers (1973) and Bregman (2012) to define ideology as "a coherent set of ideas and principles about humanity, the world and the future, by means of which a person or group determines and justifies its position and its policies." (2018, 23, transl.: EZ) In a similar vein, Roothaan (2007) adds that ideologies determine behavioural norms, which reveals that ideologies are more than just sets of values and beliefs. In Blaauwendraad's definition, ideas about the future relate to ideals of society, which can be teleological – focusing on 'ultimate' questions – but do not have to be. For example, the communist vision of the coming social revolution does not necessarily say anything about the meaning of life and death, which, as a teleological issue, falls under the concept of 'worldview.' So there may be some overlap with a worldview or even a religion, but not necessarily so.

Another useful distinction that Blaauwendraad draws on in her research on civic education is Van Montfort's (2012 et al.) distinction between a silent and a loud ideology. "The term 'silent ideology' is employed to say that the complexity [of reality] is not defined. Instead, a certain outlook on society is presented or used self-evidently without explicating the underlying choices. Also, alternative views are not identified or discussed." (Blaauwendraad, 2016, 77-78) This distinction entails a weakening of Blaauwendraad's definition, because in the case of a silent ideology, all justification of this ideology seems to be missing. Justification as a cognitive and verbally articulated argumentation is not present, but the ideology is taken for granted. In a 'loud ideology,' a person or a group is willing to legitimise their coherent set of ideas. Raising awareness of silent ideologies is, in fact, the main objective of Valk's education on worldviews, because he intends his students to become aware of their worldviews, which are often silent, or unconscious, or for them to become aware of the dominant worldview(s) in society (cf. Valk, 2010, 108). In regard to life orientation, the distinction is useful because an orientation on life as a process may take place silently. Life orientation entails more than just a cognitive and verbally expressed articulation or justification. It encompasses an orientation on life in a physical, emotional, imaginative, intuitive and cognitive manner.

Valk's other example, consumerism, could be neither a worldview nor an ideology, but a lifestyle rooted in a (possibly silently adopted) capitalist ideology. Kronjee and Lampert (cf. Van den Donk et al. - WRR, 2006, 173-174) employ the term 'lifestyle' to justify the rising income levels of Dutch citizens who are more critical, self-conscious and consumptive. Consumption patterns and life patterns have a significant influence on the way in which these citizens express their identity, a phenomenon that is part of the transformation (not secularisation) of Dutch society, which is increasingly characterised by the dominant influence of (social) media. Kronjee and Lampert relate lifestyle to meaning-giving from a sociological perspective, which is different from a religious educational perspective, in which ultimate questions are taken as a point of reference. For this reason, the concept of 'lifestyle' is less relevant to the conceptual position of life orientation, although people do adopt a lifestyle within their life orientation.

1.5.3. Life Orientation: A Definition

During our research process, we felt uneasy about the English term 'worldview' and the Dutch term *levensbeschouwing*. The literature review in section 1.4 revealed that the English 'worldview' and the Dutch *levensbeschouwing* have a predominantly cognitive connotation, which does not align with the holistic view on humanity taken in this project, with its educational and research component. Moreover, the material approach to religion, as proposed by Meyer (2006, 2012), draws attention to an inclusive concept that incorporates the material and immaterial perspectives on religion. The extensive conceptual research of Van der Kooij, Meyer's material approach to religion, and most of

all my own educational practices, pave the way to look for a different and better concept in connotation with 'worldview,' that provides a better picture of reality. Van den Berg raises the same point in his PhD thesis and proposes 'a pedagogy of sense-giving' (transl. EZ: *een pedagogiek van zingeving*) (cf. 2014, 401). His proposal is situated at the academic level of religious education, and opts for a pedagogy of joint sense-giving and meaning-giving processes in life. Van den Berg's main concern is the rehabilitation in public space of material manifestations of religion and various life views, such as myths, values, images, ideas, and rituals (cf. *ibid.*, 403). In education, this rehabilitation must result in a 'free creative space' in which the pupils themselves can first discover new manifestations. Van den Berg asserts that teachers in public and confessional education should ensure the cognitive, affective and imaginative development of each pupil, who creates his/her life view in dialogue with other pupils and sources of wisdom (cf. *ibid.*, 404-405). Van den Berg argues in favour of a pedagogical in-between space, which transcends the metaphysical dichotomy of 'this world' and 'the other world' by creating 'one world' with different dimensions. In this research project, we share the same concerns as Van den Berg, but in order to remedy the conceptual discomfort mentioned above, we want to introduce the concept of 'life orientation' as a human meaning-making process.

There is a difference between the academic discipline, the school subject, and the micro level of the individual in regard to meaning-making and the issues of worldview and religion. For the school subject and for the micro level, 'life orientation' is at least an alternative to 'religious education' and 'worldview education.' This alternative concept refers to the individual process of meaning-making. The definition of this process would be:

Life orientation an existential positioning process pertaining to the meaning of the human being, the world, and the meta-empirical, directed towards the horizon of the good life.

In this definition, 'positioning process' is constitutive of orientation and consists of multiple conceptual layers, which gives rise to a slightly metaphorical character. Orientation as a concept is dynamic in itself, which is a discerning characteristic in comparison with, for example, 'worldview.' Life orientation is a concept that refers to a dynamic and dialogical process with spatial and temporal dimensions, which are etymologically rooted in 'orientation.' The spatial dimension refers to a certain place, or metaphorically a landscape, that is open in many directions. Orienting is deciding which direction to go, but always from a specific position or point of view. This specific position reassembles continuity, while the discerning process required to choose a direction refers to discontinuity. It is a tuning process that has an impact on the constructed point of view, which is open to change. The continuity-discontinuity dichotomy also has a temporal connotation. Etymologically, the word 'orient' refers to the East, where the sun rises. The position of the sun is indicative of time. Time and place are close together. From a narrative point of view, humans find themselves in a particular place at a specific time. At this specific point, their narratives bridge the past and the future in the present. Past and future are constitutive and directional for an orientation towards a direction that you choose yourself. Personal choices that influence daily life, thinking and acting on a (sub)conscious level. Because of the overarching temporal and spatial dimension, orientation is also a dialogical concept. Different places and times are in dialogue in the intra- and interpersonal process of positioning and orientation. In chapter 4, the meaning of the dialogical character of orientation comes to the fore, and this is given significant weight by the adjective 'existential' and the object of 'meaning.'

In the definition, the adjective “*existential*” and the expression “*pertaining to the meaning*” characterise the nature of the orientation. The existential is about ultimate questions that arise while passing through human life, experienced as crossing a border where comprehensive answers seem impossible. Nevertheless, these questions are inescapable and require some sense, which points to “*orientation*” in this definition. Human beings create narratives to answer the unanswerable in human life, to address the contingency in life, or the experience of being overwhelmed. Meaning-making can also refer to other media and forms of expression; it is the process that moulds ultimate or existential questions into the material (cf. Dalferth, 2003, 36). This material can be anything and will in turn function as meaning-giving, which is characteristic for orientation as a process. This existential and meaning-making orientation often figures as a concept in philosophies that refer to identity development, personhood formation and the self. Taylor, for example, in his *Sources of the Self*, describes the human being as a ‘self’ who, in its need for identity, “(...) cannot do without some orientation to the good.” (1989, 33) He states that this orientation is a crucial feature of the human agency to define ourselves in what he calls ‘moral space,’ which consists of questions. These are questions that challenge ‘hyper goods,’ which involve a strong evaluation, meaning “(...) the fact that these ends or goods stand independent of our own desires, inclinations, or choices that they represent standards by which desires and choices are judged.” (ibid., 20) These standards are discriminating distinctions applying to fundamental issues which relate to questions that pre-exist us. Distinctions that are incomparable to “(...) our ordinary ends, goods, desirabilia.” (ibid, 20) Taylor illustrates these standards or frameworks by replacing the warrior’s ethics with Plato’s counter-position, who designated the virtuous life as a rational life instead of life that revolves around heroic honour (cf. ibid. 20). These frameworks or standards belong to a group, society or civilisation.

In a different way, the religious philosopher Dalferth defines life orientation as a matter of discernment, which is useful for describing the descriptive and prescriptive function of the adjective ‘existential’ in our definition of life orientation. In his search for what he calls *Orientierung an letzter Gegenwart* (transl. EZ: orientation towards the ultimate present), he asserts that discerning should not intend to describe the ultimate but to give relevance in life as well as practical knowledge (cf. 2015, 50). He adds that orientation inherently implies and requires the knowing of the order (transl. EZ: *Ordnung*) and its discernments enabling to take a point of view. In other words, you need to know your place on the map and how this place relates to the surrounding context. Each individual has a different map, depending on his/her state of orientation within the field of meaning-making narratives. In this regard, the notion of silent and loud ideology is important as well as the possibility of never being confronted with a religious worldview, whatsoever. Dalferth critically remarks that the dialectics of orientation is not always taken into account. When talking about or judging someone else, there should be a moral awareness of talking and judging the own point of view. Regarding the ultimate present, the distinction between human and inhuman, between what it means to live humanity in a human and an inhuman way, is after all a moral mission (cf. ibid., 53). This last remark makes the adjective ‘existential’ not only descriptive – orientation on life –, but in a way prescriptive as well – orientation towards life (cf. Roothaan, 2007, 76). Although the concept is normative in its orientation towards life instead of death, it does not include norms concerning the level or the quality of life orientation. In philosophical terms, Ricoeur describes the orientation towards the good life as an ethical intention, which is part of the human narrative (cf. Ricoeur, 1994, 172). He explicitly focuses on the aim instead of the norms as part of prescribing morality in actualising the self, or identity. The predominance of ethics over morality means that ethics encompasses morality as a logical result of the ethical aim (cf. ibid., 170). The process of actualising the ethical aim of the good life is what Ricoeur frames as ‘life plan.’ He deliberately uses the term ‘life’ to designate “(...) the person as a whole, in opposition to fragmented practices.” (ibid., 177) ‘Life’ is not just a biological

concept, but also has an ethnocultural meaning (cf. *ibid*). The concept of 'life orientation' has a parallel designation, which has didactical consequences (see chapter 3).

The prescriptive, or normative, character of the concept 'life orientation' also has its roots in the religious-educational context of this research. Dalferth (2003, 2015) states that the precondition for orientation is that one structures the 'field.' In this research project, structuring and distinguishing elements are humanity, the world, the meta-empirical, and the good life as a horizon. In our research, which is practical-theological and religious-educational in nature, these elements should be read theologically in order to claim a free place for theologising as a human right for everyone. Our reason for consciously opting for a theological rather than a philosophical approach is our concern for understanding religious language. Theology includes both the religious dimension and the possibility to approach secularity from different points of view (see 1.1.). Roebben states that "[p]hilosophizing is the act of learning-to-raise-valuable-questions. Theologizing is the act of learning-to-give-answers, "under the indication of hope" (...), assuming that transcendence can be a possibility, not a necessity, to reframe immanent issues." (Roebben, 2016, 85) Historically, the two disciplines are closely linked, but theologising includes the introduction into religious languages, which is different from doing philosophy, at least in Western traditions. Asking valuable questions and creating personal answers is the object of an ordinary theology, which comprises "(...) the content, pattern, and processes of ordinary people's articulation of their religious understanding." (Astley, 2002, 56). In order to approach life orientation within a theological space, as a structuring field, Daelemans distinguishes three interrelated dynamic perspectives: man, God, and the world (cf. Daelemans & Brabant, 2014, 25). These perspectives correspond with the anthropological question ('What is a human being?'), the theological question ('What is the meta-empirical, the divine, or what lies beyond the ordinary?') and the cosmological question ('What is our world, the cosmos?'). The horizon of the good life refers to a teleological question, which in a sense is linked to an eschatological question, 'What is the meaning of life, death, pain, and evil'? All these questions involve ethical notions, because the answer to an anthropological question has ethical consequences as well. The theological assumption in this study is that meaning-making and existential questions are anthropological constants (cf. Bakker & Ter Avest, 2014, 411). Anbeek (2013) starts with her anthropological view on religion by underpinning the meaning of the human experience of vulnerability. These kinds of experiences must lead to a reorientation of theology, which should be built on three pillars: vulnerability, systematic theology, and lived experience (cf. Anbeek, 2013, 47). Focusing on systematic theology, Anbeek discerns seven 'themes,' of which a view on God, man, the world, and the good life (or in other words *eschaton*) are pertinent issues in our definition of life orientation. These four themes are general themes, and do not specifically belong to the Christian discourse, like Christology or ecclesiology.

In conclusion, life orientation is an inclusive concept because, whether people articulate this process or not, they orientate themselves in life (cf. Taylor, 1989, 21). It is inclusive of secular and religious orientation. In addition to this inclusiveness, it is a dynamic concept, which encompasses a relationship in place, time, and with other people who are dialogical partners in this ongoing existential and meaning-giving process of addressing contingency in life. The aim of this research was not to propose another name for RE or worldview education. However, the concept of 'life orientation,' and more specifically of 'education in and through life orientation,' ideally captures the content and the goals of this two-part project, which has an educational and a research component. It is perhaps the first step in a broader (inter)national dialogue among professionals and academics in RE and worldview education. In this research project, it is a primary theoretical step to relate life orientation to normative professionalisation, which is the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter 2 The Normative-Professional Self

Life orientation is an ongoing identity constructing process that encompasses all domains of human existence. This chapter further evaluates the conceptual relationship between life orientation and professionalisation. In section 2.1, a conceptual description of the two constituent elements of the concept 'normative professionalisation' is provided. In educating students and young professionals in normative professionalisation, it is unavoidable to reflect on the relationship between morality, the self, and the function of narrative. In section 2.2, the philosophical insights of Ricoeur (1994) and Taylor (1989) are presented, which are helpful in describing this relationship. Taylor's philosophical proposal to characterise the self as emerging within a space of moral concerns enables us to switch to the dialogical self theory in section 2.3. Similar to Taylor's insight, the dialogical self theory of Hermans and his co-researchers (1995, 2012, 2013) is a spatio-temporal approach in describing the self. The dialogical self theory (DST) is pivotal in our research project because it enables us to explore Taylor's space of moral and existential concerns from a dialogical perspective. Section 2.3 begins with a description of the valuation theory prior to the DST, in order to acquire a better understanding of the psycho-educational DST, which in this research project functions as the conceptual bridge between life orientation and normative professionalisation, and as a source for the provision of heuristic concepts that enable the narrative analysis which follows later in this study. Section 2.4 outlines a practical-theological perspective on the function of a self-narrative. The focus here is on Van Knippenberg's (2002, 2008) research into narrative competencies, which form the elements of the narrative competence analysis instrument that is part of the methodological framework of this research project. In the final section (2.5), we will relate the concept life orientation to the concept (normative) professionalisation by designing a definition of this last concept. In this section, we will also justify the added value of education through life orientation for normative professionalisation.

2.1 Normative Professionalisation

In this section, the two constituent elements of normative professionalisation are further conceptually examined. In the first paragraph, it will be explained how the changing view on professionalism within different disciplines will be our context for defining professionalism and professionality. The second paragraph provides a brief history of research into normative professionalisation and describes what the adjective 'normative' includes theoretically.

2.1.1 Professionalism and Professionality

We begin with a short conceptual investigation of the notion 'profession' and its derivations – professionalism, professionality, and professionalisation – within a transdisciplinary discussion of de-professionalisation, which as a term refers to the shrinking of professional autonomy. Cruess et al. (2004), scholars in medical education, have developed a broad definition of 'profession' drawing mainly on the *Oxford English Dictionary* and their literature research. Their definition of profession is:

“An occupation whose core element is work based upon the mastery of a complex body of knowledge and skills. It is a vocation in which knowledge of some department of science or learning or the practice of an art founded upon it is used in the service of others. Its members are governed by codes of ethics and profess a commitment to competence, integrity and morality, altruism, and the promotion of the public good within their domain. These commitments form the basis of a social contract between a profession and society, which in return grants the profession a monopoly over the use of its knowledge base, the right to considerable autonomy in practice and the privilege of self-regulation. Professions and their members are accountable to those served and to society.” (Cruess et al., 2004, 75)

The difference between various professions is constituted by the content of the body of knowledge and skills. Etymologically, a profession means the professing of a commitment rooted in a vocation, which functions as a motivating source (cf. Evelein & Korthagen, 2011, 133; Banning, 2015). In this definition, the commitment is related to competence, which encompasses technical and normative elements, while integrity, morality and altruism function as three intangible and normative aspects, which makes a profession a moral relation that demands accountability. This relational point comes to the fore in the description of a profession as a social contract, which is to the benefit of both parties. The profession must serve the public good and retains the right to have considerable autonomy, an element that is under pressure nowadays (cf. Noordegraaf, 2007; Evans, 2008; Randall & Kindiak, 2008; Milner 2013).

Professionalisation refers to the process of becoming a professional, or the process of acquiring professionalism (cf. Bakker, 2016, 12). Speaking of professionalisation means that a professional *is* not a professional, but is constantly *becoming* a professional. Nevertheless, this process refers to something substantive, which could be called professionalism. According to Evans, the 'singular' unit of professionalism "(...) – and one of its key constituent elements – (...)" is professionalism (2008, 25). Professionalism has a long history that dates back to the guilds of the Middle Ages and pre-industrialised society, and manifests the need for association between professionals in creating a professional culture (cf. Noordegraaf, 2007, 765; Evans, 2008, 24). Within different professionalisms, there is growing research interest to determine what professionalism means in a changing context characterised by a networking, knowledge-based, and market-driven society. Noordegraaf describes that, until recently, there was a sharp distinction between classical professionalism, relating to doctors, lawyers, judges and other occupational domains, and the 'new professionalisms' relating to public sectors, like education (cf. Evans, p. 21). Due to social changes and a neo-liberal discourse in public organisations, these status professionals are required to be more transparent and need to adapt to "(...) businesslike and market-driven managerialism." (Noordegraaf, 2007, 763) These changes could jeopardise professional autonomy and freedom, which could be a reason to promote 'pure professionalism,' which

"(...) is about content or substance (knowledge, skills, experiences, ethics, and acts) invoked to treat cases, and it is about institutional control and discipline (associations, jurisdictions, knowledge transfer, codes of conduct, and supervision) used to shield occupational practices." (ibid., 768)

With the rise of new professionalism, however, the conceptual boundaries are more fluid, making it difficult to arrive at a unifying definition (cf. Evans, 2008, 22). In the classic view on professionalism, content and control are interrelated. Professionals must acquire a specialised, complex and codifiable body of knowledge and skills in order to become members of the association controlling the professionals. This membership provides a structure for increasing knowledge and improving skills, resulting in a 'controlled content.' Other domains in the public sector, such as health care, welfare and education, which are classified under occupational or new professionalism, have copied this classical professionalism structure, but they work with less codifiable knowledge that is more difficult to control. This difficulty in monitoring, and the external influence of managerial control which uses non-professional, economic standards such as cost reduction, quality standards and satisfaction rates, leads to the notion of 'organisational professionalism' (cf. Noordegraaf, 2007, 763). Another effect of our network society is the influence of critical patients and clients, also known as proletarianisation, which puts professionalism under pressure in a welfare state that is confronted with limited capacities (cf. Noordegraaf, 2007, 770; Randall & Kindiak, 2008, 344). Schön points out that professionalism must adapt to societal change and states that an "(...) awareness of uncertainty,

complexity, instability, uniqueness and value conflict has led to the emergence of professional pluralism.” (Schön, 1989, 17) Paradoxically, complexity in our society requires professionalism, also in health care, education and social work, but at the same time, due to societal changes, professionalism is less easy to define or even to control. It is less easy nowadays to standardise technical and ethical criteria, but the question remains how to professionalise within this complex society.

Noordegraaf describes three approaches to professionalism within an increasingly complex society, which can be found in the current literature. The first is ‘purified professionalism’, which comes down to securing the pure and classical view on professionalism, with its ‘controlled content’ and autonomy from managerial control. The second is ‘situated professionalism,’ in which traditional professionalism is placed within organisational contexts, and experts are placed alongside traditional professionals. Professionals have limited control, without being eliminated. The third answer is ‘hybrid professionalism,’ which sees professionalism as a relational concept (cf. Noordegraaf, 2007, 774). According to this approach, professional work has a relationship with other disciplines and with the outside world, which makes professionalism essentially contextual (cf. Evans, 2008, 23). This approach transforms the view on professional control and content (cf. Randall & Kindiak, 2008). “It has to be seen as reflexive control – hybrid professionalism does not constitute occupational and organizational control; it is about controlling the meaning of control, organizing, and professionalism.” (Noordegraaf, 2007, 775) This hybrid view on professionalism calls for a ‘reflective practitioner,’ as Schön coins the professional who takes responsibility for her/his professionalism (cf. Evans, 2008, 24). If Noordegraaf’s view on controlling the meaning of control is taken seriously, the preparation of professionals in vocational training requires paying attention to the competence of the professional to give meaning and content to his or her own professional conduct.

The view on professionalism has changed due to societal developments, which inherently has consequences for the professionalism as the singular unit of professionalism. Evans, a scholar in educational sciences, defines professionalism as

“(…) an ideologically-, attitudinally-, intellectually- and epistemologically-based stance on the part of an individual, in relation to the practice of the profession to which s/he belongs, and which influences her/his professional practice.” (ibid, 26)

This definition no longer hinges merely on technical rationality, but is based on what Schön calls “the epistemology of practice” (1983, 49), which refers to a continuing process of interpretation and meaning-making. Evans introduces the concept of ‘professionalism orientation’ because her definition leaves room for a subjective stance on four different aspects. In doing so, she largely draws on the work of Hoyle (1975), who distinguishes between a restricted and an extended model of professionalism. A restricted professional – in this case, a teacher – is “(…) essentially reliant upon experience and intuition and is guided by a narrow, classroom based perspective which values that which is related to the day-to-day practicalities of teaching.” (Evans quoting Hoyle, 2008, 26) On the other end of the continuum, the model of an extended professionalism reflects “a much wider vision of what education involves, valuing the theory underpinning pedagogy, and the adoption of a generally intellectual and rationally-based approach to the job.” (ibid., 26) This professionalism orientation on the continuum might be applicable to other professions as well. The position on the continuum indicates the quality of professionalism and the level of reflection, which in hybrid professionalism is the primary responsibility of the professional. Evans (cf. ibid., 27) describes a mutually influencing relationship between professionalism orientation and professionalism, which underlines the contextual character. Compared to the substantial definition of Noordegraaf, Evans arrives at a more dynamic and contextual definition, by defining professionalism as:

“(…) professionalism-influenced practice that is consistent with commonly-held consensual delineations of a specific profession and that both contributes to and reflects perceptions of the profession’s purpose and status and the specific nature, range and levels of service provided by, and expertise prevalent within, the profession, as well as the general ethical code underpinning this practice.” (ibid., 29)

Every professional contributes to the whole picture, to the range and the level of service, and has to relate his/her personal value-orientation to the general ethical code that underpins the practice. This subjective interpretation and personal reliability, as well as the responsibility for the status and specific nature of the profession, is part of the autonomy of the professional. Parallel to the development of the view on professionalism and professionalism is the rise of the Dutch school in ‘normative professionalisation.’

2.1.2 A Specific Focus: Normativity in Professionalism

The previous paragraph ended with the notion of the subjective character of the conceptualisation of professionalism, which runs parallel to normative professionalisation. Normative professionalisation opposes the classical concept of professionalism by solemnly focussing on objectified knowledge and evidence-based methodology for professional acting, as described in the previous section (cf. Van Ewijk, 2013, 64). The rise of this concept in Dutch academic discourse began as a result of de-professionalisation due to the implementation of neo-liberal measures of control (cf. Kunneman, 1996; Van Ewijk & Kunneman, 2013; Bakker & Montesano Montessori, 2016). Before taking a closer look at the concept of ‘normative professionalisation,’ it is good to state that the concept is a pleonasm since it is essential to professionalism to be normative, as Evans points out in her ideologically- and attitudinally-based stance. However, the pleonasm as a figure of speech stresses a particular aspect that reveals something of the history of this Dutch concept.

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The research into normative professionalisation can be divided into three stages (cf. Van Ewijk & Kunneman, 2013, 10). It began in the 1990s as a protest against the dominance of the economic paradigm in new professionalisms such as social work and health care. This academic rally started at the University of Humanistic Studies (Utrecht), the Faculty of Theology of the Utrecht University, and some departments of Social Work at various Universities of Applied Sciences (cf. ibid.). In stressing the normativity of professionalism, the research displayed a normative and critical character versus the dominant view on professionalism, which was mainly focused on the instrumental aspect of professionalisation. At that time, the dominant assumption was that protocols and regulations could reconcile professional acting with diminished attention for the subjective interpretation of rules. The second phase began roughly in 2000, and showed a less oppositional stance regarding the normative and instrumental dimensions of professionalism. In focussing on normativity, it may seem as if professionalisation has two different, separately available dimensions. However, instrumentality and normativity are two sides of the same coin, which are discernible but not separable, which paves the way for a reciprocal influence in professional decision-making, put in conceptual terms. Habermas’ original philosophical foundation, which described the colonising of the *life world* by the *system world*, was further adapted by introducing theories about complexity (cf. ibid., 12). In this second phase, research also expanded to other areas, such as education. The third phase began in 2010 and is still ongoing, with a focus on the question how research results from the two earlier stages are put into practice in organisations (cf. Bakker & Wassink, 2015, 12). Research interest goes out to the practicality of how normative professionalisation works in various organisations. The focus is on reflection concerning the moral dimensions of what is good to do and what professionalism should enhance. This stage is not primarily about revealing power structures, although it remains important to understand dominant discourses, but also about the acceptance of power as a reality that must be

taken seriously. Theories on complexity teach that friction with power structures can trigger learning processes that reveal the (in)adequacy of the personal or shared moral vocabulary. Difficult situations are invitations to deepen and enrich the articulation of a morality of what is good, and should even be seen as invitations to embed these values in a broader narrative (cf. Kunneman, 2013, 441). Within this third phase, our research project aims to describe how normative professionalisation could be the objective of an educational programme, and how students and young professionals relate their life orientation to their professionalisation.

Influential in the discourse on normative professionalism is the Dutch humanistic philosopher Kunneman, who coined the concept. In his philosophical approach, he mainly draws on Habermas and critical philosophers like Lyotard, Foucault, Irigaray, and Benjamin. In his description of our present society, he describes a human being who is mainly concerned with controlling all the domains of personal life, who continually enforces and relies on the recognition of others, based on an instrumental relationship with the physical body and surrounding nature (cf. Kunneman, 2009, 20). This individual autonomous human being is predominantly focused on personal freedom within a neo-liberal and capitalist society. Neo-liberal ideology prescribes that moral and existential questions are part of the private and individual domain. These questions and the possible religious or worldview-related answers to them are not expected to have a place in the public sphere. Kunneman critically opposes this neo-liberal view because of his view that every human being is a member of an encompassing narrative, even if that narrative is labelled as irrelevant. Moreover, neo-liberal and capitalist ideology itself is quite dominant in Western societies and omnipresent in advertisements, which at the very least diminishes the individual freedom of small children. As a solution for the neo-liberal hegemony, Kunneman pleads for new relations between pre-modern, modern and post-modern orientations. He intends to combine the best of these three views in order to create a different progressive perspective on society, without diminishing the freedom of individuals but by setting limits on the insatiability of the 'fat ego.' This insatiability and privatised moral orientation inevitably lead to poverty, climate change, and other global problems. He pleads for a transformation of the autonomy of the 'fat ego' into 'a deep autonomy,' which requires vulnerability and unconditional acceptance of the uniqueness of every person (cf. *ibid.*, 21). This transformation can take place if society, and more precisely knowledge-intensive organisations, pay attention to moral and existential learning processes.

Attention for moral and existential learning processes is needed to create shared moral narratives as a counterpart to the economic and political rationalities, which focus mainly on cost minimisation and efficiency. These rationalities are essential for the financial sustainability of organisations, but they lack other moral perspectives which have attention for long-term and existential and moral questions. Kunneman describes this situation by joining Gibbons and Nowotny, who distinguish between 'mode 1' and 'mode 2' knowledge production (cf. 2009, 115). Since the Enlightenment, science has wanted to construct an objective and generalised knowledge in order to describe reality and nature. This knowledge is independent of human meaning-making symbolising processes. At universities, the production of 'mode 1' knowledge is kept under strict control. 'Mode 2' knowledge is best described as applied knowledge. Economic and political questions, which are contextual, require the solving of particular problems in a specific situation at a particular time. Science can produce this knowledge, which in itself is not problematic. It becomes problematic when this contextual knowledge is regarded as 'mode 1' knowledge, without including moral and existential questions as an orientation for doing business or other types of societal activities. For this reason, Kunneman proposes to create room for 'mode 3' knowledge, which is produced by existential and moral learning processes. These processes involve an intersubjective search by professionals, in order to constitute the normativity of their work. In a post-modern society, every moral perspective

is relative and cannot claim an absolute validity, which should result in an ongoing professional dialogue that produces 'mode 3' knowledge. Kunneman argues that companies should not only focus on sustainability in business management, but also on sustainable organising, which means creating a safe space for the production of 'mode 3' knowledge (cf. *ibid.*, 26). Producing 'mode 3' knowledge is the result of an interpersonal dialogue between professionals. In this dialogue, professionals share their moral views that are rooted in a broader life orientation narrative.

An essential aspect of normative professionalisation is the promotion of a reflective and critical attitude. Within the discourse of normative professionalisation, Schön's (1983) concept of the 'reflective practitioner' is leading. This view on professionalisation corresponds to the hybrid form of professionalisation mentioned above, which takes complexity as its essence. In complex contexts, professionals have to locate a specific problem and propose a possible solution. To solve a problem, professionals have knowledge and skills, and need to know how and when to act in the best possible way, in the interest of people and society. Schön speaks of a topography of professional practice, distinguishing between high grounds and swampy lowlands. "There is a high, hard ground where practitioners can make effective use of research-based theory and technique, and there is a swampy lowland where situations are confusing 'messes' incapable of technical solution. The difficulty is that the problems of the high ground, however great their technical interest, are often relatively unimportant to clients or to the larger society, while in the swamp are the problems of greatest human concern." (Schön, 1983, 42) Schön goes on to say that, some professionals choose to remain on the high ground, while others prefer to descend to the lowlands. Whatever choice is made, complexity remains and requires the ability to discern what is the right thing to do in a particular situation. A professional must also be able to commute between the high grounds and the swampy lowlands. Kunneman describes this process with the term *amor complexitatis*, which means a professional *habitus*, characterised by a sort of embracing acceptance of complexity (cf. Van Ewijk & Kunneman, 2013; Kunneman, 2017). In a critical reflection on this concept, we propose to speak of a *passio complexitatis*, which encompasses not only the ability to embrace complexity out of a professional passion or love, but also the suffering and struggle in professional practice. (Van der Zande, 2016, 141). This *passio complexitatis* asks for a deep reflection on the personal values that play a fundamental role in discerning what is good to do, and in contributing to the good life. This discerning capacity is a competence of the reflective and 'normative' professional. The articulation of 'normativity' in professionalism becomes apparent in the making of meaningful connections between (i) the quality of life (the *good* life), (ii) the content of work (*good* work), and (iii) the societal context (*good* co-existence) (cf. Kunneman, 1996). Normativity is about orientation to the good and the relationship between a person, professionalism, and society. Each person describes what the good means for him/her in regard to the three aspects, and how these three triangle points are related to each other. The final step in articulating the normativity of professionalism is the justification of pupils, clients, students, or patients, because their experience of the moral relationship is constitutive (cf. Van Houten, 2008, 34; Van Ewijk, 2013, 57). Figure 2.1 shows the stratified dynamics of the normativity in professionalism.

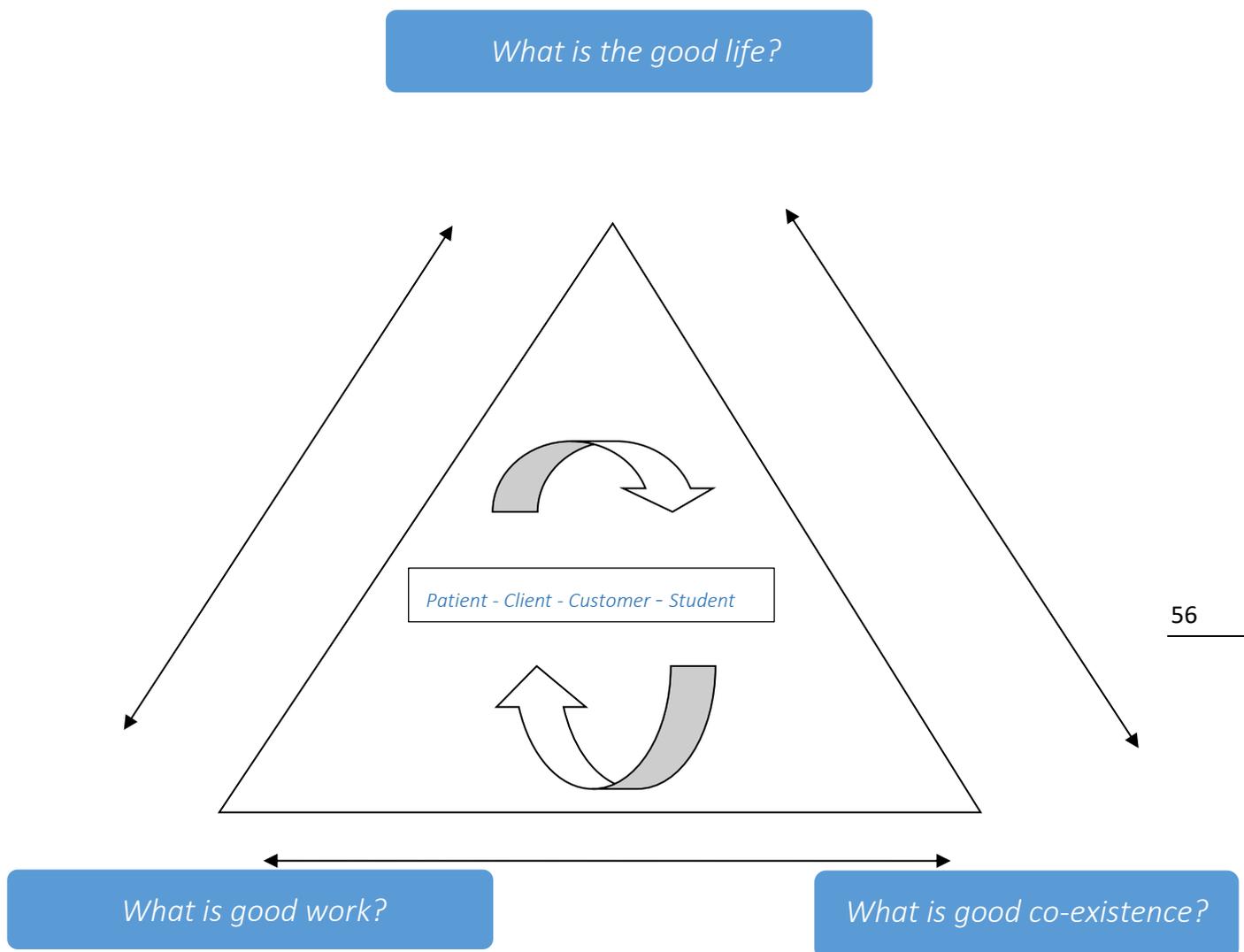


Fig. 2.1 (designed by Sabine van den Brink)

The co-creative process of producing a joint ‘humus layer,’ as Kunneman paraphrases the moral common ground, reflects the horizontal transcendence of values in the existential learning process in our post-modern society (cf. Kunneman, 2009, 76+153). Post-modern society is constantly constructing a horizontal transcendence that refers to shared values, as part of a narrative that is constructed in a moral learning process that differs from the learning process in pre-modern societies, which are characterised by a homogeneous vertical transcendence of values. None of the value systems in our times can claim absolute legitimacy or have the power to impose themselves.

Kunneman rightly asks the question how the paradoxical combination of guaranteeing maximum individual freedom and setting limits on insatiable personal greed can be achieved (cf. *ibid.*, 95). His solution is to combine the insights of Lyotard and Foucault – challenging power structures in our societal institutions and coexistence – with Jessica Benjamin’s view on interpersonal limitation (cf. *ibid.*, 84-95). In order to overcome the paradox, the acceptance of the otherness of the other and the intersubjectivity between people must pave the way for a horizontal transcendence. If the other is not seen as an object to be controlled, a free space emerges between two or more individuals. Kunneman wants to emphasise that in this free space there is just as much room for friction and anger as there is for empathy, respect, and understanding. As with any learning process, frictions are necessary to grow, and the precondition for this is an environment that enables vulnerability and insecurity. This co-creative moral and existential learning process, which takes place in an emerging free space between people, culminates in a temporarily agreed horizontal transcendent value system. The horizontality reflects the pluriform character of the underlying personal values. The transcendence reflects the emerging free space that links various value orientations and goes beyond individual stances. Kunneman warns for this horizontal value system because, just like any value system – whether horizontal or vertical – it provides a horizon for orientation, but always runs the risk of becoming absolute, which collapses the freedom of orientation in a one-way direction. Thus, a horizontal transcendence emerges that persists or disappears, depending on whether the limitations that this value system imposes are accepted, and whether its goodness is valued (cf. *ibid.*, 97). Kunneman’s warning relates to the dynamic and democratic character of the horizontal transcendent value orientation among free individuals, who try to agree on what the good life means for them in coexistence. This dynamic orientation will never be completed and remains a delicate and vulnerable exercise within post-modern society due to the constant threat of power claims at various levels.

These moral and existential learning processes enable the emergence of a horizontal transcendent value system, which is the essence of normative professionalisation. Regarding this process of professionalisation, another theoretical aspect needs to be discussed because of its significant role in the discourse on normative professionalisation. This is Polanyi’s (2009) concept of tacit knowledge that refers to unconscious, implicit knowledge, as well as to the embodied human agency that directs people’s acting and knowing (cf. Van Ewijk, 2013, 21). Tacit knowledge refers to what Schön describes as professional acting in a complex situation that requires deliberate interference. The difficulty is to prove the existence of this tacit power within us. Here, Polanyi gives the example of our ability to cycle on a busy road and to simultaneously recognise the way home (cf. Van Ewijk, 2013, 20). The concept of tacit knowledge underpins the presumption that all our knowledge, even positivistic scientific knowledge, is based on our physical being in the world. Human beings are always part of the surrounding world, which means that fundamental objectivity does not exist. In relation to professionalism, tacit knowledge is the coherence that creates the ability to see both the whole and the element in complex situations which require immediate action. This ability to create cohesion and coherence also manifests itself among people, which reveals the meaning-giving and moral dimension of tacit knowledge (cf. *ibid.*, 26). Polanyi’s interpretation of tacit knowledge provides room for a view on humanity that longs for hope and cohesion between people (cf. *ibid.*).

In the previous section, normative professionalisation turned out to be a concept based on various critical philosophical perspectives. These perspectives call for an increase of moral and existential learning processes within society, and within knowledge-intensive organisations in particular, in order to create horizontal forms of morality. These learning processes lead to a deeper insight into the sources of tacit knowledge that influence actions and thinking. In complex contexts, professionals have to decide what is the right thing to do, decisions for which they cannot rely entirely on instrumental procedures. In these contexts, professionals act as reflective practitioners who

individually and collaboratively discern the good in life, in work, and in society, in regard to the people they work with. In short, the normativity in professionalism relates to objectified standards of knowledge and procedures with a subjective interpretation for acting in specific situations (cf. Jacobs et al., 2008, 12). In the next section, we will elaborate on how subjectivity as part of the personal and professional self is the object of moral and existential processes.

2.2. Narrativity, Ethics and the Self

In this section, the central assumption is that professionals do not leave their self at home when they leave to do their professional work. Classical views on professionalism and instrumental, procedural views on professionalism might suggest that the personal self should be separated from the professional self (cf. Akkerman & Meijer, 2011). However, the self shows conceptual similarity with identity, which means ‘not to be divided.’ But ‘not to be divided’ does not mean that the self is impenetrable, as in the Cartesian view on individuality. Conceptually, the self allows for a fluid boundary between different selves and within the self. Before we make this fluidity an object of further exploration in the next section, it is necessary to take a closer look at the relationship between ethics, morality, narratives, and the self. First of all, the relationship between narratives and the self is the philosophical basis for this research project. Ricoeur (1994) describes the function of narratives in moral orientation, which always plays a role in the constitution of identity and the self. In a different way, Taylor’s (1989) theory of the sources of the self as hypergoods will reveal the connection between selfhood and morality. In his philosophy, Taylor presumes an ontological basis for moral intuitions and the inescapable space of moral and existential questions and concerns. It is constitutive for the self to orient itself within this moral space, and to know the orientation towards the horizon of the good.

2.2.1 Ricoeur: A Dialectical Narrative Perspective on the Self

Both philosophers, Taylor and Ricoeur³, stress the great importance of the meaning of narratives for the hermeneutics of the self. For this study, we draw on Ricoeur’s description of identity as a dialectical process within the subject and between subjects, evolving in a narrative with ethical implications. Taylor’s *Sources of the Self* is relevant for this study for its historical view embedded in a narrative conception of identity. It is not within the scope of this research to give a detailed picture of the differences or similarities between these two philosophers. Yet, their work is interesting for our research because they both underline the importance of the ethical aim for the development of morality and identity. Ricoeur emphasises the dominance of the ethics of ‘the good life’ over the deontological moral ‘norm’ (cf. Ricoeur, 1994, 172). He defines the “(...) ethical intention as *aiming at the “good life” with and for others, in just institutions.*” (ibid.) In his philosophy, he combines Aristotelian virtue ethics, which aims at the good life of individuals, with Kantian deontology, which strives for justice in society, both among individuals and in institutions. This is the first component. Secondly, the ethical aim of the good life that Ricoeur focuses on, is to be achieved *with and for others* – a social ideal that he designates by the term ‘solicitude’ (cf. ibid., 180). This second component opens up the aim of the good life, making it into an aspiration that is not just about the individual. Pursuing the aim of the good life necessarily requires continuous reflection and continuous evaluation of one’s actions, which leads to self-esteem (ibid., 172). Ricoeur emphasises that self-esteem should not be understood here as my esteem of myself, but as an intrinsically dialogical phenomenon, which is exactly what he has in mind when using the term ‘solicitude’ (cf. 181). He explains what he means by ‘solicitude’ by referring to Aristotle’s reflection on friendship. According to Aristotle, friendship encompasses a certain ability to be safe and vulnerable at the same

³ For pragmatic reasons while writing this English-language thesis, I used the English translation of Kathleen Blamey of Ricoeur’s original *Soi-même comme un autre*.

time. Friends are relatively safe among themselves and can act as a mirror for each other. "Solicitude adds the dimension of value, whereby each person is *irreplaceable* in our affection and our esteem." (ibid., 193) This irreplaceability presumes a similitude between myself and the other, and is referred to in the biblical wisdom 'Love thy neighbour as thyself' (Mc. 12, 30). The third component of Ricoeur's ethical aim, 'in just institutions,' is deliberately formulated in plural in order to refer to unknown others. These unknown others are people with whom I do not have a face-to-face relationship. Institutions representing power structures should ensure justice between people and not just justice in interpersonal relationships. So far, Ricoeur has broadened the ethical aim, from the interpersonal dimension to the societal dimension. Closely linked to this broadening to the societal dimension, is Ricoeur's next step to test the ethical aim against the norm in a moment of universality. The experience of solicitude, which is characteristic for friendship and oriented towards the good life, must pass the test of universality, by being tested against the moral norm which ensures justice for all (cf. ibid., 219). In applying this universal norm of justice, Ricoeur draws on the Aristotelian concept of *phronesis*, or practical wisdom. What Ricoeur describes is how the *phronimos* deviates from the universal norm in singular situations. It is an act of interpretation, which escapes the means-ends model because the interpretation remains oriented towards the good life, in terms of singular actions within a broader life plan (cf. ibid., 175). "What we are summoned to think here is the idea of a higher finality which would never cease to be internal to human action. (...) In more modern terms, we would say that it is in unending work of interpretation applied to action and to oneself that we pursue the search for adequation between what seems to us to be best with regard to our life as a whole and the preferential choices that govern our practices." (ibid., 179) It is the individual who interprets and gives meaning, a meaning that holds for him or her. This hermeneutical action connects the singular moral action to the higher finality of the good life and vice versa. This aspect of interpretation is related to the narrative approach of the self, for which Ricoeur has thought out a very helpful distinction within the concept of 'identity.'

Ricoeur distinguishes between an *idem* and an *ipse* identity, which makes it possible to defend the position that the narrative has an important function in the development of the self. In the distinction between *idem* and *ipse*, the relation between ethics and morality, as described above, becomes visible on the level of the self. The first aspect is *idem*-identity, which is identity as *sameness*, referring to our character, our dispositions, and our patterns in life. Sameness refers to an uninterrupted continuity in the narrative of the self, enclosing the principle of permanence in time (cf. Ricoeur, 1994, 117). Ricoeur also adds values, norms, convictions, social rules, and community standards to this aspect of *idem*-identity, because these become continuous and thus recognisable to others, even if a personal value is being ignored this way. Sameness refers to predictability, recognition and recurrence. The other aspect, the *ipse*-identity, refers to the call for help that others might impose on us, a call for assistance. According to Ricoeur, in such situations permanence in time becomes apparent, not in terms of 'character' but in terms of 'keeping one's word' (cf. ibid., 118). These are moments of decision, interpretation and discernment concerning what to do and staying true to your personal values, which Ricoeur designates as *self-constancy*, which includes loyalty to yourself. The *ipse* is in fact never completed, but is always open to change in connection with the *idem*-aspect, which internalises the changes in a stable new pattern, within the character. Our character, in Aristotelian terms, could reveal a total overlap between the *idem* and the *ipse* aspect, to the extent that the *idem* has incorporated the *ipse* as a trait, as a habit (cf. ibid., 121). "However, this overlapping of *ipse* and *idem* is not such that it makes us give up all attempts to distinguish between them. The dialectic of innovation and sedimentation, underlying the acquisition of a habit, and the equally rich dialectic of otherness and internalization, underlying the process of identification, are there to remind us that character has a history which it has contracted, one might say, in the twofold

sense of the word “contraction”: abbreviation and affection.” (ibid., 122) Our narrative identity evolves in the temporal tension between the stability of the *idem*, and the loyalty to our personal values as the *ipse*, which necessitates the telling and re-telling of our life story. In other words, in Ricoeur’s narrative philosophy, the narrative functions as a bridge between ethics and identity, which he describes as a dialectic process within the self and between subjects. A narrative always consists of ethical implications, because when people tell a story, they exchange experiences which are to be judged as good or bad (cf. ibid., 164). From a narrative dialectic point of view, Ricoeur describes a narrative as the configuration of events, which includes the desire for concordance and the acceptance of discordance (cf. ibid., 141). “The genuine nature of narrative identity discloses itself, in my opinion, only in the dialectic of selfhood and sameness. In this sense, this dialectic represents the major contribution of narrative theory to the constitution of the self.” (ibid., 140) In this constitution, the *ipse*-identity also includes the other than the self. This narrative aspect of the self also encompasses the identification of a character and his or her actions in written or told stories (cf. ibid., 143). A person’s actions tell something about the person in a story, which enables Ricoeur to create this narrative bridge between identity or the self, and ethics and moral judgment.

In the next section, we discuss Taylor’s philosophical perspective on the sources of the self, which in a way coincides with Ricoeur’s perspective on the *idem*-identity of the self, but Taylor also asks to take a position that in a way coincides with the *ipse*-identity. We deliberately use the qualification ‘in a way,’ because a detailed philosophical comparison can only be the subject of a further philosophical study. For this research project, a closer look at Taylor’s perspective on morality and the self helps to understand the meaning of *articulating* the narrative self as a never-ending story, which is oriented towards the good, and which is part of a larger community.

2.2.2 Taylor: The Self as Emerging in the Space of Existential and Moral Concerns

“What is good to be is more important than what is good to do,” is how Taylor begins his impressive work *Sources of the Self* (1989), which offers a critical view of the modern world. Taylor opposes the naturalistic view that there is no ground for a moral ontology and that our moral senses only have a sociobiological and evolutionary meaning, which is, in fact, a view that encapsulates a new scientific ethics. He claims that “(...) we should treat our deepest moral instincts, our ineradicable sense that human life is to be respected, as our mode of access to the world in which ontological claims are discernible and can be rationally argued about and sifted.” (ibid., 8) The question is what precedes our human dignity, what makes life worth living? The answer to these moral questions involves discriminations of right and wrong, which Taylor designates as ‘strong evaluations’ (cf. ibid., 4). These strong evaluations are relatively independent of our own desires, and offer standards to evaluate our lives as worthwhile or fulfilling. Strong evaluations, or moral and spiritual intuitions, seem to be universal and part of a moral ontology regarding the essence of the human being. Taylor intends to describe “(...) the picture of our spiritual nature and predicament which makes sense of our responses[.] ‘Making sense’ here means articulating what makes these responses appropriate: identifying what makes something a fit object for them and correlatively formulating more fully the nature of the response as well as spelling out what all this presupposes about ourselves and our situation in the world.” (ibid, 8) The articulation of our moral views and presumptions is necessary when we are called upon to justify our view, which may remain implicit.

Taylor distinguishes three axes in describing the modern moral sense or modern moral thinking (cf. ibid., 14-15). The first axis captures the modern understanding of respect, which is exemplified by integrity, the avoiding of suffering, and the affirmation of ordinary life. The second axis consists of what Taylor calls strong evaluations, and goes beyond the conception of morality as our obligations to others. These strong evaluations constitute the teleological perspective on our lives, in the sense

that they define the notions meaningful and worthwhile in relation to life. The third axis, which opens up a three-dimensional perspective on moral thinking, encompasses the notion of dignity. Dignity in one way or another also presupposes respect, but refers to the attitudinal dimension. Taylor illustrates this attitudinal dimension by referring to the way people walk or behave in the public space, which in physical expression reveals something of the extent to which they enjoy or lack respect. These three axes may overlap to some extent, and express what Taylor describes as the affirmation of ordinary life in modern times. Unlike in traditional times, what characterises the modern age is the doubt that people can experience in regard to the second axis, due to the lack of a comprehensive framework that provides a horizon. In our present time, there is no shared framework, with the result that people search for meaning in life, something that Taylor links to the level of articulation. "Finding a sense to life depends on framing meaningful expressions which are adequate. There is thus something particularly appropriate to our condition in the polysemy of the word 'meaning': lives can have or lack it when they have or lack a point; while it also applies to language and other forms of expression. More and more, we moderns attain meaning in the first sense, when we do, through creating it in the second sense." (ibid., 18) In traditional times, the framework was an unquestioned fact, while our time is characterised by the search for credible frameworks, in which articulation plays a constitutive role. "Frameworks provide the background, explicit or implicit, for our moral judgements, intuitions, or reactions in any of the three dimensions (EZ: the three axes mentioned above). To articulate a framework is to explicate what makes sense of our moral responses." (ibid., 26) Taylor criticises naturalism and utilitarianism, which deny or reduce the existence of qualitative distinctions and frameworks in favour of the affirmation of ordinary life. However, the affirmation of ordinary life becomes itself a qualitative distinction, but not in contrast to a lower way of life, but in the sense of distinguishing between different ways to lead an ordinary life, which inevitably implies certain qualitative distinctions motivated by personal moral reasons (cf. ibid., 23).

Taylor criticises reductionist views of frameworks because he relates these structures to human identity (cf. 1989, 25). Frameworks change, but they are constitutive of a human agency that takes place in the space of moral questions. In this space, human agents orient themselves towards a horizon and find out where they stand, what their position is. By using the metaphor of a moral space as ontologically basic, Taylor relates the issue of identity to ethics. "To know who I am is a species of knowing where I stand. My identity is defined by the commitments and identifications which provide the frame or horizon within which I can try to determine from case to case what is good, or valuable, or what ought to be done, or what I endorse or oppose." (ibid., 27) Taylor tends to speak of 'the self' rather than identity, to justify a depth and complexity that is characterised by a multi-sidedness. The self is always among other selves and consequently shares the moral space with others who orient themselves towards the good. "The full definition of someone's identity thus usually involves not only his stand on moral and spiritual matters but also some reference to a defining community." (ibid., 36) The membership of a language community constitutes a transcendental condition, which means that interlocution is inescapable for us. Our thoughts and utterances take place in a language that we cannot ignore and that makes it possible for us to have contact through time. By emphasising this transcendental notion of language, Taylor wants to stress the importance of traditions and also criticise conceptions of identity that define a person as completely autonomous and independent.

The self cannot do without an orientation towards the good. In this sense, Taylor regards human beings as being part of, as *becoming* in an unfolding story. In order to understand my life, to grasp who I am, and to interpret where I stand, I need an orientation towards the good, on some sense of qualitative discrimination. Taylor formulates in anthropological terms that the human condition can

be better described in terms of becoming rather than being. This teleological anthropological perspective on humanity is linked to the meaning of narratives, which he sees as a basic condition. "My life has always this degree of narrative understanding, that I understand my present action in the form of an 'and then': there was A (what I am), and then I do B (what I project to become)." (ibid., 47) Human beings strive to give meaning or substance to their lives in an orientation towards the good. In this orientation, they must determine their relative place towards the good, which is inescapable in temporal terms. In a narrative, the past, present and future are interwoven into a comprehensive account of our whole life. Although the self of our childhood is different from our self in the future, what remains is a unity in human life, told and understood in a narrative form, as a quest (cf. ibid., 52). In this narrative, while always being among other selves, the self gives life meaning in a space of existential and moral concerns. In this space, background values have a decisive role in directing feelings, thoughts and actions, which Taylor describes hierarchically as hypergoods. These hypergoods are hidden and must be articulated because "(...) these goods which not only are incomparably more important than others but provide the standpoint from which these must be weighed, judged, decided about." (ibid., 63) In our research project, which builds on Taylor's presumption of the need to articulate the structure and content of our narratives as a positioning process within a space of moral and existential concerns, the dialogical self theory of Hermans and co-researchers could offer more insight and tools to describe the relationship between the self and values.

2.3 The Dialogical Self

Identity and self are concepts to describe the human consciousness of subjectivity. This human consciousness experiences the simultaneous existence of continuity and change. The developmental psychologist Erikson developed a stage model of identity development. His psycho-social model describes how social interaction influences development and how changes are integrated in a next phase (cf. Wulff, 1997). In a similar way, Fowler (1995) developed a model that describes the human development and the quest for meaning as stages of faith. The use of models to describe psychological, moral or cognitive development has a clear parallel with descriptions in the natural sciences, and has led to very useful insights. However, there are certain types of models that result in different forms of knowledge. Lengkeek (2016) sees models as maps that result in know-what, which is value-neutral knowledge, which is useful for the natural sciences. The second type of model, similar to instructions, results in operational knowledge, or know-how. In using operational knowledge, observing itself is considered as a form of acting oriented towards an optimal result (cf. Lengkeek, 2016, 486). It may be clear that Erikson's model falls under this instructional form of knowledge, for it encompasses a norm exemplified in a hierarchy of stages. The dialogical and narrative approach does not fit in either model and can best be described as a travel diary, which aims to justify the complexity nature and openendedness of self-formation.

Both Ricoeur and Taylor describe the self as permeable and not as a closed entity. The self is among other selves and therefore mostly interdependent in its formation. From both philosophers, we have learned that value orientation is constitutive for the formation of the self. The valuation theory and dialogical self theory (DST), which are set out below, aim to describe how the development of the self, as a process of positioning, can be understood. First of all, a description of the valuation theory is provided in order to better understand the underlying idea of DST. Secondly, elements of DST will be further examined, which is necessary to underpin the applied methodology in this study, as described in chapter 4.

2.3.1. The Valuation Theory: Human Beings as Motivated Storytellers

The Dutch psychologist Hermans started his academic career with a particular interest in achievement motivation and fear of failure. After finishing his dissertation, he continued his research on the relationship between the psychologist and the client. His focus on this cooperation was the result of a critical examination of Western psychology, which tends to emphasise individual achievement motivation by focusing on the improving of self-enhancement. This emphasis leads to the objectivation of a 'problem' that needs to be solved, which ends up as an instrumental relationship between psychologist and client. At an early stage, Hermans and his ex-wife and co-researcher Hermans-Jansen were specifically interested in the dialogical cooperation between the professional and the clients as experts on their life stories. Taking the client's life story into account also means that the 'problem to be solved' appears as part of an encompassing narrative, opening the way to finding possible keys in the client's life story and previous ways of coping with 'problems,' in order to tackle a personal blockade. In this psychotherapeutic relationship, clients have the local – practical – knowledge of their narrative, whereas the psychologist has the global – theoretical – knowledge of patterns and motivational processes. Both local and global knowledge supports the construction and reconstruction of the client's meaning-giving narrative (cf. Hermans & Hermans-Jansen, 1995, 28). The study of this collaborative relationship between professional and client as described in the valuation theory regards both partners as equal. Historically, the valuation theory integrates pragmatism, which represents a contextual view of reality, and dialogism, which refers to the multi-voiced self. In the next paragraph, both traditions are further explained in order to understand Hermans's metaphor of the self as a 'motivated story teller,' which entails that valuations are affective connections with a person or situation, which are closely connected with the course of a narrative.

As the predecessor of DST, valuation theory draws on two crucial philosophical traditions, pragmatism and dialogism. The first tradition is better known as American pragmatism with representatives like James, Mead, and Dewey. American pragmatism is part of the contextual paradigm in psychology, which considers the human being as inextricably linked to a societal context. In this regard, an individual is not a self-contained ego but always connected with other human beings (cf. Hermans, 2001). Pragmatism refers to a contextualist worldview that is more dynamic than, for example, a mechanistic worldview that revolves around efficient causality. In a contextualist worldview, "(...) there is constant change in the structure of situations and in the positions occupied by actors who are oriented to the world and toward one another as intentional beings." (Hermans & Hermans-Jansen, 1995, 7) The ongoing orientation to the world influences the construction of meaning-making, which takes place in social relations and through human affective evaluations of the surrounding context. Contextualism shows a fundamental openness to change. In epistemological terms, pragmatism, as part of the contextual paradigm, denies an absolute, objective truth because new experiences could lead to other truth constructions. Pepper (1942) described contextualism with the root metaphor of 'the historical event,' which paves the way for dynamic concepts such as 'narrative' and 'story' as means to construct meaning. Narratives have storytellers, who structure their story by using a protagonist and various antagonists.

The distinction between the different roles in a story is similar to James's distinction between the *I* as the author and the various *Me*'s as protagonists and antagonists (cf. Hermans & Hermans-Jansen, 1995, 8). James defines the self as a combination of these two components. The *I* is the author who represents continuity in identity, who is continuously constructing the self-narrative. Hermans et al. conceptualise "(...) the self as a dynamic multiplicity of relatively autonomous *I* positions in an imaginal landscape." (Hermans, Kempen & Van Loo, 1992, 28-29) In this conception, the *I* has the freedom of movement between different, even opposed positions, following variations in time and

space. "The *I* has the capacity to imaginatively endow each position with a voice so that dialogical relations between positions can be established." (ibid., 28) This dynamic authoring character of the *I* results in a complex narratively structured self. The *I* decides what is in the story and what information about the *I* positions and their respective *Me*'s is part of the narrative. The *Me*, or to some extent, the *Mine*, represents the actor in the plot. One of the actors is the protagonist, who plays the leading role, who plays an act with actors in other roles, the antagonists. In another story these roles could change, which shows the flexibility of this narrative approach in describing the self-narrative. The *Me* is everything that belongs to the *I* in material and relational terms, which results in a gradual distinction between me and mine. Hermans and Hermans-Jansen describe how James managed to transcend the Cartesian dualism between the self and the other. This transcendence makes it possible to construe the self with fluid boundaries, which is open to its context as an extended self, resulting in a dynamic and interdependent relationship between subject and object. Hermans and Gieser describe how "(...) James paved the way for later theoretical developments in which oppositions to and negotiations with the other-in-the-self, in close connection with the actual other, are part of an extended, multivoiced process." (2013, 3) George H. Mead (1934), for example, elaborated on this contextual and societal description of the extended self by describing the *I* as an innovative agent, while the *Me* stands for social rules and conventions, which he called the 'generalised other' (cf. ibid., 4). The *I* does not simply adjust to social rules, but can reject or change some rules according to the requirements of time and place. At the same time, the *I* is tied to a social context with social rules. Because it offers the possibility to describe the complex interplay between social structures and psychological reactions, this psycho-social perspective has become leading in Hermans's valuation theory, which later gradually transformed into DST. Hermans walks on one of James's paved ways by combining Mead's extended concept of the self with the tradition of dialogism.

The second tradition Hermans draws on is dialogism, especially the contribution of the literary scholar Bakhtin (1973), who wrote a book about the works of Dostoevsky. Studying several of Dostoevsky's books, he introduced the concept of the 'polyphonic novel,' which has two central notions: 'dialogue' and 'multiplicity of voices.' Although Dostoevsky is the author of his books, the characters in his narratives have an independent role, they have their own worldview, their own voice, as if they were the co-authors of his books. Each character takes on different perspectives as well, which not only creates dialogues between different characters, but also within the character. "By transforming an 'inner' thought of a particular character into an utterance, dialogical relations emerge between this utterance and the utterance of imagined others in the self." (Hermans & Gieser, 2013, 6) Bakhtin's dialogical construction of the human mind shows a multiplicity of voices or perspectives that are part of a life story. During life, all these perspectives are voices that participate in an intrapersonal dialogue. This multiplicity of voices and the notion of dialogue are essential ingredients of Hermans's view on the human being, which he metaphorically describes as a 'motivated story teller.'

In what follows, we will describe the three notions of 'motivation,' 'story' and 'teller,' because these are interwoven in the valuation theory. The metaphor of the self as a motivated storyteller brings relevant notions of Hermans's underlying theories together in his valuation theory. First of all, the adjective 'motivated' reflects Hermans's original interest in psychological motivation as an organising principle in the composition of stories and self-narratives. "Two motives are distinguished: the striving for self-enhancement (i.e., self-maintenance and self-expansion) and the longing for contact and union with the environment or other people." (Hermans & Hermans-Jansen, 1995, 13) The motive for self-enhancement is the S-motive, and the motive for contact with others is the O-motive. According to Hermans, these two basic psychological motives are the criterion for the way in which

people select and organise events to tell their story, and subsequently give meaning to their lives. Most of the time, these motives are preconscious, or as Hermans would call them, latent. These motives manifest themselves through the feelings and affects aroused by persons or situations. It is a fundamental assumption in valuation theory that valuations have an affective modality. The type of affect, or pattern of affects, gives information about the valuation itself (cf. *ibid.*, 15). A final important remark is that these basic motives are not impulses, but goals, which function as a purpose and orientation in life. Humans act intentionally, which is a precondition within the pragmatic and contextual paradigm. Secondly, the self as a 'teller' refers to the notion of dialogue. The story is an expression of the self, is a way of communicating with other people who could imaginatively be in another place at a different time. A dialogue brings people from different times and places together, which characterises its dynamics. These dynamics not only take place among physical persons, but also within the self, which brings us to the third element of Hermans's metaphor, the 'story.' The notion 'story' encompasses the philosophical background of James's and Mead's psychological constructions of the human mind as a landscape, by describing the *I* and *Me* as components of the self. The story of the self has a coherent structure which the *I* coordinates through ordering different elements of the *Me* in a narrative. A story is an intentional human act to give meaning to the ever-changing context. Experiences and changes aroused by situations and other people influence the way in which the *I* composes a self-narrative. The next paragraph shows how Hermans combined these different theoretical sources into one valuation theory, which later resulted in DST.

"Valuation theory helps us understand the personal meaning of events in people's past, present, and future, how these meanings are organized into a system and what their motivational characteristics are." (Hermans & Hermans-Jansen, 1995, 14) Personal valuations are part of a comprehensive life story, which means that past social interactions play an ongoing role in the construction of a self-narrative, as long as the *I* considers these valuations necessary. Valuations are the experiences, persons, situations, and events that appear to be the ingredients in telling the self-narrative. In this self-narrative, Hermans and Hermans-Jansen distinguish between value and valuation, which coincides with the difference between group and individual. They consider values as "(...) any institutionalized principle that the members of a community or group collectively find important for the organization of their behaviour and experience." (*ibid.*, 19) A single value is part of a larger value system, a group narrative, which itself is also dynamic. From a contextualist point of view, value systems can constantly change, and they are always present in a self-narrative. In one way or another, people position themselves vis-à-vis this set of principles, which is in fact the socialisation process as Biesta describes it (cf. 2013, 129). In this process, individuals interpret these values, which can lead to adaptation, rejection or modification of the group principle. In an interpretative process, value system and valuation are interrelated and interdependent. It differs per situation and cultural context how equal or dependent those partners are on each other. "Valuation is a process of participating in the values expressed in the collective tales of a community and at the same time reworking them and even adding to them." (Hermans & Hermans-Jansen, 1995, 21) These community tales can be articulated in ideological, secular, or religious worldviews, as well as in myths, or they can be implicit, without further articulation but still directing the meaning-making process.

Valuation theory began as a study of psychotherapeutic relationships and was designed to describe the role of motivations. Such descriptions clarify how these basic motives direct the self-narrative. In psychotherapy, valuation therapy functions as an instrument in a dialogical relationship between a psychologist and the client, in order to improve psychological health. One of the objectives is to create flexibility in the personal valuation system, which does not mean that negative affects are

excluded, but that an ability is fostered to relate to negative valuations (cf. Hermans & Hermans-Jansen, 1995, 115-116). The more clients can differentiate or move between positive and negative valuations, no matter in what situation, the better they can cope with disturbing and balance-undermining situations in their life story. "There is flexibility when a person is not rigidly occupied by one type of valuation (or by one position) but has the capacity to move from one type of valuation to another (or from one position to another) in correspondence with ongoing events." (ibid., 115) This objective of flexibility is important for psychotherapeutic situations as the original setting for valuation therapy, but the growing interest of other disciplines led to the development of the more general DST. The most important concepts of this theory, as well as its methodological possibilities for research, are the subject of the following paragraph.

2.3.2. Main Concepts of the Dialogical Self Theory

In the valuation theory, Hermans discerned the *I* as an author and the *Me* as an actor in the narrative of the self. We learned to speak of the multivoiced self for which Hermans draws on the polyphonic theory of Bakhtin. The concept of 'voice' is indeed important for DST, but the term 'position' is more basic because "(...) the notion of "position," as an expression of the intrinsic embodiment of the self, refers to the phenomena and processes that are more fundamental to the dialogical self than the phenomena and processes indicated by the notion of voice." (Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2012, 227) On the day a child is born, the societal position of the child is already a fact, well before the child is able to voice it. Before a child can speak, it orients itself in the room, and turns its body to reposition itself. Another reason to conclude that a position in DST is more basic, is the fact that it is possible to be positioned without being aware of it (cf. ibid., 226-227). Within DST, the *Me* has evolved into the new concept of *I*-position, which enables Hermans to designate the self as dialogical, as a "dynamic multiplicity of *I*-positions." (Hermans & Gieser, 2013, 2) In summary, Hermans and Gieser describe this multiplicity as follows:

"(...) the *I* emerges from its intrinsic contact with the (social) environment and is bound to particular positions in time and space. As such, the embodied *I* is able to move from one position to the other in accordance with changes in situations and time. In this process of positioning, repositioning and counter-positioning, the *I* fluctuates among different and even opposed positions (both within the self and between the self and perceived or imagined others), and these positions are involved in relationships of relative dominance and social power. As part of sign-mediated social relations, positions can be voiced so that dialogical exchanges among positions can develop. The voices behave like interacting characters in a story or movie, involved in processes of question and answer, agreement and disagreement, conflicts and struggles, negotiations and integrations. Each of them has a story to tell about their own experiences from their own perspective. As different voices, these characters exchange knowledge and information about their respective *me*'s, creating a complex, narratively structured self." (ibid., 2-3)

In the description of the meaning of valuations and experiences in the formation of the self, the verb *to position* plays a pivotal role, in its active and passive meaning. In a passive sense, the self is born, or in other words embodied, at a certain place at a specific time in history. This position in the passive sense cannot be changed, it is a fact. In an active sense, the self positions itself among other selves within a society (cf. Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2012, 8). A society is a collection of individual 'societies of mind,' that all make their own unique contribution to societal debates and discourses. People communicate with each other, influence each other, and incorporate, remove, change, or possibly rearrange meanings and visions in their developing self-narrative. Different perspectives that exist in society become positions within this self-narrative, or in this 'society of

mind,' as Hermans and Hermans-Konopka metaphorically frame the self (cf. *ibid.*, 1). In DST, the boundary between the society of mind and society as a whole is permeable. The fundamental idea of DST is to transcend the dichotomy between the internal self and external society, and to emphasise the dialogical relationship between the self and society that takes place in the process of positioning. "The composite concept "dialogical self" goes beyond this dichotomy by bringing the external to the internal and, in reverse, to infuse the internal into the external." (*ibid.*) There is no sharp distinction between the internal self and external society; the transition between the two is gradual. From an anthropological point of view, DST takes an existentialist position by stressing that a one-sided essentialist approach would isolate the self from society (cf. Störig, 1994, 250). A good example of such an essentialist approach is the Cartesian conception of the self, which demarcates a sharp boundary between the self and the other (cf. Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2012, 8). Instead of isolating the self from society, the notion 'dialogue' makes it possible to construe a close theoretical interconnection between the self and society, which explains and justifies the influence of societal positions within the self and the reciprocal influence of the self on society. Taking this reciprocal influence into account, DST paves the way to describe different cultures, religions, and worldviews as positions or 'collective voices' in the society of mind. "Spatial and temporal changes in society are reflected in the self as collective voices that are not simply outside the individual self but rather are constituting it." (*ibid.*, 4) In the next paragraph, we describe the positioning process in the society of mind, which unifies the unity and the multiplicity of the mind.

Hermans and Hermans-Konopka describe the self as extended in place and time, which becomes especially clear in three different models of the self: the traditional, the modern, and the post-modern self. An aspect of these models still exists as collective voices in the actual dialogical self. On a theoretical level, two critical elements of modern and post-modern times are constitutive for the description of the dialogical self. The modern self is characterised by unity, which means that the self is an independent and autonomous entity. Post-modernity represents a multiplicity without established preferences and the recognition of differences and discontinuities. In the dialogical self, unity and multiplicity are both constitutive elements. Closely related to this are opposing movements in the self: centralisation and decentralisation. The centralising movement integrates different parts of the self into a unity that represents continuity as well. What this means becomes more understandable when one thinks of the basic fact that people have a certain awareness of sameness in their identity. The decentralising movement represents the constant change in the self, the discontinuity that occurs in every encounter, in every interruptive moment in life. Since the various models of the self co-exist, this is also the case for the centralising and decentralising movements. "Along these lines a dialogical self is portrayed that functions as multivoiced, yet being coherent and open to contradictions, as well as substantial." (Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2012, 5) In the following section, we will outline several concepts that provide insight into the spatio-temporal process of the dialogical self. This is followed by an elaboration of the core concepts of DST, in order to explain the specific dialogical narrative analysis used in this study. Most relevant for this analysis, as described in chapter 4, is the inventory that Raggatt (2013) made by distinguishing between basic elements, dynamic elements and developmental processes.

Basic Elements: I-Position, Counter-Position, External Position, and Outside Position

The basic elements in DST are the *I*-position, the counter-position, the external position, and the outside position (cf. Raggatt, 2013, 31). The first concept is the *I*-position, which encapsulates the multiplicity and unity within the self. "*I*-positions have their relative autonomy in the self, have their own specific history, and show different developmental pathways." (Hermans & Gieser, 2013, 14) The *I*-position connects unity and multiplicity because the self contains different positions belonging

to the same *I*, *Me*, or *Mine*. The self is not self-contained, but extends to the other embodied self. The self perceives the embodied other in a certain way. The imagination of the other is a personal construction in the self, which does not coincide with this real, embodied other person. The dialogical perspective ensures openness for change in this construction every time the self is in dialogue with the embodied other. The concept *I*-position refers to the *I* that is able to take different positions, to tell stories from different perspectives, an entity that has been described above as the multivoiced self. The *I*-positions are part of the process of positioning, repositioning and even counterpositioning that is characteristic of the dialogical self. In the process of positioning, the counter-position is an *I*-position that develops as an opposite, or conflicting, *I*-position that is related to previous positions of the *I*. The external position refers to an 'other-in-the-self,' this is the voiced position of another person or group within the society of mind. The outside position is a physical other, for whom a participant makes a reference for having had a dialogue (cf. Raggatt, 2013, 31).

Dynamic Elements

In his inventory, Raggatt discerns a second group of elements: the dynamic elements, which are the core position, the third position, the meta-position, and the promoter position. These positions are a selection from Raggatt's inventory based on their relevance and utility for answering the research question of this study.

Core Position

The first dynamic element is the core position, which determines the functioning of other positions. It is the position with the most emphasis in the narrative, a position that is part of a coalition. The concept of a 'coalition of positions' points in a different way to the combination of unity and multiplicity. Within the self, *I*-positions never stand on their own, but have connections with other *I*-positions. Within a coalition of positions, one or two positions or voices are dominant. "That is, dominant positions usually have their companions, helpers, satellites, and auxiliary troops that together form stabilizing forces in the internal and external domains of the self." (Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2012, 152) It is useful to know which positions are dominant, silent, or even silenced. Gaining awareness of this is part of a psycho-educational learning process that stimulates the self to integrate different positions or to come to the conclusion that some coalitions need to be changed, because they are maladaptive. An addition to Raggatt's inventory for DST-research we would like to propose, is the silent, or silenced, position, which may be detected through a reiterative reading of the narrative context. This concept of a silent, or silenced, position refers to an *I*-position that becomes less relevant, or gains a softer voice in the society of mind. The term could also refer to a voice that remains silent all the time, but makes itself heard between the lines. Gonçalves and Ribeiro allude to silenced or rejected *I*-position in dominant self-narratives, which show little flexibility (cf. 2013, 302).

Third Position

A third position offers the possibility to reconcile two opposing positions. Within the self, a conflict can arise between two positions. A third position has "(...) the potential of unifying the two original ones without denying or removing their differences (unity-in-multiplicity)." (Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2012, 10) It happens that positions cannot function in a dialogue, or cannot contribute to a good dialogue if, for example, some positions are excluded (cf. *ibid*, 177). A third position is one of the ways in which flexibility within the self can be created or improved, which initially was a therapeutic aim in DST, but could be relevant for education as well.

Meta-Position

A meta-position is a superordinate position, the product of two or more positions. It "(...) refers to 'extra-positionality,' the self moving above itself and taking a 'helicopter view'." (Hermans & Gieser, 2013, 15) This meta-position should not be confused with a control centre. "In order to avoid this confusion, it should be remembered that a meta-position is typically influenced by one or more internal or external positions that are actualized at the moment of self-examination." (Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2012, 148) From a meta-position, "sometimes also described as an 'observing ego'" (Hermans & Hermans-Gieser, 2013, 16), it is possible to observe a particular position or set of positions from a distance. Self-reflection enables the self to examine the function and role of different positions, and their mutual inter-relation. Hermans and Hermans-Konopka distinguish three functions of meta-positions. These are the unifying, executive, and liberating functions. Meta-positions could even bring opposing positions together. "In its *executive* function, it creates a basis for decision making and directions in life that lead to actions that profit from its support from a broader array of specific positions." (2012, 151) Meta-positions could be liberating in signalling behaviour that should be stopped.

Promoter Position

A promoter position is a catalyst for possible change, and "(...) gives order and direction in the development of the position repertoire." (Raggatt, 2013, 31) Promoter positions "(...) have the potential to synthesize a variety of new and already existing positions in the self and reorganize the self towards a higher level of development." (Hermans & Gieser, 2013, 17) Promoter positions are determinative for the rearrangement of *I*-positions – in the bringing forward (or silencing) of an *I*-position, for example. A life orientation could function as a promoter position. Grounded in a therapeutic tradition, DST aims to address obstructive and destructive *I*-positions. In education, improvement is not therapeutic, but could have therapeutic side effects. The primary educational goal of training in life orientation would be to foster awareness of the possibility of a dialogue between different *I*-positions. In fact, learning in general could function as a promoter position, to the extent that a student expects to learn something. According to Hermans and Hermans-Konopka, promoter positions can help overcome multilevel conflicts, and support the creation of order and direction (cf. 2012, 228-236). These multilevel conflicts centre on eloquently voiced positions and poorly voiced, or silenced, positions. In education through life orientation, multilevel conflicts can be conflicts between values learned at home and values that enter the society of mind through new experiences and dialogues. For example, it may happen that, at home, a student is in the position of having to serve everyone. During traineeship, he or she might learn self-protection by setting limits, which could then emerge as a newly developed position. Promoter positions provide support in these conflicts, in helping to integrate new values into a rearranged composition of values. "[T]hey function as "guards" of the continuity of the self but, at the same time, they give room for discontinuity." (ibid., 228)

Developmental Processes

The third group of factors in Raggatt's inventory are the developmental processes: reflexive and social positioning, and the decentring and centring processes. According to Raggatt, reflexive positioning points to the reflexive dynamics that "can be summarized along a few core existential needs – to maintain esteem, to express agency and autonomy, to seek communion with others, and to maximize pleasure." (2013, 34). The second developmental process is social positioning, which, according to Raggatt "(...) reflects the impact of others, and of cultural and institutional prescriptions that define the contours of the self." (ibid.)

Promoter positions are important for the development of the self. Figure 2.2 shows circles representing different developmental levels of the self. At each level, Hermans and Hermans-Konopka also

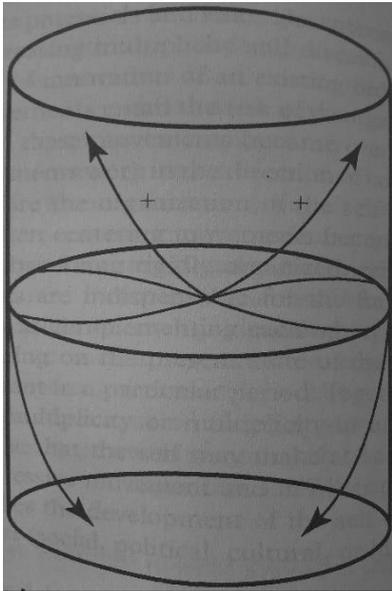


Fig. 2.2 Multi-Level Model for the Development of the Self (Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2012, 237)

distinguished three types of possible movements in the development of the self: progressive, regressive, and balanced (cf. 2012, 236). When the self goes through a progressive development, it moves to a higher level of integration, as the ascending arrows indicate. “It is further assumed that the progressive movements are facilitated by the availability and accessibility of promoter positions (indicated by +).” (ibid., 237) Similarly, when the self goes through a regressive development, it drops to a lower level of integration. Integration means that positions are reorganised in order to realise a higher level of adaptation of the self (cf. ibid., 228). Adaptation of the self to a changing and complex society, and the flexibility of the self in such a society, or in regard to life in general, are the main objectives of promoter positions and refer to the underlying axiology of DST. Promoter positions stimulate further integration of positions, while in the event of a disorganising life episode, the lack of promoter positions may entail the risk that the integration of the self drops to a lower level. The self could also go through a balanced development, without too many highs and lows. In the course of life, all three movements may be experienced, regardless of age (cf. ibid.). Figure 2.2 also shows that there are centring and decentering movements at every level, which is represented as a lemniscate. “Centring movements go in the direction of the centre of the self, a hypothetical place of perfect integration, represented by the centre of the circle. These movements work in the direction of order and integration. Decentral movements go away from the hypothetical centre towards the periphery of the self, represented by the circumference of the circle.” (ibid, 237) According to Hermans and Hermans-Konopka, both decentering and centring movements have a risk and a potential. Decentering movements are necessary for innovation and change, whereas the dominance of decentering movements would lead to chaos, disorganisation, and fragmentation. Centring movements ensure coherence and continuity, with the risk of being inflexible and rigid. Both movements are necessary for the development of the self. “Together, they construct the self as unity-in-multiplicity or multiplicity-in-unity. The model is non-linear in the sense that the self may make at some periods in the development a progressive movement and in other periods a regressive movement. This makes the development of the self to a high degree dependent on the *context*

(social, political, cultural, or historical) in which the self is embedded.” (ibid., 238). The notion of development of the self and the accompanying movements are important elements in the description of the articulated life orientation and its inherent development. The narrative character of this research into written texts makes it possible to describe the developmental processes as hermeneutic.

Depositioning of the I

A relatively newly described position in the evolution of DST is the depositioning of the *I* (cf. Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2012, 168-174), which is not included in Raggatt’s inventory but is relevant for our research. The depositioning process of the self refers to aspects of the traditional self, such as the experience of an ordered cosmos, or in religious language, the experience of ‘creation.’ Hermans and Hermans-Konopka distinguish three experiences. The first is a unifying type of experience, in which the *I* is conscious of many positions and is able to detach itself from them at the same time. The second type of experience is dualistic, which means that the *I* can detach itself from certain positions, and is aware of them at the same time. The third type of experience refers to an absence of sensory experience in an encompassing sense of unity with the surrounding context (cf. Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2012, 10). There are spiritual traditions that express the aim of depositioning the *I*. The goal in these spiritual traditions is to realise a focus, or attention, amidst the multitude of voices. “In all these forms of awareness, silence, not in the sense of absence of words but rather as a “speaking silence” and “being fully present” is a constitutive part of the experience.” (ibid., 10) The concept of depositioning is not the subject of our research, but is part of our educational context, i.e., the minor programme *Philosophy. World Religions. Spirituality*, which is described in the next chapter. Depositioning is part of the educational context, to the extent that students become acquainted with spiritual focus and attention. Not every student achieves one of the three depositioning experiences listed above, i.e., an experience of a more extensive awareness, but most of them at least experience that in silence a multitude of voices is active, initially. In this silence, or in this mode of attention, introspective reflection paves the way for the creation of a meta-position.

Good Dialogue

The goal of DST is to describe the positioning process taking place within a psycho-educational process, as well as to stimulate development. Ultimately, DST helps people to articulate and to determine how *I*-positions function within the self, and helps them to understand that the composition of positions is not fixed, but flexible at every moment. A rearrangement is always possible. In a rapidly changing and globalising society, people as participants in this society could particularly benefit from flexibility in switching between *I*-positions. “These changes require the participants to develop a multi-voiced self that is able to move flexibly from one position to another with attention to the coherence of these positions.” (Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2012, 17) From a *life orientation* perspective, this flexibility refers to the awareness of a personal life view and the ability to improve the dialogical competence. In this sense, the dialogical self does not, like the post-modern self, take a sceptic stance towards religion and religious life views, but values every position equally without clinging to a pre-established opinion, at least conceptually speaking. To foster flexibility within the society of mind, Hermans and Hermans-Konopka list eight characteristics of a good dialogue, including the acceptance of alterity, the presence of a dialogical space, and the possibility of changing one’s position, which also implies an orientation on innovation. In relation to this research project, it is relevant to point out that good dialogue is facilitated by awareness and silence (cf. ibid., pp. 174-190).

A final, important step in this section is to relate professionalisation to the dialogical self. Akkerman and Meijer (2011), in their search for a definition of teacher identity, describe how the dichotomy between ‘professional identity’ and ‘personal identity’ can be overcome. In some literature, they notice that scholars focus mainly on professional identity in order to describe – in this case – teacher identity (cf. Akkerman & Meijer, 2011, 316). From a DST perspective, this is at least rather odd, because of the ‘multiplicity-in-unity dimension.’ Akkerman and Meijer define teacher identity “(...) as an ongoing process of negotiating and interrelating multiple *I*-positions in such a way that a more or less coherent and consistent sense of self is maintained throughout various participations and self-investments in one’s (working) life.” (ibid., 315) This definition applies to other professional identities as well. This process includes the negotiation and interrelation of personal and professional positions, which means that a teacher is “(...) not merely a professional regardless of all that he or she is otherwise; personal histories, patterned behaviour, future concerns may all inform the position(s) of the teacher as professional.” (ibid., 316) This last remark justifies paying specific attention to life orientation in professional education and development. Moreover, disregarding personal histories and valuations means that the complexity of the self, which comprises the professional, would be denied. The following section discusses this complexity from a practical-theological perspective, which focuses on the substantial relationship between autobiographical, contextual, and transcendental storylines in a life narrative.

2.4 A Practical-Theological Perspective on the Development of Life Narratives

Van Knippenberg is interested in the function of spiritual guidance in a secular age, which is characterised by an unbiased experience of spatio-temporal reality, an unbiased experience that is also thematised in the educational context of this research (cf. 2008, 12; 1998).⁴ He connects this function to the structure of a life story, a narrative that he characterises as a path from name to identity. The ‘name’ represents the basic identity, which is given to the child by its parents at birth. The life experiences and life events that follow are told in a story, and construct a never-ending narrative of an evolving identity. A narrative is a self-expression, and a human action to order life within the parameters of time and space, as demarcations for this life path (cf. ibid., 20). Within the basic structure of a life narrative, Van Knippenberg discerns three storylines: the transcendental line, the temporal line, and the spatial line.

The structure of a life narrative includes a transcendental line, which refers to birth and death as transcending events in our existence. A wide variety of positions is possible on this line. Van Knippenberg describes a minimum awareness of transcendence, which occurs when an individual regards life as unfolding between deed and death (cf. ibid., 22). On the other side of the line, people can hold the view that reality is as an act of divine creation. Both positions are not static but can go through a dynamic process, even within a person’s life orientation. The function of this line is to give people a perspective on life within the spatio-temporal framework. Van Knippenberg regards people as gifted with the capacity to take a transcendental perspective, which centres on the question ‘Where do I come from and for which purpose do I exist?’ (cf. ibid, 24). The temporal line in the narrative, structures experiences in time, and centres on the question ‘When am I?’ The spatial line

⁴ Dutch readers who want to find out more about Van Knippenberg’s research, can consult his booklet *Existentiële zielzorg, Tussen naam en identiteit* (2005, 2008), or the earlier and more fundamental publication Van Knippenberg, T. (1998) *Tussen naam en identiteit. Ontwerp van een model voor geestelijke begeleiding*. Kampen: Kok. For English readers this earlier publication is available in an English translation. If interested, see: Van Knippenberg, T. (2002). *Towards a Religious Identity. An Exercise in Spiritual Guidance*. Assen: Royal Van Gorcum.

gives structure to a life story, in answering the question 'Where am I?' The three lines in a life story aim to provide insight into the way in which identity evolves within the story, as three aspects of the general existential question 'Who am I?' This is a question about meaning and sense-giving in life, which is an ongoing process. Engaged in this process, human beings experience boundaries and ambivalence. Boundaries in the development of identity are interruptions of self-evidence, and provide insight (cf. *ibid.*, 48). These boundary experiences go hand in hand with ambivalence, with the awareness of opposites. According to Van Knippenberg, a life story is not an uninterrupted line, but full of uncertainty, something that effectively provides human beings with free room to think and act (cf. *ibid.*, 51). A life narrative should situate these experiences of doubt in an ambiguous reality rather than smoothing them over, because this shows how identity develops itself.

In further describing the processes within a narrative structure, Van Knippenberg distinguishes oppositions within each of these three storylines. The experience of opposition between continuity and change structures the temporal sequence (cf. *ibid.*, 52). In the experience of space, people long for participation, for openness towards the world and other people. The opposite desire is the longing for individuation, which represents the drive to be unique, to stand out from the crowd. Within the transcendental line, there is a tension between autonomy and heteronomy (cf. *ibid.* 65). Autonomy is the desire to find the centre and the ground in one's own life, and to be the director of one's own life (cf. *ibid.*, 55). Heteronomy refers to the desire to be guided, a desire for submission and something that transcends human life. Within the transcendental line, contingency is an important and influential factor, because it confronts people with boundaries in the self-evidence of ongoing lives (cf. *ibid.*).

The final step of Van Knippenberg's reflection on the structure of life narratives, is the description of goals and competencies. He defines identity as the provisional result of a life story, in which a person continually tries to configure narratively seemingly opposite events. In following Ricoeur, Van Knippenberg argues that telling a story means articulating a direction in life, or describing an orientation (cf. Ricoeur, 1994, 170; Van Knippenberg, 2002, 72). This adjustment or configuration of a life narrative which results in an identity, requires narrative competencies. On the temporal line, the result is a diachronic identity, which requires an autobiographical competence. This competency refers to the ability to articulate a personal history within a time frame (cf. Van Knippenberg, 2002, 163). A possible pitfall here is a unilateral withdrawal on the two poles of continuity or change. The development of the autobiographical competence could enhance the capacity of having a sense of direction. On the spatial line, the result of a life narrative is a synchronic identity, which represents the extent to which someone has a place in the world, i.e., in a larger whole and in a network of people (cf. *ibid.*, 166). Synchronic identity refers to the question of our place in the universe and the meaning of this life, at this particular place. The articulation of a synchronic identity requires a contextual competence, which is the ability to develop oneself in connection with other people, with the surrounding context. It is the ability to cope with diversity.

In his pastoral-theological work, Van Knippenberg describes the result of a life narrative on the transcendental line as a 'religious identity, which asks for a view of the human being as a transcending being' (cf. 2008, 63). He defines this kind of religious identity as an ability to experience our spatio-temporal reality from a point of view that transcends this life. Although we underpin this view from a theological perspective in this study, it is necessary for our research to replace 'religious identity' with 'spiritual identity.' A spiritual identity might include – but is not necessarily synonymous with – a religious identity. In the same way, a spiritual identity can include participation in church life, but this is not necessary either. This modification is necessary within this research project on life orientation at a confessionally neutral university. Or, to put it differently, our research

context is not the *narthex* of the church, but the *agora*, the church square, or even a free place located somewhere in the public square.⁵ The concept of a spiritual identity would do more justice to the variety in the background of the participants in the empirical part of this research project. In accordance with chapter 1, we would define a spiritual identity as a conscious, and attentive, orientation towards life, directed by something that moves a person deeply (cf. Roothaan, 2007, 75). As a result of this alternative conceptualisation, the competence that Van Knippenberg has in mind must be transformed as well. In relation to the kind of religious identity that he has in mind, Van Knippenberg talks about the competence of dependency, which we would like to designate more neutrally as a competence of openness. It is clear that Van Knippenberg includes a certain norm in this competence, namely the degree of dependency as a relational concept. The two previously described competencies (autobiographical, contextual) seem to have a neutral conceptual character. Nevertheless, within the context of this research, it is more suitable to speak of ‘openness,’ meant as having the same relational character as dependency, but referring to an earlier relational phase. Before dependency begins to play a significant role in a relationship, there must first be some openness for having a relationship. The term ‘dependency’ seems to pre-sort on the prevalence of heteronomy, while the term ‘openness’ keeps a middle ground between autonomy and heteronomy. Van Knippenberg defines the competence of dependency as an ability to read the narrative which precedes our spatio-temporal reality in an open-minded way, and to see the broader context that encompasses existence in an unprejudged manner (cf. *ibid.*, 64). This definition contains adverbs that make it easier for us to operationalise the competence of openness in our research before bringing up religious submission, as Van Knippenberg is inclined to do in his theological reflection.

The different perspectives on morality, the self and the narrative, which are discussed in this chapter, support the final step in this conceptual research, which investigates the meaning that the articulation of life orientations has for normative professionalisation.

2.5 Education Through Life Orientation and Normative Professionalisation

In this concluding part, the intention is to answer the first sub-question about the conceptual relationship between worldview education and normative professionalisation. Because of the insights in the first chapter, in which we propose to use ‘life orientation’ instead of worldview, the question must now contain a different terminology.

What is the conceptual relationship between education through life orientation and normative professionalisation?

The conceptualisation of life orientation bears a metaphorical resemblance to elements of Taylor’s philosophy. His philosophy has undeniably contributed to the definition of life orientation as an existential and meaning-giving orientation towards the horizon of the good life. The teleological horizon is practical-theologically materialised in a view on humanity, the world, and the meta-empirical. This materialisation becomes apparent in another way when Taylor, Kunneman, and Hermans – each within their own philosophical and theoretical framework – describe the meaning of the historical context in the forming of the self. They describe three periods in history: the traditional, the modern, and the post-modern era. Within their respective research interests, the overall line of argument is that elements or aspects of these three periods continue to play a role in society, and consequently within our *selves*. According to the perspective of education through life orientation, which belongs to the academic discipline of RE, knowledge of wisdom traditions is necessary for the formation of the self, in order to better understand society and the self. Knowledge is not only necessary for understanding and awareness, but also for building a critical attitude

⁵ ‘Free space’ is the literal translation of the Greek σχολή (school)

towards our time frame, post-modernism. From a philosophical and psycho-educational point of view, it seems legitimate, even necessary, to include the theological question of the meta-empirical in a free space. Ricoeur and Taylor, both familiar with the Catholic tradition, leave room for theology before going into dogmatics. Hermans, referred to by Zock as “an agnostic with a religious suspicion” (2013, 18) does the same in describing the process of depositioning, which includes some references to spirituality. The teleological stance of Ricoeur and Taylor paves the way for a theological orientation, without suggesting the assumption of faith in God. However, any teleological horizon presupposes some kind of faith⁶, which in post-modern times cannot claim infallibility, but is relevant from a practical-theological point of view, because it could teach how to translate traditional or religious wisdom within Taylor’s space of existential and moral concerns. Arguing from a psychological perspective, Zock states that attention for personal religious voices in our globalising society is of paramount importance, in order to gain more insight into the way in which personal meaning-making integrates collective religious voices (cf. Zock, 2013, 32/33).

In the description of life orientation and normative professionalisation, the teleological ethical intention functions as a conceptual bridge. Akkerman and Meijer (2011) teach from a DST perspective that it would be irrational to split identity in personal and professional identity, which means that professional education should focus on the whole human self. Similarly, Zock claims that personal and collective voices cannot be separated in meaning-making, which is an argument for paying attention to collective worldviews and religious voices, even in public education (cf. 2013, 32). Kelchtermans underpins this biographical perspective through narrative research. “Central to this approach is the idea that human existence is fundamentally characterized by temporality. People have a personal history. Their life develops in time, between birth and death. Interpretations, thoughts, and actions in the present are influenced by experiences from the past and expectations for the future.” (Kelchtermans, 2009, 260) Question is how these considerations about the relationship between personal and professional development relate to the definition of normative professionalisation as formulated by Van Ewijk:

“The individual and collective development of the quality of professional action in connection with the performance of good work in an ethical, aesthetic and instrumental sense.” (Transl. Van Ewijk, 2013, 60)

This definition raises the question of what contributes to individual development, what is the content of quality, and what is the relationship between the individual and the collective. In his inaugural statement, Bakker (2013) claims that religious and worldview education has too long been regarded as a separate category of development (cf. Bakker & Wassink, 2015, 26). The reason for this separation has been the long history of a deductive perspective on identity and worldviews. He argues for an inductive approach in order to give personal meaning to symbols, rituals, and sources of wisdom that could help connect the cognitive and affective dimensions of professional development. This plea finds fertile soil in DST, which describes an embodied self comprising a multiplicity of *I*-positions that, in turn, refer to a multiplicity of affections that include valuations. A second step is to voice these various positions, to articulate your life orientation towards the good life (cf. Taylor, 1989). Bakker and Wassink seem to limit themselves to knowledge about religions in

⁶ We understand ‘faith’ here in the sense of Fowler’s broader conceptualisation, which includes faith as it is understood in the religious sense. “If faith is reduced to belief in creedal statements and doctrinal formulations, then sensitive and responsible persons are likely to judge that they must live ‘without faith.’ But if faith is understood as trust in another and as loyalty to a transcendent center of value and power, the issue of faith – and the possibility of religious faith – becomes lively and open again.” (Fowler, 1995, 14)

their attempt to help us orient on the possible meaning of religious claims that professionals could foreseeably make (cf. Bakker & Wassink, 2015, 27). In my opinion, their approach is too cautious. The content of traditional sources of wisdom – both religious and secular – enables professionals to improve their awareness of their position in the inevitable space of existential and moral questions. In his inaugural speech, however, Bakker states that normative professionalisation is a form of worldview education, or better a form of education through life orientation (cf. Bakker, 2013, 47). Based on the above-discussed theories, it is possible to justify this claim and even to operationalise this relationship.

In section 2.1.2, figure 2.1 depicts a triangular relationship between the good life, good work, and good co-existence as interrelated aspects of normative professionalisation. Within these interrelated triangular relationships normative professionalisation takes place. Based on the above-discussed theories, normative professionalisation has a dialogical and a dialectical dimension, which both are firmly connected. The dialogical structure is connected to the ethical aim (cf. Ricoeur, 1994, 218) and to the articulation of moral sources or hypergoods (cf. Taylor, 1989, 93). DST describes an ongoing dialogical positioning process in life. Positions within the society of mind, as part of a professional's tacit knowledge and practical wisdom, configure a dialogical structure and unvoiced content. As outlined above, the voicing of these positions is the second step in DST, which can help to gain awareness of, or insight into, the dialogical structure and content. In education, the articulation of a life orientation, such as defined in this study, is a way to voice these positions. Insight into this dialogical structure and content could support students and professionals in the dialectical dimension of normative professionalisation, as Ricoeur describes. This argumentative dimension comes to the fore in complex situations that interrupt the daily routine, or in intentional and intersubjective moral considerations. The difference between a dialogical and a dialectical approach is the aim of the process. A dialogical process discerns different, possibly opposite positions, without a direct intention to overcome this opposition, but instead to understand the dialogical structure and content. The dialogical dimension shows the relationship between ethics and the self. In contrast, the dialectical aim is to take a position, to have a moral judgment, after a reflective interpretation for which a person bears responsibility. Blaauwendraad summarised the three questions of Ricoeur's deontological point of view, rooted in a teleological perspective:

“Can I justify my doings to (1) myself, (2) the people I have a direct relationship with (known others), and (3) the society in which I live (unknown others), with all its institutions?” (2016, 78)

Answering these questions requires a thorough insight into the dialogical plane on which this dialectical exercise takes place. Conversely, the dialectical dimension influences the dialogical structure and content within the space of moral and existential concerns. Whereas Hermans and Hermans-Konopka construe the concept of the dialogical self, which leaves room for dialogues to be unaware, beneath the surface, professionals need to be aware of these dialogues. Dialogue and dialectics have in common the expression of disagreements, the sharing of personal opinions, and the full understanding of each other, but the difference is that dialectics ultimately intend a final decision, while a dialogue does not require closure (cf. Kessel et al., 2002, 41). A dialectal perspective refers to Ricoeur's statement that an orientation towards the good is the beginning, but that accountability to norms is a second step (cf. Ricoeur, 1994, 172). We are dealing here with a subtle and sometimes artificial distinction between dialogue and dialectics, but in this research on professionalisation it could help to build a bridge between *intrapersonal* dialogue (which could remain unaware) and the *interpersonal* dialectal exchange of positions, oriented towards a shared decision encompassing differences of opinion. Professionals need to know each other's position to

understand otherness, and to ultimately bear collective responsibility for a decision that they know some colleagues do not fully endorse. They have to be aware, and must be able to articulate the multiplicity of positions as voiced in their society of mind.

Normative professionalisation should connect the dialogical and dialectical dimensions by exploring their interrelatedness. In this research project, the focus rests on the dialogical plane to support dialectical judgment and decision-making, or, in Aristotelian vocabulary, to support *phronesis*. For this reason, the definition of normative professionalisation consists of a double-layered conceptualisation:

Normative professionalisation is an (inter)subjective dialectical reflection on the quality of the professional's practice in connection with the societal context, from the dialogical perspective of a personal life orientation.

This definition, which builds on Van Ewijk's and Kunneman's older definition, is an answer to the conceptual question of this research, and states that normative professionalisation is a form of education through life orientation, with a thematic focus on the good life within a professional's work as a contribution to good co-existence within society. Education through life orientation is therefore necessary to prepare students for, and guide young professionals with regard to the requirements of hybrid professionalism. These are conditions that call for wisdom in life orientation, meaning the competence to judge wisely, especially at decisive moments. The competence to judge wisely, in other words 'practical wisdom,' contributes to an increasing action repertoire within normative professionalisation. In chapter 7, the conceptual considerations of this chapter and the previous chapter 1 are further integrated in a summarising conclusion and subsequent discussion. The next chapter contains a description of the educational context of this research, and an example of how the practical wisdom of students in Higher Professional Education can be fostered.

Chapter 3 Case: Minor Programme *Philosophy. World Religions. Spirituality.*

The minor programme *Philosophy. World Religions. Spirituality (PhWS)* at the HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht was launched during the preparatory phase of this research project. The insights that emerged during the conceptual and empirical research contributed to the improvement of this educational programme, although this improvement was not a research objective. Conversely, experiences gained in the minor programme deepened the reflection within this research project. Given this close connection and the fact that a number of students of this minor programme methodologically became narrative co-researchers in this research, it is relevant to present this educational programme, which envisages education through life orientation. First, a short introduction describes the content and the structure of the PhWS minor in its educational context. Secondly, the holistic view on the human being and the educational objectives that are central to the minor are highlighted in a discussion of various transformative pedagogical insights. In the third part, the content and educational objectives are presented from the perspective of a ‘pedagogy of interruption.’ This type of pedagogy, which was introduced by the Dutch educational philosopher Biesta, also explains how the minor seeks to cover three domains of education: qualification, socialisation, and, in particular, subjectification.

3.1 Content and Structure of the PhWS Minor

In 2012-2013, the PhWS minor was launched at the HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht. Officially, this university has a ‘general-particular’ (transl. EZ: *Algemeen-bijzonder*) juridical foundation. Its management is different from that of public education in that it has an independent board. The adjective ‘general’ means that every life orientation is considered equal within the university, within a non-confessional, neutral stance. Article 2.4c of the Statutes stipulates that the university should be an active meeting place for various views on life and society, and must offer its students the opportunity to profile their studies from a worldview and a societal perspective within the university (transl. EZ: cf. HU Statuten, 2014, 4). This statutory article is relevant because of the possible confusion that attention for religion, as a life view, should have no place within a neutral educational institution.

In the Dutch educational system, all students in higher professional education must choose a half-year minor programme (in short, ‘minor’) at the end of their studies. Students have a free choice and can opt for one of the minors at their university, or select a minor at another Dutch university of applied sciences. The main point is that they are free to choose their minor based on strategic career considerations or personal interest. The PhWS minor is a general programme geared towards a normative professionalisation of students by educating them in philosophy, religion, secular worldviews, and spirituality. Because it is a general educational programme, students from a wide variety of disciplines find their way to this minor.

In the philosophy classes, different philosophical domains are brought to the fore: anthropology, ethics, logic, philosophy of culture, political philosophy, epistemology, aesthetics, etc. (see Appendix A for a complete overview of lecturers and tutorials). In addition to these Western philosophical traditions, students also learn about Indian and Chinese traditions. Apart from the lectures, students practice with tutorials in Socratic dialogue, moral considerations, and debating. At the end of the programme, students write an essay on a topic of their choice.

Lectures in world religions and secular life orientations are taught from two perspectives. The first approach is phenomenological, meaning that students learn about rituals, sacred texts, buildings, doctrines, festivals, and moral rules, rooted in a religious studies approach. The second approach consists of the inward perspective, which means that individuals who live in a tradition or adhere to a specific religion or secular worldview, explain their view and interpretation to the students. Students meet representatives of Judaism, Catholicism, Protestantism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Shamanism, but also representatives of Atheism, Humanism, and philosophies of the self, such as unique self or spiritual psychology, for example. In these lectures, students learn from different orientations using dialogue with the lecturers, and dialogue between the students themselves, who also represent particular, personal or general, life orientations. The primary objective is that students learn through experience that, for example, *the Islam does not exist*, but consists of different personal interpretations. Another objective is learning to ask open questions, which is crucial for a good dialogue (cf. Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2012, 174). Most of the lecturers discuss at least the main items in life orientation, which are the view on the human being, the world, the meta-empirical, and the good life. During the minor, two tests are taken to examine the knowledge of the students, which should contribute to a good dialogue or the asking of relevant questions.

The third track in the minor focuses on spirituality. Here, the primary purpose is to learn through experience to register physical signs and information, which are relevant for future teachers, social workers, managers, and other professionals. Another goal for the students is to describe or imagine their motives and sources of inspiration. Overall, students practice what it means to have “a conscious, attentive attitude in life” (cf. Roothaan, 2007, 75), which is a usable conceptualisation, although spirituality itself is an *essentially contested concept* (cf. Gallie, 1956). The intention is that students become acquainted with different forms of spirituality, spiritual exercises, imaginations, and physical sensations, in which they can freely participate. They are not forced to participate, but are, as a minimum, asked to observe actively from a phenomenological scientific point of view. Examples are music experience, arts, theatresports, Bibliodrama, haptonomy, but also yoga, silent meditation, guided meditation, and mindfulness. All these experiences are part of the reflection in their assessment, which students compose during the minor.

The minor has a programme of 30 EC, consisting of six test modules of 5 EC.⁷ Some of the tests were already mentioned in the previous paragraphs, namely: the knowledge tests, the philosophical essay, and the written and oral assessments (see table 3A for a schematic overview). The assessment is the core of the programme, because students have to demonstrate their development in the seven minor competencies. These competencies are (1) reflection and normative professionalisation; (2) communication and dialogue; (3) ethical judgment; (4) aesthetic competency; (5) heuristic competency; (6) societal contribution; and (7) spiritual competency. During the minor, students design their learning agenda by conducting a small inquiry into a spiritual subject, and by defining three learning goals that relate to one of the seven competencies. These three development goals can be a mix of personal and professional purposes, which is a consequence of the view on normative professionalisation indicated in chapter 2. An important element is the life orientation narrative that students compose in the course of the minor. In chapter 4, which sets out the methodological framework of this study, the development of this narrative and the accompanying list of facilitating questions are explained in detail, as the main source of research data in this study.

Two other test modules of 5 EC enable the students to practice and test their learning goals. The first module is a traineeship in a self-chosen public or private company. The second module awards 5 EC

⁷ ECTS stands for European Credit Transfer System. 1 ECTS equals 28 hours of educational activity for a student.

for active participation during the tutorials, the three-day inspirational stay in a monastery, and the study trip to Rome or a self-composed alternative programme in the Netherlands. The remaining 5 EC offers specialisation opportunities for students in education, journalism, and communication. These students, as well as students with other study backgrounds, can also opt for qualitative or literature research linked to one of the subjects of the minor programme.

General programme (25 EC)		
5 EC	Two knowledge tests	See lectures in philosophy and life orientations (see Appendix A)
5 EC	Written assessment + presentation	Reflections on minor competencies, normative professionalisation, personal educational objectives
5 EC	Philosophical essay	Self-chosen subject based on two philosophical sources
5 EC	Tutorials	See Appendix A + three inspirational days; several excursions; study trip to Rome or an alternative programme in the Netherlands (reflections are part of the assessment)
5 EC	Traineeship	Reflection is part of the assessment
Specialisation (students choose 5 EC from the following options)		
5 EC	Research	Practical or literature research (self-chosen topic)
5 EC	Religious education and identity in Catholic primary schools	Written assessment containing a personal view on Catholic education and development in religious education + Presentation
5 EC	The identity of public schools	Presentation and written assessment containing view on the six characteristics of Dutch public education
5 EC	Media and Religion	Research on the reporting of religion in the media

Table 3A Schematic Overview 30 EC in Minor Programme PhWS

The content and the educational objectives of the minor are an elaboration of the underlying assumption that the human being is a complex whole of body, mind and soul. This holistic approach to humankind is part of a transformative pedagogy, which will be described in the next section.

3.2 The Holistic Approach to Life Orientation Within a Transformative Pedagogy

Pivotal in the development of the minor programme has been the implementation of a transformative pedagogy, and the consideration that the human being is a complex whole of body, mind and soul. The body refers to our empirical abilities, our physical experiences, skills, and sensations. The mind, or the ratio, is the intellectual part, which holds the capacity for reason, that can construct logical relations, concepts, and knowledge. The soul is a transcendental concept, which overcomes the dichotomy between a strictly material and a classical metaphysical approach (cf. Van Riessen, 2015, 21). Van Riessen paraphrases Kant in saying that thinking about the soul of a loved one painfully reminds us of what we miss: the seeing, the experiencing of the body. Regarding the other as a soul is like regarding his or her body as something to be honoured (cf. *ibid.*, 21). Regarding the other as animated, presupposes that every human being has an irreversible right to dignity (cf. Taylor, 1989, 25; Roebben, 2014, 14). It is precisely this aim to endow every human being with the dignity that strikes a balance between a scientific view which reduces a totality to its parts and a holistic, esoteric approach (cf. Dijn, 2002, 36). The concept of the soul represents the universal equality and dignity of every human being, as well as the openness to accept a meta-empirical

reality. It is this openness that Buber describes as a relation that is essential to the soul (cf. Buber, 1998, 35).

The three tracks of the minor – philosophy, world religions and secular life orientations, and spirituality – represent this holistic view. Philosophy focuses mainly on the ratio, while religion and life orientation refer to the embodiment of meaning-giving in rituals, festivals, texts, and other materialising processes. Spirituality reflects the heart as a symbolic reference to the passion, the motivation, and the striving for power within the human self. Philosophy, religion, and spirituality function as interrelated references to the holistic approach. However, in each of these domains, there are approaches that exclude each other, which is not the intention in this minor. In addition, a combination of these three approaches is a way to foster normative professionalisation, through exploring personal wisdom or *phronesis* (see figure 3.1). In chapter 2, we have demonstrated that the process of decision-making drawing on personal wisdom is constitutive for the conceptual relationship between life orientation and professionalisation.

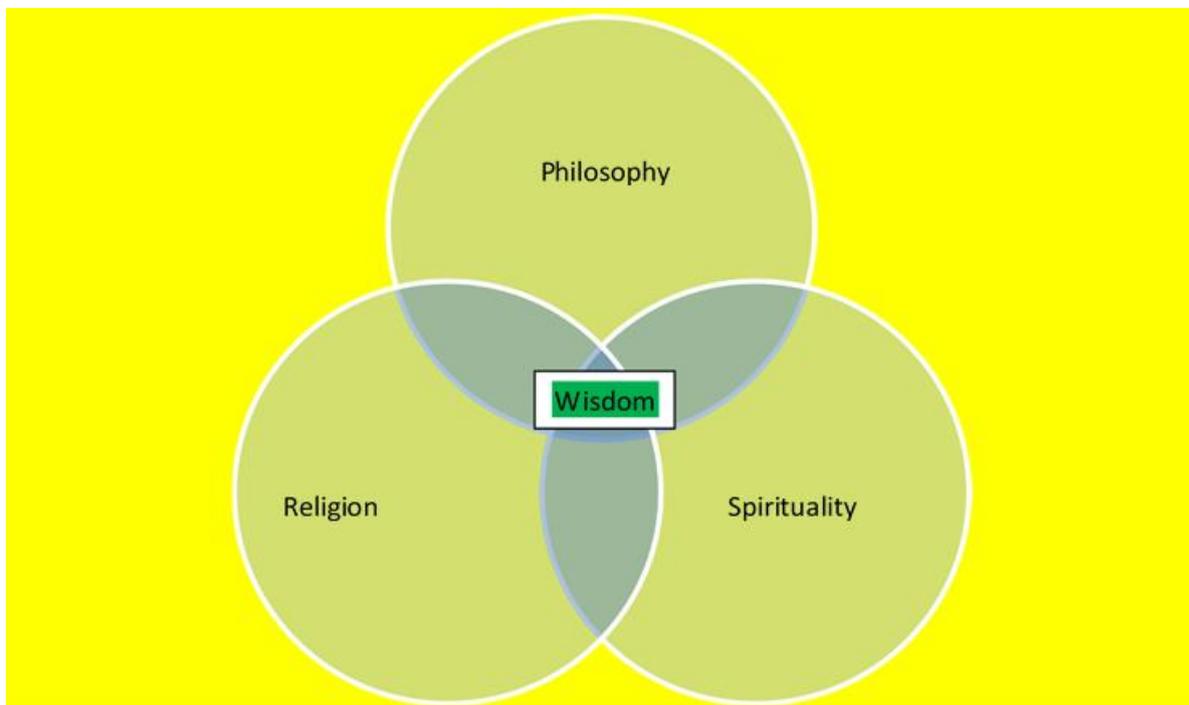


Fig 3.1 Three interrelated content tracks in Minor Philosophy. World Religions. Spirituality.

Phronesis is the ability to make value judgments. “The ability to make wise judgments should therefore not be seen as some kind of “add on,” that is, something that does not affect us as a person, but rather denotes what we might call a holistic quality, something that permeates and characterizes the whole person – and we take “characterize” here quite literally, as virtue is often also translated as “character.”” (Biesta, 2013, 134) In order to address the entire person in education, scholars in education undertake research into knowledge acquisition, skills, and affective outcomes (cf. Roebben, 1995, 125; Shephard, 2008, 89-90; Neuman & Friedman, 2010). In higher professional education, teachers have traditionally focused on knowledge acquisition and skills, and have paid less attention to affective outcomes, for fear of indoctrination and brainwashing (cf. Shephard, 2008, 89). “The affective domain is about our values, attitudes, and behaviours. It includes, in a hierarchy, an ability to listen, to respond in interactions with others, to demonstrate attitudes or values appropriate to particular situations, to demonstrate balance and consideration,

and at the highest level, to display a commitment to principled practice on a day-to-day basis, alongside a willingness to revise judgement and change behaviour in the light of new evidence.” (ibid., 88) In regard to cognitive outcomes, Bloom’s (1964) taxonomy is well-known. Krathwohl (1964) later developed a taxonomy for the affective domain and managed to relate these objectives to those of cognitive learning (cf. Zondervan, 2016, 230). Although all three domains are supportive for training in *phronesis*, the affective domain shows the most overlap in terms of values, attitudes, and internalisation. In the following paragraphs, different educational perspectives shed light on the transformative character of the pedagogy utilised in the PhWS minor.

Neuman’s Taxonomy of Affective Learning

The minor is designed from the perspective of Neuman’s adaptation of, and alternative to, Krathwohl’s original taxonomy, because she disagreed with Krathwohl’s first two levels, which are ‘receiving’ and ‘responding’ (see figure 3.2). These two levels are about the attitude of the learner towards the learning process, and not about the actual learning. These levels are teaching concerns that occur in every learning context. Neuman’s alternative for the first level is identification, which “(...) requires students to begin to identify and articulate their own beliefs, values, and attitudes.” (Neuman & Friedman, 2010) Students must identify their thoughts and values, and increase their awareness that different perspectives exist.

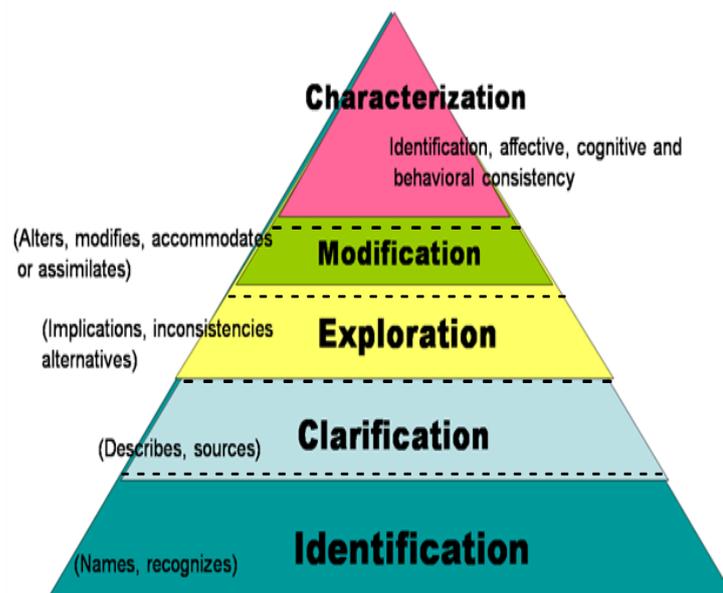


Fig 3.2 Taxonomy of Neuman (Neuman & Friedman, 2010)

The second level consists of clarification of values, which means that students must “(...) choose [...] freely from alternatives, prize and affirm the choice, act upon the choice, and behave consistently with the choice repeatedly over time.” (ibid.) The third level of exploration becomes relevant when students experience the effect of their values in practice. In case of contradictions, or complexity, students have to investigate what the sources of their values are, and how they could differentiate in the interpretation of their values. This process may affect the fourth level, modification, which reflects the insight that is required to modify values and attitudes, or a pattern of values, in an acceptable manner. This fourth level shows considerable resemblance to the repositioning process,

as viewed from a DST-perspective (cf. Gonçalves & Ribeiro, 2013, 304). The final step is identical to Krathwohl's proposal, in referring to the consistent incorporation of the modified behaviour, as a result of a re-interpretation of the value. "The student has developed an understanding of their attitudes, values, beliefs, and feelings, and has organized them into a coherent structure that now characterizes the learner. The extent to which behavioral consistency is demonstrated is a reflection of the extent of internalization as well as maturity." (Neuman & Friedman, 2010) These five levels of learning in the affective domain are part of the tutorials of the PhWS minor, and in different forms are also the subject of reflection instruments that students can use to demonstrate their development in the minor competencies. Neuman's proposal meets the DST-perspective on the functioning of *I*-positions as outlined in chapter 2, as well as the inclusive approach regarding education through life orientation. Although taxonomies might suggest that students have to reach the highest level, we do not intend students to change, or transform according to a pre-determined norm. For this reason, we have inserted a dotted line between the levels. As in chapter 2, a DST-perspective opposes clear-cut levels because these levels are interrelated. The dotted line is meant to represent the interrelation between the levels, as well as the complex intrapersonal dialogue regarding values and affections, which in DST are interrelated *I*-positions. The key word in Neuman's approach to affective learning is internalisation, which is the interplay between reflection and deeper insight on behalf of the student in regard to his/her articulated life orientation, revealing and exploring relations and patterns between behaviour, values, and beliefs, which are parts of his/her life orientation.

Argyris and Schön: Double-Loop Learning

Another concept that sheds light on the transformative pedagogy of the PhWS minor is 'double-loop learning.' The original conceptualisation of Argyris and Schön is that single-loop learning occurs "(...) whenever an error is detected and corrected without questioning or altering the underlying values of the system," and double-loop learning occurs "when mismatches are corrected by first examining and altering the governing variables and then the actions." (Argyris, 1999, 65; Tosey et al., 2011, 292) Although the concept was originally applied in organisational and management discourse, it has since then been incorporated in professional education for various disciplines. There is a lively discussion going on about whether 'triple-loop learning' would not be a better alternative, and whether the original double-loop learning of Argyris and Schön would be sufficient (cf. Tosey et al., 2011). Tosey et al. demonstrate through conceptual research that Argyris and Schön never intended a triple-loop, but already included this triple-loop intention in their double-loop description of learning (ibid., 292). The suggestions of authors who lean on the original concept of double-loop learning, proved insufficient to give a satisfying conceptual description of the added value of triple-loop learning. Moreover, every account of triple-loop learning seems to point to refer to something else, for example, an instrumental elaboration of Bateson's model that emphasises the role of the unconscious, of the aesthetic at a spiritual level (cf. ibid, 299). We will return to Bateson's model in the following paragraph when we discuss Korthagen's core reflection. What is at stake here is a transformative pedagogy regarding personhood and character formation. "Transformative pedagogy is never solely dealing with the presentation of knowledge or facts, nor a technology. It is about creating opportunities for students to respond, to speak, to take a stance, positively or negatively, towards knowledge, facts, practices, doctrines, narratives, traditions and visions. And teachers may feel responsible to create in their school classrooms such opportunities for students in optima forma to open up." (Miedema, 2014, 91) The goal of double-loop learning and transformative pedagogy is to embed a high-quality reflection that supports the student and the professional in their ongoing process of personhood formation. This process aims to give personal meaning to an ever-changing

world, in which students and professionals participate as unique human beings who bear responsibility for what they think and do (cf. Arendt, 1958; Biesta, 2012; Miedema, 2014).

Korthagen: Core Reflection

The Dutch educationalist Korthagen has developed a didactic tool for students and professionals, the ‘onion model,’ to help them connect different elements of educational professionalism. This model (see figure 3.3) explores Korthagen’s concept of ‘core reflection,’ a variant of the Bateson model (Korthagen & Vasalos, 2009, 5). Core reflection envisages to connect all the layers of the onion, also called ‘deep learning’ by Korthagen, because of the intention to include the deepest onion layer (cf. *ibid.*). Each layer of the onion corresponds to a question that helps professionals reflect on their practice. The first levels in figure 3.3 show that the corresponding questions help to identify the context, the behaviour, and the competencies. The three inner levels invite the professional to delve deeper into beliefs, identity, and mission. By beliefs, Korthagen and Vasalos mean “(...) assumptions about the world around us, which are often unconscious.” (*ibid.* 2009, 6) The level of identity concerns the self-image and ‘wanna be-identity’ of the professional. The most inner level is known as ‘the mission,’ or ‘spirituality,’ and is about the inner drives, inspiration, ideals, or the calling of the professional (cf. Korthagen & Lagerwerf, 2011, 107). This level “(...) is about the experience of being part of meaningful wholes and in harmony with supra-individual units such as family, social group, culture and cosmic order.” (Korthagen & Vasalos, 2009, 6) Core reflection is designed to support ‘good professionalism’ by extending awareness of core qualities. “As soon as people are more in touch with their own identity and mission, this not only creates a change of perspective towards the daily hassles of the profession, but it also opens up doors to more

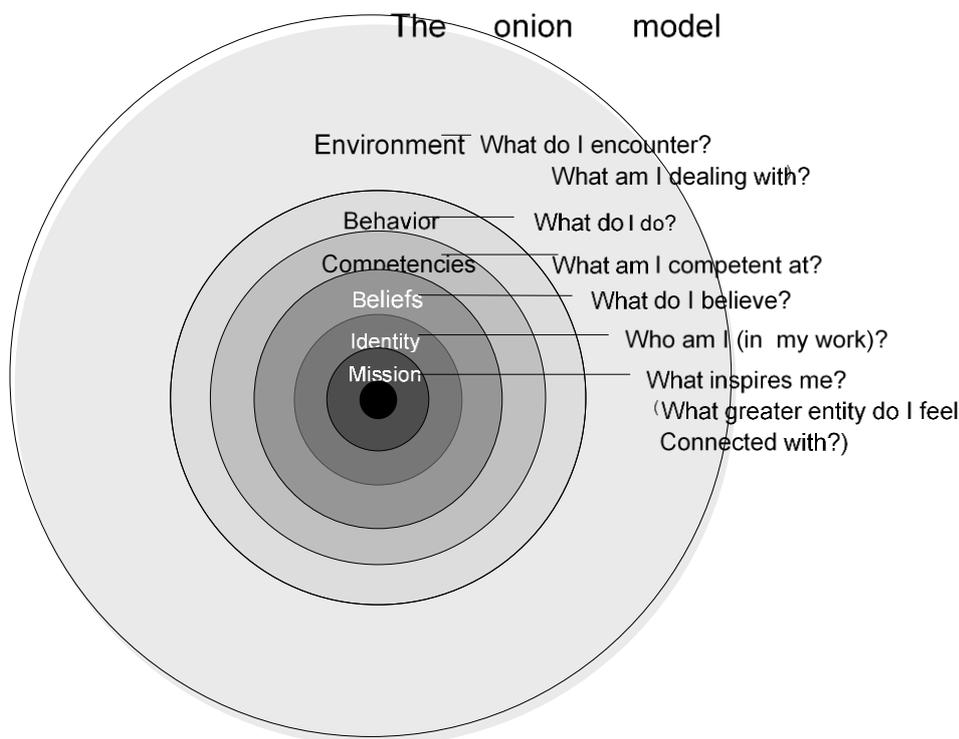


Fig. 3.3 The Onion Model Showing Six Levels of Reflection (Korthagen & Vasalos, 2009)

transformational changes. It may also lead to new types of behaviour that are more in line with people’s missions and inner potentials.” (*ibid.*) Korthagen’s theory has integrated the positive psychology of Csikszentmihalyi, which stresses the importance of looking at the future rather than

staring at the past when reflecting on present actions. The focus on strengths instead of problems is also a characteristic of this psychology, which propagates the concept of ‘flow,’ “(...) as a state of being entirely in the here-and-now, optimally connecting the demands of the situation with one’s inner capacities.” (ibid.) Although Korthagen and Vasalos pursue the integration of the personal and professional domain, they also claim that deep professional development can take place without addressing biographic issues (cf., ibid., 13). The motivation to withdraw from biographic subjects in this positive psychology is the allergy against endlessly digging into one’s personal problems. In general, we agree with their doubts about a Freudian therapeutic approach in education. In an educational environment, teachers have to be aware of their primary objective, which is education and not therapy. However, there is a connection between values and biography. The dialogical self theory as set out in chapter 2 shows how values are bound to past experiences. A narrative approach justifies the fact that biography always plays a role, but can also offer support with the voicing of promoter positions. A one-sided focus on positivity in life does not do justice to the complexity of life. This last remark brings us to a point of criticism regarding the onion model. In vertically peeling off the layers of the onion, the impression might be given that at the end the core can be found. What is this core? Elsewhere, Korthagen compares this core with ‘self-actualisation’ in a Western philosophical paradigm, but at the same time he refers to Eastern traditions when he describes this inner part as the Self, referring to a transcendental reality (cf. Evelein & Korthagen, 2011, 27). Although this vertical onion model helps with relating different elements in reflection in order to extend awareness of good professionalism, the combination of horizontal and vertical approaches in the dialogical self theory seems to respect the complexity of life in a different way. In the PhWS minor, students are instructed to use the onion model to describe their overall development, based on a mix of narrative-biographical reflections and reflections that use an adaptation of the ALACT-model (see below).

Korthagen’s work has had a significant impact on professional education, and has contributed to the improvement of the quality of reflection. He is critical of how teachers use the ALACT-model of Kolb and Fry in an easy-fix instrumental way to solve problems, without touching upon the underlying issues (cf. Korthagen & Vasalos, 2009, 2). The ALACT-model (see figure 3.4) is a hermeneutic reflection circle that can be used to define an alternative method of action in a given situation.

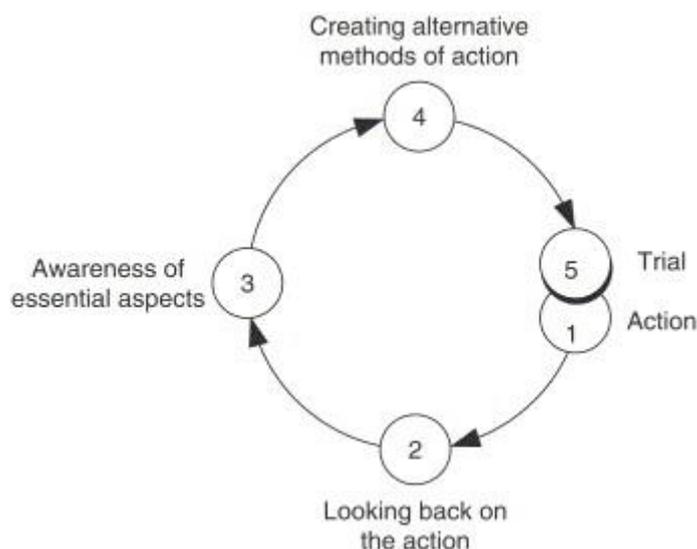


Fig. 3.4 The Original ALACT-Model of Kolb and Fry (Korthagen & Vasalos, 2009, 3)

Korthagen and Vasalos have developed an additional tool to articulate retrospectively what a student or professional in a specific situation wanted, thought, and felt. Research has shown that students experience reflection as superficial, as a result of a quick-fix attitude and a predominant focus on what went wrong (cf. *ibid.*). Another problem is the amount of reflections students are asked to produce to assess their progress, which drives students to look for situations to reflect upon without the internal motivation to make progress, but only to satisfy the teacher. As a response to this superficial use, Korthagen and Vasalos have further developed the onion model to prevent that underlying issues, like ideals and values, are not touched upon. Korthagen's intention is not that teachers help students to reflect, but that students learn *how* to reflect (cf. *ibid.*). However, the instrumental use of reflection tools will continue to exist as long as instrumentality prevails over content in general educational practice and culture. Korthagen and Vasalos have developed an alternative for the original ALACT-model (see figure 3.5) to address the above-mentioned thoughts, feelings and needs, which must be brought to full awareness. "The fact that ideals and core qualities are so closely connected is in line with the onion model. Ideals often resonate with the most inner level of mission: they have to do with our deepest desires, our sense of meaning in life, and thus with our core, our full potential as human beings." (*ibid.*)

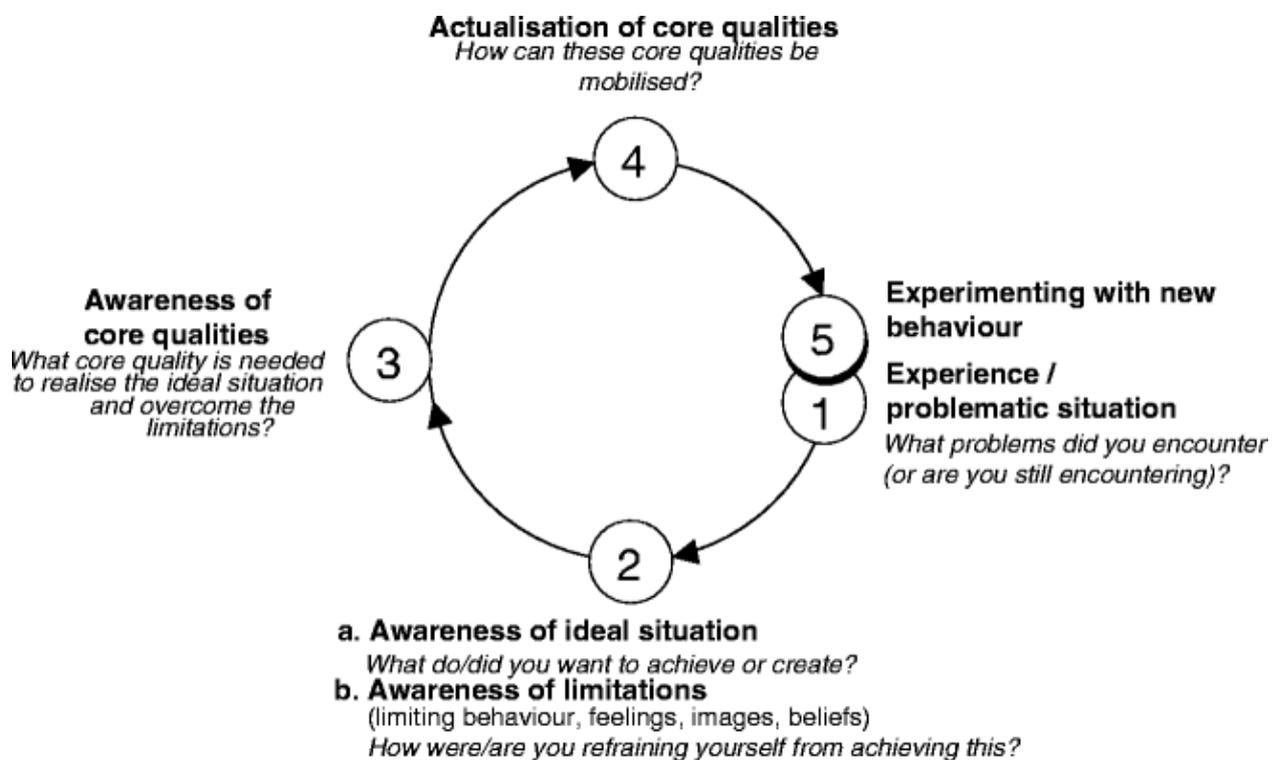


Fig. 3.5 Phase model of Core Reflection (Korthagen & Vasalos, 2009, 8)

In the PhWS minor, the onion model is used for a helicopter view, or meta-reflection, which collects situational reflections to describe the overall development. For these situational reflections, an alternative list of questions has been developed to address the concerns of Korthagen and Vasalos that students learn to reflect, that thoughts, feelings, and needs (desires) are addressed, in addition to the significance of biography from a DST-perspective. This list of 'guiding questions' blends the triad of thinking, wanting and feeling, by addressing the other and the self (see table 3B).

Situations – encounter:	Answers
1. What was your preliminary intention? How did you end up in the situation or encounter?	
2. What actually happened?	
3. What feeling predominated? Can you describe your feelings?	
4. What were you thinking?	
5. What did you do and how did you do it?	
The following questions invite you to relate your answers to your life orientation	
6. Can you relate this experience (summary of questions 2-5) to an element of your life story?	
7. Regardless of your experience: what do you think to be of significant value to the other in this situation?	
8. How do you relate the answer to question 7 to one of your core values?	
9. What wisdom does this experience grant you? What did you find out?	

Table 3B List of Guiding Questions (Developed by Blaauwendraad, De Rooij, Van der Zande, s.d.)

On the handout, which contains the list of guiding questions, it is clearly stated that students do not have to answer all these questions and that only some catchwords will suffice. The questionnaire should function as a tool to consciously enter a situation, and to compile a series of compelling experiences for the final assessment at the end of the minor. The students are not asked to elaborate on all their adventures, but are instructed to limit themselves to three core experiences that are significant for their development. In adding the elements of life orientation, the intention is not just to articulate what went wrong and to focus thoroughly on core qualities. These nine guiding questions are designed to help the students describe the underlying phenomena of *phronesis*, which require a moment of interruption. The meaning of interruption in education through life orientation is the subject of the last section of this chapter, which discusses Biesta's philosophy of subjectification.

3.3 A Pedagogy of Interruption

In a time of increasing resistance to a narrow focus on the measurability and quantifiability of learning outcomes, the Dutch educational philosopher Biesta pleads for a renewed attention for the philosophical roots of pedagogy. This attention must let education prevail over what he calls learnification. According to Biesta, learnification symbolises the individual approach to education, which is essentially a relational activity between teacher and pupil. Moreover, learning is a process in a neutral sense, in which the goal of learning is left undefined (cf. Biesta, 2012, 29). The objective of education – a terminology that Biesta prefers to 'learning' – is threefold: qualification, socialisation, and subjectification. These three educational purposes refer to separate domains, and are interrelated. The domain of qualification has to do with how people become qualified; it is about knowledge, skills, values, and dispositions (cf. Biesta, 2013, 4 + 64). In the PhWS minor, students have to acquire factual knowledge and skills that enable them to conduct a good dialogue. The domain of socialisation refers to the way in which individuals become a member of a larger whole, for example, a specific professional group, or a society. In the PhWS minor, it is not the incorporation in an existing group, but the formation of a group that functions as a laboratory to enter into a discussion about subjects relating to life orientation and normative professionalisation. The third domain, known as subjectification, "(...) has to do with emancipation and freedom and with the responsibility that comes with such freedom." (Biesta, 2013, 4) Biesta draws on Arendt and Levinas in his conceptualisation of subjectification, which, as an addition to terminology for education, is meant to safeguard the uniqueness of the person, which cannot be a prescribed outcome or objective of an

educational process. Biesta states that qualification and socialisation are educational tools to stimulate the emergence of the student's own voices, although qualification and socialisation represent the voices of certain communities, traditions, and shared discourses (cf. Biesta, 2012, 87). Subjectification refers to situations in which only your own unique voice sounds like an answer, for example when someone is dying (cf. *ibid.*).

In his book *The Beautiful Risk of Education*, Biesta begins with a reading of Genesis by Caputo (cf. 2013, 13 and following.) Genesis contains two different creation stories that result in two different images of God. Caputo's exegesis teaches that the first story is the creation of the earth in six days, depicting a satisfied and trusting God (*Elohim*). The second story is the narrative of Adam and Eve, who live in paradise in harmony with a single commandment 'Do not eat from the tree of wisdom!' This story depicts a nervous and distrustful God (*Yahweh*), who tries to control men by setting rules. "What makes the two creation stories different is not their account of creation, but the different *attitudes* Elohim and Yahweh take to creation." (*ibid.*, 16) The first story allows an open end; the Elohim-God trusts that the human being is good, without much need for interference. These two types of attitudes are symbolic of how to be a teacher regarding the 'emergence of subjectivity.' This exegesis explains the concept of subjectification – a concept that according to Biesta certainly does not enclose essentialist concepts like 'identity' or 'development' (cf. *ibid.*, 18) – in light of the ethical-existential approach of Levinas, who characterises human subjectivity in relation to "an *ethical* relationship, a relationship of infinite and unconditional responsibility for the Other." (*ibid.*, 19) For Biesta's line of argumentation, it is important to reiterate Levinas' thought that it "(...) is a question of *my* unique subjectivity as it emerges from my singular, unique responsibility." (*ibid.*, 20) The response is unique because you and I can only react in our unique way, we are irreplaceable. Like in the Biblical story describing the Elohim-God, teachers can create the conditions for the emergence of subjectivity, or they can disrupt this emergence if they are afraid of undefinable results. Without being able to count on any particular outcome, the teacher could nevertheless practice a pedagogy of interruption that opens up a space to answer freely, or answer not at all, but always in a unique way. Biesta describes a pedagogy of interruption in ethical terms by saying that Levinas provides us "(...) with an *ethics* of subjectivity." (*ibid.*) Levinas does indeed have an ethical view of subjectivity, but in a twofold way, which in this research leads to a slightly different conceptualisation of a pedagogy of interruption.

Levinas takes an existentialist view of the human being instead of an essentialist one. A statement that many authors quote from *Totalité et infini*, is:

"Life is an existence that does not precede its essence. Its essence makes up its worth [*prix*]; and here value [*valeur*] constitutes being. The reality of life is already on the level of happiness and in this sense beyond ontology. Happiness is not an accident of being, since being is risked for happiness." (Levinas, 1980, 112)⁸

Levinas describes a positive beginning of existence, a carefree enjoyment of life, '*la jouissance*.' Life has an orientation towards goodness and culminates in joy, which designates a personal enjoyment of the empirical environment (cf. Careau, 2002, 35). "To enjoy without utility, in pure loss, gratuitously, without referring to anything else, in pure expenditure – this is the human." (Levinas,

⁸ "La vie est une existence qui ne précède pas son essence. Celle-ci en fait le prix; et la valeur, ici, constitue l'être. La réalité de la vie est déjà au niveau du bonheur et, dans ce sens, au delà de l'ontologie. Le bonheur n'est pas un accident de l'être, puisque l'être se risque pour le bonheur." (Lévinas, 1961, 115; cf. Careau, 2002, 35; Guibal, 2001, 682)

1980, 133)⁹ Human subjectivity lies in the personal variants of joy and goodness (cf. Careau, 2002, 35). Careau states that Levinas does not define personhood in ontological terms, but in terms of axiological conditions by using the theme of goodness, which shapes an ethical identity (cf. *ibid.*, 36). This first joy is interrupted by the manifestation of the other. At this point, Biesta starts his line of argumentation, in conceptualising a pedagogy of interruption.

A pedagogy of interruption creates the possibility for the subjectivity to emerge, in accordance with Biesta's focus on what Levinas describes as "the transcendence and the infinity through the face of the other" (cf. Careau, 2002, 34). In addition to Levinas' works, Biesta is inspired by Arendt's philosophy of the *vita activa* (active life), in which she distinguishes three modalities of the human condition: labour, work, and action. Labour refers to our biological processes and physical survival. Work enhances the creativity of human beings and generates products that change the environment. "While labor and work have to do with instrumentality and necessity and with aims and ends that are external to the activity, action, the third mode of the *vita activa*, is an end in itself, and its defining quality is *freedom*." (Biesta, 2013, 105) Human beings can freely create a new beginning over and over again, something that Arendt calls *natality* (cf. Arendt, 1961). Freedom in Arendt's work is not a phenomenon of the will; it is not something personal, it has to do with the public domain. "What makes each of us unique is our potential to do something that has not been done before." (Biesta, 2013, 105) We are dealing here with the fundamental contingency or freedom of every human action, which Arendt marked as 'coming into presence.' But the freedom to come into presence, as a new beginning in the public realm, needs an answer of the others to be completed. As human beings, we cannot act in isolation but only in a world of plurality, which is difficult and complicated, but always possible, over and over again (cf. Biesta, 2013, 106). If plurality is a *conditio sine qua non* for human action, education must protect, and even respect this diversity. Plurality is the necessary context for a person to come into the world, which happens when others respond to what I have begun.

Human unicity takes place, subjectification occurs when we are confronted with 'otherness' and 'diversity.' A pedagogy of interruption envisages this confrontation with diversity, which challenges students to respond with their own voice (cf. Biesta, 2012, 90). Unlike Biesta, we would like to broaden the concept of a 'pedagogy of interruption' to include Levinas' concept of 'la jouissance' as an original state of life. It is not *ataraxia*, but an activity oriented towards happiness and well-being (cf. Careau, 2002, 35). In our view on interruption, it is the first existential description of subjectivity, which is interrupted. This is the primary interruption; the interruption of the self-evident course of things, the obviousness of human life. This interruption has a character that differs from what Biesta describes as the ethical responsibility to respond in a unique way to the manifestation of the other (cf. Biesta, 2013, 20). This responsibility is certainly part of the ethical character of Levinas' existential philosophy, but in our opinion, there is also room to interpret the interruption in a more general existential way. "Education's primordial character is thus situated in the possibility of being disturbed, involving something incoming that disquiets before one has the ability to judge its propriety." (Joldersma, 2011, 444) Joldersma argues that interruption is a disturbance, which he calls inspiration. "Inspiration breaks up the naiveté of one's understanding, showing its impermanence and contingency." (*ibid.*, 445) In the PhWS minor, a pedagogy of interruption entails an education that questions the simple, mostly carefree way of life and sets in motion a process of reflection aimed at defining and articulating personal values within a more extensive life orientation. The interruption is meant to inspire students from different angles, in the hope that at least one

⁹ "Jouir sans utilité, en pure perte, gratuitement, sans renvoyer à rien d'autre, en pure dépense – voilà l'humain." (Lévinas, 1961, 141)

perspective will open up the process of reflection. In addition, teachers should also be open and attentive to the fact that they are being interrupted by their pupils and students. A pedagogy of interruption requires a pedagogical relationship in which teacher and pupil interrupt each other equally, which means that they both receive inspiration and consequently justify each other's dignity. It is the responsibility of the teacher to lead by example.

The minor programme provides many opportunities for interruption. First of all, the curriculum of the minor functions as an interruption of ordinary life, because most of the content is new to the students compared to their previous studies. Secondly, as part of the programme, the tutorials operate as interruptions. For example, some students are unfamiliar with the experience of silence in meditation, which provides the opportunity to register physical reactions. A significant interruption is a three-day stay in a Catholic monastery, where students meet and have conversations with the monks who have chosen for a different life orientation than the one they are used to. During these three days, the students visit other holy places, like a mosque, a mandir, and a gurdwara. There are also a few tutorials like meditative painting or visiting a busy train station in a period of total silence. From a research perspective, this educational interruption is important because it creates an opportunity to reread the first articulation of their life orientation and to write additions. In the next chapter, this narrative process will be discussed in light of the methodological framework.

Chapter 4 Methodological Framework

This ideographic study employs a narrative inquiry approach that is traditionally part of the interpretative paradigm (cf. Creswell, 2013, 70; Riessman, 2000). The object of analysis are the students' narratives, which articulate their life orientation. They composed their articulations during the minor programme, and they redefined these as young professionals three or four years after their graduation. In addition to the aforementioned social-constructivist ontology, section 4.1 encompasses a theoretical description of the narrative approach that was applied in the empirical part of this research project. A description of the data collection, and the various methodological steps, provides the structure for the following sections. For convenient reading, research Cohort 2012-2013 has been labelled "A," and Cohort 2013-2014 has been labelled "B."

Section 4.2 consists of a presentation of the student Cohort-A and Cohort-B. The cohorts are incomparable due to a necessary adjustment of the list of facilitating questions in Cohort-B. This change was necessary because of the results of the students' and teachers' educational evaluations, and the elaboration of theoretical concepts. Both cohorts include a relatively large number of participants for narrative research. This will be explained later. This section concludes with some ethical considerations regarding this research project.

In section 4.3, the data collection procedures are given full attention, as an indispensable analytical step in narrative research. Subsections 4.3.1 and 4.3.2 present the lists of facilitating questions, which were used for Cohort-A and -B respectively. In section 4.4, the methodology and the tools of analysis applied in Cohort-A are presented. In section 4.5, the analytical steps and instruments used for Cohort-B are explained further. The changes to the data collection instrument led to changes in the analysis procedure as well, which were necessary to answer the third and fourth empirical research questions. The last section describes some validation strategies to document the 'accuracy' of this narrative inquiry approach.

4.1 Narrative Inquiry Approach

Since the 1960s, the 'narrative turn' has entered many disciplines (cf. Riessman, 2000). Czarniawska (2005) distinguishes a narrative from a logico-scientific mode of knowing. "The narrative mode of knowing consists in organizing experience with the help of a scheme assuming the intentionality of human action." (ibid., 7) In a narrative approach, there is an openness to the nature of the connection between events, which is different from the strict adherence to cause-effect law within a logico-scientific perspective. Czarniawska explains the function of a narrative as reconciling the motives with the causes within the interpretation of action. "When a human event is said not to make sense, it is usually not because a person is unable to place it in the proper category. The difficulty stems, instead, from a person's inability to integrate the event into a plot whereby it becomes understandable in the context of what has happened.... Thus, narratives *exhibit* an explanation instead of demonstrating it." (Czarniawska quoting Polkinghorne, 2005, 8) The primary research interest of this study is the articulation of life orientations, or – from a DST-perspective – the articulation of multi-voiced selves, which encompass the experiences of the participants. Clandinin and Connelly stress – in line with John Dewey – the importance of understanding *experience* both in its personal and social aspect (cf. 2000, 2). The experiences of individuals always take place in a relationship, in a social context. The reflective meaning-giving narratives that delineate life orientations in this study, are voiced experiences that relate past, present, and future at a specific place, which exhibit from a narrative perspective how the personal and the social are interrelated. According to Creswell, narrative research fits well with the interest to explain the

complexity of the data without isolating small parts of texts from the entire narrative context (cf. 2013, 113).

During the minor programme *Philosophy. World Religions. Spirituality* (PhWS), students write a life orientation narrative by using facilitating questions, which support and stimulate their reflection process. They articulate their experiences in a narrative, which exhibits how they perceive the continuity and discontinuity of their lives in a specific spatio-temporal context. Dewey qualified continuity as a criterion of experience because it grows out of other experiences (cf. Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, 2). "(...) [A] narrative is understood as a spoken or written text giving an account of an event/action or series of events/actions, chronologically connected." (Czarniawska, 2005, 17) This very broad definition could encompass almost anything, but what is important is the ordering principle. Other definitions focus on the sense-giving character of narratives. "With narrative, people strive to configure space and time, deploy cohesive devices, reveal identity of actors and relatedness of actions across scenes. They create themes, plots, and drama. In so doing, narrators make sense of themselves, social situations, and history." (Riessman quoting Bamberg and McCabe, 2000) Helping students to make sense of themselves is one of the goals of education through life orientation. Moreover, in the dialogical self theory (DST), this sense-making process is presented as the voicing of a positioning process. The analysis and description of the voicing of these positioning processes, is the subject of this narrative research.

Creswell (2013) and Riessman (2005b) describe the procedures for conducting narrative research. The first step is to collect the data, which can be written stories or narratives. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) designate these data as field texts, which are the raw data for the researchers. In this respect, Clandinin and Connelly devote a great deal of attention to the transition from field texts to research texts. "In general, field texts are not constructed with reflective intent. (...) Research texts are at a distance from field texts and grow out of the repeated asking of questions concerning meaning and significance." (ibid., 132) The chosen methodology in this research project made the participants into narrative inquirers themselves, since their life orientation documents were written with reflective intent. During the first four weeks of the PhWS minor, the students in both cohorts wrote the first articulation of their life orientation in black. An essential step in the methodology was the collection of the student's written additions to their first articulations. Following the three-day stay at the monastery, as described in chapter 3, the students reread their articulation and added new words, new insights, and anything that came to their mind as relevant *in a different colour*. They were required to do this exercise at least one more time – once again in a different colour – at the end of the minor programme. These 'coloured' methodological steps in the data collection enabled us to oversee the articulation process, and the hermeneutics. Usually, the research texts emerge out of the field texts by repeatedly asking the participants to elaborate on meaning and significance. In this research project, however, the participants themselves reflectively constructed the research texts. The difference with Clandinin and Connelly's description is that the facilitating questions remained the same and did not change, as would be the case in an interview between researcher and participant about a field text, or about a first articulated narrative.

The second step in narrative research is the *restorying, or retelling* of the story. The critical aspect of sequentiality concerns the chronological order of the narrative. There are differences in the approaches to retelling, but most of them have a three-dimensional character, which encompasses time, place, and interaction. (cf. Creswell et al., 2007, 244). In our research project, we used this three-dimensional approach in our analysis, as will become clear when we describe the analytical instruments of this study. Although the researcher did not rewrite the texts into a narrative structure with attention for a beginning, middle, end, and turning points (cf. Riessman, 2005b, 403), the

participants themselves reread the texts and added new text to the original narrative. In fact, the methodological step of collecting data through a rereading process merged with the methodological step of restoring and retelling.

A possible third step is a deconstruction of the stories, which is evidenced in such “(...) analytic strategies as exposing dichotomies, examining silences, and attending to disruptions and contractions.” (Creswell et al., 2007, 244) This last step was part of our research, as will be explained in section 4.5. In this section, we describe this final analytical activity in order to describe how ambivalence or narrative correlations play a role in life orientation, in its relation to normative professionalisation. Although it seems that a narrative inquiry comes down to following a linear process of steps, this is not the case. This method of analysis is layered in its complexity (cf. Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, 132). Before presenting the analysis, a description of both cohorts is given in the next section.

4.2 Description of the Two Student Cohorts

The PhWS minor always starts in September and ends six months later, in January. The first group of students, Cohort-A, followed the minor programme in 2012-2013, the first academic year of the minor. This group consisted of 46 students. The first criterion to become a member of the research cohort, was to give written permission for the use of the written narrative in research, which resulted in two withdrawals. The second criterion was the timely completion of the exam programme, which three students failed to do, due to personal reasons. A third criterion was the production of at least some additions to their self-written narratives during the minor programme, and while doing so, they had to follow the structure of the facilitating questions. One of the students’ narratives did not meet this last criterion, which brought Cohort-A to a total of 40 students. Table 4A shows the original study background of the 40 students who participated in this research cohort. In Cohort-A, six students were male (15%) and 34 female (85%). All students were between 18 to 28 years old, except for two female students between 48 and 58 years old.

The following step in the research project was to ask former students of the minor, who were now in their juniorship period – the first working period just after graduation – to reread their narrative and, where possible or relevant, to add new words and insights in response to the facilitating questions. For the Cohort-A students it was four years ago that they completed the minor programme. All 40 students reacted positively, but seven of them had to withdraw for personal reasons, which resulted in a response rate of 83 % (N=33).

Study	Minor Programme		Juniorship	
	Number	%	Number	%
Various Studies	4	10%	3	10%
Journalism and Communication Studies	2		2	
Marketing and Commercial Economics	1		0	
Human Resource Management	1		1	
Social Work	8	20 %	5	15%
Social Pedagogical Services	2		2	
Social Work and Social Services	3		2	
Pedagogy	1		1	
Creative Therapy	1		0	
Cultural Social Work	1		0	

Educational Studies	28	70 %	25	75%
Education – Teacher Sign Language	1		1	
Education – Teacher Grade-two Qualification in Secondary School	10		9	
Education – Teacher Primary Education	17		15	
TOTAL N	N=40		N=33	
<i>Response rate in juniorship</i>	(33/40) 83%			

Table 4A Studies and Disciplines in Cohort-A (2012-2013)

The second group of students followed the minor programme in 2013-2014. Initially, Cohort-B consisted of 57 students, including two who withdrew at an early stage due to study problems. The first criterion to become a member of the research cohort, was to give written permission for the use of the written narrative in research, which resulted in four withdrawals. Of the remaining 51 students, seven did not meet the second criterion, i.e., the timely completion of the exam programme. These seven students had already suffered serious delays in their studies. In the end, this second cohort consisted of 44 students, of which eleven were male (23%) and thirty-six female (77%). In this group, 42 students were between 18 and 28 years old, one male student was between 28 and 38 years, and one female student was between 48 and 58 years old.

For the final step of the research process, these 44 students were also asked to reread their narratives three years after their graduation. Although everyone responded positively and willingly, only 35 students managed to complete the exercise on time, which resulted in a final response rate of 80% (N=35). Table 4B shows the various disciplines of the students who followed the minor.

Study	Minor Programme		Juniorship	
	Number	%	Number	%
Various Studies	8	18%	7	20%
Journalism and Communication Studies	2		1	
Psychology	2		2	
Health Care Studies	1		1	
Business Management and Small BM	2		2	
Safety & Security Management Studies	1		1	
Social Work	18	41 %	15	43%
Social Pedagogical Services	3		2	
Social Work and Social Services	8		6	
Pedagogy (+ Ecological Pedagogy)	5		5	
Creative Therapy	2		2	
Educational Studies	18	41 %	13	37%
Education – Teacher Sign Language	2		2	
Education – Teacher Grade-two Qualification in Secondary School	7		4	
Education – Teacher Primary Education	9		7	
TOTAL N	N=44		N=35	
<i>Response rate in juniorship</i>	(35/44) 80%			

Table 4B Studies and Disciplines in Cohort-B (2013-2014)

The Justification of the Number of Participants

Riessman points out that researchers who intend to use a narrative approach in their research, may be tempted to conduct a study with a large number of participants, an approach that she classifies as

positivist reductionism (cf. Riessman, 2005b, 398). In addition, Creswell recommends focusing on a single individual (or two to three individuals) to make a 'good' narrative study (cf., 2013, 259). At first glance, this study could be criticised because of the relatively large 'N' in both tables. Yet each qualitative research project has its unique context. Creswell states that qualitative research is not 'off-the-shelf,' and that qualitative researchers have to learn by doing (cf. Creswell, 2013, 182). However, for scientific reliability, it is necessary to justify these numbers.

A first factor that enabled narrative research with a large number of participants were the close ties between the research project and the PhWS minor. From the start, the minor and the research project were conceived as a two-part project, with an educational component and a research component. This is also reflected in the researcher's involvement in the minor: he coordinates the programme and is one of the lecturers, primarily teaching philosophy and Jewish, Christian and Islamic religion. A second enabling factor was the integrated supervision by fellow lecturers of the minor. A third factor that should not be underestimated was that the PhWS minor formed the dialogical context of the study, which provided a framework for asking questions and searching for meaning. A fourth factor that made a large number of participants possible was that the students themselves were the first-level narrative inquirers. They evaluated and re-evaluated their descriptions. The project researcher took on the role of a second-level narrative researcher. This stratified methodology allowed a larger number of participants to look for themes that crossed the various narratives. He accomplished this by focusing on the relations between a selected number of topics concerning life orientation and normative professionalisation.

Ethical Considerations

An ethical question is whether or not an educational programme can be used for research purposes. The research data were originally part of an educational exercise, the articulation of a life orientation. The articulations primarily served an educational goal, with no interference from the research. After the students had completed their study programme, they were asked for written permission to use their narratives for research. They were assured that their narratives would be given pseudonyms and that all names and possible references to their private lives would not be published. Three or four years later, when the students were asked to repeat the exercise, they were again asked to confirm their participation by written consent. If any students had not agreed, their narratives would have been removed from the study, even from the previous analytical steps.

4.3 Data Collection: A List of Facilitating Questions

In section 4.2, a reference was already made to a list of facilitating questions. This list was the most important tool in this narrative study for collecting the self-written life orientation narratives. Written articulations were chosen because students at a University of Applied Sciences must be able to express themselves in writing as highly qualified professionals. As presented in chapter 3, there are many tutorials in the minor programme that invite students to learn through experience and imagination. However, students at this level are also expected to translate these experiences and imagination into a verbal narrative. The methodological choice for self-written texts, instead of (semi-) structured interviews, was meant to minimize the influence of the researcher, who is one of the lecturers of the minor. In written texts, participants experience more control over their narratives compared to face-to-face interviews in which they are asked to answer questions orally, directed by an interviewer (cf. Martin, 1998). The Canadian philosopher Martin, in turn, ascribes a possibility for personal growth and transformation to the use of self-written texts, which is part of the educational objective of the minor.

We made the deliberate choice to work with open, or facilitating, questions to invite students to articulate their life orientation. The first reason to work with facilitating questions was to start a process of reflection, which should encourage students to express themselves in their own words. This thinking process is used to address the 'slow' questions, which Kunneman (2009) mentions as part of an existential learning process. Life orientation issues require introspection, and time for contemplation, which does not necessarily lead to quick and immediate answers. Dealing with these questions requires time, as well as a safe space which allow students to show their vulnerability (cf. Roebben, 2016, 2; Anbeek, 2013, 50). The allotted time of four weeks to answer the facilitating questions for the first time was a measure that acknowledged the 'slowness' of a reflective process about life orientation themes. Following this methodological substantiation of the use of self-written texts and open questions in our research project, we will now give a detailed description of the data collection procedure.

4.3.1. Data Collection Procedure

In the first week of the minor, the students were given a list of facilitating questions (see Appendices B and C) that they had to answer within four weeks. They received the following instructions:

- The questions are facilitating, not meant to direct the articulation of your life orientation;
- If you can't come up with an answer, leave a blank space, or simply write that no words come to your mind at this moment;
- Be aware that your appointed peer student, who will give you feedback, and your supervisor will read your document; you are the editor of your life narrative, so you decide what does and doesn't end up in this personal report;
- This document is like a snapshot, which means you shouldn't focus on completeness because your life orientation will change over time;
- Do not postpone the completion of this document until the last day. Please schedule this exercise during the coming month, because it takes time and space to perform this introspection.

After this four-week period, the students had to send their document to their peer student, who had been appointed to them to give feedback during the minor programme. The students could ask anyone for input, but at the very least, they had to collect this feedback from their appointed peer student and make use of it in their reflections during the minor. The students were also required to send the first articulation of their life orientation to their supervisor, to enable her or him to become acquainted with their life story. Their supervisor not only read the narratives, but could also cautiously add additional open questions in the margins to support further introspection. For example, if a student listed 'respect' as his/her most important value without providing further explanation, the supervisor could have asked 'What do you mean by 'respect?'. The primary focus was providing support for the inter- and intrapersonal dialogues, rather than on the integration of feedback in a written text. This supervisor feedback did not consist of comments on language, grammar, or evaluative remarks about the content, which could have been too leading and might have restricted the student's 'free speech.' Immediately after the three-day stay at the monastery, the supervisors sent the feedback to their assigned students, who could use the feedback, which included open questions, during the rereading process.

After the inspirational days at the monastery, the students first received the instruction to reread their narratives and their supervisor's feedback with the additional open questions. Secondly, they were asked to add new insights which they had gained during the inspirational days, as well as descriptions of other moments of inspiration, frustration, and dialogue, in the upcoming six to seven

weeks. This methodological step was implemented because of our research interest in intrapersonal dialogical processes. Intrapersonal dialogue, as explained in chapter 2 during the discussion of DST, can incorporate external influences, physical dialogical partners, and imaginative dialogical partners. These contributions to the intrapersonal dialogue can become explicit in a written text and trigger a re-articulation of a particular life orientation issue. Moreover, this methodological step made the written narrative a dialogical partner for the students when they reread it.

The students had to write these additions in a different colour, without removing the original text. They were free to repeat this exercise as many times as they wanted, but they had to do it at least twice. This was a criterion for their assessment at the end of the minor programme. However, the students were not required to add new insights for each facilitating question. Students at least had to demonstrate that they had reread their document and write answers to two of the six facilitating questions. This minimum requirement had a double function: activating the students and preventing an excessive workload, which might prompt the students to write something down solely to please the assessor.

After completing the minor programme, the students were asked whether they wanted to make their narratives available for research. The project researcher deliberately asked this question after the completion of the programme in order to avoid influencing the process of narrative inquiry. To become a member of the 'research group,' students first had to give permission that their self-written narratives could be used as data for the research project. For ethical reasons, they were asked to give their written approval by signing a contract, to make this consent official. In this written agreement, the researcher promised to keep the narratives anonymous and to handle them with discretion and care. In the second stage of the research project, when students had entered their period of juniorship, they were again asked to participate in the final part of the data collection. At this moment, the students could still choose to withdraw or to actively participate in the ongoing study.

4.3.2 List of Facilitating Questions in Cohort-A

For a good understanding of the data collection in the two research cohorts, a separate introduction is necessary. As described in the introduction to this chapter, an adjustment of the list of facilitating questions in Cohort-B was necessary for several reasons. In this paragraph, the six facilitating questions and their subquestions as used in Cohort-A are explained in further detail. The original decisions and theoretical background that informed these questions are explained. The integral list of facilitating questions – as handed out to the students – can be found in Appendix B.

0. First Articulation

- *Try to describe your personal view on life, in one paragraph.*

The original intention was that students would articulate their first thoughts and associations about their life view. The question was deliberately left very open, so as not to be too directive for the students.

Roots

- **Which values were important at home during your childhood?**
- **Which of these values are still relevant to you, and which values have lost their relevance for you?**
- **Did religion play a role at home? If so, which religion? If not, what was the understanding of religion at home?**

- **How would you characterise the view on life at home as well as your grandparent's view on life? What impact do these views have on you today?**

This group of questions about the students' roots was designed to invite the students to articulate *I*-positions, which could reveal something of the intrapersonal dialogue of the extended self. These *I*-positions are internalised others, such as parents and grandparents, who receive a voice within the society of mind. These questions thematise the experienced existential and moral learning process by focusing on values and life views. The third question on the role and place of religion was designed to motivate the students to voice the *I*-position of a larger group or culture, which determines a view on life. Asking explicitly about religion is less open but justifiable within the context of these four questions, because these questions function as reminders. Moreover, answers to this question function as a context for other views on the meta-empirical. Another reason for the focus on religion in the third question is the curriculum of the minor, which includes lectures about different religions.

Your life story

- **Which moments in life have been decisive for who you are now? What have been the determining events, encounters, turning points, or decisive moments in your life?**
- **Which persons played an important role?**

Critical incidents and significant others, like parents and friends, are important 'building blocks' in the construction of the self. In DST-terms, these building blocks become *I*-positions in the society of mind. Some positions can be very dominant or destructive, others can be constructive, or passive. The reason to ask students to describe the most influential events in their lives, and significant persons from their biography, is to create a narrative context for their life views.

Sources of inspiration

- **What are your sources of inspiration? Think for example of specific stories, poems, rituals, music, persons, and films, etc.**
- **Which sources of inspiration would you like to explore?**
- **What significance do spiritual and religious sources hold for you? (Remember also the tutorials in the minor programme on spirituality)**

In DST, sources of inspiration could be designated as *I*-positions, or even as former or still functioning promoter positions. These *I*-positions might reveal the hypergoods, as discussed in chapter 2, because intrinsic values are a focus for present actions and future goals in personal and professional lives. According to Taylor (cf. 1989, 34), hypergoods are often implicit. Therefore, different perspectives were incorporated in the list of facilitating questions as a way to explore hypergoods. This group of questions was designed to address the spiritual dimension of the self. Korthagen (2004) designates this dimension as the core of his onion model, which functions as a reflection tool to explore different layers of the self (see chapter 2). The last question in this series was related to the minor programme. Different tutorials on spirituality provided opportunities to get acquainted with various spiritual, secular, and religious forms of inspiration. The intention was to broaden the focus on possible sources of inspiration.

Values and normative professionalisation

Values can be sources and determinative factors for actions.

- **Which values are important to you? What do you specifically understand by these values?**

- **What is the relationship between these values and your view on life?**
- **Can you give an example of how you relate these values to personal norms?**
- **Can you give an example of how you relate these values to professional conduct?**

In normative professionalisation, values play a significant role in the process of judgment (cf. Kunneman, 2009; Van Ewijk & Kunneman, 2013). The articulation of values can help students to distinguish their values from other values, represented by other persons and organisations. The purpose of these questions was to inventorise the values of students, within the broader context of their life views.

A conscious choice was made to begin the list of facilitating questions on this topic with two questions about personal values, without specifically inquiring after professional values. The purpose of this strategy was to enable a description of how personal values influence professional conduct. The assumption was that specific questions on professional values or beliefs might result in more technical, or theoretical articulations on the part of the students. For example, student-teachers might have listed ‘relationship, competence, and autonomy’ as critical pedagogical values (cf. Stevens, 2004). It is not wrong for students to articulate these values. On the contrary, from the perspective of professionalisation within the humanities, it would be interesting to learn how these ‘theoretical’ values relate to personal values.

The meaning of life

- **What would you describe as *the* meaning of life, and as the meaning of *your* life?**
- **What would you describe as the meaning of work?**

The question about the meaning of life is an ultimate question. It is an existential question about the source and the purpose of life, which arises on different occasions and in different forms (cf. Roebben, 2016, 25). In religious education, this ultimate question is unavoidable. Nevertheless, it is deliberately not the first question on the list. In DST, it is a central assumption that the self is extended in space and time (cf. Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2012, 2). This facilitating question functions as a bridge between past, present, and future. In every narrative, the past, the present, and the future are interwoven. The questions about the student’s roots and life story refer mainly to the past. The questions about inspiration and values focus primarily on the current situation. The final questions about dreams and ideals relate to the future. As a teleological issue, the meaning of life connects past, present and future and places the other issues in a greater whole.

Dreams and ideals

- **How would you describe the ideal society? What is your view on society?**
- **How would you describe your role as a professional in fulfilling this dream of an ideal society?**
- **How would you describe the relationship between these dreams and your personal worldview?**

As stated above, these questions are about the future. Although the teleological question about the meaning of life concerns the future as well, this set of questions is less ultimate. These questions about dreams and ideals function as an exploration of specific *I*-positions, which could represent values and hypergoods which motivate students in their personal and professional lives. These motivational positions could be or might become promoter positions, which in dialogical terms are

crucial for the development of the self. Because this research project has a longitudinal prospect by asking the participants to reread their personal life orientation document after three to four years, it could provide a sort of evaluation regarding these promoter positions.

4.3.3. List of Facilitating Questions in Cohort-B

The modifications to the original list of facilitating questions, which will be detailed in this subsection, largely took place as a result of the first-year evaluation within the minor programme and the growing theoretical insights. The analysis of the Cohort-A data was not yet entirely performed. However, a first look at the results confirmed some of the issues, which came to the fore in the first-year evaluation. These matters are explained below. The list of facilitating questions was adjusted to take the evolving character of the research project into account, in close connection with the minor programme, which also underwent some improvements. This methodological decision then led to a split between Cohort-A and Cohort-B. A split that was necessary to answer the third and fourth research questions in greater depth. The integral list of facilitating questions – as handed out to the students in Cohort-B – can be found in Appendix C.

Life orientation

- **Describe your personal views on the human being, the world, God/the higher (the transcendent), and the good life.**

The four issues of life orientation are extensively described in chapter 1. The definition of life orientation is:

“an existential positioning process pertaining to the meaning of the human being, the world, and the meta-empirical, directed towards the horizon of the good life.”

This definition is the result of the conceptual study that is a part of this research project. As indicated in chapter 1, Anbeek (2013) draws on various sources in distinguishing eight themes in systematic theology, which are supportive of dialogue in life orientation. These subjects are (1) the prolegomena, (2) God, (3) creation, (4) the human being, (5) Christology, (6) pneumatology, (7) ecclesiology, and (8) eschatology. Some of these topics are inherently Christian, which would be too exclusive for this research project. This selection does justice to the multiple backgrounds of the students and simultaneously leaves room for theology in this crossroads of qualitative research.

Roots

- **Describe the views of your (grand)parents on the human being, the world, God/a higher reality, and the good life. Conduct an interview with them about these topics.**
- **Describe what, in your view, is the dominant societal perspective on these subjects.**
- **Describe your cultural, geographical, and socio-economic background.**

A significant change to these questions was the addition of the exercise to interview (grand)parents about the four issues of life orientation. The focus was no longer merely on values, but more comprehensively on the life orientation narratives that encompass these values. Another change was the omission of the explicit question about the place of religion at home. This question was removed because this issue was expected to be narratively interwoven with the students' articulations about, for example, the meta-empirical. The question about the dominant societal perspective is designed to elicit specific *I*-positions, which might receive a voice because the participants frequently consult

(social) media. The last question was added to gather some contextual information, which could support a deeper understanding of the other articulations.

Your life story

- **Sketch your lifeline and mark the determining moments for your development. Please describe those moments (think of events, encounters, turning points, and persons).**

The only change in this question was the addition of the exercise to sketch a lifeline. In terms of content and argumentation, this question remained the same.

The meaning of life

- **Describe the meaning of life and the purpose of your life.**
- **Describe your understanding of death, disease, 'bad luck,' and evil.**
- **Describe the quality of your life in relation to what you have described as 'the good life.'**
- **Describe the meaning of work.**
- **Describe the meaning of your profession.**
- **Describe your view on your place in a larger whole (humanity, society, world, and cosmos).**

The question about the meaning of life received a prominent place in the middle of the list. Not only was the location changed, but a significant expansion of subquestions took place. This teleological question still makes the subtle distinction between *the meaning of life (in general)*, and *the purpose of your life (in particular)*. In response to the evaluation of the minor programme and growing theoretical insights, the *theodicy* question about the existence of evil was added. The evaluation revealed that theodicy was a frequently recurring topic in dialogues. This additional topic offers the possibility to launch a specific reflection on these issues, which could be articulated implicitly or explicitly in one of the four life orientation issues.

A new question was added that contained a request to describe the personal quality of life. In the previous list of facilitating questions, the teleological functioned as a bridge between past, present, and future. This is still the case in the new list, but this question about the personal quality of life was designed to elicit some ambivalence about the contrast between experienced life and the ideal good life. In contrast to the first list, this set of questions about the meaning of life focuses more on work and professionalisation to specifically address the research question about the relationship between life orientation and normative professionalisation. The final question seems to be a recapitulation of the question about the worldview of the students. However, this question is designed to elicit a specific positioning towards, or better yet, among larger wholes.

Sources of inspiration

- **What are your sources of inspiration? Think for example of specific stories, poems, rituals, music, persons, and films, etc.**
- **Which sources of inspiration would you like to explore?**
- **What significance do spiritual and religious sources hold for you? (Remember also the tutorials in the minor programme on spirituality)**

These questions remained the same compared to the first version.

Dreams and ideals

- Describe your personal dreams and ideals.
- Describe your professional dreams and ideals.
- Describe your picture of the ideal society.
- Describe your view of the 'good citizen.'
- Describe your professional contribution to the realisation of an ideal society.
- Describe the relationship between your dreams, ideals, and life orientation.

This set of questions about the future addresses a mix of personal and professional dreams and ideals. This was the most significant change in the questions and was intended to elicit some possible promoter positions regarding personal and professional life. The last two questions were designed to support reflection on the relations between the three triangle points of the normative professional triangle.

Values and normative professionalisation (describe in catchwords)

In the adapted list there is more integration of various elements. It also comes with a narrative approach for eliciting values. In the first version, the question about values and normative professionalisation often resulted in lists of values without any narrative context. These lists of values were difficult to analyse. In this adapted list of facilitating questions, a chart is included for educational purposes only (see table 4C). With the help of this chart, students could create a schematic overview of their values on a personal, professional, and societal level. Geelhoud et al. formulate four questions, which help organisations and individuals to describe their value-oriented vision (cf. 2012, 101). The students only had to articulate their answers in catchwords. This chart was not included in the analysis because the catchwords lack a narrative context.

	Personal level	Professional level	Societal level
Perspective: what is the higher aim?			
Challenge: how to reach this higher aim?			
Strength: what are the core qualities?			
Values: what underlies the higher aim?			

Table 4C Chart For a Quick Overview of Values on Different Levels.

4.4 Method of Analysis in Cohort-A

This section describes two analytical steps. The first step, explained in section 4.4.1, consists of an *in vivo* coding, which is used to represent what students articulate as their life orientation at the beginning of structured education through life orientation. The second step is a thematic cross-over analysis, as a preparatory action for answering the two remaining research questions, which are finally addressed in the analysis of Cohort-B. This thematic cross-over analysis is explained in greater detail in 4.4.2.

4.4.1 Thematic Analysis With *In Vivo* Codes

All qualitative research approaches have a similar structure for analysis, which Creswell characterises as a ‘data analysis spiral’ (cf. Creswell, 2013, 182). Qualitative analysis is not a linear process but a moving circular process characterised by reiteration. The first step is to organise the data after the data collection. QSR NVivo (2016), a computer programme, was used for storing the data, and for facilitating the thematical analysis process. “The processes of data collection, data analysis, and report writing are not distinct steps in the process – they are interrelated and often go on simultaneously in a research project.” (Creswell, 2013, 182) Determinative for the analytical process in Cohort-A was the second research question:

Q2. What personal life views do students at a confessionally neutral university articulate, at the beginning of a formal worldview educational programme?

The second step, which Creswell discerns, is the reading of the data and the memoing of associations and thoughts. The life orientation narratives were read in their entirety, and memos were stored in Evernote. During the analytical process, a rereading of the narratives occasionally occurred. For the above research question, the thematic analysis with *in vivo* codes was logically restricted to T0.

The third step consisted of describing, classifying, and interpreting the data by first inductively coding them, which consisted of *in vivo* coding to stay as close to the text as possible. At this stage, the text units, corresponding to the articulated answers to each of the facilitating questions, were coded separately. Within each unit, ‘families’ of codes were created to reduce the number of codes, and to describe themes or dimensions regarding the facilitating questions. This thematic analysis as part of narrative research shows the interest of the researcher in ‘what’ is spoken, or in this case written, according to Riessman (cf. 2005a, 2005b).

In addition to this inductive analysis within the third step as described by Creswell, Saldaña’s deductive form analysis (cf. 2010) was applied to the fourth facilitating question about values and normative professionalisation (see Appendix B List Cohort-A).¹⁰ The first reason for an additional deductive analysis was that students wrote abundant lists of values, which were difficult to tackle. It was necessary to reduce these values to a manageable amount of ‘themes.’ Secondly, this deductive approach can be regarded as a form of ‘thick analysis,’ which Van Staaij and Evers (cf. 2010) designate as a method of triangulation. They demonstrate that triangulation can take place by using different methods of data collection, but can just as well be a differentiation in analytical methods.

4.4.2 Thematic Cross-Over Analysis

The additions in the narratives, labelled as T1, T2, T3, and sometimes even T4, were subjected to a thematic cross-over analysis, which was used to answer the two remaining research questions:

Q3. What are the characteristics of the development that occurs in the life view articulations of students, in relation to their professionalisation while attending a formal worldview educational programme?

¹⁰ Saldaña’s form analysis, or value coding, distinguishes between three constructs – values, attitudes, and beliefs – which represent a person’s perspectives or worldview (cf. Saldaña, 2010, 89). He designates a value as something of importance we attribute to a person, a thing, or idea. “An attitude is the way we think and feel about oneself, another person, thing, or idea. (...) A *belief* is part of a system that includes our values and attitudes, plus our personal knowledge, experiences, opinions, prejudices, moral, and other interpretive perceptions of the social world.” (ibid., 89-90)

Q4. What are the characteristics of the development that occurs in the life view articulations of students, in relation to their professionalisation during their juniorship?

After the narrative research of the students themselves, our focus in this analytical stage was on the relationship between life orientation and normative professionalisation. It is a light form of deconstructing the narrative “(...) that help[s] focus attention on types of information to analyze from qualitative data (...)” (Creswell, 2013, 186) In this Cohort-A, this analytical step can best be characterised as a thematic cross-over analysis for relating the themes corresponding to the different facilitating questions. In this stage, the narratives were reread in their entirety before the chart in 4D was filled in. In a first step, the results of the thematic analysis in T0 were added to the chart. The rereading of the 33 narratives was done to winnow the significant topics related to development and growth, which the participants had written down in their life orientation document, at a place to be determined. Although it would have been logical to search for the items ‘professional belief,’ ‘meaning of life,’ and ‘ideal society’ next to the corresponding facilitating questions, the choice was made to reread the documents in their entirety to stick to a narrative approach, which should analyse each unit in its total narrative context. In adhering to the life orientation document as a whole, the intention was to keep the chronology of events in view, and to place the described experiences of the participants in a narrative order (cf. *ibid.*, 192). This analytical approach enabled us to search for patterns, narrative threads, themes, tensions, and meanings within the narrative segments (cf. Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, 133). The cross-over thematic analysis was used to describe the narrative relationship between the four designated columns. The focus was on relationships that characterised an ambivalence, tension, discontinuity, or similarity, as narratives markers for development. In Evernote, short interpretative summaries were made to describe the development in life orientation and normative professionalisation, as well as the eliciting relationship between both processes, as preliminary answers to Q3 and Q4.

Name:				
Study				
Profession				
	Professional Beliefs	Self-written Development	View on the Meaning of life	View on the Ideal Society
T 0 – <i>Thematic Analysis NVivo</i>				
T 1-4				
Juniorship				

Table 4D Thematic Cross-Over Analysis Cohort-A

To the extent that Cohort-A should be seen as a pilot study for Cohort-B, this last analytical step shows less complexity than the thematic cross-over analysis in Cohort-B. This analytical step was designed to describe the process of life orientation and normative professionalisation, and the interrelatedness between both processes during the minor and the juniorship period. A substantial basic element shown in table 4D is the aspect of time in each of the three columns. The professional beliefs have contemporary relevance; the ideal society refers to the future; the self-written

development and the meaning of life combine past, present, and future from an autobiographical and teleological point of view, respectively.

4.5 Method of Analysis in Cohort-B

In this section, two analytical instruments are described in sections 4.5.1 and 4.5.2, respectively. During the analysis process in Cohort-A, the literature study in DST and the growing ideas in theory on life orientation provided for a fine-tuning of the facilitating questions, and consequently of the analytical lens of this narrative approach. This development resulted in two self-developed analysis instruments in Cohort-B. The first is a narrative-dialogical analysis instrument, which consists of concepts from the dialogical self theory (DST) employed to describe the hermeneutic processes in a life orientation narrative. The second narrative analytical instrument is designed for performing a deconstruction of the students' narratives, by means of an analytical stance focusing on three basic narrative processes, as described by the theologian Van Knippenberg (2008). Van Knippenberg assigns a competence to each narrative process, so that we can speak here of a narrative-competence analysis instrument.

Both self-developed analysis instruments represent a phase in this narrative study. Each phase consists of analytical steps such as designating the narrative element that corresponds to the used instrument, making notes, and frequent rereading of the narratives. After both phases, a meta-analysis took place as a third phase, which merged the results of the previous two phases to enable a description of the dialogical quality in each of the narratives. Moreover, this third phase was implemented to describe the development in terms of life orientation and professionalisation in the articulations, and how both processes are related to each other. This third phase is discussed in section 4.5.3.

4.5.1. A Narrative-Dialogical Analysis Instrument

As described in chapter 2, DST is grounded in hermeneutical and narrative psychological theories (cf. Zock, 2013, 16). These theoretical backgrounds make DST suitable for the construction of a narrative-dialogical analysis instrument. Zock's (2013) research on religious voices in self-narratives by using concepts of DST, supported us in constructing a tool that was suitable for this research project. A second useful source was Raggatt's (2013) inventory research on positioning terms and processes in recent theory construction. In a glossary, he distinguishes between basic elements, dynamic elements, and developmental processes, which are described in 2.3.2. This narrative-dialogical analysis instrument is a tool for analysing topics of life orientation, and for detecting and appointing these elements and processes, for describing the positioning process over time. In Appendix D, the narrative-dialogical analysis instrument, which was designed for this research project, is enclosed.

This narrative-dialogical analysis showed within each of the 35 narratives the dialogical quality of the students' articulations, which is the representation of their intra- and probable interpersonal dialogues regarding each of the nine topics. As we have seen in 2.3.2, Hermans and Hermans-Konopka (cf. 2012, 174-190) described eight characteristics of a good dialogue, which should be oriented towards innovation. The presence of dynamic elements, which are promoter, meta-, and third positions, are indications for this orientation and consequently indications for the quality of the articulation in terms of innovation. This first narrative-dialogical analysis was a time-consuming exercise, but necessary to register the development of a particular element in life orientation and normative professionalisation at the micro level.

As the reader can see in Appendix D, the narrative-dialogical analysis instrument begins with a large open space, which we designate narratively as a hermeneutic space. This hermeneutic space connotes metaphorically with orientation as a spatio-temporal concept as described in chapter 1

(cf. Taylor, 1989; Roebben, 2015). The open hermeneutic space makes it possible to get a quick overview of the *I*-positions in time, from T0 until the stage of juniorship (T3 or T4). The sketch starts with the initial *I*-position, which is the first articulation (T0) about, for example, the view on the world, or the view on the good life. If relevant, or detectable, the instrument offers the possibility to discern an S(self)-motive, or an O(other)-motive, as described in chapter 2.¹¹ The discernment of these motives could help to describe patterns or themes in the evolving life orientation narrative. “These motives, however, are highly general orientations that do not say much about the particular ways people live their lives to realise their motives.” (Herman & Hermans-Jansen, 1995, 46) The remaining basic elements which are looked for are the counter position, the external position, and the outside position.

The second category of DST-concepts included in the narrative-dialogical analysis instrument are the dynamic elements: the dominant position, the silent or silenced position, the meta-position, the promoter position, and the third position. The last category consists of the developmental processes, which, as described in 2.3.2, are the reflexive and social positioning, and the decentring and centring processes. For the analysis of the narratives, the decentring and centring processes are regarded as subcategories of both reflexive and social positioning. Our reason for subcategorising is pragmatic, namely keeping the instrument workable in time-consuming narrative research.

The self-written life orientation narratives contain a lot of data. In this analytical stage, only a selection of articulations was used to answer Q3 and Q4. The following nine items were analysed by using the narrative-dialogical analysis instrument.

Life orientation	View on the human being
	View on the world
	View on God/the higher/the transcendent
	View on the good life
	The meaning of life
	Evaluation of the experienced quality of life in comparison to the articulated view on the good life
Content of Profession	Meaning of profession (work)
Societal Context	View on the ideal society
	Professional contribution to the articulated ideal society

Table 4E Analysed Items by Using the Narrative-Dialogical Analysis Instrument

The main focus is on the ‘life orientation’ dimension, which is a result of the research interest in describing the intrapersonal dialogue between *I*-positions within life orientation. The dialogical character of life orientation is interrelated with the normative professional dialectics, as described in chapter 2. The items of Life Orientation represent the past, the present, and the future. The past is included in the first five views because these positions are somehow developed positions, influenced by upbringing, cultural groups, and other external or internalised voices. The evaluation of the experienced quality of life is an evaluation of the present life. This item was included in the analysis because it was needed for the narrative-competence analysis (see 4.5.2). The meaning of life consists of a teleological dimension, which encompasses past, present, and future. The item ‘meaning of profession’ represents the aspect of normative professionalisation that is about ‘good work.’ It is an evaluation of the present and can give information about a participant’s perception of her/his future or present job. For narrative research reasons, the analysis was sometimes broadened to the item of

¹¹ In the DST-based Self-Confrontation Method, it is not up to the psychologist to allocate a motive; the basic motives are identified through a valuation process based on a self-narrative.

‘meaning of work,’ which was intended as a general question. This item could possibly provide additional information. The item ‘view of the ideal society’ represents the societal aspect of normative professionalisation. The subject of the professional contribution to the articulated ideal society relates to the professional and societal aspects of professionalisation. The choice for the future dimension is deliberate, because it could provide information about someone’s drives, higher goals, or in Taylorian terms, ‘hypergoods.’ Another argument is that an articulation about the future almost automatically encompasses something of the present, i.e., a wish for continuation or change.

So the first step was to appoint the basic and dynamic elements, as well as the developmental processes, by using the narrative-dialogical analysis instrument for each of the items in table 4E, in each of the 35 narratives. The second step was to make interpretive notes about the relationship between the topics ‘view on the good life,’ ‘meaning of profession,’ and ‘view on the ideal society,’ which all represent the dynamics of normative professionalisation. The same procedure was carried out for the topics of life orientation. A third and finalising step was to relate both interpretative descriptions, which was done by note-taking.

4.5.2. A Narrative-Competence Analysis Instrument

The second phase of the analytical process was necessary to analyse and describe the relationship between the different items of life orientation and normative professionalisation. In terms of narrative chronology, this second step can be regarded as a further deconstruction, after the participants had already articulated and redefined the answers regarding the topics of a life orientation narrative. With the narrative-dialogical analysis we consciously kept the whole in view, but simultaneously we focused on the hermeneutic process within the individual items. This second phase was a further abstraction, because the individual items were placed in a framework to enable a description of themes and patterns within the narrative. For the design of this second instrument, we drew mainly on the work of the Dutch theologian Van Knippenberg, as described in chapter 2. This second phase enabled us to describe the development in terms of narrative competencies, which provides an overview of the development within life orientation as a whole, instead of focusing on every single aspect. The same argument applies to the aspects of normative professionalisation.

Table 4F shows the narrative-competence analysis instrument, which contains the three storylines with their corresponding identities, competencies, and ambivalence-containing processes in the first three horizontal rows. Van Knippenberg defines ambivalence as “(...) the simultaneous presence of opposing feelings or attitudes towards a person or an object.” (2002, 85) In the next row are the dominant positions in each of the six life orientation items. During the design phase of this instrument, it turned out to be that the view on the human being and the view on the world belonged to the spatial line. The experienced quality of life in relation to the articulated view on the good life elicits the diachronic identity because it combines the past, the present, and the future. For the transcendental line, both the view on the higher, or God, and the meaning of life seemed to be a fitting pair of items. According to the theory of Van Knippenberg, the transcendental line should be situated in the middle because it represents the perspective on the spatio-temporal reality. On the left side of the instrument, the dominant *I*-positions of the ‘meaning of profession’ are added. On the right side, there is room for the view of the ideal society and the subsequent professional contribution in T0, T1-T4, and the juniorship period. From a contextual perspective, it seemed quite logical to place these societal items on the side of the spatial line. Nevertheless, all lines are interrelated and overlap to some extent.

<i>Name:</i>						
<i>Story Line and Identity</i>		Temporal line (Diachronic identity)	Transcendental line (Spiritual identity)	Spatial line (Synchronic identity)		
<i>Competence</i>		Autobiographic competence	Competence of Openness	Contextual competence		
<i>Process</i>		Change-Continuity	Autonomy- Heteronomy	Individuation- Participation		
<i>Dominant positions in the dialogical self regarding life orientation</i>		View on the Good Life/ Experienced quality of life in comparison to the articulated view on the good life	View on the higher/ the transcendent/god/ Meaning of life	View on the human being/ View of the world		
Meaning of profession (work)		T 0				View on the ideal society professional contribution
		T 1 – T 4 (Minor)				
		Juniorship				

Table 4F The Narrative-Competence Analysis Instrument

Before the instrument was filled with the narratively articulated dominant *I*-positions, the first step was to reread each narrative of Cohort-B in its entirety, with the intention of keeping the whole of the narrative in view. Although the results of the narrative-dialogical analysis could simply have been transferred to this second phase, it was a deliberate choice to reread in order to stay as close as possible to the original documents. During this rereading process and the application of the narrative-competence instrument, notes were taken in Evernote to describe eliciting themes and patterns in the hermeneutical processes regarding each of the three competencies, during the minor and the juniorship period.

4.5.3 Meta-Analysis on the Basis of the Narrative-Dialogical and the Narrative-Competence Analysis

The third phase consists of a meta-analysis that merges the results of the previous phases, to enable a description of the development in the articulated life orientation, professionalisation, and the mode of interrelatedness of both processes. The first step for each narrative was to collect the

presence of dynamic DST-positions at the left side of table 4G, and to collect the presence of redefined positions during the PhWS minor and the juniorship period. As we learned in the first phase, the presence of these dynamic elements are indicators for the dialogical quality and the innovative character of the repositioning process.

The second step relates to the right side of table 4G, where the development of the competencies was indicated by using the DST-concepts of centring and decentering movements, as described in chapter 2 (see figure 2.2). The centring movements imply an increasing coherence, unity and integration within a competence, while the decentering movements indicate innovation and diversification. A pilot analysis showed that a third description was necessary. In some cases, the narrative concept of tension is better suited to describe an opposition between the two related aspects of the competence.

Positions - present in each of the nine topics					Competencies in life orientation narratives			
<i>Redefined positions</i>					<i>Dynamic DST-positions in Life Orientation</i>			<i>Tension between positions</i>
	<i>silent (-ced)</i>	<i>promoter</i>	<i>meta</i>	<i>third</i>	Centring movement = coherence, unity, integration dominant = centralised, inflexible (risk)			
present	Readable	New	New	New	decentering=innovative, diversification dominant =chaos and fragmentation (risk)			
hardly present	TO Silenced	Same	Same	Same				
	Minor silenced	Absent	Absent	Absent	AC	OC	CC	
Minor								
Juniorship								

Table 4G An Overview of Narrative-Dialogical and Narrative-Competence Analysis per Narrative.

A third step is to combine these results in order to describe the overall development in life orientation as far as the articulations are concerned. As described in chapter 2, Hermans and Hermans-Konopka (2012) distinguish three kinds of movements in the development of the self: progressive, regressive, and balanced (cf. ibid, 236). This research project is concerned with the development of life orientation, which can also be described in terms of these three qualifications. A pilot analysis resulted in the emergence of two different types of progressive development. Some narrative articulations exhibited a progressive movement with a developing degree of coherence and integration, or in DST-terms: an emerging unity-in-multiplicity. Other narrative articulations exhibited a progressive movement with the articulated integration of new positions, which could be identified as increasing multiplicity-in-unity (see table 4H). This distinction between progressive movements in the articulation of life orientations appeared to be important for describing the relationship with the articulation of aspects in normative professionalisation.

Balanced - centralising and decentralising movements in the articulation
Progressive - integrating multiplicity-in-unity - articulated integration of new positions
Progressive - emerging unity-in-multiplicity - developing a degree of coherence in new positions
Regressive - decreasing flexibility and adaptive potential in articulation

Table 4H Articulations in Life Orientation

For the description of the development in the life orientation articulations, the first focus is on the development of awareness of, and the integration of new positions, which indicates an increasing insight into the dialogical self (cf. *ibid.*, 6). The first indicator for this awareness development is an elaboration of the position repertoire, which in DST-terms constitutes an increasing multiplicity-in-unity and a growing unity-in-multiplicity within the self (cf. *ibid.*, 238). The second indicator is the presence or absence of dynamic positions (promoter, meta-, third, and silent or silenced positions), which describe the development of the self.

A fourth and final step is to describe the narrative relationship between life orientation and the development in regard to the two remaining aspects of normative professionalisation. This last step involves the answering of the second half of the 3rd and 4th research question. In Evernote, the notes from the earlier narrative-dialogical and narrative-competence analysis were supplemented with the interpretative process of this third phase, which resulted in a summary for each personal narrative.

4.6 Validation Strategies

Narrative research distinguishes itself from quantitative research by its focus on the becoming, the development of phenomena, instead of preoccupation with determining the what or the how. This narrative focus means that insights or findings are fundamentally temporary (cf. Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, 145//6). Creswell refers to various qualitative researchers who avoid typical quantitative research and positivist terminologies such as validation, comparability, and reliability (cf. 2013, 245/6). He describes the alternative terms of Lincoln and Guba (1986), who describe alternative criteria to the positivist paradigm because the axiom in the interpretative paradigm is not comparable, and therefore would be irrelevant in its application. “The axiom concerned with the nature of “truth” statements demands that inquirers abandon the assumption that enduring, context-free truth statements—generalizations—can and should be sought. Rather, it asserts that all human behaviour is time- and context-bound; this boundedness suggests that inquiry is incapable of producing nomothetic knowledge but instead only idiographic “working hypotheses” that relate to a given and specific context.” (Lincoln & Guba, 1986/2007, 17) Creswell partially adopts some of the alternative terms and suggests that qualitative researchers should document the ‘accuracy’ of their studies, which he designates as ‘validation strategies’ (cf. Creswell, 2013, 250). He describes eight different procedures and recommends to apply at least two of them.

The first validation strategy is ‘prolonged engagement and persistent observation,’ which includes building trust with participants (cf. Lincoln & Guba, 1986/2007, 18; Creswell, 2013, 250). The specific context of this research project, rooted in the educational programme, enabled the lecturer/researcher to build trusting relationships with the participants. The fact that nearly all the students wanted to participate in the research project after completing the minor programme, and again wanted to make a contribution in their juniorship period, indicates that trust had grown between the participants and the researcher. Particularly in the case of narrative inquiry, serious attention should be paid to the transition from field texts to research texts, because the narrative researcher usually has a close relationship with the participants. In this study, these close relationships formed during the minor programme and had the character of a teacher-student-relationship (cf. Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, 129). The very first analysis of the students’ narratives took place at least six months later, which, due to the passage of time and the anonymisation of the documents, created a consciously pursued distanced position. The next analytical steps took place

about one year later than the T0-analysis. This rereading process could be seen as a kind of check on 'credibility,' which is a qualitative research criterion for establishing 'trustworthiness' (cf. Creswell, 2013, 246).

The second validation strategy is 'triangulation' of multiple analytical approaches, or as Van Staa and Evers (2010) call it, 'thick analysis.' In qualitative research, the complexity of the phenomenon requires a creative and open approach to engage in an abundance of unstructured data. For Cohort-A, as described above, the *in vivo* coding was followed by a rereading of the answers to the facilitating questions about values and normative professionalisation. A comparison was made between the *in vivo* findings and the form analysis, and occurring differences were noted. The comparison of the results of a more inductive and more deductive approach led to a description of dimensions in values, attitudes, and beliefs. One year after this analytical step, the narratives were reread for a thematic cross-over analysis. During this cross-over analysis in the search for themes, patterns, narrative lines, hermeneutic movements and tensions, notes were made, and findings were structured into a self-designed scheme. In this scheme, the findings of the narratively interested rereading were combined with the earlier analytical steps, which created room for the checking of accuracy.

The third validation procedure is 'peer review or debriefing,' which "(...) provides an external check of the research process, much in the same spirit as interrater reliability in quantitative research." (Creswell, 2013, 251) In the analysis of Cohort-B, a fellow researcher played the role of the 'devil's advocate,' which Lincoln and Guba described as "(...) exposing oneself to a disinterested professional peer to "keep the inquirer honest," assist in developing working hypotheses, develop and test the emerging design, and obtain emotional catharsis." (1986/2007, 19) The results of the narrative-dialogical analysis and the narrative-competence analysis were reiterated. Similarities and differences were discussed, not in order to reach an agreement, but to ascertain the accuracy of the analysis, and ensure the credibility of the interpretation. Because of the intensity of a narrative inquiry, three life orientation documents were subjected to this procedure, which led to comparable findings.

The fourth validation procedure is 'clarifying of the researcher's bias' (cf. Smaling & Hijmans, 1997, 29; Creswell, 2013, 251) The description of the researcher's history, and ontological and epistemological orientations in the introduction and in the epilogue, should provide insight into which interpretations and approaches may have influenced the study.

The fifth validation strategy is to combine with reliability perspectives. Creswell (2013) indicates that reliability can be enhanced by obtaining detailed field notes. The interim texts recorded in Evernote during every interpretative-analytical step enabled fellow researchers to judge whether these findings fitted in another context (cf. Lincoln & Guba, 1986/2007, 19). In this research project, the validation strategy of 'thick description' shows some similarity with the procedure for improving reliability, because of the detailed interim texts connected with the self-written life orientation narratives. The methodological choice to appoint the students as co-researchers in reflective narrative inquiry, increases the reliability and trustworthiness of the data (cf. Creswell, 2013, 257). In the following chapters, the findings of the analyses in Cohort-A en B are reported.

Chapter 5 Analysis of Students' Articulations in Cohort-A

A presentation of the different phases of this narrative research was set forth in the previous chapter. In this chapter, the analysis of the narratives in Cohort-A is presented in detail. The analysis in Cohort-A was a self-contained study and, at the same time, served as a preparatory study for the fine-tuning of the analysis in Cohort-B. Section 5.1 contains a presentation of the results drawn from a thematic analysis of the narratives in Cohort-A. The thematic analysis started with the use of *in vivo* codes and referred to the second research question that is about students' first-stage life orientation articulations at the beginning of the PhWS minor.

Section 5.2 provides a description of the thematic cross-over analysis of the relation between the students' life orientation articulations and the aspects of normative professionalisation that were emphasised during the PhWS minor and their juniorship period. These analysis results show how different typologies of 'ambivalence' play a significant role in the hermeneutical process of professionalisation.

5.1 Thematic Analysis of the First-stage Articulation of Life Orientations

This first analysis was performed to describe the kind of narratives that students from different backgrounds articulate as preliminary answers to the facilitating questions during the first four weeks of the PhWS minor. As explained in chapter 4, the list of facilitating questions addresses the following issues:

1. First articulation of personal life view
2. Live views of parents and grandparents
3. Life story
4. Inspirational sources
5. Values and normative professionalisation
6. Meaning of life
7. Dreams and ideals

At the beginning of the thematic analysis, a selection of topics was made, which meant that themes 2, 3, and 4 were initially left out of the *in vivo* coding process, because they were less relevant for the answering of the second research question. This research question is about what students at a confessionally neutral university articulate as their life orientation at the start of a formal worldview education programme. However, themes 2, 3, and 4 are still relevant for the contextual approach of our narrative inquiry. During the rereading process, it became clear that answers to one particular question also contained references to other facilitating questions. The facilitating nature of questions in narrative investigations justifies the inclusion of relevant articulations that are found elsewhere in the narratives, instead of limiting oneself strictly to the anticipated location.

5.1.1 First-stage Articulation of Life Orientations

During the data collection in Cohort-A, the concept of life orientation – as described in chapter 1 – still had to be developed. This conceptualisation of 'life orientation' was the result of a reiterating comparison between theory and the results of this first analysis. For chronological reasons, it is better to talk about the presentation of 'life views' at this research stage. However, the reiterative research process led to the discernment of four aspects that became constitutive parts of the definition: 'view on the human being,' 'view on the world,' 'view on god/the meta-empirical,' and 'view on the good life.'

A first analytical look at the articulations led to the insight that the majority of students articulated something about their past or present relationship, or affiliation with, an official or organised religion (see table 5A). Because of the inductive approach of this research, the students were deliberately not asked to describe their denominations. The focus needed to be on the students' attempt to articulate their position on meaning-giving issues. Nevertheless, 29 students brought up a religious socialisation in the family, the church, or at school. Not all students mentioned a religious upbringing, but in the Dutch pillarised educational system, children of secular parents can also be enrolled in Protestant or Catholic schools. From a DST-perspective, the confessional school 'represents' an *I*-position that voices organised religion. In this cohort, one student said that he had been educated at confessional schools but had not received a religious upbringing at home. The remaining 11 students did not describe explicitly religious or secular life orientation backgrounds. Sometimes they mentioned a boyfriend, family member, or nanny with a religious affiliation. However, this was not about primary socialisation in the family, church, mosque, synagogue, or school. In their articulation of their 'life view,' they touch upon the concept of 'faith.'

"It's difficult to describe my life view in one paragraph. This is because I don't have a religion, but I'm still open to various faiths and ideas." (River – Cultural Social Work)

"My personal life view, I think, doesn't take long to describe. First of all, I'm not religious and I don't believe in a god. I'm not religious at all. Perspective is very important to my life view." (Luke – Education – Student-teacher in History)

All 11 students had a special interest in religion, which was one of the reasons why they enrolled in the minor PhWS. Some of them wanted to investigate personal preconceptions or are interested in examining stereotypical images in society. Others had a personal spiritual or religious longing, which they wanted to explore.

Denomination	Past	Present	Affiliation still active
Roman Catholic Christianity	11	9	3
Protestant Christianity	12	9	5
Islam	4	4	4
Yezidi	1	1	1
Enrolled in confessional school without religious affiliation at home	1	No affiliation	No affiliation
Total	29	23	13
No past affiliation	11	No affiliation	No affiliation

Table 5A Articulated Affiliation with Organised religion in the Present and in the Past

Usually, narrative research is less about the quantification of data, but at this stage, the numbers tell something about the associations students make when they are asked to articulate their life view. Besides mentioning their socialisation in religion, a relatively large number of students described something of their 'view on god/the meta-empirical,' and their 'view on the good life.' The context of the minor programme may have influenced their articulation, because students may have certain teacher expectations in mind. In any case, the analysis indicates that the students associated the concept 'life view' – in Dutch: *levensbeschouwing* – with being religious or not. The two remaining concepts constituting 'life orientation' were less frequently mentioned in the students' first-stage articulation of their life views (see table 5B).

Meaning-Giving issues in Personal Life Views	Cohort 2012-2013 – N=40
View on god/the meta-empirical	24
View on the good life	25
View on humankind	13
View on the world	7

Table 5B Quantification of Meaning-Giving Issues in Personal Life Views

A comparison of tables 5A and 5B shows that the mentioning of religious affiliation (N=29) does not automatically include an articulation of the view on god/the meta-empirical (N=24). However, the narrative research requirement is to reread the complete documents, which revealed that the students articulated a view on the meta-empirical in other places in their narrative, for example in their life story.

From now on, numbers are no longer part of the presentation, because a narrative study is primarily interested in the analysis of experiences that are articulated in lived stories (cf. Creswell, 2013, 70; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, 21). Quantification of the results would distract us from the evolving nature of meaning-making, and entail the assumption that these initial articulations are fixed and unchanging (cf. Riesmann, 2000). Also, our research interest focuses on the content of the articulation and the manner of redefining, rather than on percentages or numbers. In the following part of this section, the four themes of life orientation are highlighted in a detailed description of the themes that emerged in the student's articulations.

The View on God/The Meta-Empirical

The rereading and thematic analysis of the narratives resulted in the description of six themes, as shown in table 5C. The last category 'no clear articulation' encompasses the narratives that carry no reference to a meta-empirical reality. The absence of an initial articulation does not justify the conclusion that a view is absent.

Themes in the Articulation of Views on the Meta-Empirical/God
(one) God
Reincarnation
Power/energy
Something/more
Searching/asking
Immanent
<i>No clear articulation</i>

Table 5C Themes in the Articulation of Views on the Meta-Empirical/God

The themes range from an articulation of the transcendental existence of a single God to an immanent view on reality. The students who referred to God used few words to articulate what they meant. Most of these articulations are expressions of faith in one God as a Creator, a Caring Being or a Loving Being. Characteristically, these students identify with organised religion.

“I believe in one God, for all of us, and that you do not necessarily have to cover yourself in order to be a good Muslim.” (Samira – Student-Teacher Social skills)

“My personal life view is based on my belief in God. He who created the whole world, is good and just, and He gave us the Bible as guidelines for living a good life.” (Esmay - Social Pedagogical Services)

The themes 'power/energy' and 'something/more' are broadly similar as expressions, except for the choice of words. The resemblance lies in the affirmation of a transcendental reality and in the denial

of the existence of a divine person. In both categories, the answers vary from an immanent to a transcendental view on reality. With this word choice students show a variation regarding affiliation with a religious organisation, ranging from membership to rejection.

“I believe that there is something or someone, but not that there is a God who created heaven and earth.” (Fay – *theme: something/more* – Student-teacher Primary Education)

“I believe that ‘god’ is something in yourself. The piece of yourself that encourages you to keep on learning and developing, and that communicates to you which things are good and not good for you. This is done through your feelings, your gut-feeling. I don’t believe in a big, all-transcending power that is separate from human beings. I believe in a power within yourself. A power in the form of love, love for yourself and love for others around you.” (Hayley – *theme: power/energy* – Social Pedagogical Services)

The group of students whose articulations were sorted under the theme ‘searching/asking,’ describe themselves as actively or less actively seeking. Others call themselves agnostic. At the very least, they all show some interest in and curiosity about the existence of a belief, or faith, in the transcendent.

“I didn’t have a faith that I grew up with, but I’ve always been curious. I think you have to respect and value all faiths. I’ve been interested in the existence of something up there. Is there anything? There’s almost bound to be, if so many people believe in a god. When you die, you can’t just disappear. These are questions I think about, and somehow I’ve always thought I belong to a faith.” (Britt – Student-teacher Primary Education)

Another group of students articulates an ‘immanent view’ on the meta-empirical, which implies a denial of the existence of God, or of another kind of transcendent reality. They concentrate on this life and not on the afterlife. Some of them deny immortality, others leave this possibility open. Some of these students express a belief in the power inherent in human beings, a belief that resembles that of the students who believe in the existence of an energy, or power. However, those who believe in such a power, characterise it as something independent.

“I regularly have conversations with my father about ‘God.’ We both find it interesting to read about it, but we can’t align with these thoughts.” (Miley – Journalism and Communication Studies)

The View on the Good Life

The analysis of the students’ articulations of their life views resulted in the discerning of the theme ‘view on the good life,’ which indicates a teleological perspective. Without explicitly being asked for articulations of the good life, students wrote down their preliminary view on the subject. The analysis resulted in two themes, both of which discern predominant aspects in the view on the good life. The first theme is:

Personally enjoying life to the fullest and in a positive way

In this first theme, most students emphasise the importance of pleasure and enjoyment in the here and now. It is about following and fulfilling your dreams, which expresses a form of eagerness.

“Go for the things you really dream of, and don’t forget: enjoy the little things in life.” (Lucy – Student-teacher Primary Education)

“What I find important in life is that I get everything out of it. I don’t want to think later: if only I had... I tend to feel more regret for the things I didn’t do than for the things that turned out wrong; when that happens, I at least tried. I don’t believe in any God. I can’t draw

strength from that. I draw my strength from my family and friends, from successes and challenges. Furthermore, I think enjoyment in life is very important. I want to have as much enjoyment in life as possible, because this makes you happy.” (Melanie – Student-teacher Primary Education)

In this theme, students articulate that everyone bears personal responsibility for their happiness in life. You need to do it on your own, which is also linked to personal freedom. The realisation that you only live once, which they refer to, is often related to less happy experiences in life, such as the divorce of their parents, or the death of a loved one. These experiences encourage them to enjoy the little things in life, not just the big dreams.

“As a result of some events in my life, I began to live very consciously. I really enjoy the little things around me, and I appreciate what I have. I try to get as much out of life as possible, and I believe I’m the only one who can do that.” (Abby – Student-teacher Primary Education)

These articulations stress the importance of the here and now, satisfaction with life as it is, awareness that there are unhappy moments in life, and the desire to enjoy life. When these articulations refer to the other, this is almost always the known other, i.e., family and friends. The general other, and the unknown other seem to receive less attention in this perspective.

A description of this theme could be ‘an orientation towards personal freedom, characterised by the enjoyment of life in the here and now.’ The word ‘orientation’ refers to what students described as their attitude, and their way of life. This particular orientation, articulated by students, is less contemplative and more coloured by the conscious experiencing of affections.

The second predominant theme in the ‘view on the good life,’ which emerged from the thematic analysis, is:

Living while taking care of yourself and looking after others

In this second theme, when students articulated their view on the good life, they placed more emphasis on care for others, and values like respect and compassion.

“In my view, respect is a very important part of life. I think it’s very important that people have respect for each other at all times. I also try to be as positive as possible, in life. Even when things get rough, I try to see the positive.” (Basma – Human Resource Management)

These articulations show a balance between focusing on yourself and caring for others. The difference between these two is not simply the difference between selfishness or altruism. On the contrary, this distinction would be too sharp. Nevertheless, they point to different values, and a different orientation.

“In my view, the world is a place where people, animals, and nature live. They live next to each other, but still have to learn how to really live together. In my opinion, you do this first and foremost by investing in yourself. If you don’t have your own affairs in order, when you’re not happy, you can’t really help others. And investing in yourself takes time. Allow yourself that time. Accept there’s things that don’t work out, but don’t let it stop you from fighting for your happiness and for your ideals.” (Evelyn – Journalism and Communication Studies)

This articulation reveals a focus on the future and some concerns about the current state of our planet. Self-care differs from a simple focus on pleasure, which is an essential point in this theme because, within this theme, every student described that self-care is necessary to love the other.

Self-care is related to silence, rest, feelings, love and happiness. The students describe this orientation in an active manner, by using words such as ‘way of life’ and ‘generating positivity.’

“In order to be able to live well and help other people and animals, I think it’s important to first make sure that you are healthy and happy yourself. (...) In order to make sure I’m spiritually and mentally strong, I draw on Buddhist teachings, which helps me a lot. I think that if you’re comfortable in your own skin, you should then free up some of your time to do volunteer work, for example.” (Romy – Student-teacher Primary Education)

The description of this second theme is ‘an orientation towards self-care, directed towards a caring and responsible relationship with the known and unknown other.’ This relationship seems to be visible, which means that a good life can never be realised without an essential connection with the other, whoever that may be. Sometimes the students describe this relationship with words like love and care, and other students limit themselves to emphasising the importance of respect and tolerance between people.

The View on the World

Few students articulated anything about their view on the world. Most of them connect this world-view with nature. In these articulations, we notice that care for the environment and concerns about threats to the environment play a role. Human beings are part of nature, instead of being the owners of nature. The number of references is too small to make a well-founded statement, but a significant distinction is that some focus on ‘the world’ as the nature that surrounds us, while others have society in mind.

“My world, compared to the world of my peers, is already a pretty big place. I’m 22, but I’ve seen many different layers of the world. I travel a lot with my parents, and I’ve been to various continents. Life in Morocco, for example, is different from life in the Netherlands. People are very relaxed, but some have to work really hard. When it’s time to pray, everybody leaves their store and goes to the mosque. When the shopkeeper returns, everything is still there; nobody gets it in their head to steal something.” (Hayam – Student-teacher Primary Education)

This fragment shows the interwovenness of the student’s world-view with a number of other views. This fragment undoubtedly reveals connections between a view on the human being – people are moral – a view on the good life – being relaxed – and a view on the meta-empirical – the reference to a community. Articulations of these other aspects of life orientation were not explicitly requested in this Cohort-A.

The View on the Human Being

The thematic analysis resulted in the emerging of three values regarding the human being. Some students answered the first facilitating question with a summary of their view on humankind, in order to summarise their personal life view. Others described this view elsewhere in their document. A criterion to select fragments of the texts was an explicit reference to human being, humankind, or humanity. Synonyms such as person, people, and individual were also taken into consideration. The emerging values were:

1. Equality and Diversity

In these articulations, some students stress the equality between men and women. Others talk about equal rights for all people, which should eradicate racism and discrimination.

“I regard every individual as a human being, only then do I see them as fellow students, colleagues, professionals, or in a different role. I also treat my classmates as human beings and not, for example, as student-teachers in English or French, or as journalism students. I treat each individual as a person with equal value, and I do my best to enter into a dialogue with them without prejudice.” (Halil – Student-teacher in Sign Language)

2. Responsibility for Your Own Life and Development

This group of students stresses the aspect of development and learning. Life comes with opportunities to learn and to grow as a human being. Individuals bear personal responsibility for this process.

“I see life as filled with highs (moments to be proud of) and lows (learning moments), which alternate so that as a human being I can learn and develop myself. In this process, I get to decide how I live life, and this determines how happy I am.” (Joanne – Creative Therapy)

3. The Tension Between Good and Evil

Another group of students describes the human being as part of a battle between good and evil. The students differ in their articulation of the character of evil. Some articulate the essence of humanity as good, or as a combination of a good and a bad side. Others articulate evil as an independent entity. The students struggle to reconcile the goodness of humankind with the negative realities of war and other violence.

“I’m convinced that you have to start from the belief that there is good in people, however difficult that may be at times. But there is a limit to respecting people. A person can really go a few steps too far, so that you’re so at odds with someone’s actions and thoughts that you can no longer respect them.” (Jenna – Student-teacher Primary Education)

The value of ‘equality’ shows a resemblance to the good life theme *‘Living while taking care of yourself and looking after others,’* which includes consideration for the other. In contrast, the value ‘responsibility for your own life and development’ resembles the good life theme *‘Personally enjoying life to the fullest and in a positive way.’* The different views are linked together in an overarching view on life. A research strategy could be to look for patterns among the four different aspects of life orientation. This strategy might result in a description of different configurations. However, to do this, each student should at least have articulated something about all four aspects, which was not the case at this stage of the research project. Moreover, from a narrative perspective, each story is unique in its context, and every small change in one of the aspects changes the whole configuration. In our opinion, it is more interesting at this stage to describe the relationships between the different views, and to indicate how all of this relates to normative professionalisation.

5.1.2 ‘The Meaning of Life’ as Articulated in Themes

All students articulated what they considered to be the meaning of life. The facilitating question distinguishes between the meaning of life (in general) and the meaning of the personal, individual life (in particular). Only a few students addressed this distinction, which could justify the conclusion that most of the students did not value this distinction, or simply overlooked the matter. A comparison of articulation learns that the meaning in life, in particular, is an exploration of the general meaning of life. Here, the presentation of the results of the analysis will be limited to articulations that addressed the general meaning of life.

A reiterative reading process resulted in a description of five themes. These themes show narrative connections with each other, which justifies the view that one of these themes is dominant in the students' narratives, but that this theme is nevertheless open to overlap with other themes. Another argument for having 'fluid boundaries' is the essence of narrative research itself, which is primarily designed to describe what people express and articulate as their meanings and experiences, which are inherently contextual, and how they proceed in doing so. The five themes are:

1. Life has no meaning
2. To live and enjoy life
3. Being meaningful to someone else
4. Developing and achieving personal goals
5. God has a plan/There is a plan

Theme 1 'Life Has No Meaning'

A group of students articulated that life has no meaning. Some students in this group describe life as having no meaning at all, or lacking any pre-existent purpose.

"My opinion is that life, and therefore also my life, has no meaning, not in a religious sense. There is no purpose, plan, or obligation. I owe no one anything for the fact that I exist. This means that I'm free to choose what I want to do with my life." (Mike – Student-teacher in History)

In this fragment, Mike articulates the meaning of life in dialogue with a religious meaning given to life. For him, freedom is a discriminating value. Other students in this group are less firm and express a 'not knowing,' because it is a difficult question, to which a definite answer is impossible.

"What's the meaning of life? I think that's a difficult question to answer. In the end, we all die. But does this mean that life has no meaning at all? I don't think so. I don't believe in a God or in an afterlife, but I do believe that we are on earth for a reason. What this reason is, I don't know. Still, I have a feeling that my life has meaning. Even if I were to die soon, I still feel like I've done something to make the world become a better place." (Evelyn – Journalism and Communication Studies)

For Evelyn, a pre-existent purpose to life does not exist, but she is still looking for some reason to live because she cannot believe that life has no meaning at all. Like other students in this group, her first statement is that life has no meaning. After this first statement, the students try to articulate what could make life meaningful. Another student keeps puzzling what life could mean.

"The meaning of life can be a tough question. However, I don't find it all that difficult. My answer: I don't know. Is there a meaning to life? Or is that something that we, as humans, have invented to be able to endure life here for 80 years? I do think, however, that life has meaning. But what that is, I don't know." (Lou – Student-teacher in Social Skills)

All articulations in this group have the view in common that a pre-existent purpose or meaning to life does not exist. Some students accept this as a fact of life, and orientate themselves towards something that can make life meaningful. These students could belong to two groups. Regarding their first articulation, they belonged to the group that stated that life has no meaning, but having said that they could become a 'member' of the group that wants to enjoy life, or become meaningful

to others. Their articulation shows graduation. Some students seem to be disoriented because life itself can be meaningless.

“I’ve been looking for the meaning of life for a long time now, but I don’t know. I think life is pretty hard and sad, and I don’t understand why it needs to be, or why things happen.”
(River – Cultural Social Work)

Theme 2 ‘To Live and Enjoy Life’

Another theme in the students’ articulations about the meaning of life is primarily an orientation towards the enjoyment of life, in the here and now. Frequently described values here are enjoyment, happiness, and pleasure, but also family life and friends. Some of these students emphasise the satisfaction with small things in life.

“What I do know is what is important to me: my loved ones, and enjoying life. So the only thing I ultimately find important in my life is being there for my loved ones, in good and in bad times, and enjoying the little, beautiful details that this world can offer me – alone, or in the company of others.” (Luke – Student-teacher English)

Most students expressed positivity and optimistic feelings. They describe the world as beautiful, and as a place where there is so much to see and experience. These expressions communicate a lust for life, which includes the value of freedom of movement and freedom of choice.

“I’ve got a very positive outlook on the meaning of life. I love life and I grab it with both hands. Life is never boring, and full of choices and consequences.” (Jessy – Pedagogy)

Although the articulations contained a great deal of positivity, there was also a serious overtone, an awareness that life is finite, that human beings are mortal. For some students, the focus on intense enjoyment of experiences, or consciously spending time with family and friends, had to do with this overtone.

“The last couple of years I’ve learned that life can be over – just like that. You live now, so enjoy your life. I think it’s important to be happy with the people around me. That the people around me are happy, as well. You have to be there for each other and enjoy things together, and enjoy each other.” (Chrissy – Student-teacher Primary Education)

This group of students articulates the meaning of life in a positive way, but they are aware of the shadow side of life. Characteristic is the focus on close family and friends, who make life meaningful and with whom they want to share happiness. These moments of happiness and enjoyment are the little things in life.

Theme 3 ‘Being Meaningful to Someone Else’

Another group of students demonstrates a different way of thinking and acting. They express concern about other people, who they do not specify. They express care for other people, and sometimes more generally for animals, for nature, or the world as a whole. Values like loving your neighbour or the golden rule are familiar to this group.

“One day, I hope to find my happiness in little things and especially in immaterial things like helping people and doing good for others, based on my own values, like charity and generosity.” (David – Student-Teacher History)

David provides a reflection on how he could reach happiness, which does not automatically mean real action. In this group of students, some are more contemplatively inclined, like David, and others express an active orientation towards helping others, or the world. They link their choice of

education to a personal effort to make life meaningful.

“I think that, now that you’re in the world, you should do something with your life. I want to do something meaningful. Now, I can start asking myself: what is meant by ‘meaningful’... But it should be something that matters to me. I’m going to become a teacher and I see that as a useful profession, I can really mean something for someone else.” (Eliza – Student-teacher French)

Characteristic of this theme is that students express the wish to make a difference, now and in the future. They feel a responsibility to their family and friends, but also to a larger whole. Sometimes they relate their future profession to their view on the meaning of life. In general, the difference they expect to make is small, but meaningful, as Macey articulates:

“The meaning of life ... a very ‘tough’ question. I think that as a person you have to try to make a small contribution to the earth, leave something behind that is of use to the earth, the animals and human beings. Even if it’s only something very small.” (Macey – Student-teacher English)

Theme 4 ‘Developing and Achieving Personal Goals’

Another cluster of articulations about the meaning of life focuses on skills in life. These students show a drive to develop themselves, and they tend to think a few years ahead.

“I try to get as much out of life as possible. I want to take advantage of as many opportunities as possible, and realise my dreams. In my opinion, it is important to make the choices that are good for you and that make you happy. You have to think ahead: will the choices you make now still be good for you in ten years’ time? For me, the people around me are the most important, they make me happy. I think every person should do that what makes him or her happy, everyone has a different goal in life.” (Melanie – Student-teacher Primary education)

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Melanie articulates the importance of family for her life and personal happiness, but her narrative culminates in the claim that there are goals in life. Students in this group describe the value of responsibility for the personal future. In addition to drawing attention to responsibility, some of them also express joy in learning and developing. They describe self-development as the meaning of life.

“I’m a person with a lot of perseverance, and I know what I’m going for. When I go for something, I give it my 100%. This means that I like innovation and improvement, and that I’m constantly looking for new challenges, in my life and in my work. In my work, this is mainly expressed by the fact that I want to push myself to a higher level, and continue to develop myself.” (Liss – Student-teacher in Social Skills)

These articulations reveal an orientation towards the future, and a drive for personal development with a long-term objective. All these students express confident expectations about the future, they are ready to do their best, and although life can be hard, a bright future is waiting.

Theme 5 ‘God Has a Plan/There Is a Plan’

The last theme to emerge from the thematic analysis was ‘God has a plan/there is a plan.’ These articulations refer to a divine plan in life as the ultimate meaning of life. Characteristic in these narratives is the embedding of the entire human biography in a larger story of God. Some students focus on the view that God is present before a personal life begins, or that a human being’s personal

life is God's will. Others speak of the future with God, referring to the view that life on earth is oriented towards the afterlife.

"The meaning of life, and of my life, is that you get to know God and build a relationship with Him, so that you will be with Him after this life. He has made us for that purpose." (Emmeley – Student-Teacher French)

"My meaning of life is oriented towards God. I know that our presence here is not random, and that God has a plan for us. That we have to take care of each other and the world, is something I recognise in my work." (Esmay – Social Work and Social Services)

"The meaning of life is to serve God and not to associate partners with him, in order to succeed in this life and the next." (Hayam – Student-teacher Primary education)

Emmeley, Esmay, and Hayam describe a relationship with God, who has a plan. Their articulations assume a pre-existent plan for every life. Esmay links the meaning of her life to her future profession as a social worker. The articulations that belong to this theme are located within a narrative context of religious socialisation. The characteristic value of this theme is 'trust.' These students express trust in the origin and the purpose of their lives. They describe their answers in theological language, which is recognisable as either Christian or Muslim. Hayam's expression of not associating partners with God is a dogmatic Muslim rule. Not all students with a religious background formulated the meaning of life within this theme, although they did refer to it.

"I'm very grateful to God for the life he's given me. In my opinion, I've been given a lot of freedom, and I can decide and organise my own life. I have the possibility to do what I want, for example, to choose the kind of study I'd like to do, or the kind of job I'd like to apply for. I can plan my own future and follow my own ambitions. Moreover, I have a loving family, which is always there for me. I have very nice and dear friends, with whom I spend a lot of time." (Basma – Human Resource Management)

This fragment is a striking example of my choice to designate clusters of articulations as themes within this narrative analysis. In this fragment, Basma combines two themes. She recognises the existence of God, but does not articulate her life as a plan of God. She makes her own plans, yet she is grateful for the life God has given her. Starting from this gratitude, she sets her goals and does not forget her family. This theme could therefore also be referred to in less theological terms as 'there is an encompassing plan,' but in this Cohort, all articulations that fall within this cluster include this theological notion.

5.1.3. The View on the Ideal Society

For the cross-over thematic analysis with which we intend to describe the articulated relationship between life orientation and normative professionalisation, it is necessary to present the analysis of students' articulations about their view on the ideal society. Again, the presentation consists of a number of themes, which differ in their characteristics or emphasis on a number of elements within a theme. It is possible that some elements appear in more than one theme, but vary in their importance or position within the storyline. Some students articulate that an ideal society does not exist, and will never exist. The other students articulate an ideal society within one of the four themes: respect, acceptance of differences, cooperation, and opportunities for development.

Theme 1 Respect

These articulations express a wish to take the needs of others into account. In this theme, some students articulate individual freedom that should respect the freedom of others. Other students focus more on the relationships with others.

“My ideal society is a society in which all people live in harmony, respect each other, and give each other space. As a person I try not to force anyone to do anything, and I try to be friendly to everyone and to let everyone be as they are.” (Miley – Journalism and Communication Studies)

Miley focuses on freedom and respect for every person. She longs for a harmony that allows everyone to be as they would like to be. In other words, she wants to respect the autonomy of each individual. Other students articulate the care for others, and taking the needs of others into account.

“In my ideal society people love each other, and help each other when necessary. But they also make sure that they can take care of themselves. Everyone is free to express their opinions and is not immediately held accountable for them, we value each other and treat each other in a respectful way. This is something I don’t always see in the world, people are quick to have their opinions ready and allow their opinions to be influenced by their prejudices.” (Maddy – Social Work and Social Services)

Maddy gives everyone freedom in her ideal society and calls for respectful behaviour. Her articulation seems to go a step further than Miley’s, because she emphasises care for others. Maddy’s freedom is not confined to personal freedom, but also includes the ability to be independent. This independence, or perhaps self-sufficiency, is not just an individual responsibility, but involves a shared responsibility.

Theme 2 Acceptance of Differences

This theme resembles the theme of respect, but stresses values like empathy and understanding. These articulations ask for an active open attitude towards each other, the willingness to meet ‘others’ in society and do some research to get know the other better. Understanding the other better requires openness and a sense of equality. In these articulations, there is some concern about the current state of society.

“My ideal is for everyone to develop a greater understanding of each other. That everyone acquires a bit more empathy. That people realise that other views on life do exist. Then life would be simpler, there would be fewer conflicts between people.” (Lexie – Student-teacher Primary Education)

Theme 3 Cooperation

Another theme is about harmony in society, the peaceful co-existence of different cultures. These articulations seem to focus on the current tensions in Dutch society, in light of some recent right-wing political statements. Other students look beyond the Dutch society; they have a wish for the global community, namely peace and no more war. The theme of cooperation also encompasses concerns about the increase of individualism. Ideally, people should take care of each other, which implies some measure of self-sacrifice, as Emmeley articulates.

“In my ideal society, people care about each other. They respect each other and treat each other well. They know that this requires self-sacrifice, and they try to learn from each other. In my ideal society, people are not selfish.” (Emmeley – Student-teacher French)

In this fragment, respect means more than giving someone their freedom. It is the other way around, which means that a part of personal freedom has to be sacrificed because this is necessary to live and work together.

Theme 4 Opportunities for Development

Another perspective on the ideal society is the elimination of poverty, which means that everyone receives equal opportunities. A strong value is equality. In these articulations, students focus on the possibilities in our society, which are not the same for everyone.

“More growth opportunities for people who are in financial difficulty, the possibility to break this vicious circle. Providing business opportunities so that people have the opportunity to prove themselves. Not just focusing on certificates, it is the person that matters. Reduced work pressure, more room for self-development.” (Bobbi – Marketing and Commercial Economics)

This articulation highlights another perspective on the ideal society. Bobbi is worried about people who are at risk of ‘missing the boat.’ In an ideal society, institutions, companies should first look at the person, in face-to-face contact. This fragment sounds like a critique of a current society in which people who are employed must endure a high workload. Bobbi asks for more free time, which should offer people the possibility to develop themselves in other directions.

5.1.4. Professional Beliefs

The facilitating questions ‘values and normative professionalisation’ usually resulted in a long list of values, with detailed or less detailed descriptions. The first result of the analysis of the students’ 40 articulations was a variety of answers, and a long list of values with personal descriptions. In the following presentation, only the analysis of the fourth subquestion about the relationship between personal values and professional action is taken into account, which means that we focus on the professional beliefs of the students.

The first step of the thematic analysis resulted in 14 clusters of ‘parent-values,’ hosting a variety of related ‘child-values.’ The analysis consisted of a reiterative process of rereading, which continued to produce unsatisfactory research results because of the inherent arbitrariness associated with allocating values to this or that cluster. This shortcoming resulted in a second analytical strategy: value coding according to Saldaña’s method, as described in chapter 4. Saldaña (2010) distinguishes between values, attitudes, and beliefs in coding, which are interrelated in a worldview. We applied this second strategy for two reasons. Firstly, the application of two analytical methods is a form of thick analysis, which constitutes a validation strategy. Secondly, Saldaña’s distinction between values, attitudes, and beliefs in coding made it possible to specify the descriptions of how students relate their values to their professional conduct. This specification helped to filter out six themes concerning professional beliefs. At this point, the focus is on Saldaña’s construct of ‘belief,’ which he describes as a “(...) part of a system that includes our values and attitudes, plus our personal knowledge, experiences, opinions, prejudices, moral, and other interpretive perceptions of the social world.” (2010, 89-90) This construct includes values and attitudes, which makes it possible to describe thematically what students articulated. For this description, a rereading process took place to determine the context of the students’ narratives, which encompasses experiences and other interpretative perceptions. In Cohort-A, the majority of students come from educational studies, and a minority from social work and journalism studies, which becomes apparent in the following descriptions of professional beliefs (see table 5D).

Educational Studies	The school must be a safe place
	Supporting learning progress and happiness
	Societal independence
Social Work	Everyone is an equal member of society
	Self-development of clients
Journalism Studies	Serving the truth

Table 5D Professional Beliefs Articulated in Relation to Professional Education Background

Students in Journalism and Communication Studies articulated that serving the truth was the most important thing to do. It is crucial for a journalist to protect his or her sources, but also to be reliable and trustworthy. Evelyn articulated at the beginning of the PhWS minor:

“Also, I respect my sources if they prefer not to be named in the article. Or else I choose not to use the source, or I use a pseudonym. In addition, as a journalist, I’ll never pay for information. I will also always tell you that I’m a journalist and what I’ll be using the information for. Undercover journalism is really out of the question for me.” (Evelyn – Journalism and Communication Studies)

For Evelyn, the values of trust and honesty mean that at least one domain of journalism will never be her choice. In this example, trust directs her orientation within the profession.

Some students in Social Work describe their values to regard everyone as an equal member of society. This sense of equality is an essential belief regarding the performance of their future profession.

“For me, equality means that everyone is equal and deserves equal opportunities. I know that in reality this is not always the case, but I’ll strive to achieve this.” (Maddy –Social Work and Social Services)

Maddy articulates an emancipatory ideal that closely matches the ideals of other students in social work, and which centres on the self-development of clients. These students want to support their clients to be self-sufficient.

“They notice at work that I’m really there for others, and that I’m always willing to think along and help, as far as I’m able. I focus on the clients. At work I’m there for the clients, and I try to leave things from my private life at home. I often do this well, and when I can’t manage I try to discuss this with my colleagues. It’s often easier to pick up work again after that. You can say that I’m myself at work, with the same personal values, only I take on a role. The role of counsellor, which means that I’m there for the clients, when I’m working.” (Hayley – Social Pedagogical Services)

In this fragment, Hayley indicates how her values are present in her work during several traineeships in middle and higher vocational education. She merely takes on the role of a counsellor, who should pay full attention to her clients. This articulation shows how a student experiences that the attention for clients is sometimes under pressure. Her strategy is to talk with her colleagues when a private concern claims something of her attention. This emancipatory ideal in social work can also be found in education. Students express the professional belief that pupils must learn to be self-sufficient.

“My pupils won’t become lawyers or surgeons, but I hope I can make them think about what is happening around them. Self-sufficiency in a society like ours isn’t easy for them. I hope that later there will be a pupil who says: ‘O, that Mrs Lou, that was a good teacher!’.” (Lou – Student-teacher in Social skills)

Lou works at a vocational school and describes the problems of her pupils (12-16 years old) in Dutch society. One of the ways to support self-sufficiency is to improve the reflective capacity, to open the pupils' eyes to the societal context. Other students articulate that they support the improvement of citizenship education by paying attention to identity and personhood.

In primary school, the professional belief is about the safety of the learning context. The safety aspect is also one of the elements in vocational schools, but there it is at the service of the professional idea that students must be prepared for society. Student-teachers in primary education, on the other hand, emphasise the need to create a safe space as their central professional belief.

“When I feel safe, I can open myself up. When that feeling of safety isn't there, I can never really show myself. The same applies to the education I give. The children must feel safe so they can develop themselves.” (Lexie – Student-teacher Primary education)

Lexie begins her articulation with a personal experience. She recognises the importance of safety, which dominates her professional belief. As a teacher, she has the power to create safe places for children. This fragment shows that it is sometimes arbitrary to determine which value is so dominant in a professional belief, that it may be viewed as central. Nevertheless, the narrative context in which these values are articulated is essential. In Lexie's biographical account, the primary school period was less positive. She described herself as shy and insecure, and hardly had any friends.

The last group of articulations expresses the resolve of student-teachers to support pupils in their learning progress, and to create joy for pupils as they go through developmental steps.

“The ideals you want to achieve as a teacher are to get all the children on a good level before you send them on to the next grade, or the next school. I don't want to do that just by covering the teaching material, there must be room for excursions and time for relaxation as well. I also want to be a teacher the children can confide in, a teacher they can go to with their stories.” (Fay – Student-teacher Primary education)

Fay's focus is to support her pupils in their learning capacity, but without primarily focusing on cognitive capacities. She believes that it is her job to get the best out of her pupils.

In this narrative study, the research interest was, first of all, focused on the description of the themes in the first-stage articulations regarding a number of facilitating questions, which are relevant for answering the second research question about the students' first-stage articulations of life orientation in relation to professionalisation. The second step in this narrative research is to explain the process, and the content of the redefinition and the repositioning in the self-written narratives. This second analytical step calls for a close rereading process, which made it possible to add some nuances to the emerged themes of the thematic analysis. This process is discussed in the next section.

5.2 A Thematic Cross-Over Analysis

In this section, the hermeneutic and redefining processes in the students' articulations during the minor programme and their juniorship period are discussed. The analysis of these processes was performed to answer the following research sub-questions:

Q3 What are the characteristics of the development that occurs in the life view articulations of students, in relation to their professionalisation while attending a formal worldview educational programme?

Q4. What are the characteristics of the development that occurs in the life view articulations of students, in relation to their professionalisation during their juniorship?

As described in section 4.4.2, a narrative, thematic cross-over analysis was carried out to answer the research questions listed above. The process of rereading the 33 narratives and making the accompanying notes was focused on the narrative function of continuity and discontinuity within these articulations. Attending the minor programme and rereading the narratives in their juniorship period functioned as an ‘interruption’ of the students’ daily lives, which constitutes the context of these articulations. The rereading of the re-articulations resulted in descriptions of development in terms of (dis)continuity, and descriptions of the role and function of ambivalence. As described in the methodological chapter, ambivalence is an essential aspect of narrative research because of its relevance for time, place and interaction. These ambivalences represent the students’ experiences with boundaries, interruptions, and discontinuity in their life orientation, which could lead to a redefinition of their articulations, and a subsequent repositioning in regard to professional and societal contexts. This focus on ambivalence allowed us to describe seven different ways in which students cope with ambivalence in their life orientation articulation, and subsequent professionalisation.

The description of these seven different positions of ambivalence in the articulations is a first step in answering the research questions Q3 and Q4, which will be taken further in the analysis of Cohort-B narratives. During the minor programme and in their juniorship period, the students added new words, insights, and other perspectives to their earlier articulations, in different colours. In the following presentation, the colours below are used to represent a time period during the hermeneutic and articulation process (see table 5E).

Time period	Corresponding colour
T0 = first stage	Black
T1 = after the inspirational days	Green
T2 = extra addition(s) beyond the required number	Purple
T3 = the end of the minor programme	Red
Juniorship period	Blue

Table 5E Corresponding Colours to Periods of Articulations

Typology 1: An Ambivalence in the Past Provides Direction – Deepening Integrating Insight

One group of students describes a former existential ambivalence in their biography. Specifically, these were war experiences, a burn-out, the death of one of the parents, and a turbulent youth period. Most of these students explicitly relate these former experiences of discontinuity to their values and life orientation. The student with a turbulent youth period articulates that the development of personal identity is a motivation in her teacher job. The student who experienced war in her youth has been using her life story as an example for her pupils to never give up, to prove that everyone can achieve personal goals. The student who experienced burn-out used the minor programme as a time for reflection. Characteristic in Cohort-A for the students of this typology is that they demonstrate a deepening reflection on life orientation topics during the minor programme. This leads to critical thinking about their position, attitude, or life views, in reaction to this discontinuity they experienced. These considerations do not lead to a new ambivalence regarding professionalisation or society, but to a repositioning – and consequently a redefinition of their position – as a result of new insights because of this discontinuity.

“During the minor, I felt so enriched. Everything which was new to me, was a moment full of life. I discovered how much more there is, and how much there is still to discover. Everything got deepened. (...) A remarkable moment was the lecture about Hinduism. It was difficult for me to give Hinduism a place. So many gods, who represent something. The appearance of the Hindu faith is beautiful. Colourful and inviting. But in terms of content, I found it difficult to understand. Until I attended this lecture. The teacher talked about the two currents in Hinduism and about the origin of the gods. She did this briefly and succinctly. During the lecture, it struck me powerfully that Hinduism belongs in the list of monotheistic religions. All of a sudden everything was clear. When everything had become clear, I felt disappointed. Especially in myself. I grew up with the idea that Hinduism is a polytheistic religion. I myself have experienced it is as unpleasant when people have a wrong picture of Islam. And now it turned out that I had a false picture of Hinduism. I observed the teacher, and she told me about how she positioned herself in life. It didn't bother her that people generalise Hinduism. Or have a narrow view of it. She told me that she focused on her self, on her own karma and dharma in life. (...) I would actually like to bow down to this college. The message for me was that I'm just like the others. I have to focus on my own life. The here and now. I valued it very much to let everyone know that Islam is a peace-loving religion. I valued it so much, that I became quite passionate about it during discussions. But I've now abandoned this value. It is what it is. And if people think badly about Islam, they have to figure it out by themselves. If not, it is a great loss for them.” (Haneefa – Student-teacher Primary Education – Jan. 2013)

This long fragment shows in what way Haneefa experiences a discontinuity. Islam is very important to her because it gave her her identity in her puberty. Not only an identity, but also a peaceful mind and a peaceful home situation. Islam was a way out of an ambivalence she experienced in life. In the lecture she describes, she discovered that she did the same as other people did to her: generalising a faith. Her faith is related to her core value, or in Taylorian language, to a hypergood, 'getting an identity,' which is her primary motivation in teaching. This experienced and described discontinuity led to a deepened insight into her behaviour, which she wished to adjust, and to use as an example for her pupils at an Islamic school. During her juniorship period, she continued to value openness and the capacity to listen:

“It does me good to pass on life experience to the pupils. What it is like to be a Muslim in this society. And how to focus on all the beautiful things we are surrounded with.” (Haneefa – Student-teacher Primary education – Jan. 2017)

During the juniorship period, changes occur. Like Haneefa, for example, students continue their orientation process, resulting in an ongoing implementation of the other aspects of normative professionalisation. The other articulations show a similar pattern in the minor programme and in the juniorship period. These students discover new perspectives, which broaden their views, resulting in a deepening insight into their life orientation position, which involves more than just a deepening of awareness. They are already aware of their position, but as a result of dialogues they manage to express their position more elaborately, and in this way, they receive confirmation that they are moving in the right direction. For most of them, the articulated values in their life orientation function as a motivation within their professional and societal context.

Another student, who had experienced burn-out, experienced a set-back. This reappearing ambivalence led to a reorientation, which she felt was necessary to teach her something. Enjoyment and relaxation in life became more important to her, and were integrated. Now, she has a new job as a teacher, which she links to her professional and societal contribution.

“I don’t know if I described it above, or elsewhere in my document. But suddenly I remember the image of the river and the stones in the river. The many stones that lie in the river can change the river a little bit. As a teacher, I can just as easily change the lives of many people a little bit. I can certainly see a great deal of my sense-giving here.” (Fiona – Social Work and Social Services – April 2017)

Although all students qualify their studies in their minor programme as significant, their reasons for changing direction are far too complex to conclude that the reorientation was simply a result of the minor programme. However, they all express that the minor programme led to a deepening of their life orientation, which is evidenced by the conscious integration of this deeper insight into their articulation. An integration that they associate with their professional beliefs and societal context.

Typology 2: An Ambivalence in the Past Plays no Significant Role in Articulation – Reorientation During Juniorship Period

The students in this group describe similar intrusive existential moments in life, like being a refugee, loss of parents, or an unstable home situation. Unlike the previous group, these students do not explicitly relate this experience to their personal values or life orientation in their articulations. They do not describe any insights they have drawn from these past experiences, which become the subject of further deepening in the minor. During the PhWS minor, they learn many things, acquire knowledge and skills, or gain insights, regarding the meaning of rest and silence, for example. Another characteristic in Cohort-A is the lack of an articulated relationship between the three aspects of normative professionalisation during the minor.

In the juniorship period, changes occur in the articulations of this Cohort-A. One student switched from social work studies to a life as an entrepreneur in a beauty shop. Moreover, she broke with her orthodox Christian background, and decided to take her own path in life. Melanie, for example, discovered a talent for organising, which made her decide to start a master in governance studies. Four years ago, she described pleasure as her number one value, something she later evaluated as a bit childish when rereading this fragment. She found a new orientation, which incorporates something of a past ambivalence, regarding her late mother.

“I’ve become a lot more ambitious over the years. My mother gave up her job when she had two children and focused on family life and volunteer work. I used to see this as my future, but now it wouldn’t occur to me anymore. Self-development is very important to me. To keep on learning and developing is very important to me. Over the years, I’ve gained better insights about where my interests lie, and my ambition to achieve more in the field of work has increased enormously.” (Melanie – Student-teacher Primary education – April 2017)

Her mother has passed away and she describes that since that time her life is always filled with some grief. Her mother’s life was an example, but not anymore. An important value in her articulation is self-development, which after she graduated as a teacher began to function as an orientation. Other narratives in this group signal a similar process in the juniorship period, characterised by a reorientation. In this group, there is no articulated narrative relationship between a past ambivalence and the values that now function as an orientation in the professional and societal context.

Typology 3: A Silent Ambivalence Comes to Light During the Minor

In this typology, the articulations during the minor programme show the existence of a silent ambivalence. The ambivalence is silent, because it did not appear in the first articulation of the life orientation, or did not occupy a significant place. As a result of the tutorials, the educational impact

of the minor, and the student group, some of the participants became aware of an already existing, but non-explicit ambivalence in their life. Macey describes how during the inspirational days, her explanation of her painting to her peers resulted in the awareness that the past influences her picture of what other people think of her.

“During the follow-up talk, I indicated that I’m rather careful about showing myself, and that what I do show needs to be as beautiful as possible, so that people will like me, I think. This is largely due to my uncertainty. It told them that I was bullied in the past and how this affected my self-image, and the reactions were very positive. Someone else said that she’d also been bullied in the past, and how she managed to shake off this negative feeling at some point. I found it surprising and very pleasant to hear that others don’t have a negative image of me, but find me pleasant and tranquil. They also said that you don’t always need a big mouth to be seen, everyone is different. ‘You are as you are.’ This touched me in particular: I am as I am and that’s something to be quite proud of. This moment in this group session was very special for me, I really shook off something from the past.” (Macey – Student-teacher English – Nov. 2012)

This critical incident was the beginning of a new process. She began to integrate this new perspective on herself into the other life orientation issues. It even had an impact on her professional identity, a development she managed to continue in her juniorship period. As an English teacher in vocational education, she describes her life story as a tool to support students who are insecure. This process led her to redefine her orientation towards her profession and towards society. Another example of redefinition and subsequent behavioural change relates to Laurie’s articulation. Her ‘silent’ ambivalence revolved around opening up and taking a position. A few times in her narrative, she describes that she had opened up, but a couple of years later, she had to open up again. One of the causes, she relates, is that as the youngest daughter she had to conquer a place among her older brothers. She explains that she had to learn to open up, which for her means independence and acceptance. In the minor, this process of opening up and acquiring an independent voice restarted. In her juniorship period, she describes how, as a teacher in primary education, she now manages to deal with something that belonged to an old ambivalence.

“Before the minor, I used to be pretty quick to judge people, while there’s often a story behind people that also explains their behaviour. In my teacher job, I have this with parents for example. You know, in every group you have overanxious parents, which make you think as a teacher, pff, there’s that mother again. While I learned that parents don’t do this without reason, that there’s always a story behind it. The result of this is, that in my work I can also be open to the types of parents who belong to the children in my class.” (Laurie – Student-teacher Primary education – May 2017)

For this group of students, the minor programme offered support with describing some of the patterns in their lives that influenced their behaviour and interpretation of situations. The safe atmosphere in the minor, which they describe, helped them to investigate these elements of their biography. In their juniorship period, these students continued the process they had started, and they described how they integrated their new insights into their normative professionalisation. Sometimes they did not articulate the societal meaning of their personal and professional values.

Typology 4: A Currently Experienced Ambivalence Influences the Orientation in the PhWS Minor and Later

Characteristic in these narratives is the current experience of an ambivalence, which takes up a lot of attention. Examples are a divorce of the parents, a severe grieving process, the requirement to

succeed, a lack of spiritual freedom. These ambivalences differ in character, but what they have in common is the centripetal dimension during the minor. This commonality does not mean that they show a comparable process regarding the effect of the ambivalence. In one case, the articulation showed that the ambivalence continued to be a blockade for further growth, which continued into the juniorship period.

The other examples show that the minor programme functioned as a safe space to give these ambivalences the necessary attention. The result was a diminishing, or sometimes even disappearing influence on life, and a subsequent diminishing influence on the profession and societal positioning. Abby, for example, describes how she started to live on her own. This involved a process of becoming independent from her mother, who never listened to her. It is also a process of mourning, which coincides with the minor, and which was given a place during the meditative painting in the monastery.

“While explaining this painting, I noticed that I find it very difficult to talk about my life. I still find it very difficult to accept that I can’t talk very well with my mother, and that this makes me feel very lonely. These feelings are very well expressed for me in the following poem that I found.” (Abby – Student-teacher Primary education – Nov. 2012)

In addition to this particular event, she discovered that she had some values she was not aware of. She decided to do her traineeship at an Islamic homework supervision institute. Things were managed in a less structured way.

“At the end of the minor, I know that I hold on very strongly to my values. Personally, I see this as a very strong quality of myself. I do notice that I expect others to meet my values, if this is not the case I quickly become irritated with them, or withdraw in myself. This is a side of myself that I have to deal with very consciously. I cannot expect that when something is unclear, this will automatically get resolved. I have to learn to (dare) ask for help, so that things become more clear to me.” (Abby – Jan. 2013)

Abby chose a traineeship that fell outside her comfort zone, which enabled her to discover things that would not have become so explicitly clear in an ordinary internship. At the very least, the combination of the traineeship and the attention given to values and attitudes in the different tutorials, probably gave her more opportunities to discover how things work for her. At the end of the minor, she listed this traineeship, although it was sometimes hard, as one of her sources of inspiration. Even in her rereading process four years later, she was still grateful for this interruption, from which she still benefits in her professional and private life.

Besides Abby, there are examples in this group that show that the diminishing effect of the ambivalence increases during the juniorship period. Jenna, for example, struggled with a lack of autonomy and freedom. First of all, the context of the minor and its students was like a warm bath, because for the first time she could talk about things that matter in life. With her fellow student-teachers in primary education, this was not possible. The ambivalence was caused by her parents’ norm, which said to always help other people. Others always come first. When she described her professional belief, she stated the opposite, ‘be free and autonomous, and love yourself.’ At the end of the minor, she described being at the beginning of a new stage, in which she could call herself a free-thinking, self-sufficient and strong woman.

“If I finally believe that myself, then I’ll also be able to see what my mentor and the pupils in my class have seen this year. All I have to do is to believe in it myself. That is my goal.” (Jenna – Student-teacher Primary education – Jan. 2013)

Jenna had an excellent start at her school, but the norm 'always help others' led to a burn-out, as she described. She lost herself in her job. Four years later, she is reintegrating again, after challenging the old ambivalence during a period of physical and mental recovery.

"After a long process of anger, frustration, and a sense of being lost, the final distance led to reflection and insight. It was absolutely necessary for me to physically collapse in order to finally be able to scrutinise myself mentally, and to even admit that I was overworked. I've astonished myself in how harsh I can be on myself, how stubborn I can be, and how I'm able to keep racing on the motorway without stopping. It took me at least three months before I was able to admit to myself – and feel – how much grief was hiding behind this dropout. (...) Still, I know that this experience will make me big, brave, stronger, and above all, will bring me much self-love. Without love for yourself, it is impossible to share that love with the people around you. Start with yourself, then the rest will follow." (Jenna – March 2017)

This fragment shows the presence and the power of this ambivalence, which impacts on the orienting value of 'self-love, autonomy, and freedom.' The minor programme enabled Jenna to articulate these autobiographical tensions, which finally resulted in a hopeful professional start. Yet she still encountered this pitfall she thought she could recognise. This group of articulations shows the power and influence of past ambivalences, which continue to play a role. Either in a silenced way, or perhaps positively, or emerging and still negatively. In any case, the outcome of these challenges calls for a reorientation towards the professional and societal context

Typology 5: No Ambivalence – Exploring and Taking a Position

This group of students does not describe an ambivalence which had its influence in the past, or still dominates the existential learning process. What the processes of these students have in common is a growing insight into their position among others. During the minor, they become aware of the position they take in life, in their professions, or in society. They enjoy the conversations, the tutorials, and show an interest in the subjects. They describe that the context of the minor helped to have more in-depth conversations, which enabled them to get to know themselves better. At the end of the PhWS minor, Miley rearticulates her professional belief, which became clear during dialogues and classes about normative professionalisation.

"I often think that anyone can do what I do. In a lecture I had, we asked ourselves whether a journalist is a professional. After all, anyone can write a good piece. When I talked with my internship coach about this, we came to the conclusion that a journalist is definitely a professional. By studying journalism, you learn how to build a good article, you learn spelling, style and grammar and all that is essential to make a radio or TV item. This gave me the confirmation that not everyone can do what I do. You need to have the training.

I also gradually discovered how I want to act ethically. In my philosophical essay, I ask the question where the boundary lies between gathering news and invading the privacy of (well-known) people. In one of my learning goals in the minor, I describe how I would act when writing a news item about Muslim extremists. Now, I'm able to make an agreement with myself that I will put the interests of my sources first. As a person, I want to be respected, so I give respect to others. I don't want to follow the masses, so I don't blindly assume that news items contain the full truth. Nor do I want to let my judgements shine through my news items; it's up to the public to form its own opinion, if it so wishes. I want to be objective. I treat my sources like I want to be treated. I'd rather have a pleasant conversation without getting any news out of it, but safeguarding the trust of my sources, than a blunt interview

after which the interviewee will not call me again if he/she has any news, because he/she finds me unlikeable.” (Miley – Journalism and Communication Studies – Jan. 2013)

Miley stresses the importance of trust and openness to show her own vulnerable side, which she experienced during the minor.

“During the Day of the Dialogue (EZ: on this day, people can join a table in a supermarket, a library, etc., to have a dialogue with strangers), and during conversations with fellow students on the inspirational days, and the trip to Rome, I noticed that I told these people things I’ve never told before to people I hadn’t known for long. Only a few friends know important things about me, but that’s all. I could be open with my fellow students because I knew that they listened sincerely and showed interest. It also helped that they, in turn, told their own story. I think that being so open with people is really special, that doesn’t happen very often.” (Miley – Jan. 2013)

For Miley, the open conversations helped her to explore her vulnerability. In an earlier fragment, she realised that she had a very stable and happy youth, which appeared not to be noticeable. She felt privileged. Four years after these experiences, Miley reread her articulations, and realised that she no longer consciously thinks about these experiences, but that they are still meaningful.

“I still look back with satisfaction and a good feeling on the half-year minor. Of course, I don’t think about the minor every day or every week, but now that I think back to it, I had many conversations that made me develop as a person. Now I think about it, I realise it’s still the same, but now in my work. I greatly value a conversation from person to person – with whomever it may be. My work (for a magazine) allows me to interview many interesting people, who are very inspiring. It is a ‘means’ for me to get to know and shape my values even better.” (Miley – April 2017)

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This fragment is an example of how this narrative inquiry can help students to become aware of personal values and positions. Miley relates experiences in the minor to aspects of her work as a journalist. As described, she designates her youth as happy and carefree. In this group of articulations, there are students with a less carefree background. They, too, experience the open atmosphere and trust among the students as support for their personal development. Chrissy emphasises another perspective on her repositioning process.

“I would like to put my prejudices behind me. I would like to leave my insecurity behind. I’ve learned that people really value me for who I am, and that I don’t have to be insecure. I am who I am and that’s what people will have to deal with. If they can’t manage, then they don’t deserve me.” (Chrissy – Student-teacher Primary education – Jan. 2013)

In these articulations, two elements of repositioning occur. First, Chrissy notices she has certain prejudices. She learns to listen to life stories first. A good understanding of the story helps to understand the behaviour of people. The second development is increasing self-esteem, empowerment of her identity. In her juniorship period, she continues this growth as a substitute teacher in primary education. She faces some difficulties in the beginning, but manages to turn a problematic class into a manageable group of children. Her motivation is to develop and learn new things. Another example in this group shows how the educational interruption can support students to investigate their value orientation, and its broader impact on their life and profession.

“By finding out what respect means for me, I learned more about myself. I’ve noticed that respect means a lot more to me than I originally thought. By thinking about what I’ve

experienced in the past, and finding out what respect means in my culture, I've gained a broader perspective on the concept of respect. Respect and equality are still values for me that I want to pass on to others in my field of work. I think that, as a human resource manager, it is important that you convey this message to your colleagues and employees.” (Basma – Human Resource Management – Dec. 2012)

For Basma, the concept of respect became more important, and more layered. She gained an insight why this value was so meaningful and what the conceptual boundaries of her perspective on respect meant to her. The students in this group express how they became aware of their position, which helped them to articulate who they are, and what they stand for, in private and professional life. The societal impact of their profession was in some cases less articulated. During their juniorship period, some of the students looked back on the minor as a pleasant interruption, and continued their development. Others were faced with a significant interruption, which helped them to reorient during their juniorship stage. Luke, for example, worked on a cruise and stayed in Japan for a few months. This cultural encounter made him aware of his values and attitude.

“By living and working on a ship, and in Tokyo, I learned an incredible amount about my own perspective and my values. I've become aware of the negative aspects of these values. I've also learned that sometimes I need to keep my values to myself, and that I should be as open as possible to opposite values.” (Luke – Student-teacher English – March 2017)

For Luke, the cultural encounter helped him to recognise his position. The difference with other students in this group is that he apparently needed an opposite perspective in an environment where his values were not part of the known cultural context. This experience helped him to connect the three aspects of normative professionalisation, and to articulate a direction in his orientation. Luke did not change or leave some of his values behind, but managed to redefine them in a new configuration.

“In recent years, I've developed an ideal that is more in line with practice. I think it's important that people value their own identity. This makes the world more beautiful, more interesting, and sometimes even a little easier to explain.” (Luke – March 2017)

The fragments in this group explain the meaning of interruption, and that some students benefit from different forms of interruption. Both types of interruption, i.e., the minor and the cross-cultural experience, show that a mixture of perspectives helps to get to know yourself and the other better. To recognise your personal values, to start a reflection on what is essential in personal and professional life. Also, these fragments reveal that for some students, more attention should be paid to the societal impact of their professional contribution.

Typology 6: No Ambivalence in the Past, Nor in the Minor Programme

In this group of articulations, the students do not recall any 'strong' ambivalences in the past. During the minor, these students show different attitudes, from eagerly searching spiritual sources to a laid back attitude. Characteristic is that none of the articulations shows a reflective or narrative relationship between the three aspects of normative professionalisation. Some students connect two elements by linking their life orientation to either the professional or the societal context. Another aspect is the relatively small amount of articulated additions, compared to the first-stage articulation.

In the juniorship period, the development of the students in this group differs. Mike, for example, had to redefine the articulations he set out during the minor programme. He detested the Calvinistic

work ethos of his parents. His view on work changed utterly. His job as a teacher fulfils his life and has become an essential part of his identity.

“My job as a teacher not only satisfies me, it’s an important part of my identity. Being allowed to form people at such a vulnerable age gives me a great deal of satisfaction. Being a teacher can really be the most rewarding profession at times. Furthermore, in a general sense, I discovered that I, too, like to work. The sensation of trying something difficult and then to succeed with lots of effort, turns out to be vastly more enjoyable than never trying anything.” (Mike – Student-teacher in History – Jan. 2017)

Mike found his orientation during his job, and not during his education. His core value ‘justice’ relates his professional orientation to the societal context. In the minor programme, he stated that his job was to convince his pupils. Now, he supports them in giving voice to their own meaning.

Typology 7: An Ambivalence Emerging During the Minor Programme

The last group of students differs from the previous group in that the ambivalence first occurred to them during the minor programme. At least, that is what they describe and articulate. The focus is on the articulated narrative. In the group of silent ambivalence, students recognised during the minor something of an ambivalence, which played a role in their lives before. In this group, the ambivalence occurs as a result of a new insight, which influences their positions in life orientation. Rowan, for example, was always of the opinion that a man should be physically strong. The manifestation of physical strength tells something about the person as a whole. During the inspirational days, he came to a conclusion that it is precisely the other way around.

“My self-image consisted of the belief that power and strength are linked to a person’s physical condition. It’s now clear to me that the opposite is true. With a few words, it soon became clear who was strong and who was less strong. Physical strength is only useful to support actions, but actual strength comes first of all from within. Being able to talk about emotions without being confronted with them and being bothered by them, is a proof of inner strength. For me, it was important that the difference became clear. Merely working on my physical self-image is/was not enough. Precisely working on my self-image through facing my emotions will make me a balanced and thus strong individual. I’ve still got a long way to go, but what matters to me is that the first experience is there.” (Rowan – Student-teacher in Physics – Oct. 2012)

This realisation meant a reorientation for Rowan. From a psychological point of view, it may be possible to say that the ambivalence was somehow already present, but that from a narrative perspective this was not the case. In his meaning-giving process, he had to deal with a new insight, which required an evaluation of the other elements in his normative professionalisation.

In the juniorship period, the reorienting processes that started during the minor continued. David discovered during the minor that his future as a teacher was not precisely what he wanted. He describes a promoter position as ‘helping other people.’ This value was important in his upbringing. At the beginning of the minor, work and money were less critical for him, but this view began to change. He articulates that his opinion is taking on a more realistic form. After his graduation he had a small job at a supermarket, which opened his eyes. His colleagues have to do this job their entire lives, for a small salary.

“I noticed that for many other boys this job was their ‘real’ job, which made me realise that I’m in a very privileged position. Of course, the whole idea of ‘helping people’ can be interpreted broadly, and in the end almost every job contributes to the improvement of

society and ‘helping other people.’ That’s why I opted for public administration when I chose a follow-up study. In the public sector, of course, you’re often occupied with making society more beautiful, liveable and sustainable. You may not always be in direct contact with the people you’re doing it for, but you do contribute to society.” (David – Student-teacher in History – April 2017)

This fragment shows that ambivalence does not always contain an emotional dimension. In this case, David’s articulation and the process of rereading and having conversations, resulted in a reorientation of his position in life. The reorientation also started in the professional domain. First during his traineeship and later in his side job. All these developments forced him to redefine his narrative around his core value of ‘helping other people.’

For David, the societal context was and is very important. The career change required him to redefine his normative professionalisation. The reference to society is not always present in the articulations. For some students, most of their attention is focused on their personal and professional lives. At this point, it is important to notice that the list of facilitating questions needs to address other issues to enable a description of students’ positions in society. In these positions, the presence of ambivalence influences the articulation of students’ normative professionalisation. The analysis showed that there are seven typologies of students’ articulations in which ambivalence plays a role in the articulation of a life orientation. These typologies indicate how this influencing ambivalence relates to the normative professionalisation during the PhWS minor and the juniorship period.

Summary

Schematically, table 5F presents the seven typologies, which emerged from the thematic cross-over analysis.

Typology	Relationship Between Life Orientation and Professionalisation	
	Minor Programme	Juniorship
1. An Ambivalence in the Past Provides Direction - Deepening Integrating Insight	Deepening and integrating insights into another aspect of normative professionalisation	Integration of insight
2. An Ambivalence in the Past Plays no Significant Role in Articulation – Reorientation During Juniorship Period	Little or no articulated relationship between life orientation and other aspects of normative professionalisation	Shift in life plan
3. A Silent Ambivalence Comes to Light During the Minor	Activated awareness starts repositioning process	Integration of new perspective
4. A Currently Experienced Ambivalence Influences the Orientation in the PhWS Minor and Later.	The personal process is dominant	Beginning integration of insight in professionalisation – depending on personal situation
5. No Ambivalence – Exploring and Taking Position	Taking position + integration in professionalisation	Continuation
6. No Ambivalence in the Past, Nor in the Minor Programme	Limited articulation + no integration in professionalisation	No clear (narrative) relation
7. An Ambivalence Emerging During the Minor Programme	New insight starts repositioning process	Integration of new perspective

Table 5F Seven Typologies of Students’ Articulations

Chapter 6 Analysis of Students' Articulations in Cohort-B

This chapter starts in section 6.1 with a description of the themes, which emerged from the thematic analysis of the articulated meaning of the world and the human being. This analysis makes it possible to complete the answer to the second research question. The following section 6.2 is a presentation of the development in the students' articulations and their positioning during the minor *Philosophy. World Religions. Spirituality* (PhWS) and their juniorship period. This section is a continuation of section 5.2, in which seven different typologies of students were described as the result of a thematic cross-over analysis. These seven typologies were taken as the beginning of the analysis of the Cohort-B narratives, which resulted in a description of the hermeneutic development in the students' articulation of their life orientation related to the developing articulation of their normative professionalisation.

6.1 View on the World and on the Human Being

In chapter 5, the thematic analysis, using *in vivo* coding, resulted in a description of students' first-stage articulations at the beginning of their education through life orientation in the PhWS minor. The students of Cohort-A articulated their view of life, which was the first general topic of their list of facilitating questions. The analysis and the articulations in Cohort-A show that the students paid less attention to their view on the world and on the human being, which in the abductive research process between theory and practice emerged as constitutive elements of 'life orientation.' Therefore, the students of Cohort-B received a more detailed list of questions covering these two particular views as well. Because these two topics are significant for our conceptualisation of life orientation, an additional thematic analysis on these two elements was performed to verify whether more themes would emerge than in Cohort-A, when students are explicitly asked to articulate their meaning. An additional analysis of the articulated views of the good life and the meta-empirical did not result in extra themes, which is the reason why an extra presentation of exemplifying articulations has been left out of this chapter.

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View on the Human Being

The thematic analysis with *in vivo* coding of the Cohort-B articulations on the human being resulted in four themes, which show an overlap with Cohort-A (see table 6A). Two students described that it was too difficult for them to articulate something at this stage.

Themes emerged from an analysis of the first-stage articulations of 'view on the human being.'
A moral being
Equality and diversity
Responsibility for your own life and development
A social being

Table 6A Themes in Articulated Views on the Human Being

Theme: A Moral Being

The articulations that belong to this theme of 'a moral being' often refer to the nature or essence of the human being. Some students describe humans as essentially good, others tend to say that humans are neither good nor bad, but that external factors are constitutive for moral development.

"Human beings are naturally good and have the free will to choose between good and evil."
(Aiden – Student Pedagogy)

Aiden stresses free will as an important aspect, which another pedagogy student combines with a theory about nature and nurture.

“In my pedagogy studies, a lot of attention is paid to the education of ‘a human being.’ An example is the discussion nature-nurture. I believe that humans are born with certain instincts that can emerge in times of crisis, but no human being is inherently evil, with the exception of mental disorders. Through education and the living environment ‘a human being’ is formed. It is very difficult to let go of these values and norms later in life.” (Carice – Student Pedagogy)

A few students articulate their view on the meaning of the human being in religious language.

“My image of man is that human beings are created in the image of God. I believe that a human being in its pure form (birth) is perfect. I also believe that human beings in their pure form are good, and that the blows of life cause the growth of evil in them.” (Safia – Student-teacher in Social Skills)

In this theme of ‘a moral being,’ some students articulate the goodness or the wickedness in human beings explicitly. Some designate humans as selfish, or not to be trusted.

“There are few people that you can really rely on and trust. As you walk your way through life, you get to know those people and it is up to you to cherish them and to show them your appreciation and love.” (Beatrice – Journalism and Communication Studies)

Theme: Equality and Diversity

In the theme of equality and diversity, students emphasise that human beings should have the free space to be as they are, and the freedom to be as they want to be.

“I believe that all people are essentially equal, and that you have to interact with others with respect and an open mind.” (Romy – Student-teacher in Sign Language)

Some students stress uniqueness and the freedom to be unique in order to safeguard equality and diversity.

“Every human being is a unique individual, who makes his or her own choices in life. A human being lives, or is sometimes lived by his or her environment. Every person has received his or her own values and norms, received through upbringing, but must abide by the rules that the law imposes on them. Every individual chooses to live with others, or alone.” (Alice – Student in Health Care)

Alice starts with the aspect of unique individuality, and continues to articulate other themes as well. In her articulation, she combines the aspect of uniqueness and the aspect of being an individual, which in this theme appear more often separately.

“I see a human being very much as an individual. Although I know that man is part of a greater whole, I find it difficult to see it that way. Every human being has his or her own character traits and way of thinking.” (Joy – Student in Ecological Pedagogy)

Theme: Responsibility for Your Own Life and Development

Students in this theme articulate the responsibility that human beings have for their own path in life, for the choices they make.

“I see the human being as partly independent, and partly dependent. I think humans are independent because there are more and more opportunities for development, and because people can make their own choices. I think humans are dependent on technology. I see technology as an opportunity to make a big world smaller by bringing it closer to us, and by giving us more opportunities to discover it. Yet people are becoming more and more dependent on it. It’s hard to imagine spending a day without electricity and/or the Internet.” (Izzy – Student in Psychology)

This theme of responsibility is close to the theme of ‘a moral being,’ except that these students are less inclined to express themselves about the essence of a human being. They emphasise the responsibility for actions, by stressing the freedom of choice.

“I believe that a human being is responsible for his actions. You are makeable and you have choices. Every form of behaviour is a choice. As a human being you have to work on yourself, and try to make sure that you get along well with yourself and with others. I do see us as animals, I don’t put humans above other animals, so I don’t eat meat or fish. I think that every human being is good in principle, but that can be ruined by external factors. That people act badly then, is out of ignorance.” (Meryl – Student in Social Skills)

Theme: A Social Being

The focus in this theme is on the social character of human beings. Some students have a descriptive articulation, others express themselves prescriptively. Two examples:

“I think that we humans are the result of evolution. I think that, because we live together in groups, we are destined to take care of each other. In addition, we want to protect our own group against ‘the others.’ Everything can be developed from that (societies, organisations, you name it). I think that it’s not as animal-like as I describe it now, because we want to learn and innovate, and we want to look for insights. We can think about this, and look for reasons to do or not to do things.” (Kate – Student in Psychology)

Kate describes that we are social beings because of evolution. At the end of her articulation, she wants to distinguish what makes humans different from animals, which is the ratio. Chloë combines an essentialist view on the human being with a responsibility to take care of each other.

“We are in the world to create something beautiful together. I think human beings are on the planet to help and support each other. Equality, social justice and solidarity are important core values for me. In addition, I value nature very much and believe that we, as human beings, should handle nature with care. I don’t believe in a class society, and I believe that everyone should be able to experience equality.” (Chloë – Student-teacher in Social skills)

View on the World

Two students did not know what to write about their view on the world at the beginning of the PhWS minor. There are three general themes, which emerge from the thematic analysis by using *in vivo* coding. Significant is the difference between a focus on the world as nature or environment, and the focus on society and co-existence (see table 6b).

View on the world	
The world is beautiful and needs protection	Focus on nature and less on society
The world is a negative place, and in danger	Focus on society and less on nature
The world shows cultural diversity	Focus on society

Table 6B Themes in Articulated Views on the World

Theme: The World is Beautiful and Needs Protection

In the theme 'the world is beautiful and needs protection,' most students focus on nature, plants and animals. The world is a beautiful place, sometimes called creation, sometimes a coincidence. This beauty is under serious threat and needs protection. Secondly, some students start articulating the beauty of the earth but simultaneously state that there is a lot of societal inequality.

"I think the nature in our world is beautiful. There is so much beauty to see, sometimes it's unimaginable that it can be so beautiful. For human beings it's not beautiful everywhere. There is a lot of poverty and war. There are too many of us, with too many opinions, to manage everything in the right way. I now have the feeling that we're the only inhabited planet in the universe. I often think that we've developed this far as the result of a 'mistake'." (Angel – Social Work and Social Services)

In the following articulation, there is a close relationship between a view on the human being and a view on the world. Meryl relates both views to each other.

"I still find this a little difficult to describe. I love nature and animals. I therefore think it's very bad that humans are wasting our planet that way. We must stand beside the animals, not above them. If humans learn to get along with themselves and with others, and see this as a goal in itself, the world would be a lot more beautiful. I also think that world peace is not a matter of a messiah, but that world peace is in the human being itself. It can be achieved by really wanting it. As I've said in this document, human beings are responsible for everything, including war and world peace." (Meryl – Student-teacher in Social skills)

The articulation of Chloë shows some overlap with the next theme, which starts from a negative perspective on society. Chloë adds that her depressive state of mind is probably a reason for her negative thoughts.

"My worldview: sometimes I see the world as a beautiful place to learn things, and sometimes as a difficult and annoying place. Last year I was depressed for a while and this changed my worldview. My view of society has changed and I think that social pressure was also related to my depression. Previously (before the depression) I was often naive and liked everything but this experience made me realistic. I think the world can be a beautiful place, but because of our way of handling it we've made it a cruel and ugly place. The world and its inhabitants hurry too much: time pressure, deadlines, beauty ideals and mobile phones have made us a slave to society. We all have an obligation to keep the world beautiful. I find it difficult to describe my worldview because of these recent events. I'm still in the process of adjusting it. For me, the world is a better place now, but to get there I do make some choices." (Chloë – Student-teacher in Social skills)

Theme: The World is a Negative Place, and in Danger.

In this theme, the focus is on societal inequality, poverty, and on a generally negative perspective of living conditions. These conditions are societal, but also environmental.

"Because humans are allowed to make their own choices, there is a lot of variation in the world. A number of people, in my view, are making the wrong choices, and that makes the world worse. At the moment, we are busy with making budget cuts in our economy. I think that politicians don't listen well to the voice of the people, and that is why many people are dissatisfied." (Emily – Student-teacher Primary education)

Meagan describes that she has to force herself not to focus too much on negative things.

“At the moment I’m more focused on the negative things, because there is a lot of war and misery in the world. I have to make a conscious effort to see the beautiful things (such as nature, etc.) in the world.” (Meagan, Student-teacher in Sign Language)

Besides articulating a negative perspective, some students state what a possible solution might be: more solidarity, empathy, connections, and tolerance.

“We know very little about the world on a larger scale. In our own neighbourhood and in our own way of life we focus on survival. Not on surviving all together. I think it’s a pity that we’ve become so individualistic as human beings. I think that, after all, we need each other. By this I also mean the animals and the people on the other side of the world.” (Guinevere – Social Work and Social Services)

Theme: The World Shows Cultural Diversity

In this theme, the perspective has a positive character. Students focus on cultural diversity and the beauty of the earth.

“I think we have a beautiful world in general. When you think about it, it’s actually strange that we don’t all speak one language, share one nationality, and don’t have one big country. I find it special that there are so many different people, so many nationalities. And I’ll love to make a journey around the world, go to all continents and taste all cultures.” (Nikkie – Social Work and Social Services)

The descriptions of these three themes articulated within ‘view on the world’ complete the thematic analysis, and provide the additional means for answering the second research question. The themes show what students articulate at the beginning of the PhWS minor regarding their life orientation as an existential positioning process pertaining to the meaning of human being, the world, the meta-empirical and the good life. In the following section, the presentation continues by showing how students develop hermeneutically in life orientation, in relation to their professionalisation.

6.2 A Narrative Study in Three Phases

In chapter 5, seven typologies of students’ articulations emerged from the thematic cross-over analysis in Cohort-A. After we had completed the first two analytical phases, we reread the narrative with a specific focus on the biographical part to determine which of the seven typologies, described in chapter 5 (see table 5F), applied to the narrative. The biographical part of the narrative is an important indicator for the way in which ambivalence, as a characteristic of experiencing existential boundaries, played a role in the students’ lives as articulated so far. All seven typologies were also present in Cohort-B, and no other typology emerged during this analytical process. Moreover, the analysis in Cohort B made it possible to fine-tune some of the descriptions. The typology ‘Ambivalence in the past plays no significant role in articulation – reorientation during juniorship’ changed because of other additional characteristics in this theme. In cohort-B, the equivalent typology is called ‘Ambivalence in the past plays no significant role in articulation – broadening of an already integrated insight.’

In this chapter, we use the same colours as in the former chapter to represent different time periods during the articulation process.

Time period	Corresponding colour
T0 = first stage	Black
T1 = after the inspirational days	Green
T2 = extra addition(s) beyond the required number	Purple
T3 = the end of the minor programme	Red
Juniorship period	Blue

Table 6C Corresponding Colours to Periods of Articulations

6.2.1. An Ambivalence in the Past Provides Direction – Deepening Integrating Insight

The existential ambivalences which occurred in the past range from (severe) depression, diseases, feelings of insecurity, and the divorce of parents, to being bullied, a high number of deceased loved ones, and a suicide attempt. These past ambivalences provide a direction in the students' orientations. In this group, all students show a process of repositioning in their articulation during the PhWS minor and during their juniorship period. They wrote several additions to most of the nine topics, which is indicative of an elaboration of their position repertoire, and an increasing awareness. Compared to other typologies, what is significant in this group is the relatively high number of silent or silenced positions. For example, Meagan's first articulation about her negative perspective on the world silenced, and remained silent in the following years.

“At the moment I'm more focused on the negative things, because there is a lot of war and misery in the world. I have to make a conscious effort to see the beautiful things (such as nature, etc.) in the world.” (Sept 2013) (Meagan, Student-teacher in Sign Language)

“(…) I think it's important to make a contribution to the people and the nature around me. I try to do this by eating vegetarian, by consciously processing waste, and by recycling. I'm also aware that I can make a difference by asking people in my environment how I can contribute, and also telling them how everyone can contribute to the preservation of the world.” (Nov. 2013)

“Lately, I've been consciously busy with positively influencing the nearby world around me, by drawing people's attention to the fact that world conservation is important for the future. The whole world is not manageable for me at this moment, so I try to make a difference in smaller circles, for example by recycling (as described above). This applies not only to the physical world (nature) but also to the social world (people).” (April 2017)

All students articulated meta-positions and promoter positions, which can be seen as indicators for the development of the awareness of their life orientation and innovation of their insight. Particular for this group is the presence of – one or more – third positions. For example Alice, who articulated her view on the good life in September 2013 as a search for balance between rest and unrest, filled with love, and with the capacity to give and to receive. She continued:

“A human being lives a good life when he/she works for a better world, for himself/herself but especially for others.” (Oct. 2013) (Alice – Student in Health Care)

“A good life is being there for each other, in good times and in bad times. You’re a good person when you're there for someone else, when you can put your own sorrow aside to support someone who has more sorrow than you. In a good life, you appreciate what you have and what you’re blessed with.” (Jan. 2014)

“A good life is a life without selfishness and with love for our environment. In recent years I’ve learned that I’m allowed to think more of myself. Sometimes I’m maybe too much there for others, which makes me forget about myself. I’ve learned to draw a line and not always be guided by what others think, believe or want. A good life, I think, is a life in which there is a balance between your own will and the will of the other.” (Jan. 2017)

At the beginning of the minor, Alice articulated a longing for balance as a promoter position, which she articulated quite paradoxically as “let everything go and still keep everything under control (September 2013).” In January 2017, she articulated a third position as balance between your own will and the will of the other. A closer look at the autobiographical competence, which concerns her view on the good life and her experienced quality of life, revealed that the search for balance was becoming a decentring movement. About her experienced quality of life, she wrote:

“I think that at this moment I don’t (yet) live the good life. I’ve got a good life because I have my loved ones around me, dear family and friends. At this moment I’ve not yet found a balance between rest and restlessness, I’m still very much searching for who I am and what I want in life. However, I do think that I’m aware of my fellow human beings and respect them. I try to take the other into account as much as possible, but sometimes I lose sight of myself in the process.” (Sept. 2013)

“I’m searching very much for who I am and what I want with my life. I’ve learned that I ‘have to’ spend more time with my family and friends, and that I find time for myself very important, by painting, writing or making music. In order to be able to live a good life, I’ll have to look more for this kind of relaxation.” (Oct. 2013)

In the minor programme, Alice articulated that she was aware of the experienced ambivalence in her past. She related this past to her longing for rest and balance, which we denoted as a promoter position during the minor. Her contextual competence also showed a decentring movement because she considered the world first of all as beautiful, stating that we can make beautiful things. This last articulation was an expression of her experience in Rome during the study trip. But just a few weeks after Rome, her mother-in-law died, which made her feel powerless. A powerlessness she also felt regarding the suffering in the world. This suffering ran counter to her view on the human being, which is characterised by the value of ‘equality.’ During the minor, she experienced a variety of events in her life, which as a whole showed a progressive development of her life orientation. Her progressive development showed an increasing unity-in-multiplicity, a starting integration of new insights. The absence of additions regarding normative professionalisation might be an indication that her repositioning process, her growing awareness, and her ongoing development in each of the competencies had not yet reached the point of coherence and unity.

Three years later, she articulated the following regarding her quality of life:

“I’ve grown, I’m aware of what I can and cannot do well. I feel appreciated and realise that I may be here. I have people around me who give me a good feeling. I invest in these people and give them the attention and love they need. I’ve become more self-confident. I’ve always reflected, even a little too much. I’ve learned that over-reflecting exhausts me, that I can find peace in who I am and what I do, and that I do that well. All this is special for me to say. For

years I thought I was too little, believed that I actually wasn't allowed to be there. I'm still very insecure, about my appearance and sometimes about what I do. But the experiences of the past years have made me grow and give me peace of mind." (Jan. 2017)

This piece of narrative shows a balance in her autobiographical competence, which equals the balance in her competence of openness and her contextual competence. In regard to this last competence, during her juniorship period, a trip to Indonesia made her realise that poverty does not automatically mean unhappiness. In fact, she integrated some complexity in her vision on the world.

"Images on television often caused me grief when I saw that certain groups of people have so much less wealth than I have. In Indonesia, I was able to see that this image is not always correct. That people can be very happy with little. I feel rich in being able to travel, but at the same time I also know that I can be happy with very little. The same applies to these people. We've become so accustomed to certain things, which we take for granted, while we can do with much less. I'm not materialistic, I can manage well with little. At least that is what I think. Because secretly I'm happy being able to watch television, to have a mobile phone on which I can Facebook, and beautiful home furnishings around me." (Jan 2017)

Her vision on the world got repositioned, and her position repertoire became more elaborated on the spatial line. Regarding her contextual competence, Alice showed in her last addition during her juniorship period a balanced level with centralising and decentralising movements. The complexity she faced earlier, received another perspective. She even articulated a meta-position, which shows an honest and sincere reflection about her materialism. These balanced movements also took place in her other two competencies.

In summary, Alice's articulation in her juniorship period shows balanced movements in her life orientation after the progressive movements in the PhWS minor. At the end of the minor, the progressive movements were characterised by a lower degree of integration. In Alice's case, there was no articulated relation with professionalisation, because she did not add anything at all regarding these professional elements. In her juniorship period however, she integrated the earlier started progressive movements in the articulation of her professionalisation. Other students showed similar patterns that a certain coherence of positions in professionalisation had not yet been reached, while they succeeded in their juniorship period. Another part of the students who had also shown progressive movements – but already in coherence – continued their integration of positions in life orientation and professionalisation. All of them showed a deepening insight into their life orientation, as well as a coherent and integrated relationship with their professional views. Meagan, for example, articulated that the meaning of life is about doing nice things, which help you to develop. After the three inspirational days in the monastery, she discovered what her core value, the most valuable in her life, really was: 'making contact.' The discovery or better awareness of this core value was a returning and deepening insight during the minor and her juniorship period. Meagan wrote:

"I discover more and more that when I do what feels good, and what I think really suits me, I'm then busy with the meaning of my life. At the moment, I can see this in my work with people with intellectual and multiple disabilities. I feel at home when I'm in contact with them and when I can offer them support with leading a meaningful life. I have the feeling that I can contribute to this with my qualities, and this is where I find the meaning of my life right now. (...)" (Jan. 2017)

All students in this group, either directly or later when integrating new positions, articulated to have gained a deeper insight into their life orientation, which they all integrated during their professional

life. Alice's articulation is an example of how the profession eventually turned out to be the third position. As described above, Alice's theme is searching for balance, between attention for herself and others, for instance. In her juniorship period, she articulated about the meaning of life that in her work she can fully focus on the patient, which enables her not to think of herself:

"I've been working as an occupational therapist in a hospital for more than 2 years now. I notice that in my work, I can mean something to people with a physical or mental disability. It gives me satisfaction to see that I can do something for these people, help them to give a positive turn to life. I like to be there for others in my work, I don't have to think of myself at those moments, I can focus on my fellow human beings. The appreciation I receive from my patients makes me happy, but makes me feel small as well. People can be so thankful sometimes for the small bit of advice I give them, or the little adjustments I make. I find this valuable and instructive. That fits in nicely with how I view life. We don't need big things to be happy. We are here in the world to make something beautiful out of it, and to ensure that the generations after us can enjoy it as well." (Jan. 2017)

6.2.2 An Ambivalence in the Past Plays no Significant Role in Articulation – Broadening of an Already Integrated Insight

This group of students resembles the former group by having the same sort of (strong) existential ambivalences articulated in their biography, which provides a direction in their orientation. The difference is that they show movements in their articulations that are more balanced. From a DST perspective, their articulations consist of decentring and centring movements, which is indicated by their repositionings and redefinitions during the minor and their juniorship period. However, some of them produce considerable fewer additions compared to the former group. Furthermore, most of the students in this typology articulate one or more promoter positions, whether in life orientation or professionalisation. An analysis of their competences predominantly shows centring movements, which justifies a description of their development in life orientation as being primarily balanced. The analysis also shows that the balanced movements within the articulation of life orientation, usually parallel balanced movements in professionalisation during the PhWS minor. In the juniorship period, their articulations continue to be balancing in life orientation, but some students show a more coherent integration of new positions in the articulation of their professional views, while others continue the balanced movement.

Besides the fact that compared to the former group some of the students produce little to no additions in some topics, they all show dynamic positions. Significant is the absence of silent or silenced positions, and the relatively small amount of third positions. A possible explanation could be that the existential ambivalence of the past has already become more integrated and less under the surface, or that they are more confident about the direction they've taken in life. Nearly all the students who belonged to this typology articulated promoter positions, which is an indication for the possibility of innovation and development. Although the overall development in life orientation shows a balanced movement, the balance is oriented towards progression, whether articulated in the minor PhWS or during the juniorship period. Teddy, a student-teacher in German wrote in her juniorship period about the meaning of life:

"The meaning of life in general: developing yourself into a full person, able to live in harmony with people, animals and nature. My life hasn't always been sunny, but it's precisely those

experiences that give me a lot in my contacts with people who are having a hard time. I can guide my own children well, in their process of ageing and development. I have respect for everything around me, and I'm aware of my responsibility towards my own health and the world around me." (Feb. 2017) (Teddy – Student-teacher German)

This articulation resembles her articulation about her profession, in her juniorship period:

"My profession satisfies me. I manage to do better and better and I see that my positivity, my hunger for knowledge, helps others to learn from me, both on a personal level and in the development of their school skills." (Feb. 2017)

In the PhWS minor, Teddy showed a balancing movement in her life orientation, but also discovered that being a German teacher could contribute more to the development of pupils.

"Although I teach German, I'm aware (also because of the lecture about normative professionalisation) that I can indeed address world issues. It doesn't have to be big and compelling. The seeds are in small things. That is why I try to draw attention to something that is currently going on in the world at the beginning of the lessons, and that is in line with the life world of the pupils (for example abuse via the Internet)." (Nov. 2013)

This last example is a meta-position, which all students articulated during both periods in their additions. During the PhWS minor, most students showed a balanced development regarding the articulation of their life orientations, as well as meta-positions which are indicative of decentring and centring movements. These are meta-positions which broaden the already integrated insights. During the minor, there are many external influences that could affect the development of articulations. For this reason, we do not claim any direct or causal effect. However, the minor programme stimulates a process of introspection and reflection, which always remains a complex interplay between different *I*-positions. Between the minor programme and the juniorship period, all sorts of experiences have an effect on the articulation of life orientation, which is inherent to the subject of life itself. Chloë, a student-teacher in Social skills, did a tour through Asia, which provoked a meta-position concerning her view on work and on her profession.

"For me, the meaning of work is questionable. I always bring up that you need to work to live, not the other way around. It happens that I fall into this trap myself, because I also believe somehow that you have to work hard to achieve something. I experienced this first hand and noticed that it is sometimes easier for me to hide in work and studies, so that I can avoid other internal processes. So on the one hand it is my distraction and on the other hand it is also the gateway to another life, the kind of life my immediate family members have." (Sept. 2013) (Chloë – Student-teacher in Social Skills)

"Ugh, everything above feels like nonsense. Haha, work and ego were really strongly connected with my feeling of ego. I found it dead scary to quit my job and studies (to go abroad, ed. EZ) and I remember a moment when I was crying on the kitchen floor because I thought my whole identity was gone. Here I do write, however, that I knew that work and studies were a gateway, but that they were anchored in me in such a way, I didn't realise at the time. Because the situation of my parents caused a lot of annoyance, I wanted to prove myself, I thought 'This won't happen to me' (parents have not studied, ed. EZ). I really think that education is the key to self-realisation, which is why I've started working in education." (Jan. 2017)

Chloë's background is characterised by what she calls "parents who live a simple life and are not interested in the rest of the world, nor in education (Sept. 2013)," which is a promoter position for her. In the PhWS minor, she wrote some additions to her life orientation, which showed a broadening of insights, which had little effect on the professional topics. We qualify that her touring experience in Asia provoked a progressive movement in her articulation, which she instantly integrated into her professionalisation, resulting in what we read from her articulation. In this case, her narrative demonstrates a broadening in the articulation of her life orientation with little to no integration in professionalisation during the PhWS minor. In her juniorship period, her articulations in professionalisation showed an integration of her positions in life orientation.

Important to mention is the adapted name of this typology in comparison with Cohort-A, which is the only name change in our typology. In Cohort-B, it was possible to allocate more characteristics to this typology, of which a broadening of insights was the most significant one. A second difference compared to Cohort-A, is that in Cohort-B a shift of life plans in the juniorship period was not the main characteristic.

6.2.3 A Silent Ambivalence Comes to Light During the Minor

In this group of articulations, repositionings occur during education through life orientation, and in the juniorship period. The students' articulations show an openness to innovation, which becomes apparent in the presence of dynamic elements. Students show promoter and meta-positions in both periods, which is indicative of a constant movement of progression and innovation. Jailey, a student in art therapies, articulated an example about increasing flexibility regarding the quality of her life:

"Sometimes things can feel very complex and complicated for me. Then I think sometimes: 'Don't make it so difficult for yourself,' or 'Don't be so dramatic.' Then I feel like a bad person. I think that over the past few months I've been able to adjust that image a little bit, and now I feel more often that I have a 'good life.' Not that things are less complex, but complexity is allowed to exist, I experience it like that now and that's not a choice. I live my life very intensively, I'm thoughtful, and this is my way." (Jan. 2014) (Jailey – Student Creative Therapy)

This piece of narrative, which shows a meta-position, also reveals the silent ambivalence of accepting life as complex and facing insecurities. Significant is the appearance of third positions in the juniorship period instead of during the minor. Also typical is the relatively high amount of silent or silenced positions in this typology. Carice, for example, articulated what might be named a silent position regarding her view on the world:

"When I think of the world, I don't think of the people who live on it, but of nature. Nature, in my opinion, must be at the centre of everyone's life. (...)" (Sept. 2013) (Carice – Student Pedagogy)

This silent position could not be found in other topics of life orientation, but became stronger and stronger. In Carice's narrative, this silent position merged with a silent position expressed in her view on God, which we will read later. After Rome, she added the following second addition to her view on the world:

"A couple of days ago, I was talking to my father about my future and he said, 'Life is not so rosy as you think it is, Carice.' My answer was: 'That depends on how you look at it.' He

didn't respond to my reaction, maybe because he didn't want to hear it? I've realised that no one can determine for me how I ought to see life and the world. If you only think positively, there's nothing left to worry about, right? For sure, this statement needs to be put into perspective, and bad things still remain, but it's my responsibility to either lose myself in them or to do something about them." (Nov. 2013)

An example of this silent position that became louder is the articulation of the good life, also in November.

"The good life is hidden somewhere deep within me. For example, I've never really thought about things that were quite normal: eating meat. Meat is always on the table in our home. After having read the book *Eating Animals*, I deal with it much more consciously. And I think it's very clever of me to keep this up! I say to myself: 'No living being on earth will have to suffer for my existence.' Bringing a 'sacrifice' before you think of yourself, giving something up for someone else, and above all, being positive in life, is the good life for me." (Nov. 2013)

The articulation of the good life is an element of the autobiographical competence, which like the other two competencies, shows considerable decentring movements in Carice's narrative in the minor PhWS. This period is a full-on search for her own positions, which includes an empowerment of the S-motive, which becomes apparent in the autobiographical competence. In the competence of openness, to which the view on the meta-empirical belongs, she articulates another search.

"My image of god or the higher falls under 'somethingism.' 'I believe that there's something, but I haven't (yet) figured out what.' Through various spiritual matters that I use (not often enough), I try to experience this 'something.' Yoga, meditation, philosophising until the middle of the night, walks in nature. In my opinion, this 'something' means above all love and enjoyment of the little things, independent of materialism. Religions scare me off somehow. The dogmatic or the fact that it can incite people to kill, gives me the feeling that I need to stay away from it." (Sept. 2013)

"During the inspirational days, I opened myself up to the higher. I've set aside my prejudices, I've looked at experiences and stories as they are. To be perfectly honest, I've never felt so safe as in the 'houses of God.' Especially in the mosque, which is rather ironic because in my personal environment there is a negative image of Islam. These moments were so meaningful that I had an euphoric feeling which lasted for days." (Oct. 2013)

"In October 2015, I married, and with my husband I went on a honeymoon to Bali, the island of the gods. This island has a unique interpretation of Hinduism. With lots of incense, colours, daily rituals and the worship of everything in nature. It's incredible how this busy, colourful, spiritual island is completely in balance with every living creature that lives there. It inspired me to have a further look at religions, and I started to immerse myself in Hinduism." (Jan. 2017)

Her search continued during the minor, and went on afterwards. She had her honeymoon on Bali, and Hinduism inspired her. Back in the Netherlands, she started to look for an equivalent, which she found in Wicca. In her contextual competence, similar movements took place, of which the talk with her father is an indication. Overall, we designated the development in her life orientation during the minor as 'progressive but not yet coherent', by comparing the presence of dynamic elements, in addition to the development in her narrative competencies. This 'not yet coherent progressive movement' in life orientation is reflected in the relationship with normative professionalisation, which even showed no integration of new positions at all. There are no additions concerning the

ideal society, which is remarkable because of the development of the contextual competence, which encompasses her view on the human being and the world. Nevertheless, the absence of additions does not automatically coincide with her intrapersonal dialogue. Though she had no additions to the ideal society, she added something to her view on her profession, which is the reflection of a detour along different opportunities. At the end of the minor, she returned to her future profession, teaching social skills:

“The profession for which I’m currently studying has taken on a much deeper significance. There is more than what people tell you at first glance. (...)” (Jan. 2014)

With this last phrase, she articulated the insight that after the first impression, every human being has a story to tell, which could reveal a lot. It is what she experienced by herself and with fellow students. After the minor, the process continued and led all the way to New Zealand, where she lives on her own now, working with horses. In the meantime, she had gotten married a few years earlier, started a business with her husband, worked 24/7 and got burned out after 1.5 years. The theme in her narrative is claiming personal space, where she can make her own choices and bear personal responsibility. Finally, she found her point of orientation. The silent ambivalence in her view on God, which stood for ‘who am I and can I become free from the expectations of others,’ merged with her view on the world and the good life. This process started in the minor and now came to a provisional end in New Zealand. During her juniorship period, her articulation in life orientation showed a balanced movement, which is indicative for having found a direction. According to our interpretation, this balanced movement shows a process of integration in her professionalisation. Though she did not know yet which study suited her best, she knew it ought to represent her own ‘core,’ which also had to align with her view on the ideal society. Other students belonging to this typology showed a similar process, except that they had already started to integrate the new positions in life orientation, which became fully integrated into their articulations during their juniorship period.

6.2.4 A Currently Experienced Ambivalence

This group of students describes an existential ambivalence, which is in the foreground of their life. These ambivalences range from depression, anxiety attacks, to memories of abuse, and illnesses. All these students had to cope with severe problems, which could be put under a magnifying glass during tutorials in spirituality, or during inspirational days. The students expressed that they felt free to share what they wanted to tell. Like in the former typologies, these students also show repositionings, which mean that they elaborate their position repertoire within the considerable number of nine topics in the analysis. Significant is the dominant presence of the silent or silenced positions, which is one of the dynamic elements. Lindsey, a pedagogy student, provides an example of how we think that silenced, meta-, and promoter positions come to the fore in her process of articulation, regarding her view on the world:

“At the moment I don’t really regard the world as a beautiful place. I try to keep seeing the beautiful things of the world, nature etc. Unfortunately, I’m confronted every day with all the nasty things that happen in the world. The world will have to become more tolerant if we want the violence to stop someday.”(Sept. 2013) (Lindsey – Student Pedagogy)

“After hearing so many fine words, after meeting so many beautiful and wise people with beautiful stories and ideals, my outlook is less gloomy now. The world is a beautiful place that is unfortunately often misunderstood or misinterpreted. I’m still convinced that more tolerance will bring about a peaceful world.” (Oct. – after the inspirational days. 2013)

“This image hasn't really changed, I'm happy to see the world a bit sunnier. I can see the misunderstandings that sometimes arise, and I also see what I can do to make the world a little more beautiful. Small things can have big consequences. Small, everyday virtues help. After the trip to Rome, I became more aware of poverty and fraud, and realised what a sheltered upbringing I actually had. I'm grateful for this protection because I believe that my innocence has been preserved. The world can be hard for some people, and this hardness damages their morality and their love. I'm now trying to look more positively at everything, including the world.” (Jan. 2014)

Lindsey's original negative view on the world was silenced because of the inspirational days, which she experienced positively. After Rome, she articulated a meta-position – an expression of gratitude – and a promoter position – looking at the world in a more positive way. After Rome, she could articulate more positions regarding the harshness and the bad elements of the world. After the PhWS minor, Lindsey had to continue coping with her currently present ambivalence, which are very negative thoughts about herself, for which she was receiving therapy. After three years, she articulated her addition during a period when life seemed to brighten:

“At the moment, so much is going on in the world that my worldview has become a bit more negative again, unfortunately. I'm thinking of all the right-wing, nationalist political leaders and politicians who, in my opinion, are putting the world in a bad state. Trump, Wilders, Le Penn. The list goes on. (...) I hope people will continue to believe in connection. Fortunately, I see many initiatives that are working towards this. I try to remain positive, but also very critical and sharp.” (Feb. 2017)

In our analysis, we observed that the promoter position was still being articulated, but that the silenced position, which we recognised in her articulation, received a stronger voice. The relationship between these voiced positions is an example of dynamics within the intrapersonal dialogue that react on external influences.

The majority of the students in this group articulated a third position during their juniorship period. One of the students, Charlie, who was a student-teacher preparing for primary education, started the minor as a Christian student who was very convinced of her faith. In her narrative, she described how she began to see things in a broader perspective, without losing her faith. In her juniorship period, this process continued. She wrote that she had struggled with her faith over the last two years, because certain members of her church did not appreciate her boyfriend, who happened to be a Christian too. These members did not agree with the fact she and her boyfriend were cohabiting without being married. She was looking for answers, and asked many people for advice. The following part is a fragment of her view on God:

“So I ran in different directions, searching for answers. I talked about it with my boyfriend, but it's still something I find exciting, and far from finished. Fortunately so, because I don't ever want it to be finished with God. Deep inside my being lie the roots of my faith. It is messy there and occasionally there's quite a bit of unrest, but I know that my boyfriend is a good man and also a child of God. So if God loves me and sees me as His daughter, who are all these 'Christians' who scream at the top of their lungs? Then my boyfriend is also a child of God.” (March 2017) (Charlie – Student-teacher Primary education)

Charlie articulates a third position, which combines two opposing positions – her love for a good man, and a particular interpretation of the Christian faith – by stating that her boyfriend is a child of God too. Like Charlie, other students in this group showed a lot of decentralising movements in their articulations. A closer look at their competencies reveals that during the minor their autobiographical

and contextual competencies show more positivity, and that their competence of openness seems more balanced. These decentralising movements have a progressive, and innovative effect on the development of life orientation but almost none of the students managed to integrate the new positions into a more coherent narrative, as far as our analysis teaches us. Because of this delaying coherence, these students also show a process of ongoing integration of new positions in their articulations about normative professionalisation.

In their juniorship period, some of these students continue a progressive development in their life orientation, while others reach a more balanced development. At that point, most of them have found a direction in their orientation, but they are still searching, which becomes concrete in their uncertainty about what job they want to do. This search affects the relation between life orientation positions and professionalisation because the profession must fit the life orientation, which is not the case in some narratives. Meryl, originally a student-teacher in social skills, is still having therapy in March 2017. When she started with the PhWS minor in September 2013, she had just restarted her study. The difficulties she faced were insecurity, separation anxiety, and avoidant personality issues. Her articulation about her quality of life in March 2017 stated that she has a good life, but she still needs to work on these difficulties, which she manages. After her graduation, her difficulties were an important reason for her not to start as a teacher. Now she works for a communication company. Her view on her profession:

“My current work is not something that I’m very proud of. But I do things I never thought I would be able to do. I manage various projects, including those across national borders. However, it’s not a job that suits my personality, and somehow that is something that I very much want and long for. My profession is important to me, because I spend 40 hours a week there. I’m now trying to do a study through my work, so that I can continue with something I really like. Work is part of your life and it shapes you. Only now can I see how important this is for a human being.” (Meryl – March 2017)

Although Meryl shows balancing movements in her autobiographical and contextual competencies, as well as in her competence of openness, enhancing the meaning of her life, she is still looking for an appropriate job. In her articulation about the ideal society, she does not connect her present profession to the societal context. In her contextual competence, she expresses that people are anxious beings and the world is going to be destroyed. She cried when Trump was elected president. She does not connect these concerns expressed in the contextual competencies to her present professionalisation. This disconnectedness could be explained by her remark that it is still not the job that suits her personality.

6.2.5 No Ambivalence – Exploring and Taking a Position

This typology contains the group of students who did not mention a strong existential ambivalence in the past, or during the minor. The difference with the next typology is that during the PhWS minor they actively take a position in their education through life orientation, which encompasses more than becoming aware of the existence of other positions. They show more redefined positions compared to the students of the next typology, which indicates a potential for innovation and a development of their position repertoire. Also, their articulations contain all types of dynamic positions, to a varying degree. In their quite elaborate articulations, they express a drive to actively investigate how things are, which is a difference with the next group of students, who are also

interested but show less investigative initiative in their articulation. Sandra, a student in social work, articulated the following views on the human being.

“I don’t think people differ that much from each other. Everyone is born and dies. In the meantime – I believe – people want to lead the best possible lives and take care of their fellow human beings. Every human being is good, I think, but the circumstances can be such that your choices in life don’t always turn out right. The country in which you are born also influences how you’re educated as a human being. But inside, I think, everyone is equal and wants to love and be loved.” (Sept. 2013) (Sandra – Student Social Work and Social Services)

“After we had sat an hour in Utrecht Central Station (the silence exercise described in chapter 3), I noticed that I had lost sight of my own view on the human being. For one hour, I only saw people walking by very fleetingly. Some of them were busy with their cell phones, others only saw what was in front of them and hurried to their destination. I only saw what was fleeting, and mentioned that in that hour, no one had seen me. I didn’t like that and my view on the human being changed into the idea that people are just hasty creatures with little regard for others. After the inspirational days, I did abandon that idea. All the people I met, once again became those people who want to lead the best possible lives and take care of their loved ones. Who wants to love and be loved. It’s very possible that these people run through a busy train station in the morning to get to their destination, but I realised that people are more than what I see at first sight. I’m the one who makes a value judgment by calling them hasty with little regard for anyone else. By entering into a conversation with them, I get to know their other side, and return to what I wrote above.” (Oct. 2013)

During the minor, Sandra continued writing these elaborated reflections regarding all the topics, to take a conscious position. Like Sandra, other students from this group show decentring and innovative movements in one or more of the three competencies. These decentring movements indicate a progressive development in life orientation as a whole. The majority of these students, according to our interpretation, manage to integrate this progressive development, placing new positions into a coherent narrative. Chelsea, a student-teacher in history, describes at the end of the minor her development in regard to the good life, as part of the autobiographical competence:

“Through this minor I certainly learned that ‘now’ is the most important moment for the good life. You can’t change anything about the past, you have to let it go. The past makes me who I am now. The future cannot be a future, perhaps there is no future. Therefore, I need to learn to enjoy the now. I still find this difficult, but I do notice that awareness is an important step in the right direction. By means of yoga, which I have discovered, I’m capable of becoming more restful, which makes it easier to live in the now. One of the biggest benefits of this minor for me. For me, the good life has long since begun, but I’m only now aware of this.” (Jan. 2013) (Chelsea – Student-teacher in History)

Chelsea articulated earlier that she discovered silence and rest during the inspirational days. During the minor, she immediately integrated this discovery in her view on her profession:

“Above all, my profession must feel good, I must enjoy going to work, get satisfaction out of my profession, and be able to preserve the calm and rest in my profession.” (Nov. 2013)

Although it seems that she immediately integrated these repositions, the development in her juniorship period would reveal to which degree these repositions would last. Chelsea exemplifies

how students dive into the material of the minor, actively probe and take positions, which in their juniorship period becomes silenced in their articulation. This silencing is an indication that the *I*-position has become less prominent in the intrapersonal dialogue or composed position repertoire. About her view on the meta-empirical, she articulated three years later:

“I have to say that after the minor, I started to read a lot about religions, and we went with a small club to the monastery in The Hague for another weekend. In addition, I integrated much of the theory into the subject of civic education, which I teach. In this way, the pupils also gain more knowledge about the major world religions. Now that I’m rereading what I wrote three years ago, I must say that I’m less occupied with God or religion than I was back then. I think this is because of the grind of the day and a relapse into old patterns. I take less time for these things now and therefore I’m less occupied with them. It still has my interest and I mainly pick it up in my work, and while reading.” (Jan. 2017)

In their narratives, other students also notice this pattern – that after the minor they are less occupied with the meta-empirical, or with the spiritual exercises they designated as inspirational and full of insights, while others continue. Although Chelsea wrote that she is less occupied with it nowadays, the formerly taken positions still take part in her intra-personal dialogue, something of which the following articulation about the good life during her period of juniorship is indicative:

“For me, the good life at this moment is sharing love with friends and family. Health for everyone I love, and for myself. In addition, travelling has become an increasingly important part of my life, and I notice that it can really make me happy. It has given me freedom and experiences, and beautiful memories that I can always fall back on, and if I’ve been home too long I begin to feel restless. Then it’s time for a new journey. Letting go and living more in the now is still difficult for me, and here too I am less conscious than when I attended the minor. However, I did get tools during the minor, which I sometimes still use (meditation).” (Jan. 2017)

This piece of articulation is an example of how formerly taken positions become ‘silenced,’ but remain a part of the dialogue. Chelsea’s big discovery was the experience of rest and silence, which seems to be the opposite of her restless feelings when she is too long at home. This opposition becomes articulated in the above section with the inclusion of the received tool of meditation. In the competence of openness, the meaning of life is the adjacent aspect to the view on the meta-empirical. In the minor, Chelsea started to find her spiritual path, as she articulated in her narrative about the meaning of life. Her first description especially articulated the happily living together with her family and friends. Again, the inspirational days functioned as an interruption, which resulted at the end of the minor in an expression of a feeling to belong to a larger whole. Three years later, this newly taken position is still there:

“I still believe that I’m part of a great ‘nature,’ or a great whole. Everyone is here with a certain function. The function and meaning of my life is to love, teach and – at this moment – to travel. This is not something that is continuous but changes over and over again. I’m part of the great nature and I have to live and enjoy life. One day I will die and then I’ll be taken back into nature again.” (Jan. 2017)

In this typology, all the students show a progressive development in their life orientation, whereby some students immediately relate these repositionings to their professionalisation, while others have found a direction in their orientation but are still searching for the best way to implement their newly articulated insights. These processes are very personal, and every narrative has its own unique ingredients. However, in their juniorship period, nearly all the students managed to integrate the new positions into their professionalisation. Some implemented their new insights into their earlier chosen profession; others chose to change direction and started another study because of their new insight.

6.2.6 No Ambivalence – Limited Articulation in an Already Taken Position

Students in this group show considerably less redefined positions compared to their preliminary articulation. Still, the analysis justifies the conclusion that education through life orientation provokes an elaboration of positions, which also means increasing flexibility, although to a lesser degree than in other typologies. The same conclusion applies to the dynamic elements. With a few rare exceptions, students belonging to this typology show almost no silent – or silenced – and no third positions. In the PhWS minor, however, they all show promoter positions, which remain unchanged during their juniorship period. The unchanged promoter positions are different, compared to other typologies where new promoter positions occur. Similarly, is the frequency of new meta-positions also diminished in the juniorship period.

All students show centring movements in the autobiographical competency. They have a clear overview of their life and are relatively satisfied with the quality of it. Most of the students show the same centring movements in their contextual competency. Still, they articulate problems, for example growing individualism, or existing inequality, but during the minor, they continue to circle around their first articulations closely, or produce no additions at all. They use a sort of factual description. Finn, a student-teacher for primary education, wrote about the view on the human being:

“Every human being has the right to live his life as he pleases.”(Sept. 2013)

“...within the rules of society. I think that every human being is spontaneously selfish. This means that there has to be a society/state with clear rules to which people have to adhere, in order to co-exist in a good way.” (Jan. 2014)

“I have no different view on the human being.” (Jan. 2017)

Regarding the competence of openness, the students showed an interest in facts and information, the assimilation of which elaborated their view, but did not change their positioning very much. Some students articulated a clearly recognisable faith tradition concerning the view on God or the meaning of life, and others articulated a secular view. Angel, a student in social work for young people in institutions, articulated her view on God in her juniorship period.

“The minor has given me the opportunity to learn more about the different religions in the world. I was busy with my own quest, after the minor this slowly decreased. I did go to church a few more times, but I soon noticed that this did not bring me anything. I noticed that what I lacked was faith in God. Today, I still haven’t noticed the existence of this. However, I do find it special to discuss this with believers (of whatever faith). I notice that it gives them direction in life, a grip on how things should be done in life, and more insight into what happens after death. I myself no longer have the need to find or experience this. I notice that I can be happy by living in the here and now, and I’m not very busy with the question of how it all started, or what the purpose of it is.”(Jan. 2017)

Angel described her search during the minor, which she undertook seriously. She had started the minor with an interest to know more. She ended with more knowledge and also some church experience, at the same time. In fact, these students have already taken a position and become more aware of this position through the encounter with other positions. This growing awareness of their adopted position does not show much integration in their professionalisation. Perhaps the same pattern is active, which means that already adopted positions are strong and it might take these students more time or effort to articulate repositions, or there is no reason for redefining positions. However, the students' articulations also show meta-positions, which might indicate a growing awareness, also in professionalisation.

"More and more often, I feel that I really give a piece of myself to the people I work with. I think this is because there is a somewhat tense atmosphere. My work costs me energy and I would sometimes like to receive a little more gratitude. I'm afraid that this isn't a good development. In the end, I shouldn't do this work because I expect something back from others. I do notice, however, that this has led me to focus more on my own well-being in my private life. I try to do things that are enjoyable or relaxing, so that I don't have to look for this in my work." (Nov. 2013)

In this articulation, Angel describes how she feels and she narratively points out that appreciation and pleasure are important values for her regarding work. Because of the tense atmosphere in her work as a trainee, she becomes aware of these values. Three years later, she articulated:

"Besides the fact that this job offers me a lot, I think it's great that I can be socially active, and earn a wage this way. I'm at the heart of society, I learn a lot from what is happening around me, and I can make a substantial contribution to a small part of a 'better world.' I very often find it extremely cool that I can do this job and also earn a wage with it, in order to take care of myself." (Jan. 2017)

Three years later, Angel is very happy with her job, which she combines with a societal contribution. Other students show these same integrative articulations. However, it does not always become clear what they integrate. For example, at the beginning of the minor, Angel had articulated her view on the ideal society, without any additional follow-up. Nevertheless, in all narratives of this typology, no matter how small the articulations and additions sometimes are, there is an increasing awareness during education, and in the juniorship period. This process of increasing awareness continues in varying forms. The positions taken in professionalisation, which show a varying degree of integration, also remain the same. Angel, for example, articulated an integrative view on her personal well-being, her profession and its societal context, without explicating what her 'essential contribution to a better world' is. Other students reiterate their faith position, which also gives direction in professionalisation.

6.2.7 An Ambivalence Emerging During the Minor

In chapter 5, we did not list any numbers or other clear quantifications regarding the different typologies. The reason is that narrative research is less interested in numbers, if at all. Though this research has an uncommon number of narratives to analyse, we sometimes have the tendency to quantify. Still, it is the typology which teaches us something about the process of articulation and the relation between normative professionalisation and life orientation. The reason why we start this paragraph with this introduction is that Cohort-B happens to have one narrative in this typology. Simultaneously, the researcher of this project continued to be a teacher in the PhWS minor, which enabled him to check, together with colleagues, whether this typology occurred in other cohorts, which was the case. For now, the only narrative is Aiden's, who is a pedagogy student. The

ambivalence that came to the fore is the effect of a learning experience during the minor, which he brought up when describing his quality of life.

“The quality of my life is partly good. I believe that I behave well towards my fellow human beings. I try to do good and to solve dilemmas ethically by asking myself what I would like in a certain situation (empathy). However, only my immediate environment benefits from this.”(Sept. 2013) (Aiden – Student Pedagogy)

“Much better than at the beginning of the minor. I’m building, I’m trying to build structure. Because of this I got back to work for school. I’ve learned to love myself over the past six months. I’ve become more empathic and I’ve learned to postpone my judgment. I don’t always manage, but often it goes better.”(Dec. 2014)

In this research project, we can only rely on what people articulate, which can sometimes make the application of a typology somewhat arbitrary. In Aiden’s case, a good argument would be that when he started with the minor, a silent ambivalence was already there and was only being touched upon during the minor, and that a certain longing for love was already present. For this reason, we use typologies and not categories, whereby the latter does not scientifically allow an overlap. Aiden also wrote in the biographical part of his articulations:

“I discovered that friendship is something valuable. I don’t speak anymore to the people that I thought were my friends, and I kept four very good friends and found a special new girlfriend in the minor. Looking back, I think this is a wonderful thing. It points to my own development.” (Dec. 2014)

“XX (EZ: for reason of anonymisation, the XX refers to a specific age): the age when I really understood for the first time what love is (...).” (April 2017)

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These short pieces express a boundary experience, which he did not expect, and is relatively new to him. Previously, he experienced the value of friendship differently, this is at least what we can conclude based on what he has articulated. After the minor programme, he continued to have these friendships and even met his future wife, which was the first time when he truly experienced what love is, as he wrote in April 2017. Aiden articulated an important existential process, for which he took his time in the minor, which gave him some tools to continue with after the PhWS minor. He integrated the theme of love into his articulations about work and profession. He is clear about the order of significance.

“For me, the meaning of my profession is, first of all, provision for my personal life needs. The needs of my family. The second thing that matters to me is the pleasure, the satisfaction that the work gives me, and the extent to which it makes me happy. The meaning of profession for me is completely self-centred, in spite of the fact that I work with – and for – disadvantaged people and supervise them. Because I only do this work because I get personal satisfaction out of it. The fact that the knife cuts on both sides because I help other people, comes second and is a nice bonus in this case.”(April 2017)

In his juniorship period, his articulations showed a balanced movement, which means a continuation of the development that he started three years ago. The central theme in this period is the expectation of a child and the building of a family. In his profession, he would like to continue to make meaningful contributions to society, but family life is now his top priority.

Summary

This chapter started with an addition to the results of chapter 5 regarding the view on the human being and the world, to answer Q2, which is about the first-stage articulations of students' life orientations and normative professionalisation. These two aspects of life orientation did not come to the fore in the analysis of the narratives in Cohort-A, which was the effect of a less detailed list of facilitating questions.

The second part of this chapter also included a more detailed description of the development in articulation regarding the different aspects of life orientation, and regarding normative professionalisation in the different typologies. The narrative-dialogical analysis shows that in all narratives, admittedly in a varying degree, repositions could be determined and could be seen as an indication of innovative potential (see Appendix E). This analysis also shows the presence and function of the dynamic DST-elements, like the promoter, meta-, and third positions. The silent or silenced position was present in some typologies.

The narrative-competency analysis showed how the different aspects of life orientation developed within the autobiographical and contextual competencies, as well as within the competency of openness. This analysis helps to describe the developmental movements of a personal narrative, which DST describes as centring or decentering. This analysis provided more detailed insight into specific developments within life orientation (see Appendix F). Some students showed development on all three competencies; others focused more on the competency of openness, while some struggled with an unsolvable tension in the contextual competence, as far as their articulation could express. A tension that becomes apparent through a positive view on the human being and a negative view on the totality of human beings within a global perspective.

The detailed insight into the development of the life orientation of the participants in this research, finally led to a description of the development of life orientation as a whole. DST designates this development as balanced, progressive and regressive. Our analysis taught that none of the students showed a regressive development within life orientation. Depending on the typology, they showed a balanced movement, or a progressive movement with a parallel integration of the repositions, or a progressive movement with a beginning process of integration of newly articulated positions within an encompassing life orientation. Our analysis resulted in a description of the development of each participant during the PhWS minor and during their juniorship period, which led to more insight regarding how the development in the PhWS minor endured in the juniorship period.

The last step in the analysis was to describe how the articulation development – indicative for the positioning process of the dialogical processes in the society of mind – could be related to different aspects of professionalisation, and to normative professional development as a whole. The different typologies shed light on patterns regarding the way life orientation is and becomes a part of articulations in normative professionalisation (see table 6D + Appendix G). This relationship is described in terms of integration and awareness, which in DST are indicators for increasing flexibility and adaptive potential for dealing with new and/or complex situations. This analysis also indicates how education through life orientation might facilitate a progressive development, as far as the articulations can show this.

New life orientation (LO) position(s) is/are integrated
Integrating LO-positions – searching, but direction being found; new job
Not integrating new LO-position, or not yet a direction in the profession
No additions in normative professionalisation
Balanced; continuation, none or some repositions

Table 6D Relationship of Development in Life Orientation With Normative Professionalisation

The five modes of relationship are also a result of the narrative analysis, which means that conclusions are only based on what is articulated, which does not exclude the unarticulated existence of a relationship between life orientation and professionalisation. Appendix G gives an overview of the analysis of all 35 narratives in Cohort-B concerning the development of articulation, and concerning the relationship between life orientation and normative professionalisation from the perspective of articulation.

Chapter 7 Conclusions and Discussion

The central theme of this research project is the relationship between the articulation of a personal life orientation and professionalisation. This study was created with the intention to describe how students at a confessionally neutral University of Applied Sciences describe their personal and professional values as part of their *normative* professionalisation. The general research question is:

What is the meaning and contribution of a personal life view articulation to professionalisation?

In this concluding chapter, the answers to the sub-questions and the main research question will be presented to the reader. The answers to these questions are the result of a reiterative and abductive process between a conceptual study and narrative research. The conceptual part of this research resulted in the proposal of the inclusive concept ‘life orientation,’ after a discussion of various academic positions regarding the concept ‘worldview.’ This conceptual clarification was necessary in order to answer the first sub-question about the nature of the relationship between life orientation and normative professionalisation. Section 7.1 of this concluding chapter contains a number of remarks that are useful for further discussion and for future conceptual research. An elaborate conceptual account is provided in chapters 1 and 2.

Section 7.2 contains the conclusions drawn from the analysis of the first-stage articulations of students’ life orientations, at the beginning of the minor *Philosophy. World Religions. Spirituality* (PhWS). In section 7.3, we draw conclusions from the results of the empirical studies in Cohort-A and –B to describe the development of the students’ articulations during the PhWS minor, and the articulations’ development during the juniorship period. In this section, attention is paid to narrative competencies. In section 7.4, we describe the seven typologies of ambivalence that emerged from our 3-phase narrative analysis in Cohort-B. In these descriptions, we give a concluding answer to the general research question, which also paves the way for further discussion. In section 7.5, we discuss the conclusions and make a number of recommendations for future research, and for professionalisation in higher vocational education and in the juniorship period. Finally, section 7.6 consists of critical comments on this research project.

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7.1 Life Orientation: A Dialogical Perspective on Professionalisation

One of the challenges in this research was to describe the character and the mode of the conceptual relationship between what we originally named religious or worldview education, and normative professionalisation. The first sub-question of this research was therefore a conceptual one:

Q1. What is the conceptual relationship between worldview education and normative professionalisation?

The claim was that normative professionalisation is a form of religious or worldview education (Bakker, 2013). Verification and substantiation of this claim first required a conceptual clarification of the two related terms, which required, in particular, conceptual research into the idea of ‘worldview.’ Our reason for focusing on ‘worldview’ was the recent international academic discussion on the proposal to broaden the traditionally less inclusive concept of ‘religious education.’

In his comprehensive overview of religious education in Europe, Jackson (2014) concludes that definitional and terminological concerns are part of the current academic discourse. The terms ‘worldview’ and ‘life orientation’ are both considered as “(...) potentially workable for covering both

religious ways of life and non-religious convictions.” (ibid, 75) Van der Kooij (2016) has contributed a thorough conceptual study on ‘worldview,’ with useable discernments. In chapter 1, we addressed the definitional and terminological concerns, which seemed to result in fewer translation problems, without prioritising the secular, the religious, or everything in between. To honour a holistic view on humanity and the dialogical dimension of meaning-making, while allowing for the possibility that these would somehow be linked to a transcendental reality, we propose the process-related concept of ‘life orientation,’ which we define as:

“An existential positioning process pertaining to the meaning of the human being, the world, and the meta-empirical, directed towards the horizon of the good life.”

In connecting life orientation to education, Roebben’s latest proposal for an inclusive religious education, designated as ‘learning (by meeting) in/through religion’ (cf. 2015, 74-75), which encompasses ‘learning about, from, and in/through religion’, paves the way to speak of education through life orientation as an umbrella idea.

The societal context of today’s professionalisation teaches that diversity and heterogeneity in life orientation require ongoing and shared moral and existential learning processes (cf. Kunneman 2009). Kunneman uses the metaphor of a ‘humus layer,’ which refers to a common moral ground that professionals create together in these learning processes. This common moral ground is the context for decision-making in everyday and complex professional situations. Professionals make smaller and larger decisions, sometimes alone and sometimes together. In all cases, they must be able to rely on each other by trusting they share a common moral ground, which requires a continuing (inter)subjective reflection. In chapter 2, we learned that the aspect of decision-making and thus of bearing responsibility favours ‘dialectics’ over ‘dialogue,’ which ultimately does not require a solemn or shared decision. However, underneath the process of decision-making, intra- and interpersonal dialogue as part of a life orientation contributes to the dialectics, which require a single outcome. Normative professionalisation, as an ongoing process of improving professionalism, then consists of a reflection that can take place before or after the decision has been taken. In our final conceptualisation of normative professionalisation, we answered our first sub-question in the following definition:

Normative professionalisation is an (inter)subjective dialectical reflection on the quality of the professional’s practice in connection with the societal context, from the dialogical perspective of a personal life orientation.

A critical remark about the proposal of ‘life orientation’ might be that the difference between religious and secular life orientations persists. This is certainly true, but not within a framework in which ‘religion’ and ‘worldview’ are subclasses of life orientation. The main difference between life orientation and other concepts is the process-related focus of orientation. Life orientation is a description of a process, which makes the adjectives ‘religious’ or ‘secular’ of secondary importance. In the conceptualisations of Valk (cf. 2007; 2009; 2009a; 2010; 2013) and Van der Kooij (2016), the advantage of ‘worldview’ would be that both religious and secular perspectives are taken into account, which makes this distinction substantive for the original conceptualisation. In other words, the starting point is preoccupied with the competition between both adjectives. The starting point for ‘life orientation’ is different, because it starts with the anthropological claim that every human being orientates her/himself in life, which is connected with the contingency of life in different ways. This starting point is inductive because of its interest in process and content, while the discussion about ‘worldview’ often starts deductively with the use of labels. Gustavsson’s critical remark about

our conceptualisation of life orientation might be that it is too preoccupied with concepts like the meaning of life, God, or the good life (cf. 2018, in press). That is why she uses interviews with questions about the important events in life. “By letting the young adults talk about important events in their own lives I have found a method that allows for their own words and gives a possibility to go beyond given life-view concepts such as the meaning of life and death.” (2018, in press) In our methodology, we incorporated these past experiences by means of the facilitating question about biography. Nevertheless, asking questions about views on the meaning of life, the meta-empirical or God, and the good life, supports the students in increasing their vocabulary in this domain.

Valk (2010) and Van der Kooij (2016) are in favour of ‘worldview’ because it is more inclusive than ‘religion.’ Our relative inductive approach of the meaning-making process that we adopt in our research wants to safeguard the inclusiveness in education. Bråten, therefore, proposes to keep both religion and worldview in our vocabulary. “One of the main points here is that the term worldviews (i.e. *livssyn*) has been established for a long time and has been used with overlapping or competing meaning of ‘religion.’ One could see it as a primary concept, or together, the two are seen as co-dependent concepts. I would argue that we need both ‘religion’ and ‘worldviews’ as part of a vocabulary where the current plurality can be better described and discussed in school education.” (2018, 15) Bråten defends the use of ‘worldview’ because of its long history, which is relative because the international conceptualisation has only just started. She is preoccupied with inclusion and plurality, which would be arguments for keeping both concepts. In our view, the point of inclusion would be better served if a concept would grant that all humans have their unique and personal interpretation, and connect themselves with larger frameworks. Taylor (1989) states that we live in a moral space of pre-existing questions, by which he proclaims the questioning human being as the ultimate start. When we take this start seriously, larger frameworks, worldviews, religions, ideologies, or life styles take second place. The inductive approach to life orientation, which avoids starting with labels, leaves room for different scientific approaches to religion, instead of squeezing this concept into the immaterial and classical phenomenological mould of worldview. The concept of ‘worldview’ extends as far as a ‘view on the world,’ whether it be the planet or society.

For future research, it would be interesting to investigate how Van der Kooij’s useful distinction between personal and organised worldviews might be applied to life orientation. First of all, the process character and the inductive approach to life orientation align with the personal dimension. In what way the adjective ‘organised’ could be used, can be determined by future conceptual research. From a Christian perspective, thinking about tradition as an ongoing process could be the first perspective. Another relevant topic for research is the relationship between the material approach to religion, which is favoured by Meyer (2006, 2012), and our proposed conceptualisation of life orientation. These remarks bring us to intercultural questions, because the inductive approach to life orientation seems to start from a Western, individualistic point of view. Future international research is necessary to verify whether these “Western spectacles” jeopardise the proposed inclusiveness of an education through life orientation.

7.2 The First-Stage Articulation of a Life Orientation

Students who attended the PhWS minor on a voluntary basis from September 2012 to January 2013 (Cohort-A), and September 2013 to January 2014 (Cohort-B), started articulating answers to facilitating questions about life orientation and normative professionalisation in the first month of the programme. These first-stage articulations mark the beginning of a hermeneutical and redefining process, which is influenced by the PhWS minor and external factors. Before we focus on the process and the development of these articulations during the minor and in the juniorship period, a

presentation of the first-stage answers introduces different themes to clarify what students describe as their life orientation. These research findings are an answer to the second research question:

Q2. What personal life views do students at a confessionally neutral university articulate, at the beginning of a formal worldview educational programme?

All the students in Cohort-A and Cohort-B managed to articulate a first-stage narrative for most topics at the beginning of the minor. As some students wrote, they experienced these questions as interrupting, because most of them were not accustomed to discussing such questions with family and friends.

The students in Cohort-A began with answering an open question that inquired about their personal view on life (see Appendix B). The thematic analysis justifies the conclusion that nearly all of the students brought up some concepts relating to God, religion, faith, and life goals. Apparently, the PhWS minor influenced their articulation in the sense that they felt that these concepts should be part of a life view, or it may be that the students automatically associated the Dutch *levensbeschouwing* (view on life) with these subjects. The conclusion is that this first open question resulted in relatively fewer articulations about the human being and the world, and more articulations about the meta-empirical and the good life, or about whatever else they described as important in life. Apparently, it hardly crossed the students' minds to state something about these issues. This conclusion resulted in the adjustment of the list of facilitating questions for Cohort-B. The adjustment explicitly thematised the human being, the world, the meta-empirical and the good life in life orientation, which appeared to be supportive of the students in Cohort-B, because nearly all of them articulated answers about these four issues.

Table 7A shows the themes that emerged from the thematic analysis of the Cohort-A articulations. Based on our conceptual research, we qualify these articulations as being about 'life orientations.' In table 7A, we further present the analysis of the Cohort-B articulations, in which we specify the themes that emerged in relation to the topics of humankind and the world.

Applied to the students' views on the meta-empirical, our analysis reveals a thematical range between a transcendental and an immanent view, which is a Western outlook. The different articulations display some overlap between these themes. The students' views on the human being are divided into four themes, which show the different foci students have in their first-stage articulation. These foci represent different values. The students' views of the world reveal two general perspectives: the planet or society. In the students' articulations, one of the perspectives turns out to be dominant, and there are only a few articulations that merge both perspectives. A general conclusion is that the students have a predominantly negative outlook on the world, which is characterised by worries and a preoccupation with threats. Finally, the students' articulations about the good life reveal two different themes, which encompass many characteristics. The main difference is the degree of focus on the unknown other compared to the focus on known others, i.e., family and friends. Nevertheless, both themes show a fairly broad range of articulations, which could easily lead to subthemes. We did not choose to describe the subthemes because the issue 'the meaning of life' showed some overlap in substance with the view on the good life.

Topics related to Life View/ Life Orientation	Themes that emerged from the thematic analysis
View on God/the higher/the meta-empirical (Cohort-A)	(one) God
	Reincarnation
	Power/energy

	Something/more
	Searching/asking
	Immanent
View on the human being (Cohort-A and Cohort-B)	A moral being
	Equality and diversity
	Responsibility for your own life and development
	A social being
View on the world (Cohort-A and Cohort-B)	The world is beautiful and needs protection
	The world is a negative place, and is in danger
	The world shows cultural diversity
View on the good life (Cohort-A)	Personally enjoying life to the fullest and in a positive way
	Living while taking care of yourself and looking after others

Table 7A An Overview of Themes in Students' Personal Life Views (Cohort-A and Cohort-B).

Analysis of the students' views on the meaning of life resulted in emerging themes with a thematic overlap (see table 7B). For example, some students start by saying that life has no meaning, but they add 'now that we're here, let's enjoy ourselves.' Students who articulate that life has no meaning, object to the perspective that life has a pre-existent meaning or purpose. In some cases, they articulate this theme as an anti-programme. Often, students who articulate their faith in a god expressed the view that life does have a pre-existent or given meaning. According to our interpretation, the aspect of a pre-existent meaning connects two opposite and paradoxically connected poles.

Topic: The meaning of life	Themes
	Life has no meaning
	To live and enjoy life
	Being meaningful to someone else
	Developing and achieving personal goals
	God has a plan

Table 7B An Overview of Themes Regarding the Meaning of Life.

Our analysis of the students' views on the ideal society yielded four themes and a number of subthemes (see table 7C). The theme of cooperation also consists of 'harmony,' 'less individualism' and 'no more war.' In fact, the students articulate a variety of values within a narrative context. This context impedes the analysis, because of the different meanings that are appointed to the same value. The topic of 'the ideal society' represents the normative professional aspect of 'societal context,' in addition to 'the content of work' and 'well-being in personal life.'

Topic: The ideal society	Themes
	Respect
	Acceptance of differences
	Cooperation
	Opportunities for development

Table 7C An Overview of Themes Regarding the Ideal Society.

The topic 'the meaning of life' parallels 'the view on the good life' and 'the ideal society' in some way, in regard to its forward-looking (future) or orienting perspective, which was a reason for us to start a comparative analysis from the perspective of 'the meaning of life.' We were interested

whether a pattern would emerge when comparing the students' articulations of these three forward-looking (future) orientations, which represent the personal and societal aspects, and the professional beliefs and values, thereby completing the normative professional triangle. We started, for example, by selecting 'developing and achieving personal goals' (the meaning of life) to see whether this selection would reveal similarities with the two other aspects of normative professionalisation, namely 'the ideal society' and professional beliefs and values. No matter which theme we selected, the selection resulted in a variety of combinations of themes within the students' views on the meaning of life, the meta-empirical, the ideal society, or their professional beliefs and values. This extensive comparison – performed from different angles – did not result in clear patterns, which justified the conclusion that these narrative articulations cannot be categorised as strictly defined and distinct characteristics. In the context of the narrative approach used in this research project, 'theme' would therefore be a suitable designation. The use of themes leaves room for overlap and justifies the uniqueness of each story.

The final conclusion, which forms the connection with the next section, is that categorisation here has a relative meaning because these first-stage articulations represent a snapshot. These first-stage articulations do not cover the entire position-repertoire of the society of mind, to put it in DST-language. Therefore, our research design provides a description of a hermeneutical or interpretative development, which probably makes categorisation quite impossible from a substantive perspective, because students could articulate additional thoughts that belong to a different theme in the topic. Nevertheless, these thematic results are supportive for the development of qualitative research questions.

In summary, the answer to the second sub-question is that students are able to articulate personal answers regarding various issues in life orientation. These articulations can be thematised, which resulted in an overview of overlapping themes in all the topics. A comparative analysis from the perspective of 'the meaning of life' did not result in patterns of adjacent themes regarding other issues in life orientation or professionalisation. For this reason, it was impossible to discern thematic relationships between the articulated life orientations and other aspects of normative professionalisation. Therefore, we had to look for another approach to describe the relationship between these two processes from a hermeneutical development perspective.

7.3 The Narrative Competencies of Students and Young Professionals

This section addresses the third and fourth sub-question, which both consist of two parts.

Q3. What are the characteristics of the development that occurs in the life view articulations of students, in relation to their professionalisation while attending a formal worldview educational programme?

Q4. What are the characteristics of the development that occurs in the life view articulations of students, in relation to their professionalisation during their juniorship period?

The first half of these sub-questions addresses the development of the students' life orientation articulations and the second half addresses the relationship with professionalisation, in the PhWS minor (Q3) and in the juniorship period (Q4). In this section, only the first half of these sub-questions will be addressed to clarify the presentation. For pragmatic and presentational reasons, the answers belonging to the second part will become more clear when addressing the general research question in the next section. First, we performed a thematic cross-over analysis of the Cohort-A narratives. In the abductive process of this research, the analysis in Cohort-A simultaneously became a preparatory

study for fine-tuning the research in Cohort-B, in which students were handed an adapted list of facilitating questions to support their articulations.

Cohort-A

The intention behind the thematic cross-over analysis was to describe the development in the articulations by focusing on the presence of redefinitions, and the presence of articulated relationships between professional beliefs and views on the meaning of life and the ideal society. In this focus, the self-described developments in the narratives were singled out because of their narrative relevance for the three selected issues (see table 4D). The conclusions here are very general and serve as a first impression of the conclusions drawn from the analysis in the third phase of the Cohort-B study, presented in the next section. A general conclusion is that nearly all the students in Cohort-A managed to articulate additional descriptions and answers to the facilitating questions.

In drawing on our cross-over thematic analysis, we conclude that the students showed a development in language use, which we characterise as deepening or broadening. In terms of the dialogical self theory (DST), their position repertoire becomes more elaborated, which is indicative of their dialogical competencies (cf. Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2012). Broadening occurs when they elaborate on their perspective and describe other aspects of it. They use more words than before. In the additions, they elaborate on values and describe their understanding of the language that addresses the topics of life orientation, or of 'religious language' in particular. Deepening occurs when they question their first-stage articulations and describe how their perspective is related to other views in their narrative, or to other people's views. Some students demonstrate the capacity to change perspectives, or to reflect critically on their earlier voiced positions, whether these are insights, attitudes, or specific meanings. As we see in the following section, there are differences between the students, but all of them showed an increasing awareness, sometimes about the existence of other positions, sometimes about possible nuances of their own positions.

We conclude that the students register a development in their personal and/or professional life in their biographical descriptions. The facilitating question on biography proved useful in the analysis for the creation of a narrative context for the other articulations about professional beliefs, and views on the ideal society and the meaning of life. In addition to their biographical accounts, the students' self-described developments were also present in other articulations, for example, their articulations about professional beliefs or the meaning of life, which serves as an indication for a growing awareness.

Cohort-B

The conclusions from the analysis in Cohort-A and the conceptual research on life orientation and normative professionalisation, resulted in an adapted list of facilitating questions that was handed to the students in Cohort-B (see Appendix C). The adjusted list provided for a better comparison between the various aspects of life orientation – as we have defined this concept – in Cohort-B. This resulted in more data about our concept of life orientation. A difference between Cohort-A and Cohort-B is the relatively small number of additions that the students provided in Cohort-A. They usually provided additions only once, in response to the first – general – question in the Cohort-A list, which inquires about their personal view on life. The conclusion is that the improved and elaborated Cohort-B list supported the students in their elaboration of their first-stage answers. In Cohort-A, nearly all the students produced a first-stage articulation about the meta-empirical, but they hardly produced any additional articulations about this topic during the programme, while in Cohort-B, nearly all the students did. The conclusion is that – within the Dutch context – asking questions about someone's life view is probably too general, and will often lead to narrow interpretations, i.e.,

answers that are limited to the issue of faith or belief in God, and about what makes life meaningful, or good.

The first phase of the narrative analysis of the articulations in Cohort-B was the use of the narrative-dialogical instrument (see Appendix D). We selected nine topics from the facilitating questions to describe the basic and dynamic DST-elements as well as the developmental processes according to DST-concepts. The analysis showed that 31 students regularly redefined their positions, and that four students provided small additions to their first-stage articulations.

The narrative-dialogical instrument also showed the presence of dynamic DST-elements, like promoter positions, meta-positions, silenced positions, and third positions. Third positions and silenced positions were less common than the other two, which appeared almost everywhere in the data (see Appendix E). During the PhWS minor and in the juniorship period, the students articulated new promoter positions and meta-positions, which could be observed by comparison with the earlier stage of articulation. According to DST, the presence of these dynamic elements indicates an increasing awareness of positions, potential innovation of positions, and integration of new positions, which contributes to a growing flexibility and adaptation of the self.

In addition, the narrative-dialogical instrument revealed that the students show more redefining activity regarding the topics of life orientation than regarding professional belief, their views on society, and their dream/ideals, for example. The explanation for fewer additions to 'dreams and ideals' might be that these desires and orientations for the future remain the same, i.e., do not change so quickly. In regard to their professional beliefs, some students tend to stick to their first-stage articulation, which sometimes shows traces of the discourse of a specific professional training. Other students show that they integrate new positions, which became visible in the life orientation topics. This will be explained in detail in the next section. The articulations about society showed some substantive overlap with views on the world and the human being, which might explain why the students might feel to reiterate earlier items in their narrative.

The second phase of the narrative analysis was the use of the narrative-competence instrument, which is composed of concepts taken from Van Knippenberg's (2002, 2008) narrative theory (see table 4F). This instrument enabled us to take another perspective on the hermeneutical and redefining development, because in each competence two topics are taken together. For example, the autobiographical competence is composed of the topics 'view on the good life' and 'the evaluated quality of life compared to the articulated good life.' The goal of the analysis in this phase was to describe from a DST-perspective the centring and decentering movements in the redefining process, and the possible presence of thematic tensions within a competence (see Appendix F).

The narrative-competency analysis revealed that in every narrative, a variety of centring and decentering movements occurred in the redefining process. According to DST, the presence of centring movements is indicative of coherence, unity and integration, and simultaneously entails a risk that the self becomes inflexible and less adaptive to new situations. The advantage of our narrative-competency analysis was the deconstruction of the narrative by focusing on three competencies, which simultaneously remain interrelated. This deconstruction enabled us to denote in detail the redefining process within the complexity of a narrative. The deconstruction made it possible to describe the movements taking place within each of the three competencies. Each competency can have a different mode of movement that characterises the development of the dialogical self. For example, in some cases, the autobiographical competence could show a decentralising movement, whereas the contextual competence shows a centralising movement. The DST states that a dominant presence of a centralising movement could indicate inflexibility. When in

all three competencies centralising movements are very dominant, it is justified to state the conclusion that the dialogical self is quite inflexible. The deconstruction into three competencies enabled us to describe the development with nuances, which respects the complexity of the dialogical self narrative.

From a narrative perspective, it was also possible to describe thematic tensions between the two constituent topics of the three narrative competences: the autobiographical competence, the contextual competence and the competence of openness. Sometimes the students noticed these tensions themselves; sometimes they did not explicitly mention the narrative tension within the competencies. Tensions or seemingly opposing themes also arose between the normative professional aspect of societal meaning – which was represented in our analysis by the view on the ideal society – and the contextual competence, which is composed of the view on the human being and the view on the world. These tensions seemed to be informative in describing the redefining process that took place in the minor, and related to the period of juniorship some years later. The appearance of thematic tensions, as well as decentring and centring movements, was supportive for the description of the characteristics of seven typologies of ambivalence. The description of these typologies was part of the third phase in our narrative inquiry that combined the descriptions of the first and second phase. These descriptions will be listed in the next section.

In summary, we conclude that all students redefined their first-stage articulations, which as an activity contributes to an increasing awareness of their positions. The presence of various dynamic DST-elements in the first-stage articulations and the occurrence of, for example, new promoter and meta-positions, are significant indicators of an increased awareness. We also conclude that differences occurred in the development of the students' awareness. In almost all narratives, the students show, to varying degrees, an increasing awareness of their personal position. For some students, this led to a broadening of their perspective or position repertoire, for others to a deepening of their insight and coherent integration of new positions. Another group of students began to recognise and become aware of their personal position, and became aware of the existence of some other positions. The additions in the students' articulations vary in length and in number, which is indicative of the increasing awareness, but not one-to-one comparable with the available position repertoire in the society of mind. It is quite possible that students face difficulties in writing down their positions, that they find it difficult to be open about these positions. There can be many explanations for little to no production of additions. We draw these conclusions in the first and second phase of our narrative analysis in Cohort-B. In the next section, these different developmental characteristics in awareness are explained in greater detail while presenting seven typologies of students based on the role of ambivalence, which is part of the third phase of our narrative analysis. The presentation of these typologies also sheds light on the meaning of the articulation of a personal life orientation for professionalisation – the main question of this research project.

7.4 The Meaning of the Articulation of a Life Orientation for Professionalisation

The abductive research process in this narrative study was a search for 'a key' to describe the character and the mode of the interrelatedness between the developmental processes of life orientation and professionalisation. This interrelatedness is the focus of our general research question, which receives a concluding answer in this section. The conceptual part of our research taught us that both concepts share in the meaning of a moral and existential learning process oriented towards the good life in various domains of private and professional life. The philosophies of Ricoeur (1994) and Taylor (1989) describe a relationship between morality and narrative, and refer to developmental possibilities by increasing *phronesis*, practical wisdom (Ricoeur), or a narrative

understanding of the self (Taylor). The *dialogical self theory* (DST) provides concepts that can be used in a narrative inquiry project that intends to describe the development in the narrative unfolding of the self (cf. Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2012). The original objective in DST is to support individuals in developing increasing flexibility and adaptive potential for addressing the contingency in life. It is a narrative learning process that “(...) has the capacity to move the self to higher levels of awareness and integration.” (Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2012, 6) In narrative research, continuity and discontinuity are important indicators for describing the unfolding of a story. Van Knippenberg uses the concept of ‘ambivalence’ to designate the experience of boundaries, which he defines as, the “(...) simultaneous presence of opposing feelings or attitudes towards a person or a subject.” (2008, 49) The experience of ambivalence is the ‘fuel’ for the development of the self (cf. *ibid.*). Both theories, DST and Van Knippenberg’s narrative theory, contributed to our development of narrative-analytical instruments to describe the hermeneutical and positioning process in the articulations of the students, which was the subject of the previous section. Ultimately, the narrative meaning of ‘awareness,’ ‘integration of new positions,’ and ‘ambivalence’ turned out to be a key to describe the development in life orientation related to professionalisation, which resulted in seven typologies.

The thematic cross-over analysis in Cohort-A resulted in the description of seven typologies, which describe the role and meaning of ambivalence. In the three-phase narrative analysis of the articulations in Cohort-B, these seven typologies emerged as well. Only typology 2 received a different title (see italics) to address the difference between Cohort-A and Cohort-B. Table 7D shows the seven typologies schematically. For each typology, a short description follows with separate attention for the PhWS minor period and the juniorship period as a concluding answer to the general question about the meaning of the articulation of a life orientation for professionalisation.

	Typology
1	An ambivalence in the past provides direction – deepening integrating insight
2	An ambivalence in the past plays no significant role in articulation – <i>broadening of an already integrated insight</i>
3	A silent ambivalence comes to light during the minor
4	A currently experienced ambivalence influences the orientation in the minor and later
5	No ambivalence – exploring and taking a position
6	No ambivalence – limited articulation in an already taken position
7	An ambivalence emerges during the minor

Table. 7D Typologies Emerged From the Analysis in Cohort-A and -B

Typology 1: An Ambivalence in the Past Provides Direction – Deepening Integrating Insight

The narratives in this typology show a significant number of additions compared to earlier articulations. In the redefining process, the students demonstrate a critical and deep reflection, which they often see as a result of the interruptive experiences during the minor. During the PhWS minor, these students articulate new promoter and meta-positions, which are indicative of increasing awareness and a progressive movement in the development of the self. In this typology, silent and third positions appear relatively more than in most other typologies. During the minor, some of these students integrate this progressive movement which encompasses new positions into their original articulated position repertoire, and simultaneously relate these insights to normative professional positions. Most of the time, the articulations show centring movements, which lead to coherence, or a multiplicity-in-unity. Another group of students show the accumulating of the progressive movement in combination with an evolving integration and direction towards coherence in the new repertoire, which marks increasing unity-in-multiplicity. This group does not incorporate this progressive movement in life orientation into their articulation of normative professional positions.

In their juniorship period, all these students show balanced movements, which indicates a continuation of the taken positions. All of them managed to integrate their new life orientation positions into normative professional positions, as evidenced by the coherence and interrelatedness in their articulations. In their additions, they mention a deepening of their insight through the integrated positions.

In conclusion, what the articulation of a life orientation means for professionalisation is an increasing awareness of one's personal life orientation. In some cases, this new awareness is simultaneously integrated into the articulation of normative professional aspects. In general, it takes time to integrate this increasing awareness. In the juniorship period, what the articulating process means for professionalisation is a coherent integration of life orientation into the normative professional identity, which results in a deepening of insights.

Typology 2: An Ambivalence in the Past Plays no Significant Role in Articulation – Broadening of an Already Integrated Insight

In Cohort-A, a number of students described intrusive existential events in their lives, but they made no connection between these moments and their current values or positions in life orientation. In their articulations, most of these students did associate life orientation with professionalisation. In their juniorship period, nearly all of them changed their professional perspective and chose another study or job, which in some cases was an answer to an ambivalence in the past, to the extent, they had articulated this relationship.

In Cohort-B, the characteristics differ at some points. Similar are the relatively few and smaller additions to the articulations, in comparison to typology 1. The development of this group signals decentring and centring movements of the same level, which contributes to a balanced movement of the narrative self. This balanced movement results in a broadening of insights that are already integrated, due to the fact that dynamic positions do occur in the articulations, with the exception of the silent and third positions, which are hardly present. The articulation of promoter positions indicates an attitude of openness towards innovation and progression.

In the juniorship period, this balanced movement continues, and some students show a further articulated integration of new life orientation positions into their normative professional perspective, which results from new promoter and meta-positions. Different from Cohort-A is that these students do not abandon their original professional orientation.

In conclusion, what the articulation of a life orientation means for professionalisation in this typology, is characterised by a broadening of insight during the PhWS minor. This broadening is the result of articulated promoter and meta-positions that contribute to a decentring and innovative process within the balanced movement of the narrative self. This balanced movement within life orientation parallels their normative professionalisation. They do not always make a connection between life orientation and normative professionalisation. In comparison to typology 1, the conclusion might be that progressive movements of the narrative self stimulate an articulated relationship between life orientation and normative professionalisation, while a balanced movement of the narrative self is less likely to lead to a connection between both processes, at least not in the articulation. Still, what the articulation of a life orientation means for professionalisation in this group is a broadening awareness of one's life orientation, which could contribute to an increasing flexibility and adaptive capacity of the narrative self.

Typology 3: A Silent Ambivalence Comes to Light During the Minor

In this typology, students articulate a silent ambivalence, or an ambivalence they thought they had managed to silence, in their additions. Only in the additions do these ambivalences come to the fore, sometimes unexpectedly. The difference between typology 3 and 7 are the differences in articulation because, in this typology, students are somehow unconsciously aware of the current ambivalence in their narrative. During the minor, all these students show the dynamic elements of promoter and meta-positions and of course the silent position. These dynamic elements participate in decentring movements, which contribute to the progressive development of the narrative self, although this can also cause feelings of powerlessness. These feelings could be explained by the unexpected appearance of the silent ambivalence. In this group, the progressive development shows little signs of being integrated into the normative professional aspect, or a beginning process of integration.

In the juniorship period, this progressive movement continues but now shows a further integration, which results in an emerging coherence of positions. Depending on their development during the minor programme, these students continue their development in the juniorship period by going through a continued integration, or by achieving this process in the articulation of their normative professional aspects.

In conclusion, education through life orientation can cause the activation of a silent or silenced position, which results in the articulation of dynamic elements, which is indicative of a growing awareness. Students differ in this process; some manage to integrate new insights, others face a disturbance, which has the result that some time is required for the integration of the progressive movement of the narrative self. In their juniorship period, these students show a continuation of this progressive movement and a further adaptation of the narrative self, in establishing a connection between the new life orientation positions and normative professionalisation.

Typology 4: A Currently Experienced Ambivalence Influences the Orientation in the Minor and Later

The main character of this typology is the centripetal dimension of an existential ambivalence during the minor. Some students chose to attend the minor precisely for the purpose of addressing this ambivalence. Regardless of the motivation, it turns out that this ambivalence is predominantly present in different parts of the life orientation narrative of these students' articulations. Examples of these ambivalences are the divorce of the parents, a disorder, a disease, the loss of a loved one, conflicts with the parents, etc. Various developments come to light in these articulations, which is indicative of the uniqueness of every personal biography. In their additions or redefined articulations, these students show dynamic elements, which are indicators for the innovation of their position repertoire. Significantly different from some other typologies is the presence of silent positions, or the silencing of positions during the PhWS minor. In one or more of their competencies, these students show decentralising movements or tensions. These decentralising movements contribute to the progressive development of the narrative self, with a starting coherence of positions regarding life orientation. The relationship between life orientation and the articulations concerning other aspects of normative professionalisation show a beginning integration, but also a process of searching for direction. Most of these students are not sure whether they are on the right professional track.

In their juniorship period, most of these students continue to deal with the currently experienced ambivalence. Sometimes they describe a setback, sometimes a balanced movement of the narrative self as a result of, for example, a therapy. We recognise a relatively high number of third positions in their juniorship period, in addition to the predominantly progressive development of the narrative self. Almost none of the students achieved an integrated coherence in the articulation of their life

orientation, and the same pattern emerged regarding the articulations in normative professionalisation.

In conclusion, nearly all of the students in this typology describe the positivity of having the time and space to share their life story with other people, in a safe environment. The currently experienced ambivalence receives attention in their narrative in the articulation of life orientation, while the relationship with the professional domain does not seem to be on the foreground. In this typology, the students are searching for direction, which influences their reflection on normative professionalisation. Predominantly, we see a progressive development in the narrative self with a starting integration in the life orientation position repertoire. In their juniorship period, some students continue the progressive movement, while others reach a balanced movement of the narrative self. This depends on whether they have found a direction in their orientation, whether privately or professionally.

Typology 5: No Ambivalence – Exploring and Taking a Position

The fifth typology that characterises the role of ambivalence, encompasses articulations with a balanced movement in the narrative self. The students become aware of this balanced movement by noticing that other students express the existence of an ambivalence in their life. It is not true that these students were not dealing with any ambivalence, but in their articulation, they do not mention the presence or influence of one. This typology differs from the next typology in that the students produce exploring, deepening and redefining articulations, which is indicative of a process of position-taking. To a varying degree, these articulations all contain dynamic elements with predominantly decentring and innovative movements, which stimulate a progressive development of the narrative self. These students show an eagerness for knowledge, insights, and awareness, in their articulations. The redefining process shows an increasing integration in the position repertoire of life orientation. The coherence of the new positions in the normative professional positions repertoire is still under construction.

In their juniorship period, most of these students show a balanced movement of the narrative self with centralising movements in most competences. We also see that some students manage to reach coherence between life orientation and normative professionalisation, and that others find a direction in their normative professionalisation, but are still searching for integration of new insights. Most of the students continue their development towards a balanced movement in life orientation, and towards an increasing integration of their life orientation in normative professionalisation. Others recognise that old patterns are strong, upon noticing that when they stop being members of the PhWS minor context, their (firmly) taken positions become diluted. In their juniorship period, some positions may be silenced again but occasionally they take part in the intrapersonal dialogue of the self, as far as the articulations show.

In conclusion, this group of students is very interested in taking and exploring a position in life orientation, and engages in an active search for knowledge and understanding. During the PhWS minor, their articulating signals a progressive development of the narrative self in life orientation, which also has repercussions for their positions in normative professionalisation. Not all students show an immediate integration of their broadened and/or deepened insight into a personally taken position regarding their normative professional articulation. An explanation for this lack of immediate integration might be that the students become acquainted with a new language in the minor, which causes them to redefine their articulations. It takes time to interiorise this language, and to apply it in the description of other normative professional articulations. Another explanation might be that the majority of these students started to become aware of their position, and continued their search for what this means. This attitude is different from the sixth typology, where

the students' development remains limited to an increasing awareness, but does not demonstrate to take the next step for progressive development.

Typology 6: No Ambivalence – Limited Articulation in an Already Taken Position

This sixth typology seems to be the opposite of the fourth typology – which describes a currently experienced ambivalence – because no ambivalence whatsoever is thematised in these narratives. The difference with the former typology is that the students produce fewer and shorter additions to their earlier articulations. In Cohort-A, these students do not articulate any relationship between the different elements of normative professionalisation. A characteristic of this typology is the absence of silent and third positions. In the articulations, we recognise promoter positions and meta-positions but relatively few new ones, compared to other typologies. Based on these first analytical results, the conclusion is justified that the articulations in this typology contain less innovative potential, compared to other typologies. Consequently, the narrative self shows less flexibility, a statement made in virtue of the analysis that all these students show centring movements in their autobiographical competence. The position that the students articulate at the beginning of the minor, is followed but only a few – but still some – additions later on. These additions show an increasing awareness of the existence of other positions, which does not automatically lead to further exploration of these positions, or a critical assessment of the personal position.

In their juniorship period, most of these students continue to go through a balanced movement of the narrative self-regarding life orientation, which manifests itself in a continuously balanced movement of scarcely integrating any new positions in their normative professionalisation.

In conclusion, the students in this typology show an increasing awareness of the existence of other positions, but they generally feel no urge to further clarify, or explore, the meaning of these other positions. They have already taken a position. For most of them, a balanced movement continues. Some mention a confrontation with another culture, which fuelled the redefining process of earlier positions; or at least it resulted in the further relativity of the personal position. For normative professionalisation, this typology shows a balanced movement in education through life orientation, which comes down to hardly any adjustment in professional views at all.

Typology 7 An Ambivalence Emerges During the Minor

In this typology, it is a sudden insight that causes ambivalence. This ambivalence, as a boundary experience, sets in motion a process of reorientation and redefinition of earlier articulations. During the PhWS minor, the students are involved in this process, which results in differences regarding the integration of new insights. What these students demonstrate is an awareness, for which they need time to incorporate it into their position repertoire. They often mention that it takes time to change an old behavioural pattern or old attitude.

In their juniorship period, they continue this integration, and they explicitly take note of their new awareness and the degree of integration. In this group, there is also the example of how the professional context caused an ambivalence, which changed some positions in life orientation. This shows that these processes distinguish themselves in terms of content, slightly different topics, but they simultaneously are integrated and inseparable in the society of mind. Nevertheless, our study is about what the articulation of a life orientation means for professionalisation, which justifies the conclusion that education through life orientation enables the appearance of ambivalence. In conclusion, typology 7 shows that the emerging ambivalence is a supportive accelerator of the students' increasing awareness of their perspectives, insights, and *I*-positions.

Summary

The general research question is:

What is the meaning and contribution of a personal life view articulation to professionalisation?

We conclude that education through life orientation offers the opportunity to apply the ultimate questions in life to professionalisation. The ultimate questions are the starting point for developing dialogical competence and for the expansion of, and growing awareness of, one's personal position repertoire in the moral space of pre-existent questions. The dialogical competency, and the awareness of personal meanings support the integration of positions regarding life orientation issues into professional identity. This process of reflective integration in professionalisation supports the awareness of the narrative relationship between morality and identity. The dialogical competence and cultivated awareness enrich professionalisation because professionals have to take decisions for which they bear responsibility. Decisions, which are the result of how they interpret their professional context and respond in a variety of situations. These interpretations and responses are claims that – consciously and unconsciously – have a relationship with what individuals articulate as answers to ultimate questions, questions which figure in their moral and existential learning process. An education through life orientation is designed to articulate and explore this relationship, which benefits practical wisdom.

We conclude that every human being orientates in life, which is a positioning process related to the meaning of the human being, the world, the meta-empirical, and the good life. An orientation that is characterised by continuity and discontinuity, contingency, and complexity. The articulation of this life orientation takes place in different degrees and in different modes, being a positioning process that addresses all human capacities: the intuitive, imaginative, cognitive, and affective abilities, and human experience. This orientation and positioning process is dialogical and relational within the society of mind and between physical people. Moreover, the dialogical dimension can transcend temporal boundaries by relating our present day to the past. The traditional philosophical, religious, and spiritual sources of wisdom can function as dialogical partners for students and professionals in their development of the articulation of a personal life orientation. These sources, represented by books, rituals, symbols and living people, can be helpful in the moral and existential learning processes of professionalisation. Education through life orientation connects the traditional, the modern, and the post-modern self within the dialogical self.

In our view, attention for life orientation in higher professional education is necessary to stimulate human dignity in our society, because in this way students and professionals are invited to relate their professional acting to the teleological question of the good life. The orientation and positioning towards that question determine the quality of their professionalism. In this study, we have shown that a relationship between education through life orientation and professionalisation results in a deep reflection about professional identity.

The description of the seven typologies shows that what the articulation of a life orientation means for professionalisation is not clear-cut, as a result of the narrative function of ambivalence. The typologies, which characterise the function of ambivalence in personal narratives, enable us to further explore the relationship between a life orientation and professionalisation. We conclude that the integration of an articulated life orientation in professionalisation takes place in differing degrees across the typologies. These processes are interrelated, but for every person in a uniquely personal way. Using the results of our three-phase narrative research, these typologies help to describe in detail the different moral and existential learning processes, and consequently the differences in

articulation and the development in the redefining. By no means, should these typologies function as simplifications of unique personal narratives. On the contrary, the emergence of typologies articulates the diversity in how students and professionals describe their life orientation, and integrate it into their professionalisation. In all typologies, increasing awareness of the personal position was noticeable, although in different ways. We expect that this increasing awareness will improve the dialogical competency of students and young professionals to be able to imagine other positions in life orientation and morality, to innovate their personal positions, and to broaden the bandwidth of their position repertoire.

7.5 Discussion of the Conclusions and Implications for Professionalisation

The discussion of the conceptual part of this research had its place in section 7.1. In this section, we open the discussion for the narrative-empirical part of the study. Three points emerge from the conclusions drawn in section 7.2, 7.3 and 7.4. In what follows, we discuss each of these points and simultaneously make some recommendations for professionalisation in higher professional education. The three points are:

- Articulated moral awareness not self-evidently integrated into the professional self
- Life orientation going beyond an instrumental use of reflection models in professionalisation
- The humanities integrate moral education and teach dialogical competency

7.5.1 Articulated Moral Awareness not Self-Evidently Integrated Into the Professional Self

In this research project, the assumption is that a personal and a professional value orientation are somehow interrelated. In DST, the complexity of this interrelatedness is metaphorically represented as the 'society of mind,' which hosts various *I*-positions representing valuations within an encompassing life story. Akkerman and Meijer (2011) advocate from a DST-perspective to overcome the dichotomy between personal and professional identity. They argue that the forming of identity or the self is a dynamic and fluid process within a broader societal context. They stress that professionalisation is the ongoing process of becoming a professional, which from a dialogical perspective means the challenging continuity and discontinuity in (working) life. In this study, we have learned that an education through life orientation functions as a discontinuity on different levels, which in varying degrees provokes and supports a repositioning process, and in varying degrees an increasing awareness of the positions within the dialogical self (Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2012; Kelchtermans, 2009). In another discourse on subjectification, the emergence of the *I*, Biesta (2013) deliberately avoids the notion of 'development,' and with good reasons. In our research, we have not assessed the quality or extent of emerging subjectification. More critical is the condition of reflection, which shows relations between experience, insight, biography, and an encompassing life orientation directed towards good work and the good co-existence. The primary assumption is that each student has a unique starting point, which determines his/her learning experience, for which the student bears responsibility together with his/her fellow students, the teacher, and in the juniorship period with the trainer and colleagues.

The articulation of the repositioning process, or redefining development, has been at the centre of our attention. We have learned how students and young professionals increase their awareness of positions in life orientation, which represent different personal values. Korthagen and Vasalos (2009) describe how core reflection can be used to become aware of the inner layer of their so-called 'onion model,' which represents the inspirational and spiritual dimension of identity. Core reflection, in their view, can connect the different layers, from the perspective that positions and changes in the inner layer affect the outer layers of the onion. In our research context, students and young professionals articulated their personal and professional beliefs but did not *automatically* show an

integration. For some students, it takes time to integrate awareness of positions in life orientation into professionalisation. Moreover, in using Van Knippenberg's narrative theory (2002; 2008), discerning different narrative competencies, we have learned that within Korthagen's and Vasalos' designated inner layer of 'mission' there could exist opposing positions, which indicates the complexity of a life orientation. This is a complexity that Korthagen and Vasalos risk simplifying by giving priority to professional development and their preoccupation with the positive psychological 'flow' (cf. 2009, 13). Another risk of the onion-model is a linear approach to development. The onion-model might suggest that every person can touch an inner core, which seems to be rather static. DST addresses the possibility that individuals might have different compositions of positions, depending on the context and situation.

With Korthagen and Vasalos, we agree that education should not be therapy, but our analysis has shown that biographical issues play an important role in the mode of awareness and level of integration regarding the (re)positioning in life orientation. Students who belong to the typology of 'a currently experienced ambivalence' are not entirely taken seriously if the message is that focus on core qualities and professional development will generate a flow. Although Korthagen and Vasalos recognise that students could bump into personal issues, they do not want personal issues to become the focus of professional development. In our view, these boundaries are fluid, which means that schools and universities could learn from our typologies to differentiate in student support. We recommend educators to recognise the balance between personal and professional development. Trainers in professional education should be aware of different existential and moral learning processes. The description of typologies at least provides insight into the different modes of awareness during the articulating process of personal views, and the varying degrees to which the position repertoire can be increased. Both influence the extent to which personal values are integrated into professionalisation. In relying on our results, we recommend becoming familiar with the different modes of awareness. First, students become aware of their moral values, their positions in the domains of life orientation, professional life and the societal context. Secondly, they consciously relate different personal positions to each other within each of the domains. Thirdly, they are aware of possible other positions taken by physical others, and can imagine what these positions mean. Fourthly, they become aware of the relationship between the positions adopted in the three domains of normative professionalisation. Fifthly, students and young professionals can relate their biographical past, present and future positions to their professionalisation. In these five modes of awareness, which are to varying degrees present in a single person, our typologies could be helpful for trainers and educators, to have an insight into how and where a student or professional could be supported. For coaches of students in typology 4 'a currently experienced ambivalence,' it would be helpful to know how to keep focus on education, without denying the present ambivalence. For other students, for example, in typology 2 'ambivalence in the past – broadening of already integrated insight,' it is helpful to support these students in analysing the relationship between, for example, their values articulated for the good life, their professional beliefs, and the ideal society. These educational actions should be the result of an approach that recognises different modes of awareness concerning personal and professional positions in the Taylorian moral space of pre-existent questions.

In our definition of normative professionalisation, we discerned the question of the good life, good work, and good co-existence. The latter refers to the societal aspect within normative professionalisation (cf. Van Ewijk, 2016, 56). We have noticed that this aspect is not automatically within sight of all students. Therefore, it is not only about integrating positions that have become aware in education through life orientation, but also about the integrative relationship between the three different aspects of normative professionalisation. In our research, students articulated their

views on the human being and the world, which relate to the normative professional aspect of society. First, students differ in their awareness of their personal position and other positions regarding these issues, which they begin to integrate differently in their larger narrative of life orientation. At this stage, not all students automatically relate this repositioning and redefining process to their professionalisation, which requires a further integration through reflection. For normative professionalisation, it is therefore necessary that educators address the societal and contextual aspect of professionalisation by means of reflection activities that lead to an integration of positions. For example, the articulations in typology 6 'no ambivalence – limited articulation in an already taken position' showed hardly any additions in the professional and societal aspects of normative professionalisation. This difference, compared to some other typologies, must not automatically lead to an inferior evaluation because all students have their unique learning process, which in education through life orientation should not be judged by a linear development system. At least, this result asks for a further investigation into the students' motivation to add little to no articulations, or to hardly relate their life orientation to professional beliefs.

The last recommendation is particularly for universities teaching various professional disciplines: the interdisciplinary context can be used to foster dialogue. It is advisable to create study programmes that bring students from different studies together. These students bring with them different perspectives on society and professions, which automatically starts a thinking process about the personal and professional positions of the self. Such a programme would be a cheaper, and therefore an accessible alternative for international traineeships, which provide for discontinuity in another way.

7.5.2 Life Orientation Goes Beyond an Instrumental Use of Reflection in Professionalisation

Under the previous point of discussion, we already mentioned that reflection in life orientation addresses a complexity of positions, which opposes an instrumental approach. Korthagen and Vasalos (2009) have developed the onion model in order to address the predominantly instrumental use of reflection in professionalisation. "The fact that ideals and core qualities are so closely connected is in line with the onion model. Ideals often resonate with the most inner level of mission: they have to do with our deepest desires, our sense of meaning in life, and thus with our core, our full potential as human beings." (ibid., 2) Nevertheless, the onion model also runs the risk of being applied in an instrumental manner. As long as questions remain superficial or restricted to the professional domain, reflections keep running the risk of becoming instrumental. The facilitating questions in life orientation require personal consideration without having a direct, or conscious connection with professionalisation. Our research has shown that education through life orientation results in processes of professionalisation, which are relevant to students, and are characterised by thoughtful, conscious and embodied experience. In education, students should begin with these questions as a foundation for their further professionalisation. Their life orientation articulations function as an embedment for the forming of a professional identity. An orientation, which in this research is envisioned as a matter of the whole human being, including the rational, intuitive, imaginative and affective capacities. Our recommendation is to start with a list of facilitating questions to support the evolving of the narrative self, and to create a narrative context for core values. An increasing self-understanding is the foundation for the integration of instrumental professional knowledge, attitudes and competencies. This order of listing is not an order of importance: what we mean is that right from the beginning, professional education, normative education, and instrumental professionalisation should receive equal attention. It requires time to relate articulations of life orientation with professional and societal aspects. Alsup (2006) has described how universities for teacher training fail to address the personal self, which she designates as a source for the unsuccessful entry of student-teachers in their professional life. Universities

neglect "(...) aspects of identity development that involve the integration of the personal self with the professional self, and the 'taking on' of a culturally scripted, often narrowly defined, professional role while maintaining individuality." (ibid., 4) Educational institutes and universities might look at their curricula to ascertain how personal and professional identity, normativity and instrumentality are interwoven in their programmes, and how they are stimulating reflection in both domains, reflection that would result in an attitude on behalf of the students to question the underlying values, views on the human being, and on the world in the theories they are taught.

Kelchtermans (2009) practices a narrative-biographical approach in teacher education. His focus is on educational professionals, but his ideas are applicable to other professions as well. The person of the teacher, or in general the professional, constitutes professional acting. Kelchtermans asks trainers and educators to be vigilant in safeguarding vulnerability. He states that vulnerability is at stake at different levels. In our research, the multiple manifestations of ambivalence make teachers aware of the different 'narratives' in front of them. First, the attention to personal motivations and values, which are part of a life story, calls for a safe educational climate in which students can become vulnerable in front of peer students and professionals. The reflection that goes beyond instrumentalism requires a safe space that offers the students the possibility to become vulnerable, among themselves, and in front of their teacher. A safe space that is particularly necessary where students or professionals feel that they do not have the possibility to speak freely, or to express themselves authentically. Secondly, professionals have to judge, to decide what is good to do. "And still, it is this capacity to judge, to act and to take responsibility for one's actions which constitutes a key part of teachers' professionalism. There is no escape: the particular scholarship of teaching (professionalism) demands that one endures this vulnerability. Vulnerability is the fundamental condition a teacher 'finds himself/herself in'. The expression is important: it reveals the inevitable element of passivity, of exposure that characterises teaching. It is not something one 'makes happen'." (ibid., 266) In other words, Biesta (2014) describes this vulnerability in *The Beautiful Risk of Education*, in which he states that teachers have to trust the outcome of their professional acts. An outcome, which he discerns along three educational domains: qualification, socialisation and subjectification. All domains should get equal attention, which is unfortunately not the case for subjectification or personhood formation because of "(...) the current emphasis on achievement in the domain of qualification where excessive pressure on students (and teachers, for that matter) to perform in that domain (...)." (Biesta, 2015, 78) The domain of qualification demands a lot of time, which endangers the third educational domain of subjectification. Integration of facilitating questions regarding life orientation can be a means to come into the world, to foster a unique voice in the public domain (cf. Roebben, 2015, 146). Attention for life orientation leads to 'deeper learning in professionalisation,' as Korthagen and Vasalos (2009) call for, but it requires educators and trainers to ask 'deeper questions.' Questions that can cause emotions, questions which demand a moment of silence, and time to reflect. If educators and trainers feel insecure when addressing this type of questions, they first have to deal with these topics, otherwise, this deeper reflection will end up in an instrumental exercise.

Not only students bear responsibility for their education, teachers do as well. First, they must carefully ensure the safety among the students (cf. Roebben, 2015, 65). A safe space is a first condition to be vulnerable, to be authentic. A safe environment invites students to show their uniqueness. There are several pedagogical instruments available to work on this safety condition in a newly forming group. Particularly in life orientation, if teachers show their own vulnerability, it functions as a guide for the students to facilitate the hermeneutical process (cf. ibid., 69; Alii, 2009, 126). To educate in life orientation requires the teacher to be open about his/her personal position. As a teacher teaching in life orientation, taking a position is normative because life orientation is all

about existential truth (cf. Heimbrock, 2017, 13). Perhaps in another degree than a teacher in life orientation, but educators and trainers have to show their life orientation as well, to create a safe atmosphere and to be an example for students on how to relate this life orientation to professionalisation. Secondly, taking a position does not merely mean to be open about one's personal life orientation, but to be open to the alterity of the students as well. When Biesta claims against 'learnification' that education belongs to a relational category, the conclusion should automatically be that not only the student needs to be interrupted, but the teacher as well (cf. Joldersma, 2011, 446). Thirdly, Levinas argues that education needs to cultivate a prophetic aspect when it comes down to ethics and justice. Justice relates to my irreplaceable responsibility to others, without being responsible for the responsibility of my neighbour. My responsibility expands to a third, a fourth party, and eventually transforms into justice, a concern for all, including myself (cf. Joldersma, 2008). Joldersma designates education as a social and ethical occurrence. Teachers should disturb their students to let them reorient toward the good of others. The responsibility of the other towards the good requires the teacher to call attention towards the good in general. "The spirit that animates education is an outward-directed distribution of responsibility across the network of relationships among humans, a continuous interruption of self-interested conatus with the goodness of one's concern for the welfare of others as other—those with whom one has little in common." (Joldersma, 2011, 447) In the PhWS minor, there are several occasions like 'moral considerations' and other tutorials, which have a prophetic character. Thus, a pedagogy of interruption, or a pedagogy of disturbance as Joldersma has called it, does not leave teachers empty-handed. We agree with Biesta that we cannot foresee the outcome of our education in the domain of subjectification. We should regard subjectification not merely as an ethical event (Biesta, 2013, 22), but also as an existential event occurring through 'a distantiating of the self-centeredness' (cf. Joldersma, 2011, 445), for which a teacher bears responsibility.

Professionalisation in whatever professionalism is in need of a deep reflection on moral positions, which connects the personal and the professional meaning-giving frameworks. This need that addresses human dignity and humanisation in our increasingly complex and science-dominated society. Every professionalism has its moral questions and a varying degree in real contact with people. Teachers, nurses or social workers are directly confronted with the effect of their professional actions. Professionals in marketing, finance, or engineering may not have direct contact with their clients and customers, but should also function within the ethical aim and norm of solicitude (cf. Ricoeur, 1992, 218). Solicitude claims an irreplaceability of every person, which Ricoeur extends to just institutions by setting a universal norm of justice. Every professional has to learn how to translate this universal norm into a professional framework of beliefs, which is inherently related to a personal life orientation, as we have concluded in this research. It is when bringing up this point of a universal norm of justice, that Ricoeur pleads for *phronesis*, practical wisdom. A practical wisdom, which is oriented towards goodness in life and in the profession. For this goodness and the situatedness of the good life, every single person bears a unique responsibility, which includes the care for the (un)known other, and every professional shares a common responsibility within a societal context.

7.5.3 The Humanities Integrate Moral Education and Teach Dialogical Competency

From his humanistic perspective, Kunneman (2009, 21) draws attention to the 'deep autonomy of the human being.' The experience of deep autonomy leads to the acceptance of vulnerability and the fact that life is not completely manufacturable. Together with other people, we have to trust that vulnerability, and the pre-existent life questions are the main gateway to deep experiences of meaning and connection with life (cf. *ibid.*). These pre-existent questions, which Kunneman coins as

'slow questions' ask for a common search in our moral and existential learning process. These questions do not request tailor-made answers, even less so now that we live in an increasingly complex society. Kunneman's life orientation drives him to claim a space for human dignity in an era where scientific solutions are so dominant that the moral background of these solutions vanishes. Taylor (1989) has claimed the same room for the moral space in which we live, in order to safeguard human dignity. The issue of human dignity must function as a critical norm for every education, to the extent that we at least subscribe to the importance of personhood formation.

Professionalisation also includes moral and existential learning processes, which have an unpredictable outcome. Nevertheless, the aim is to educate students and to coach professionals in knowing where they stand, as a precondition for knowing who they are (cf. Taylor, 1989). In DST terms, this means to know your position repertoire, and to broaden and flexibilise this repertoire to become a flexible and an adaptive self in a complex society (cf. Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2012). The expected result of this broadened position repertoire is the improvement of good dialogue. "Dialogue is *not only* something to be studied, but represents a moral and developmental purpose: an activity that is desirable and valuable when people want to learn from each other and from themselves in the service of a further development of the self and society." (ibid., 174) One of the features of good dialogue is to innovate the self (cf. ibid. 10). We have seen that the facilitating questions for life orientation support students and young professionals in becoming aware of, and in articulating promoter positions and meta-positions, as well as in renewing these positions, which is indicative for innovation and is subsequently contributing to a good dialogue. The dialogical competencies of deep listening, asking open questions, being emphatic, allowing silences, being able to disagree, accepting multiple voices and pluralism, being aware of personal positions, the responsibility for safeguarding freedom of speech, and the capacity to register physical reactions and feelings that relate to values – this is all contributing to the developmental enterprise of a dialogicality in a globalising society.

Closely related to dialogical competencies, and the possibility to have a good dialogue, is the innovation and broadening of literacy in life orientation. Roebben follows Habermas, Taylor and Ferry in stating that religious language represents an important source for the humanisation of our society (2015, 29). According to Roebben, a dialogue between persons with different life orientations could easily get stuck in platitudes, an abstract language about love, respect and tolerance. The learning of religious and life orientation language could guide pupils and students to reach beyond indifference, which means dignifying yourself, as well as the other (cf. ibid., 73). These languages encompass sources of wisdom, which according to Hermans and Hermans-Konopka (2012) are parts of our dialogical self. In different ways, various scholars relate the traditional, the modern and the post-modern eras to each other (cf. Taylor, 1989; Kunneman, 2005; Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2012). The traditional era with its primarily religious language teaches us to speak in symbolic language, instead of in a one-dimensional scientific language. Education in symbolic language and literature supports pupils and students in the increasing of their vocabulary, which enables them to articulate answers to ultimate existential questions, which asks for a response as a human being, and as a professional. Van der Kooij (2016) has shown that in schools not only a narrow moral education takes place, which is restricted to rules, but also a broad moral education. This broad moral education encompasses some ultimate questions, which means that pupils already have to learn how to position themselves at an early stage. This positioning of themselves is a process that necessitates articulation in order to share each other's view. This larger vocabulary also supports the emancipation of pupils and students in enabling them to recognise dominant worldviews, which seem so obvious that they are no longer recognised as influential in daily life. In this sense, expanding a life orientation vocabulary supports the democratisation process among civilians because people

are better equipped to come into the world, to speak with a unique voice (cf. Biesta, 2014, Arendt 1958, 2009).

Living in a globalising society, students and young professionals need to articulate their life orientation as the source of their daily decisions. In their private and professional lives, people come across ethical, moral, and existential questions. In a globalising, heterogeneous society, people do not share a common life orientation language, which is needed to bring up these ultimate questions in a dialogue. For every subject, these questions could be adjusted to the terminology of the dominant discourse. There should at least be time for reflection on these questions, and for reflection on the way these questions are being silenced in a dominant discourse. Neglecting these questions would mean to deny a crucial part of the human being and of the professional in particular, which is the relationship between self, morality and the narrative. Every human being has a story to tell, which is an activity of taking a position in the moral space of pre-existent questions. The articulation of a narrative is the result of an autobiographical and contextual competency, and a competency of openness. More insight into these competencies might help teacher-coaches to support their students in addressing the ambivalences in (professional) life. The practising of narrative competencies also contributes to an increasing self-understanding, and to an understanding of different and other perspectives. In a globalising society, every professional bears responsibility for the quality of dialogues, which contribute to mutual understanding but also to the humanisation of society. A humanisation which requires the attitude to take moral and existential learning processes seriously, and not as a sort of add-on.

The final recommendation is to make time available for students and professionals to consider the facilitating questions themselves, and to enable them to discuss these questions with others. Literally, 'school,' derived from the Greek σχολή, means spare time, which should mean that a study ought to include time and space for the articulation of a personal identity, related to a professional identity. In the Dutch context, the concept of *Bildung* takes centre stage in the educational debate. This is because it is used to stress the importance of broad personhood formation (Onderwijsraad 2011, 2013; Van Dijck, 2016; Platform onderwijs2032, 2016). Miedema (2014) pleads for a transformational pedagogy, which promotes *Bildung* by addressing all the domains of human potentiality and ability. Gude (2016) has outlined that *Bildung* is an educational process of meaning-giving and civilisation, which takes place in what he designated as 'the training programmes' of philosophy/science, art, sports and religion. Each of these four programmes has their specific questions and rules, which help people to order their lives, and to take the middle between individualism and collectivism. All these programmes are oriented towards the good life.

7.6 Critical Remarks and Recommendations for Future Research

In this last section, we present some critical remarks about this conceptual and narrative-empirical research project. The method that was applied will be discussed, and the results will be critically examined. The final subsection refers to possible future research regarding the results of the narrative study.

7.6.1 Critical Remarks and Limitations

A first critical remark concerns the number of narratives. Some say a narrative inquiry normally consists of one to four stories (cf. Creswell, 2013, 74). Our research consists of 68 narratives, which led to an important limitation. We did not interview the participants to reconstruct the story structurally with a beginning, a middle and an end. A point of critique might be that apart from the data collection, the analysis could have been reduced to, for example, ten participants. Indeed, at this point in the project, serious consideration took place about the methodological steps to be

followed. An alternative action could have been to conduct 10 in-depth interviews to restore the narratives, according to the steps Riessman (2005b) describes. Perhaps this alternative method would have yielded a very detailed description of the encompassing contexts of the narratives. Also, the product would have been 10 complete narratives, drawn from the self-written documents and in-depth interviews. However, we deliberately did not want to change the original stratified education-research design, which guaranteed that we kept close to the narrator's 'voice.' This approach does not strictly comply with Riessman's criterion to produce a beginning, a middle, and an end, to a more or less saturated narrative. The retelling had been conducted in another way, which meant abandoning Riessman's strict proposal of restoring. Yet our method safeguarded a rich body of data, due to our invention of an alternative method for narratively retelling self-written documents. Within the time provided for this research, it was not possible to implement both methodological strategies. The limitation is that we could only describe the articulations, while interviews might have resulted in a thicker description of intrapersonal *I*-positions which remained unvoiced, or unarticulated. Therefore, it might be a serious option to pursue this alternative approach in a follow-up study. After all, the semi-longitudinal approach provides room for alternatives in the future.

In her critical overview of recent narrative research in social work, Riessman (2005b) describes three good practices of narrative research. One of these good examples, comparable to our research, is Martin's narrative research project (1998) on the experienced transition to adolescence by 30 youths aged 18/19 who leave child care. Martin used 30 self-written texts, produced by 'direct scribing,' which is "(...) transcribing the spoken word into a computer as the speaker watches the screen, and amending the text as directed." (Martin, 1998, 1) The following four criteria, which Riessman (Cf. 2005b, 403) distinguishes, concretise the two first procedural steps described above:

- (1) Work from detailed transcripts
- (2) Describe in detail the production of the final story, and how the story underwent change at varying points
- (3) Attend to structural features of narratives
- (4) Respect the dialogic nature of the life stories

A short justification, now, to demonstrate how our research meets these four criteria. First, the self-written life orientation narratives were the data for further research. Every analysis procedure provided for a close reading of the original description. Secondly, the participants were told that they were the only narrator and editor of their narrative. They got to decide what went in, and what remained unwritten. Thirdly, during the minor programme, the participants reread their primary documents and could add new insights to the original text (in another colour). In strict terms, this research does not meet the third criterion about the creation of a reconstructed story according to narrative criteria (see 4.3). However, the methodological step of the students' rereading process, and their production of additions is an alternative for (re)structuring a self-written text. Fourthly, the dialogical nature is essential to the minor programme. Participants talk about each other's narratives, which is the beginning of the redefining process. This dialogical character makes the participants themselves first-level narrative researchers.

The response rate of 83% (Cohort-A) and 80% (cohort-B) in the juniorship period might, first of all, be an indication of goodwill towards the lecturer-researcher, but it might also indicate that the students regarded this type of reflection as meaningful. Of course, these students had freely chosen to attend the PhWS minor, which is indicative of their motivation, but this time-consuming exercise was performed with attention. In fact, the students who had to withdraw after first confirming they would participate during their juniorship period, apologised for not participating because they lack time to answer the questions properly.

The DST is originally a psycho-educational theory with a positivist perspective on development. In their description of the movements within the self and the self as a whole, Hermans and Hermans-Konopka use terms like progressive and regressive movements. In their thinking on the human being, there is a tendency to appreciate growth and improvement. However, they also stress the importance of work on the flexibility and adaptivity of the self, which is needed in an increasingly complex and globalising society (cf. Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2012). Still, criticism of DST would be the dominant focus on growth, or the aim to make the self better. We describe how students increase their awareness of how they integrate *I*-positions in life orientation into their professionalisation. Nevertheless, we do not emphasise a positivist psychological ‘flow’ principle. Precisely our preoccupation with life orientation motivates us to take the contingency of life seriously, which means that not everything can be solved with ‘flow.’ DST also enables us to speak of increasing density in the awareness of positions, which might be beneficial for flexibility and adaptivity in complex situations. Simultaneously, it is foreseeable that certain life events could paralyse this flexibility, for which a circular approach to development fits better than a linear approach. This circular approach addresses Taylor’s claim that personal identity is a matter of self-consciousness (cf. Taylor, 1989, 49).

Another criticism of DST would be the assumption that different *I*-positions are present. It is difficult to prove the existence of these positions empirically. Bamberg and Zielke (2007) question the role of the director, the *I*. Who is actually the leader in the society of mind? These scholars doubt the existence of relatively independent *I*-positions. This important theoretical critique is relevant for future research, but less relevant for this study in which DST-concepts were useful for the description of the character of articulations in a narrative study. Our research is restricted to these articulations, and we explicitly do not claim anything about the empirical existence of the ‘society of mind.’ Moreover, if it were possible to prove the independence of these *I*-positions empirically, the articulations would only capture a few of them, because not all of them are voiced.

7.6.2 Recommendations for Future Research

The educational context of this research project was a minor programme that students attend on a voluntary basis. Most of the students who apply for this minor, are interested in the subjects and have a certain openness to the facilitating questions. A narrative study never intends to be representative, not even with 68 narratives. Nevertheless, we recommend adjusting the list of facilitating questions to the specific context of a professional discipline. Further research would give insight into what students – and probably near-future alumni – would articulate and redefine as their life orientation related to their professionalisation. Moreover, a relevant question is what the outcome of this articulation process would be with students who have to answer these questions as a mandatory part of their curriculum.

Another research recommendation would be the valuation by students and young professionals regarding a formal education in and through life orientation and their perceived relatedness on their professionalisation. The research topic here is the meaning that students give to education through life orientation as part of their professionalisation. This research should definitely be carried out by another researcher who is not a member of the teacher team of the PhWS minor. Open interviews could provide insight into what the participants value as relevant and useful for their professionalisation.

Another research recommendation would be to use the narratives as the starting point for an open interview. Our deliberate strategy was to exclude the interview method, in order not to influence the redefining process and to stay as close as possible to the intrapersonal dialogue of the student. Future research is needed to focus on students’ and professionals’ reflections regarding personal

well-being, professional beliefs and the societal context as aspects of normative professionalisation. Since the launch of the minor programme, different reflection tools have been developed to support students in the exploration of dominant values in each of these three aspects, and to relate their values narratively. This is a next step in fostering the awareness of students and young professionals, and in the increasing of their vocabulary. For narrative research reasons, an interview on the basis of these longitudinal articulations could support the young professionals in consciously making thematic connections between their life orientation and normative professionalisation. The aim of such open interviews is to improve professional practice. Insights drawn from this research project should benefit the guidance and development of young professionals, and should offer means for optimising the transfer from professional education to the juniorship period.

More research would be useful for establishing connections between different studies, which use DST-concepts. Akkerman and Meijer (2011) have conducted thorough conceptual research on the relationship between personal and professional identity, based on DST. Leijen and Kullasepp (2013) have used these insights for their study on how personal and professional approaches to dilemmas relate to each other. The outcomes of their research have resulted in seven different developmental trajectories, which could be compared to our seven typologies in future research. Zock (2013) conducted narrative research by using DST-concepts to describe religious voices in a self-narrative. Some of her insights and methodological perspectives have already been used in this research, but a more detailed comparison within an extended narrative methodology – an open or semi-structured interview for example – could contribute to a deeper insight into the articulations of students and young professionals.

The PhWS minor creates an experience of discontinuity for most of the students. This discontinuity is deliberately strived for as part of a pedagogy of interruption, as we have described in detail in chapter 3. This could possibly be initiated in different ways, in an international traineeship, for example (cf. Mesker, 2018). Comparative research into various types of educational discontinuity could deepen our insight into different strategies, within a broad understanding of a pedagogy of interruption. In our research, the seven typologies inform teachers and educators about how existential discontinuity played – and still plays – a role. Other perspectives drawn from other research on discontinuity might enrich our insight into how educators and trainers could benefit from a beneficial moral and existential learning process that contributes to the human dignity of every pupil, student and professional.

A final research proposal is to continue this two cohort-research, by inviting the young professionals who participated in this research project, to reread their articulations in about 10 years' time. It is an opportunity for us and for them to gain insight in the development of their life orientation, related to their professionalisation in the long term. Such follow-up research would also inform us about the development of the *homo optionis*, who we came across in the first chapter of this dissertation. People in our age have so many choices for which they bear full responsibility. How do they cope with their options, their responsibilities as a constitutive part of their life orientation? Their narratives continue, which is an interesting and infinite source of inspiration for them, and a source for the further theoretical development of education in and through life orientation.

Epilogue: Faith Encounter on the Agora

The purpose of theology is to understand what faith means according to revelation and tradition. Every theological discipline has its own object of research and methodology. Although my background is in Catholic systematic theology, this thesis has a predominantly practical-theological perspective. In practical theology, the object of research is the human actor as part of interrelated social practice (cf. Dillen & Gärtner, 2015, 112/113). This general description could be applied to different interests within the church, on the border of the church and the world, or even outside the institutional boundaries of the church. From a practical-theological perspective, this research investigates religious and worldview education for students with different backgrounds which focuses on the articulation of a personal life orientation related to professionalisation, at a 'general-particular,' confessionally neutral university.

The practical-theological dimension in this research primarily draws on the inspiration from the Vatican II Council's Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et Spes*. In this constitution, the primary concern is the service to the whole of the human family:

"Though mankind is stricken with wonder at its own discoveries and its power, it often raises anxious questions about the current trend of the world, about the place and role of man in the universe, about the meaning of its individual and collective strivings, and about the ultimate destiny of reality and of humanity. Hence, giving witness and voice to the faith of the whole people of God gathered together by Christ, this council can provide no more eloquent proof of its solidarity with, as well as its respect and love for the entire human family with which it is bound up, than by engaging with it in conversation about these various problems." (*Gaudium et Spes*, art.3)

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This encouraging text regards, in principle, every voice in this dialogue as free to speak. *Gaudium et Spes* shows the necessity of this dialogue among all people indifferent of background (Cf. GS., art 21), for the principle of the dignity of human beings (cf. GS., Art. 12, and 28) and for the value of universal freedom (Cf. GS., Art. 17). These two values, human dignity and universal freedom, are guiding and also critical principles of this research project. According to McIsaac Bruce (2008), the applied method of narrative research fits these values through its spiritual and liberating dimensions. "It is a holistic and non-dualistic discipline that places value on subjectivity, reflection, creativity, and a sharing of feelings and experiences." (McIsaac Bruce, 2008, p. 334-335)

Gaudium et Spes encourages a dialogue with every human being centred on the values of human dignity and universal freedom. This dialogue takes place on the agora, the public square and thus outside the church. Roebben tends to speak of 'narthical religious learning,' which intends transformative learning (cf. 2016, 36). He uses the metaphor of the *narthex* as a pedagogical and theological place of confrontation on the border of the world and the sacred space within the church. This metaphor helps to remind church-goers that a traditional view on religion is no longer self-evident. Most of the young people do not understand church or religious language anymore. Based on this narrative inquiry and my educational experience, I conclude that it is necessary to leave the *narthex* and to enter the *agora*, which requires skills in listening to a language, which is different from the theological language and religious language. Lingering on the *agora* demands openness and acceptance of the risk of transforming or even losing your precious faith. It also necessitates receptiveness for what the other is willing to share with you in her or his wisdom, respect for the Wisdom in the midst of you and your dialogical partners, and openheartedness for transformational learning. These attitudes characterise the theology of meeting on the agora. On the *agora*, everyone

has a unique story to tell. The only significant relationship is the sharing of the same ultimate questions.

My first experience on the *agora* was just a few weeks after my work as a lay minister in a Catholic parish. I worked with teenagers and adolescents, who shared a common faith in differing degrees. This commonality provides for a sense of belonging, expressed in practices, rituals, texts, and songs. On this *agora*, it is, not possible, at least directly, to sing a song which expresses a sense of belonging. In the beginning, it felt uncomfortable and caused a feeling of homesickness for the safe environment of the church. In addition, during my educational activities in the church I noticed that parishioners spoke another language than the official language in the church. At that time, I learned to relate their life questions to the narratives in the Bible and the Catholic tradition. These parishioners had a shared sense of belonging but they quite often also shared a difficulty to understand the traditional texts. In my role as a catechist, it was a challenge to translate these ancient texts encompassing comparable human experiences and to relate them to the parishioners' questions. In my view, most of my educational, catechetical activities already took place in the narthex because most of the people just began by articulating their answers to ultimate questions. What I mean is that the metaphor of the narthex refers to people who are interested in faith or to the metaphorical place of religious education in Catholic primary and secondary schools without intending to Christianise the pupils. In the Dutch context, many Catholics have a loose relationship with their parish, which they visit scarcely. They were baptised, attended Catholic schools, but are not accustomed to articulating their faith. For example, Catholic parents who want to baptise their children are in the narthex and ask for guidance in expressing what they believe.

Now, a few years later, I feel comfortable on the *agora* and very thankful for what I learned in the parish, and thankful to be able to have meaningful dialogues with adolescents of all backgrounds. It has taught me to recognise the peculiarity of my own faith and tradition. When we visit a Catholic church, some students can be shocked by being confronted with an image of a life-size dead body covered with blood lying on the knee of a woman. Students teach me to look with different eyes to the intrusive image of the Pietà, which causes introspection and reflection regarding my personal position towards this scene and my tradition. In my experience, being on the *agora* causes ambivalent feelings of being lost and alone and at the same time discovering new perspectives. Moreover, most of our students do not know the sense of belonging to a religious group and tell me that they appreciate the space and time we offer them to meet other students who are interested in the same sort of questions and issues. In fact, we create a kind of belonging without believing. Being on the *agora* asks for an open attitude, vulnerability, and curiosity into the other's world. For me, the meeting of Jesus with the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4) is inspirational in breaking boundaries between people and creating conditions for people to relate to their inner selves and to others. Only through conversation, dialogue, and sincere encounters, can we, as *Gaudium et Spes* teaches, show our respect and love for every human being to collectively address the serious problems of our world today.

Appendix A: The Curriculum of the PhWS Minor Programme

Philosophy	h.	Religious and Secular Life Orientations	h.	Spirituality	h.
<i>Western Philosophy</i>		<i>Western</i>		<i>Tutorials</i>	
Introduction	2	Ancient Near East Religions	2	Introduction Meditation	2
Logic and Rhetoric	2	Judaism	4	Meditation - Visualisation	2
Ethics	4	Introduction Christianity	2	Meditation - Mindfulness	2
Cultural Philosophy	2	Roman Catholic Christianity	2	Yoga	4
Aesthetics	2	Protestant Christianity	2	Music Experience	4
Political Philosophy	2	Islam	6	Bibliodrama	2
Anthropology	2			Theatresports	2
Ontology	2	<i>Eastern</i>		Haptonomy	2
Epistemology	2	Hinduism	5	Arts and Painting	2
Philosophy of Science	2	Buddhism	3	Poems and Archetypes	2
<i>Eastern Philosophy</i>		<i>Secular Life Orientations</i>		<i>Lectures</i>	
Islamic Philosophy	2	Atheism	2	Introduction Spirituality	2
Indian Philosophy	2	Humanism	2	Psychology and Spirituality	4
Chinese Philosophy	2	Philosophies of Self	2	Normative Professionalisation	2
				Buber: Ich und Du	2
<i>Tutorials</i>		<i>Various</i>		Spirituality: The Concept	2
Socratic dialogue	2	Phenomenology of Religion	2		
Moral Considerations	2	Religious Studies	2	<i>Mandatory Excursions</i>	
Debating	2	Shamanism	2	Three days of inspiration in a Catholic monastery (+ visiting mosque, gurdwara, mandir)	
Dialogue	2			Buddhist Temple	
				Study trip to Rome (+ visiting Roman synagogue), or self-composed alternative programme in the Netherlands	
				<i>Optional Excursions</i>	
				Synagogue	
				Humanist counsellor in a hospital	

(h. = amount of hours)

Appendix B: List of Facilitating Questions to Articulate a View on Life – Cohort-A

1. First Articulation
 - Try to describe your personal view on life, in one paragraph.
2. Roots
 - Which values were important at home during your childhood?
 - Which of these values are still relevant to you, and which values have lost their relevance for you?
 - Did religion play a role at home? If so, which religion? If not, what was the understanding of religion at home?
 - How would you characterise the view on life at home as well as your grandparent's view on life? What impact do these views have on you today?
3. Your Life Story
 - Which moments in life have been decisive for who you are now?
What have been the determining events, encounters, turning points, or decisive moments in your life?
 - Which persons played an important role?
4. Sources of Inspiration
 - What are your sources of inspiration? Think for example of specific stories, poems, rituals, music, persons, and films, etc.
 - Which sources of inspiration would you like to explore?
 - What significance do spiritual and religious sources hold for you?
(Remember also the tutorials in the minor programme on spirituality)
5. Values and Normative Professionalisation

Values can be sources and determinative factors for actions.

 - Which values are important to you? What do you specifically understand by these values?
 - What is the relationship between these values and your view on life?
 - Can you give an example of how you relate these values to personal norms?
 - Can you give an example of how you relate these values to professional conduct?
6. The Meaning of Life
 - What would you describe as *the* meaning of life, and as the meaning of *your* life?
 - What would you describe as the meaning of work?
7. Dreams and Ideals
 - How would you describe the ideal society? What is your view on society?
 - How would you describe your role as a professional in fulfilling this dream of an ideal society?
 - How would you describe the relationship between these dreams and your personal worldview?

Appendix C: List of Facilitating Questions to Articulate a Life Orientation – Cohort-B

0. Life Orientation	
Describe your personal views on the human being, the world, God/the higher (the transcendent), and the good life.	
Human being	
God/the higher/the transcendent	
The World	
The good life	
1. Roots	
a. Describe the views of your (grand)parents on the human being, the world, God/a higher reality, and the good life. Conduct an interview with them about these topics.	
b. Describe what, in your view, is the dominant societal perspective on these subjects.	
c. Describe your cultural, geographical, and socio-economic background.	
2. Your Life Story	
Sketch your lifeline and mark the determining moments for your development. Please describe those moments (think of events, encounters, turning points, and persons).	
<div style="text-align: center;">  </div>	

3. The Meaning of Life

a. Describe the meaning of life, and the purpose of your life.

b. Describe your understanding of death, disease, 'bad luck,' and evil.

c. Describe the quality of your life in relation to what you have described as 'the good life.'

d. Describe the meaning of work.

e. Describe the meaning of your profession.

f. Describe your view on your place in a larger whole (humanity, society, world, and cosmos).

4. Sources of Inspiration

a. What are your sources of inspiration? Think for example of specific stories, poems, rituals, music, persons, and films, etc.

b. Which sources would you like to explore?

c. What significance do spiritual and religious sources hold for you?
(Remember also the tutorials in the minor programme on spirituality)

5. Dreams and Ideals

a. Describe your personal dreams and ideals.

b. Describe your professional dreams and ideals.

c. Describe your picture of the ideal society.

d. Describe your view of the 'good citizen.'

e. Describe your professional contribution to the realisation of an ideal society.

f. Describe the relationship between your dreams, ideals, and life orientation.

6. Values and Normative Professionalisation (Describe in Catchwords)				
	Personal level	Professional level	Societal level	
Perspective: what is the higher aim?				
Challenge: how to reach this higher aim?				
Strength: what are the core qualities?				
Values: what underlies the higher aim?				

Appendix D: Narrative-Dialogical Analysis Instrument

Name:	Subject:
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Basic elements

<p>HERMENEUTIC SPACE (T0-JUNIORSHIP PERIOD)</p> <p>(Initially articulated I- Position) S-motive:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">→</p> <p>O-motive:</p> <p style="text-align: right;">↘</p>	
Counter position (T1-Juniorship)	
External position (T1-Juniorship)	
Outside position (T1 – Juniorship)	

Dynamic elements (T0-Juniorship Period)

Core position	T0 – Juniorship Period	Silent (silenced) position	T0-T4	
			J	
		Meta-position	T0-T4	
			J	
		Promoter position	T0-T4	
			J	
		Third position	T0-T4	
			J	

Hermeneutic processes (T0-Juniorship Period)

Reflexive positioning	Centring	
	Decentring	
Social positioning	Centring	
	Decentring	

Appendix E: An Overview of Results Narrative-Dialogical Analysis

Name	Type	Positions - present in each of the nine topics				
		<i>Redefined positions</i>	Development Positions in LO			
<i>present</i>	<i>silent (-ced)</i>		<i>promoter</i>	<i>meta</i>	<i>third</i>	
hardly present	TO Silenced		Same	Same	Same	
absent	Minor silenced	Absent	Absent	Absent		
Mary	1 minor juniorship					
Alice	1 minor juniorship					
Meagan	1 minor juniorship					
Emily	1 minor juniorship					
Kate	1 minor juniorship					
Safia	1 minor juniorship					
Romy	1 minor juniorship					
Teddy	2 minor juniorship					
Robin	2 minor juniorship					
Judith	2 minor juniorship					
Chloë	2 minor juniorship					
Nikkie	2 minor juniorship					
Izzy	2 minor juniorship					
Sue	2 minor juniorship					
Pete	2 minor juniorship					
Risha	2 minor juniorship					
Carice	3 minor juniorship					
Jailey	3 minor juniorship					
Lindsey	4 minor juniorship					

Ruby	4 minor juniorship					
Charlie	4 minor juniorship					
Joy	4 minor juniorship					
Joan	4 minor juniorship					
Meryl	4 minor juniorship					
Chelsea	5 minor juniorship					
Guineverre	5 minor juniorship					
Indy	5 minor juniorship					
Ismat	5 minor juniorship					
Sandra	5 minor juniorship					
Angel	6 minor juniorship					
Finn	6 minor juniorship					
Beatrice	6 minor juniorship					
Farid	6 minor juniorship					
Achmed	6 minor juniorship					
Aiden	7 minor juniorship					

Appendix F: An Overview of Results Narrative-Competence Analysis

Name	Typology	Period	Competencies (AC, OC, CC)		
			Autobiographical	Openness	Contextual
			<i>Tension between Positions</i>		
			Centring Movements = Coherence, Unity, Integration		
			<i>The Risk when too dominant = centralised, inflexible</i>		
			Decentring Movements = Innovation, Diversification		
			<i>The Risk when too dominant = Chaos and Fragmentation</i>		
			Autobiographical	Openness	Contextual
Mary	1	minor			
		juniorship			
Alice	1	minor			
		juniorship			
Meagan	1	minor			
		juniorship			
Emily	1	minor			
		juniorship			
Kate	1	minor			
		juniorship			
Safia	1	minor			<i>No additions</i>
		juniorship			
Romy	1	minor			
		juniorship			
Teddy	2	minor			
		juniorship			
Robin	2	minor			
		juniorship			
Judith	2	minor			
		juniorship			
Chloë	2	minor			
		juniorship			
Nikkie	2	minor			
		juniorship			
Izzy	2	minor			
		juniorship			
Sue	2	minor			
		juniorship			
Pete	2	minor	<i>No additions</i>		
		juniorship			
Risha	2	minor			
		juniorship			
Carice	3	minor			
		juniorship			
Jailey	3	minor			
		juniorship			
Lindsey	4	minor			
		juniorship			
Ruby	4	minor			
		juniorship			
Charlie	4	minor			
		juniorship			
Joy	4	minor			

		juniorship			
Joan	4	minor			
		juniorship			
Meryl	4	minor			
		juniorship			
Chelsea	5	minor			
		juniorship			
Guineverre	5	minor			
		juniorship			
Indy	5	minor			
		juniorship			
Ismat	5	minor			
		juniorship			
Sandra	5	minor			
		juniorship			
Angel	6	minor			
		juniorship			
Finn	6	minor			
		juniorship			
Beatrice	6	minor			
		juniorship			
Farid	6	minor			
		juniorship			
Achmed	6	minor			
		juniorship			
Aiden	7	minor			
		juniorship			

Appendix G: An overview of each student's development – Cohort B

			Column 1	Column 2
			Articulations in Life Orientation	The relationship between articulations of life orientation and normative professionalisation in terms of integration
			Regressive	New LO position(s) is/are integrated
			Balanced - centralising and decentralising movements	Integrating LO positions - searching, but direction being found; new job
			Progressive - integrating multiplicity-in-unity	Not integrating new LO-position, or not yet a direction in the profession
			Progressive - emerging unity-in-multiplicity	No additions
				Balanced; continuation, none or some repositions
Name	Typology			
Mary	1	minor juniorship		
Alice	1	minor juniorship		
Meagan	1	minor juniorship		
Emily	1	minor juniorship		
Kate	1	minor juniorship		
Safia	1	minor juniorship		
Romy	1	minor juniorship		
Teddy	2	minor juniorship		
Robin	2	minor juniorship		
Judith	2	minor juniorship		
Chloë	2	minor juniorship		
Nikkie	2	minor juniorship		
Izzy	2	minor juniorship		
Sue	2	minor juniorship		
Pete	2	minor juniorship		
Risha	2	minor juniorship		

Carice	3	minor juniorship	
Jailey	3	minor juniorship	
Lindsey	4	minor juniorship	
Ruby	4	minor juniorship	
Charlie	4	minor juniorship	
Joy	4	minor juniorship	
Joan	4	minor juniorship	
Meryl	4	minor juniorship	
Chelsea	5	minor juniorship	
Guinevere	5	minor juniorship	
Indy	5	minor juniorship	
Ismat	5	minor juniorship	
Sandra	5	minor juniorship	
Angel	6	minor juniorship	
Finn	6	minor juniorship	
Beatrice	6	minor juniorship	
Farid	6	minor juniorship	
Achmed	6	minor juniorship	
Aiden	7	minor juniorship	

Typologies	
1	An ambivalence in the past provides direction - deepening integrating insight
2	An ambivalence in the past plays no significant role in articulation – broadening of an already integrated insight
3	A silent ambivalence comes to light during the minor
4	A currently experienced ambivalence influences the orientation in the minor and later
5	No ambivalence – exploring and taking a position
6	No ambivalence - limited articulation in already taken a position

7	An ambivalence emerging during the minor programme
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Summary

Introduction

The underlying normative question in this research is ‘What is good professionalisation?’ The perspective in this study to answer this question is the attention for personhood formation. This attention addresses the dynamic between personal and professional development. These dimensions in professionalisation are interrelated, but in practice, there is a tendency to foster the instrumental approach (cf. Bakker, 2013). In a culture of manufacturability, there is a belief that every complex problem must be solved and that future dilemmas can be fixed with an adjusted protocol. The fact that this view on professional reality is peppered with normativity is often disregarded or ignored. In this cultural context, Kunneman (2009) pleads for the incorporation of moral and existential learning processes to add the development of a critical and reflective attitude towards professional and societal context in what he coined ‘normative professionalisation.’

This reflective and autonomous attitude relates to Biesta’s proposal of subjectification. Biesta (2012, 2013) describes a threefold aim of education: qualification, socialisation, and subjectification. Regarding qualification, accountability and controllability are dominant economic concepts to justify the quality of education. For socialisation – the enculturation in a specific group – the same concepts are more or less applicable to guarantee a certain standard of quality. According to Biesta (2012) and various governmental studies (cf. Onderwijsraad 2011, 2013), subjectification or personhood formation is difficult to measure and thus comes with the risk that any results would be intangible.

Different contributions from the humanities have stated that personal development should be an integral element in education and professionalisation. The question is how we translate this assertion into daily practice. The claim of this research project is that (normative) professionalisation is a mode of worldview education. Morality and personal positioning regarding ultimate life questions are at the core of worldview education. Our claim and the urgency for researching practices of personal development in professionalisation result in the following general research question:

What is the meaning and contribution of a personal life view articulation to professionalisation?

This general question is split up into four sub-questions, which are:

1. What is the conceptual relationship between worldview education and normative professionalisation?
2. What personal life views do students at a confessionally neutral university articulate, at the beginning of a formal worldview educational programme?
3. What are the characteristics of the development that occurs in the life view articulations of students, in relation to their professionalisation while attending a formal worldview educational programme?
4. What are the characteristics of the development that occurs in the life view articulations of students, in relation to their professionalisation during their juniorship period?

Theoretical Framework: A Conceptual Clarification

Chapters 1 and 2 provide an elaborate report on the conceptual research. To gain more insight into the conceptual discourse on worldview education, three related societal developments are relevant: individualisation, diversity, and secularisation. The academic discussion in religious education about the use of 'worldview' instead of 'religious' as adjectives for 'education' is relatively new in the international discourse (cf. Bråten, 2018; Bakker & Ter Avest, 2014; Geurts et al., 2014; Jackson, 2014; Gustavsson, 2013; 2018). Jackson even speaks of a conceptual minefield and of translational challenges in studying the various alternatives in Europe (2014, 27). In this debate, we compare the theoretical positions regarding the concept of 'worldview education' according to Valk (2007, 2009, 2012), Van der Kooij (2016), and Roebben (2014, 2015, 2016).

From a holistic view on humanity and the dialogical dimension of meaning-making – which includes the possibility of the transcendental – we propose the processual concept of 'life orientation.' We define 'life orientation' as:

“An existential positioning process pertaining to the meaning of the human being, the world, and the meta-empirical, directed towards the horizon of the good life.”

The concept of orientation is inherently dynamic with its spatiotemporal connotation (cf. Taylor, 1989; Dalferth, 2015). As a process, life orientation refers to learning in and through life, but it can also take place in an educational context. It is prescriptive as far as it concerns 'the orientation towards life.' Now that we have explained the concept of life orientation, the next step is to describe its relationship with professionalisation.

The concept of 'professionalism' originally belonged to professions like doctors and lawyers, whose work was codifiable and standardised (Evans, 2008). The so-called new professionalism refers to the application of this concept to education and welfare professions, where codifications, protocols, and standards have entered the work space (cf. Bakker, 2015, 10). Nevertheless, in these professions, codification is less applicable and consequently they open up space for subjectivity and interpretation. In this context, Schön (1989) talks about a reflective practitioner, who is in a continual process of meaning-making and interpretation to address the complexity of professional practices. In this process of meaning-making, Kunneman centralises three interrelated questions 'what is the good life?', 'what is good work?', and 'what is good co-existence?' (cf. Kunneman, 1996; 2009). Every professional must, for reason of professional quality, determine the answers and their underlying values, and how these answers and values are interrelated. The first question about the good life demonstrates a conceptual link to life orientation, as a meaning-making positioning process, which connotes with Kunneman's designated moral and existential learning processes.

According to Taylor, the articulation of personal meaning-making is essential because it is constitutive for identity. "To know who I am is a species of knowing where I stand." (1989, 29) The self is a narrative self who becomes and evolves in the orientation towards the good. Life has a certain degree of narrative understanding to relate the past, the present, and the future in our meaning-making process and in our communication with other people. Ricoeur (1994) and Taylor (1989) characterise the relationship between the self and morality differently. Taylor underlines the dialogical while Ricoeur underlines the dialectical character in the formation of the self. This subtle

conceptual discernment between dialogical and dialectal offers the missing piece in the conceptual jigsaw to understand the relationship between life orientation and normative professionalisation. The definition of normative professionalisation specifies the process of life orientation:

Normative professionalisation is an (inter)subjective dialectical reflection on the quality of the professional's practice in connection with the societal context, from the dialogical perspective of a personal life orientation.

This definition answers the first sub-question: 'What is the conceptual relationship between worldview education and normative professionalisation?' While the philosophies of Ricoeur and Taylor help to enrich the description of the relationship between identity and morality through narrative, both approaches require further exploration to be useful for empirical research. The examination of some of the concepts on narrative research in the psycho-educational dialogical self theory (DST) of Hermans and Hermans-Konopka (2012), proves useful for this exploration. DST defines the self as a society of mind, extended in time and space and essentially open to the external context. The metaphor 'society of mind,' describes the self as having an intrapersonal dialogue between different *I*-positions. The self can have simultaneous interpersonal dialogues with physical other selves in society. The composed concept 'dialogical self' describes the self as permeable, which means that society as the total of selves and the separate self influence each other. As storytellers, humans can articulate the dialogical process between the different internal and external positions.

Context, Design and Methodology of this Study

Chapter 4 describes the methodological framework of this research in more detail. This study is a narrative inquiry within the interpretative paradigm of scientific research. This research project draws on a social-constructivist ontology, which is open to different realities without the domination of one worldview. The epistemological presumptions draw on hermeneutics and phenomenology – the twofold philosophical background of the interpretative paradigm (cf. 't Hart et al., 2005). In hermeneutics, we follow Gadamer's (1972) assertion that it is impossible to reach the original meaning through interpretation. Every interpretation is the product of a *Wirkungsgeschichte*.

The educational context of this research is the half-year minor programme *Philosophy. World Religions. Spirituality* (PhWS). In Dutch higher professional education, students must choose a half-year course, which either deepens their discipline or broadens their personal and professional development. The PhWS minor is intended to help students develop a professionalisation from the perspective of life orientation. Due to this general objective, students of different backgrounds and various disciplines opt for this minor. Chapter 3 consists of an elaborate description of the content and underlying educational reflections of the PhWS minor.

In this research project, Cohort-A (2012-2013) and Cohort-B (2013-2014) – which included 33 and 35 students/young professionals respectively – were the object of our narrative inquiry. All students in the PhWS minor were invited in the first four weeks of the minor to articulate their life orientation and normative professionalisation using a list of facilitating questions (see Appendix B + C). During the minor, students were asked to reread their preliminary articulations and to add new insights, words, questions, thoughts, or different perspectives in another colour. This rereading process took place in the middle and at the end of this half-year programme. Finally, three or four years later, these former students were asked to repeat this same exercise as young professionals. This

repetition of the exercise after their studies gives this narrative inquiry a semi-longitudinal character. These articulations and coloured additions are the data for this narrative inquiry.

During the abductive process of conceptual and empirical research in this narrative inquiry, it became necessary to improve and adjust the list of facilitating questions used for Cohort-A. The most significant adjustments regarded the aspects of life orientation, which emerged from our conceptual research. The students in Cohort-B used this adjusted list, which resulted in detailed articulations regarding life orientation. The adjustment in the data collection resulted in new insights and turned the narrative analysis in Cohort-A into a preparatory study for Cohort-B.

In Cohort-A, we started with a thematic analysis of the students' preliminary answers for their view on life at the beginning of formal education through life orientation. This thematic analysis was meant to answer the second sub-question in this research, 'What personal life views do students at a confessionally neutral university articulate, at the beginning of a formal worldview educational programme?' A thematic cross-over analysis was conducted on the relationship between (re)articulations regarding life orientation and those regarding professionalisation.

The narrative research in Cohort-B consisted of a three-phase analysis. In the first phase, we developed a narrative-dialogical analysis instrument for analysing the articulations. This instrument enabled us to describe the presence of basic, dynamic, and developmental elements, drawn from DST (see Chapter 4 and Appendix D). The presence of dynamic elements is indicative of the innovative potential of the articulations.

For the second phase, we developed the narrative-competence analysis instrument (see Table 4F). The narrative theory of Van Knippenberg (2002, 2008) provided a description of narrative competencies, which made it possible to relate the different issues with their articulations to each other. The instrument enabled us to characterise the relationship between the articulations of six selected issues that represented life orientation and three that represented normative professionalisation.

The third phase of the research was intended to connect the insights of the first two phases to answer the general research question.

Results

Chapter 5 contains an elaborate description of the themes, which emerged from our thematic analysis in Cohort-A. The analysis concerning the articulation about 'the view on the human being' resulted in the themes 'a moral being,' 'equality and diversity,' 'responsibility for your own life and development,' and 'a social being.' Every aspect of life orientation and normative professionalisation shows a comparable list of overlapping themes.

After the thematic analysis in Cohort-A, a thematic cross-over analysis indicated that the narrative concept of ambivalence was the key to interpret the relationship between the articulations in life orientation and professionalisation. We frequently reread the students' entire narrative, through which we learned that the biographical notions and the students' articulated notions of development – during the PhWS minor and during their juniorship period – reveal how ambivalence comes to play a different role. Van Knippenberg uses the concept of 'ambivalence' to define the experience of boundaries as the "(...) simultaneous presence of opposing feelings or attitudes towards a person or

a subject.” (2008, 49) The thematic cross-over analysis resulted in seven typologies to characterise the meaning of ambivalence in the articulations and the development of articulating life orientation and integrating life orientation into professionalisation.

We also frequently reread the articulations during the analysis process of Cohort-B to keep sight of the whole instead of having a tunnel vision on single articulations. The same seven typologies emerged from this rereading process, though in differing degree. The analysis resulted in a fine-tuning of the description of the typologies’ characteristics describing development and integration of life orientation into professionalisation. Table 1 shows an overview of the seven typologies.

	Typology
1	An Ambivalence in the past provides direction – deepening integrating insight
2	An Ambivalence in the past plays no significant role in articulation – <i>broadening of an already integrated insight</i>
3	A silent ambivalence comes to light during the minor
4	A currently experienced ambivalence
5	No ambivalence – exploring and taking a position
6	No ambivalence – limited articulation in an already taken position
7	An ambivalence emerges during the minor

Table 1 Typologies Emerged From the Analysis in Cohort-A and -B

In Chapter 6, we discuss the results of the three-phase narrative research into the articulations of Cohort-B to provide the answers to the third and fourth sub-questions which focus on the development in students’ articulations of their view on life during a formal worldview educational programme (third question) and during their juniorship period (fourth question). The adjusted list of facilitating questions made it possible to analyse the development of articulations – during the PhWS minor and during the juniorship period – in more detail. The detailed insight into the development of the participants’ life orientation issues during this research project led to a description of the development of life orientation overall. DST characterises this development as balanced, progressive, and regressive. During the analysis, we learned that none of the students participating in this project showed a regressive life orientation development. Depending on the typology, they displayed a balanced movement, a progressive movement with a parallel integration of the repositions, or a progressive movement with a starting process of integration of newly articulated positions within an encompassing life orientation (see Appendix G – column 1). From the analysis, we gained a depiction of the development of each participant during the PhWS minor and during the juniorship period, which led to more insight into how the development from the PhWS minor endured during the juniorship period.

The final step in the analysis was to discuss how the development of the life orientation articulation–indicative for the positioning and repositioning within the dialogical processes in the society of mind – could be related to different aspects of professionalisation and the normative professional development overall. The different typologies shed light on patterns of to what degree life orientation is and becomes part of articulations in normative professionalisation. This relationship is described in terms of integration and awareness, which in DST are indicators of increasing flexibility and adaptive potential for dealing with new and/or complex situations. This analysis of the articulations, as described positions, also indicates how education through life orientation might facilitate a balanced, or a progressive development.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The general research question is:

What is the meaning and contribution of a personal life view articulation to professionalisation?

We conclude that education in and through life orientation integrates moral and existential learning processes into professionalisation. This type of education improves the dialogical competency and the awareness of personal morality positions. This improvement is the result of an introspective reflection on the personal life orientation. There are differences in how students integrate their articulated life orientation into their professionalisation. The description of the type and function of ambivalence enabled us to understand these differences. Education in and through life orientation supports students and professionals in articulating their – often unconscious – positions regarding the ultimate questions in life. These positions play a role in professional decision-making. In our opinion, an awareness of these and other positions contributes to the improvement of dialogical competence. In our increasingly complex society with a variety of moral frameworks, it is necessary that professionals can communicate about their personal life orientation. This is crucial because in professional life moral questions have to be addressed, and decisions must be taken for which all bear responsibility. Professional decisions are claims, which need to be justified, and which are ideally based on the result of a dialogue. Dialogical competency contributes to a mutual understanding of different positions, to an awareness of continuing the dialogue, and to the capacity to live with uncomfortable situations and positions.

Moreover, in considering moral questions by improving the dialogical competency, we may assume that human dignity is a focus in our society. At least, students and professionals learn to recognise the normativity in our technological and science-based society. To conclude, this last remark is not a criticism of our society but a criticism of indifference and unconscious moral positioning.

Based on these conclusions we have formed recommendations for professional higher education. In professionalisation, teachers should be aware of the different ways in which students integrate an articulated life orientation into their professional selves. The development of reflection tools is necessary to integrate and to monitor the ongoing development of life orientation related to professionalisation. However, there is a risk to implement these tools instrumentally. In our research, we have demonstrated that students have different starting points and that their biography has a large impact on their narrative and moral positioning. In professionalisation, education through life orientation is meant to develop a tailor-made approach to every unique personal story rather than a one-size-fits-all solution. This approach does justice to the human dignity of every single student and professional, all of whom are entitled to be heard, to be seen, and to be known.

Universities can also take advantage of the presence of different disciplines on their campus. This research project demonstrates that mixing students from different disciplines almost automatically contributes to dialogue and the changing of perspectives. The perspective of humanities on professionalisation paves the way to investigate how life orientation could be integrated into the general curriculum. In the future, it might be interesting to investigate the outcome of the previous recommendation. We are aware that the educational context of this research is exceptional, but the

adjustment of the list of facilitating questions could be a minimum of implementation. This adjustment should meet the special context of a specific discipline.

Another recommendation for future research is the comparison between different strategies for interrupting students' life orientation. One example of this is a traineeship abroad, which causes boundary crossing in a different way. Comparative research can enrich our insight on how to contribute to the moral and existential learning process to improve the quality of professionalism.

The last research proposal is to invite the participants of this narrative inquiry in about 10 years' time to once more reread their life orientation articulations and add new insights, words, questions, thoughts, or different perspectives. Their narratives continue to be an infinite source of inspiration and practical wisdom, which contribute to our educational practice for future generations.

Samenvatting

Inleiding

De ‘normatieve’ vraag die voorafgaat aan dit onderzoek luidt ‘Wat is goede professionalisering?’ Om deze vraag te beantwoorden, leggen we in dit onderzoek de focus op het perspectief van een persoonlijke vorming. Vanuit dit perspectief kijken we naar de dynamiek tussen een persoonlijke en een professionele ontwikkeling. Beide dimensies zijn met elkaar verweven in het proces van professionalisering. In de praktijk bestaat echter de neiging om vooral een instrumentele benadering van professionalisering te bevorderen, waarbij het persoonlijke, of subjectieve minder aandacht krijgt (cf. Bakker, 2013). In een maakbaarheidscultuur heerst de opvatting dat ieder complex of ingewikkeld probleem opgelost moet en kan worden en dat het simpelweg aanpassen van een protocol kan bijdragen aan het verhelpen van toekomstige dilemma’s. Het feit dat ook deze benadering van professionalisering doorspekt is met ‘normativiteit’ valt vaak buiten beschouwing of wordt simpelweg ontkend. In deze culturele context pleit Kunneeman (2009) voor het opnemen van morele en existentiële leerprocessen in het geheel van professionalisering. Hij spreekt van ‘normatieve professionalisering’, waarmee hij de nadruk wilde leggen op juist deze leerprocessen, die bijdragen aan een kritische en reflexieve houding ten opzichte van de beroepsmatige en maatschappelijke context.

Deze reflexieve en autonome houding houdt verband met Biesta’s begripsvorming rond ‘subjectificatie’. Biesta (2012, 2013) beschrijft drie doeldomeinen van het onderwijs: kwalificatie, socialisatie en subjectificatie, waarbij de laatste ook wel wordt aangeduid als persoonsvorming. Binnen het doeldomein kwalificatie zijn *accountability* (verantwoording) en *controllability* (beheersbaarheid) dominante economische normeringen die dienen als rechtvaardiging en meetinstrument voor de kwaliteit van het onderwijs. Voor socialisatie – de invoeging in bestaande ordes – zijn dezelfde economische normeringen min of meer in gebruik om een zekere kwaliteitsstandaard te garanderen. Volgens Biesta (2012) en verschillende overheidsdocumenten (cf. Onderwijsraad 2011, 2013) is subjectificatie, ofwel persoonsvorming, moeilijk te meten, waardoor het risico ontstaat dat resultaten niet tastbaar zijn en buiten beeld raken.

Verschillende geesteswetenschappelijke bijdragen stellen dat persoonlijke ontwikkeling een integraal onderdeel moet zijn in onderwijs en professionalisering. De vraag is hoe we deze bewering kunnen vertalen in de praktijk. In dit onderzoek poneren we de stelling dat (normatieve) professionalisering een variant is van levensbeschouwelijke vorming. Het persoonlijk verhouden tot de ultieme levensvragen, dat onder andere bijdraagt aan een morele oordeelsvorming, behoort tot de kern van levensbeschouwelijke vorming. Deze stelling en de dringende noodzaak om praktijken te onderzoeken waarin persoonlijke vorming deel uitmaakt van professionalisering, brengt ons tot de volgende centrale onderzoeksvraag:

Wat is de betekenis en welke bijdrage heeft het beschrijven van een persoonlijke levensbeschouwing voor professionalisering?

Deze centrale onderzoeksvraag valt uiteen in vier deelvragen:

1. Hoe verhouden levensbeschouwelijke vorming en normatieve professionalisering zich conceptueel tot elkaar?
2. Wat beschrijven studenten aan een algemeen-bijzondere hogeschool als hun persoonlijke levensbeschouwing tijdens het volgen van levensbeschouwelijk onderwijs?

3. Welke kenmerken van ontwikkeling verschijnen, gedurende de periode dat studenten deelnemen aan levensbeschouwelijke vorming, in de beschrijvingen van hun persoonlijke levensbeschouwing in relatie tot hun professionalisering?
4. Welke kenmerken van ontwikkeling verschijnen, gedurende de inductiefase dat afgestudeerde studenten als professional werkzaam zijn, in de beschrijvingen van hun persoonlijke levensbeschouwing in relatie tot hun professionalisering?

Theoretisch kader: een conceptuele verheldering

In hoofdstuk 1 en 2 volgt een uitgebreide verslaglegging van ons conceptuele onderzoek. Voor een conceptuele verheldering van 'levensbeschouwelijke vorming' bleek het relevant om drie aan elkaar verwante maatschappelijke ontwikkelingen te beschrijven: individualisering, diversiteit en secularisatie. Op het vakgebied van de godsdienstpedagogiek (de academische discipline voor het schoolvak levensbeschouwelijke vorming/godsdienst) wordt sinds enige tijd een internationale academische discussie gevoerd over het gebruik van de aanduiding 'worldview education' in plaats van 'religious education' (cf. Bråten, 2018; Bakker & Ter Avest, 2014; Geurts et al., 2014; Jackson, 2014; Gustavsson, 2013, 2018). Jackson deed voor de Raad van Europa een onderzoek naar de verschillende Europese benaderingen van religie in het onderwijs. Hij spreekt zelfs van een conceptueel mijnenveld en van uitdagingen met betrekking tot een adequate vertaling naar het Engels (cf. 2014, 27). Wat het academisch debat betreft, vergelijken we de theoretische posities van Valk (2007, 2009, 2012), Van der Kooij (2016) en Roebben (2014, 2015, 2016) met betrekking tot het concept 'worldview education'.

Op basis van ons conceptuele onderzoek stellen we het procesbegrip 'levensoriëntatie' voor. Dit voorstel doen we vanuit een holistische visie op de mens en de gedachte dat betekenis- en zingeving een dialogische dimensie heeft. Onze definitie luidt:

Levensoriëntatie is een existentieel positioneringsproces met betrekking tot de betekenis van de mens, de wereld en het meta-empirische, gericht op de horizon van het goede leven.

Het concept 'oriëntatie' heeft een dynamische dimensie en een tijdruimtelijke connotatie (cf. Taylor, 1989; Dalferth, 2015). Als proces heeft levensoriëntatie betrekking op het leren in en door het leven, terwijl het tegelijkertijd ook object kan zijn van een onderwijs- en vormingsdoelstelling. De definitie van levensoriëntatie is prescriptief voor zover het de gerichtheid op het leven zelf betreft. Na deze korte uiteenzetting van het begrip 'levensoriëntatie' kunnen we de volgende stap zetten in de richting van professionalisering.

Het concept 'professionalisme' behoort oorspronkelijk tot beroepsgroepen zoals artsen en advocaten, die de inhoud van hun werk kunnen standaardiseren (Evans, 2008). Het zogenaamd 'nieuwe professionalisme' verwijst naar de toepassing van deze standaardisatie in beroepsgroepen zoals welzijn en onderwijs. In deze beroepsmatige context zijn protocollen, beroepsstandaarden en codes onderdeel geworden van het werk (cf. Bakker, 2015, 10). In deze beroepsgroepen is een protocol of een standaard echter niet altijd toepasbaar in een situatie, waardoor er ruimte ontstaat voor subjectiviteit en interpretatie. In deze context spreekt Schön (1989) over de 'reflexieve professionals' die op de complexiteit van hun beroepsmatige praktijk betrokken zijn in een voortdurend proces van betekenisgeving en interpretatie. Kunneman stelt in dit proces van betekenisgeving drie vragen centraal, namelijk 'wat is het goede leven?', 'wat is het goede werken?' en 'wat is goed samenleven?'. In deze vragen komen het persoonlijke welzijn, de inhoud van het werk en de maatschappelijke context aan de orde (cf. Kunneman, 1996; 2009). Iedere professional moet, omwille van de kwaliteit van het professioneel handelen, een antwoord op deze vragen

kunnen formuleren en beschrijven hoe de daarin geïmpliceerde waarden met elkaar verband houden. De eerste vraag over het goede leven toont een conceptuele relatie met levensoriëntatie, dat als een proces van betekenisgeving verwant is aan wat Kunneman morele en existentiële leerprocessen noemt.

Volgens Taylor is de articulatie, ofwel beschrijving, van de persoonlijke zin- en betekenisgeving essentieel, omdat het vormend is voor de identiteitsontwikkeling. “Weten wie ik ben is een vorm van weten waar ik sta.” (1989, 12; vertaling EZ). Het zelf is een narratief en een verhalend zelf, dat in wording is, zich ontwikkelt in de oriëntatie op het goede. Het leven veronderstelt een bepaalde mate van verhalend begrijpen, waarin het verleden, het heden en de toekomst onderdeel uitmaken van ons proces van betekenis geven en eveneens een rol spelen in onze communicatie met andere mensen. Taylor (1989) en op andere wijze Ricoeur (1994) typeren de relatie tussen het zelf en moraliteit als een narratieve verhouding. Taylor onderstreept het dialogische karakter, terwijl Ricoeur focust op het dialectische karakter met betrekking tot de vorming van het zelf. Dit subtiële begripsmatige onderscheid – tussen dialogisch en dialectisch – voorziet in het ontbrekende stukje van de conceptuele legpuzzel waarin levensoriëntatie en normatieve professionalisering in verhouding tot elkaar staan. De definitie van normatieve professionalisering specificceert het proces van levensoriëntatie:

Normatieve professionalisering is een (inter)subjectieve dialectische reflectie op de kwaliteit van het professionele handelen in relatie tot de maatschappelijke context, vanuit het dialogisch perspectief van een persoonlijke levensoriëntatie.

Deze definitie beantwoordt de eerste deelvraag ‘Wat is de conceptuele verhouding tussen levensbeschouwelijke vorming en normatieve professionalisering?’. De filosofische gedachtevorming van Ricoeur en Taylor beschrijven vanuit een narratief perspectief de relatie tussen identiteit en moraliteit. Voordat beide benaderingen geïmplementeerd kunnen worden in een kwalitatief-empirisch onderzoek, vragen zij nog wel om een nadere uitwerking. De ‘theorie van het dialogische zelf’ (DST) van Hermans en Hermans-Konopka (2012) biedt handvatten voor deze nadere uitwerking en implementatie. De DST beschrijft het zelf als een *society of mind* (landschap van de geest), die voorbij de eigen grens uitgebreid is in tijd en ruimte en wezenlijk openstaat voor de omgeving. De metafoor ‘samenleving van de geest’ duidt het zelf aan als een intrapersoonlijke dialoog tussen verschillende ik-posities. Zo kan het zelf tegelijkertijd een intrapersoonlijke dialoog voeren en een dialoog met fysieke anderen in de samenleving. Het samengestelde begrip ‘dialogische zelf’ gaat niet uit van een strikt afgesloten, maar van een open zelf, met als gevolg dat zowel de samenleving – als een geheel van zelden – en het afzonderlijke zelf elkaar beïnvloeden. Als ‘verhalenvertellers’ kunnen mensen het dialogische proces tussen verschillende interne en externe posities beschrijven.

Context, onderzoeksontwerp en methodologie

In hoofdstuk 4 volgt een gedetailleerde beschrijving van de methodologische stappen in dit onderzoek. Deze studie wordt gekenmerkt door een narratieve onderzoeksmethodologie en sluit aan bij het interpretatief wetenschapsfilosofische paradigma. Dit onderzoeksproject is gefundeerd op een sociaal-constructivistische ontologie, die een fundamentele openheid kent voor verschillende werkelijkheidsopvattingen, zonder dat één ervan dominant is. De epistemologische vooronderstellingen zijn gebaseerd op de hermeneutiek en de fenomenologie – beide gelden als filosofische onderlegger van het voornoemde interpretatieve paradigma (cf. 't Hart et al, 2005). In de hermeneutiek volgen we Gadamer (1972) die stelt dat het onmogelijk is om door interpretatie tot de oorspronkelijke betekenis door te dringen. Elke interpretatie is een product van de *Wirkungsgeschichte* (werkingsgeschiedenis).

De onderwijscontext van dit onderzoek is de halfjarige minor *Filosofie. Wereldreligies. Spiritualiteit* (FWS). Hoofdstuk 3 bevat een uitgebreide beschrijving van de inhoud, alsmede enkele pedagogische en didactische beschouwingen op deze minor. In het hoger beroepsonderwijs hebben studenten een profileringsruimte die dient om hun studie te verdiepen, dan wel te verbreden. Dit biedt studenten de mogelijkheid zich verder persoonlijk en professioneel te ontwikkelen. De algemene doelstelling van de minor FWS is dat studenten zich (normatief) professionaliseren vanuit het perspectief van levensoriëntatie. Als gevolg van deze algemene doelstelling kiezen studenten met verschillende achtergronden en studierichtingen deze minor.

Object van dit narratief onderzoek zijn twee cohorten, namelijk Cohort-A en Cohort-B met respectievelijk 33 en 35 studenten/startende professionals. Tijdens de eerste vier weken van de minor FWS werd aan alle studenten gevraagd om hun levensoriëntatie en hun normatieve professionalisering te beschrijven aan de hand van een lijst met faciliterende vragen (zie Appendix B+C). Tijdens de minor werd de studenten tweemaal gevraagd hun eerder geformuleerde beschrijvingen te herlezen en zo mogelijk nieuwe inzichten, woorden, vragen, gedachtes, of ook perspectieven waar ze het niet mee eens zijn, toe te voegen in telkens een andere kleur. Drie tot vier jaar later werd de reeds voormalige studenten gevraagd deze zelfde oefening nogmaals te herhalen en wederom in een andere kleur. De herhaling van deze oefening na hun studie geeft dit narratieve onderzoek een semi-longitudinaal karakter. De initiële articulaties, ofwel beschreven posities, en de 'gekleurde' toevoegingen zijn de data voor dit narratieve onderzoek.

Tijdens het abductieve proces waarin conceptueel en empirisch onderzoek op elkaar werden betrokken, werd het duidelijk dat de lijst met faciliterende vragen zoals gebruikt in Cohort-A, aangepast en verbeterd moest worden. De meest in het oog springende aanpassing betreft de toegevoegde aspecten van levensoriëntatie, die voortkwamen uit het conceptueel onderzoek. De studenten in Cohort-B gebruikten deze aangepaste lijst, hetgeen resulteerde in gedetailleerde beschrijvingen van hun levensoriëntatie. De aanpassing met betrekking tot de dataverzameling resulteerde in nieuwe inzichten en had als gevolg dat de narratieve analyse in Cohort-A zich evolueerde tot een voorbereidende studie van Cohort-B.

In Cohort-A zijn we begonnen met een thematische analyse van de initiële beschrijvingen die studenten maakten van hun levensbeschouwing aan het begin van de minor FWS. De thematische analyse had als doelstelling om de tweede deelvraag 'Wat beschrijven studenten aan een algemeen-bijzondere hogeschool als hun persoonlijke levensbeschouwing tijdens het volgen van levensbeschouwelijk onderwijs?' te beantwoorden. Een volgende stap betrof een thematische cross-over analyse, waarin ook de aanvullingen in kleur werden betrokken. Op deze wijze kwam de ontwikkeling in de tijd in beeld voor zowel het beschrijven van de levensbeschouwing en de professionalisering, als voor de onderlinge relatie tussen beide processen.

Het narratieve onderzoek in Cohort-B had uit een gelaagde analyse en bestond uit drie fasen. Voor de eerste fase werd een narratief-dialogisch analyse-instrument ontwikkeld om de articulaties van studenten te analyseren. Dit instrument maakte het mogelijk om de aanwezigheid van zogenaamde basiselementen, dynamische elementen en ontwikkelings-elementen, die we ontleen aan de DST, te beschrijven (zie hoofdstuk 4 en Appendix D). Een aanwijzing voor het innovatieve vermogen die in de beschrijvingen besloten ligt, wordt gegeven door de aanwezigheid van dynamische elementen.

Voor de tweede fase werd analyse-instrument ontwikkeld op basis van narratieve competenties (zie tabel 4F). De narratieve theorie van Van Knippenberg (2002, 2008) voorziet in een beschrijving van narratieve competenties die het mogelijk maakt om de verschillende aspecten met hun beschrijvingen in een onderling verband te plaatsen. Het instrument stelde ons in staat om een

vergelijking te maken tussen articulaties die betrekking hadden op zes faciliterende vragen met betrekking tot levensoriëntatie en drie faciliterende vragen met betrekking tot normatieve professionalisering.

De derde fase bestond uit een meta-analyse met als doel om de inzichten uit de eerdere twee fasen met elkaar te verbinden en zo een antwoord te geven op de algemene onderzoeksvraag.

Resultaten

Hoofdstuk 5 bevat een uitgebreide beschrijving van de thema's die uit de thematische analyse van de articulaties in Cohort-A naar voren kwamen. De beschrijvingen van het mensbeeld brachten bij voorbeeld de volgende thema's naar voren: 'een moreel wezen', 'gelijkheid en diversiteit', 'verantwoordelijkheid voor je eigen leven en ontwikkeling' en 'een sociaal wezen'. Voor ieder aspect binnen levensoriëntatie en normatieve professionalisering is een vergelijkbare lijst van deels elkaar overlappende thema's opgesteld.

Na de thematische analyse in Cohort-A volgde een cross-over analyse. Deze analyse had als richtinggevend resultaat dat het narratieve concept 'ambivalentie' de sleutel was om de verhouding tussen de diverse articulaties te beschrijven en te interpreteren. Tijdens de verschillende analyserondes hebben we meerdere malen het hele document van de student herlezen. Door deze herhaalde lezing ontdekten we dat naast de biografische beschrijving er ook zelf geformuleerde ontwikkelingsbeschouwingen genoteerd stonden – zowel tijdens de minorfase als in de inductiefase. Een vergelijking van deze beschrijvingen in hun unieke context bood inzicht welke rol 'ambivalentie' kan spelen in een levensoriëntatie en daarmee ook in professionalisering. Van Knippenberg gebruikt het concept ambivalentie om grenservaringen te definiëren als de "(...) gelijktijdige aanwezigheid van tegengestelde gevoelens of houdingen tegenover een persoon of een object" (2008, 49). De thematische cross-over analyse leverde zeven typologieën op, die de betekenis van ambivalentie karakteriseren. In deze zeven typologieën komt naar voren welke betekenis ambivalentie heeft in de ontwikkeling van het articuleren van de persoonlijke levensoriëntatie en in welke mate deze ontwikkeling geïntegreerd raakt in professionalisering.

Ook de beschrijvingen in Cohort-B zijn systematisch herlezen, zodat we zicht hielden op het geheel van het narratief en daarmee een tunnelvisie op de afzonderlijke articulaties uitsloten. In Cohort-B konden dezelfde zeven typologieën in verschillende mate onderscheiden worden als in Cohort-A. De analyse bracht een verfijning aan in de beschrijving van de typologieën en dan met name in de beschrijving van de ontwikkeling en de wijze waarop de integratie van (her)positioneringen in levensoriëntatie vorm krijgt in professionele positionering. Tabel 1 toont een overzicht van de zeven typologieën.

	Typologie
1	Een ambivalentie in het verleden geeft richting – een verdiepend en integrerend inzicht
2	Een ambivalentie in het verleden speelt geen significante rol in de articulatie – verbreding van een reeds geïntegreerd inzicht
3	Een stille ambivalentie komt aan het licht gedurende de minor FWS
4	Een actuele ambivalentie die nu ervaren wordt
5	Geen ambivalentie – onderzoekend en positie bepalend
6	Geen ambivalentie – beperkte articulatie in een reeds ingenomen positie
7	Een ambivalentie die opkomt tijdens de minor FWS

Tabel 1 Typologieën die verschenen als resultaat van de analyse in Cohort-A en B.

In hoofdstuk 6 staan de resultaten van de analyse in dit narratief onderzoek, dat in drie fasen plaatsvond en betrekking had op wat studenten in Cohort-B gedurende langere tijd articuleerden als hun levensoriëntatie en professionalisering. Deze gelaagde analyse was bedoeld om de derde en vierde deelvraag te beantwoorden. De aangepaste lijst met faciliterende vragen maakte het mogelijk de ontwikkeling in articulaties – tijdens de minor FWS en de inductiefase – gedetailleerder te beschrijven. Het gedetailleerde inzicht dat we per aspect van levensoriëntatie kregen in de articulaties gedurende het onderzoeksproject leverde uiteindelijk ook een overzicht van de ontwikkeling in levensoriëntatie als geheel.

De DST karakteriseert ontwikkeling van het zelf als gebalanceerd, progressief en regressief. Na het afronden van de analyse bleek dat geen enkele student/jonge professional die deelnam aan dit project een regressieve ontwikkeling in levensoriëntatie vertoonde. Afhankelijk van de typologie zagen we een balancerende beweging, een progressieve beweging met een overeenkomstige integratie van de herpositioneringen, of een progressieve beweging met een startend proces van integratie van nieuw geformuleerde posities binnen het geheel van levensoriëntatie (zie Appendix G – kolom 1). Op basis van de analyse kregen we een beeld van de ontwikkeling die iedere student tijdens de minor FWS en later als jonge professional tijdens de inductiefase doormaakte.

Tijdens de derde en laatste stap hebben we per typologie beschreven in welke mate levensoriëntatie een deel is, dan wel deel wordt van beschrijvingen met betrekking tot aspecten van normatieve professionalisering. Deze relatie beschrijven we in termen van integratie en bewustwording, die in de DST indicatoren zijn voor een groeiende flexibiliteit en aanpassingsvermogen in nieuwe en/of complexe situaties. De gelaagde analyse van de articulaties, als beschreven posities, laat ook zien hoe vorming door levensoriëntatie een gebalanceerde, dan wel positieve ontwikkeling van het dialogische zelf kan faciliteren.

Conclusies en aanbevelingen

De centrale onderzoeksvraag is:

Wat is de betekenis en welke bijdrage heeft het beschrijven van een persoonlijke levensbeschouwing voor professionalisering?

We concluderen dat vorming in en door levensoriëntatie morele en existentiële leerprocessen integreert in professionalisering. Dit type vorming draagt bij aan verbetering van dialogische competenties en het bewust worden van persoonlijke morele posities. Deze verbetering is het resultaat van een introspectieve reflectie op de persoonlijke levensoriëntatie. Er zijn verschillen in hoe studenten hun gearticuleerde, beschreven levensoriëntatie integreren in hun professionalisering. De beschrijving van het type en de functie van ambivalentie maakte het mogelijk om deze verschillen te begrijpen. Een vorming in en door levensoriëntatie ondersteunt studenten en young-professionals in het articuleren van hun – vaak onbewuste – posities met betrekking tot de ultieme levensvragen. Deze posities spelen een rol in professionele besluitvormingsprocessen. We zijn van mening dat bewustwording van deze en andere posities bijdraagt aan een verbetering van de dialogische competentie. Onze maatschappij wordt complexer en herbergt verschillende morele referentiekaders, waardoor het voor professionals noodzakelijker wordt met elkaar te communiceren over hun persoonlijke levensoriëntatie. Dit is belangrijk, omdat mensen in hun professionele leven geconfronteerd worden met morele vragen en verantwoordelijkheid moeten nemen voor allerlei beslissingen. Deze beslissingen zijn op te vatten als claims die onderbouwing vereisen en die idealiter het resultaat is van een gezamenlijke dialoog. Competentie in dialoog draagt bij aan een wederzijds begrip van verschillende en uiteenlopende posities, aan bewustwording dat

een voortgezette dialoog nodig is en aan de bereidheid om te leven met ongemakkelijke situaties en posities.

Wanneer we de morele vragen die op ons afkomen nader beschouwen, dan mogen we aannemen dat een verbetering van de dialogische competentie ook inhoudt dat menselijke waardigheid een focus is in onze samenleving. Niet in het minst leren studenten en professionals dat normativiteit besloten ligt in onze technologische en natuurwetenschappelijk georiënteerde samenleving. Deze laatste opmerking is niet zozeer een kritiek op onze samenleving, maar eerder op onverschilligheid en het onbewust innemen van morele posities.

Op basis van onze conclusies formuleren we aanbevelingen voor het hoger beroepsonderwijs. Docenten in het hbo zouden zich bewust moeten zijn van verschillende manieren waarop studenten hun beschreven levensoriëntatie integreren in hun professionalisering. Het is nodig dat er reflectie-instrumenten ontwikkeld worden die juist de voortgaande ontwikkeling van levensoriëntatie in relatie tot professionalisering integreren en monitoren. Het risico is dat deze instrumenteel worden ingezet. In ons onderzoek tonen we aan dat studenten een verschillende beginsituatie hebben en dat hun biografie een grote invloed heeft op hun narratief en op hun morele positionering. Een vorming door levensoriëntatie biedt voor professionalisering van studenten een op maat aanpak voor elk uniek, persoonlijk verhaal, in plaats van een mal waar iedereen in past. Deze aanpak komt tegemoet aan de menselijke waardigheid van elke individuele student en professional, want eenieder heeft het recht om gezien, gehoord en gekend te worden.

Hogescholen kunnen hun voordeel doen met de uiteenlopende studierichtingen in hun studieaanbod. Dit onderzoeksproject toont aan dat het mixen van studenten uit verschillende studies bijna automatisch leidt tot dialoog en het uitwisselen van perspectieven. Het geesteswetenschappelijk perspectief op professionalisering is een uitnodiging te onderzoeken hoe vorming door levensoriëntatie geïntegreerd kan worden in het generieke curriculum. Mocht deze aanbeveling geïmplementeerd worden, dan zouden in de toekomst de resultaten hiervan onderzocht kunnen worden. We zijn ons ervan bewust dat de onderwijscontext van dit onderzoek, namelijk de minor FWS, uitzonderlijk is, maar de lijst met faciliterende vragen kan betrekkelijk eenvoudig aangepast worden aan de context van andere opleidingen.

Een andere aanbeveling voor toekomstig onderzoek is de vergelijking van verschillende didactische strategieën om de levensoriëntatie van studenten te onderbreken. Een voorbeeld is de buitenlandstage die op een andere wijze grenservaringen veroorzaakt. Een vergelijkend onderzoek kan verrijkend zijn voor inzicht in hoe het hbo kan bijdragen aan een moreel en existentieel leerproces met als doel de kwaliteit van het professioneel handelen te verbeteren.

Een laatste onderzoeksaanbeveling zou zijn om de deelnemers aan dit onderzoek over 10 jaar nogmaals te vragen hun narratief te herlezen en zo nodig te voorzien van aanvullingen en wederom in een andere kleur. Per slot van rekening blijven hun narratieven een oneindige bron van inspiratie en praktische wijsheid, die middels onderzoek bekendheid krijgt, ten gunste kan komen aan onze onderwijspraktijk voor toekomstige generaties.

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'I, Wisdom, share house with Discretion, I am mistress of the art of thought.
'Adonai created me, first-fruits of his fashioning, before the oldest of his works.
From everlasting, I was firmly set, from the beginning, before the earth came into being.
(Misjlei/Proverbs 8: 12, 22-23)

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Curriculum Vitae

Edwin van der Zande was born in 1972 in Wateringen, the Netherlands. After completing his university preparatory education (VWO) in 1990, he continued studying International Management at the HES University of Applied Sciences Rotterdam. As a trainee, he worked at the marketing department of Gist-Brocades (which became part of Royal DSM) and successfully completed his study. In 1994, he began studying theology at the Catholic University of Theology (KTU) in Utrecht. He graduated in systematic theology with a competence in pastoral care and education.

From 2003 onwards, Edwin worked as a lay minister in the communities of the Saint Pope John XXIII (*H. Paus Johannes XXIII*) parish. His expertise was in education and catechesis for young people and adults. In 2011, Edwin began working as a teacher in religious education and as teacher-educator in primary education at the HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht. At this university, he developed – and still coordinates – the minor programme *Philosophy. World Religions. Spirituality*.

In 2013, Edwin began working on his PhD project as a member of the combined research groups of the Utrecht University (Worldview Education) and the HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht (Normative Professionalisation).

Scientific Publications

Van der Zande, E. (2016). 'Passio Complexitatis: A Dialogical Approach to Complexity.' In: Bakker, C. & Montesano Montessori, N. (Eds.). *Complexity in Education. From Horror to Passion*. (121-146). Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.

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Presentations at (inter)national Conferences:

8th International Conference on the Dialogical Self – The Hague (ICDS) (August 2014) ‘Self-Confrontation Method as a Research Instrument.’

REA Conference Chicago (November 2014). ‘World View Education in a Secular University: A Promising Perspective on the Moral Dimension of Professional Development.’

ENRECA Conference Vienna (May 2015). ‘Worldview Education as a Space of Orientation.’

Klingenthal Conference (September 2015). ‘Religious Education Applied in Professional Education and Development.’

Goethe Universität Frankfurt (November 2015). ‘Weltanschauliche Position in Zusammenhang mit professionelle Identität.’

ISREV (July 2016). Symposium: Normative Professionalization and Educational Complexities. ‘Passio Complexitatis: A Dialogical Approach to Complexity.’

ORD (June, 2018). ‘Levensoriëntatie voor professionals.’