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CHAPTER 1

RESEARCH BACKGROUND

1. THE CONTEXT OF THIS RESEARCH

This research studies the problems of the children of Korean missionaries and the educational difficulties they face on the mission field.

According to Kim (in Park 1999:55), most of the missionaries involved in countries abroad experience many difficulties, such as cultural differences, language and communication problems, and various different responsibilities of the ministries. However, a proper investigation established that the most important issue missionary parents are faced with concerns the educational needs of their children on the mission field. Hale (2003:13) avers that many missionary agencies have discovered that the dilemma of the education of missionary children almost always tops the list of problems incurred on the mission field. Directors of mission agencies find themselves faced with resignations and requests for reassignment, all too often due to this issue. It is accordingly important for the mission agencies and churches to take note of the reasons why the education of missionary children has become a central issue and seriously consider options available to solve it (Park 1999:56). There is a need for support of the education of missionary children in order to assist missionaries to the various mission fields (Hale 2003:14).

Some of the essential reasons why the churches and mission agencies need to be concerned with the educational issues of missionary children are the following: According to Pollock (1998:31) and Lim (2004:9), missionary work and the education of missionary children are inseparable. Between 9% and 35% of missionaries attrition worldwide was related to issues involving their children, especially educational issues. Problems and tensions in schools attended by children of missionaries¹ affect the entire mission community and the parents' work is influenced (Bowers 1998:31). In future, many mission fields will be situated amongst

¹ Given prevailing conventions this study will refer to 'MK schools', rather than (but implying) schools attended by children of missionaries.

“Unreached People² groups”, without proper education facilities for missionary children. Thus, effective provision for the educational needs of missionary children is one of the key issues to be addressed before dispatching missionaries (Park 1999:56). It is important that the churches and mission agencies regularly provide education materials for their missionary children. The experience of missionaries’ children abroad will enhance their potential³ in various ways (Bowers 1998:31). All educational enterprises worldwide are influenced by globalization and internationalization with worldwide perspectives developing. Pollock (1998:31) says that every country in the world has made at least some effort in this regard. Multilingualism is an asset in many cities of the world and there is a growing interest in developing the leadership potential of young adult missionary children, growing up in the “third culture” of an expatriate community (Park 1999:39). The solution of the situation missionary children face is part of the larger task of the church. Ward (1998:17) quotes Hill (1998:245) in saying that “missionary children are a potential resource” for the church. Hill emphasized that the mission needs internationalists who have grasped the larger vision of a world for God, and discovered that there is no group of people which has more potential of becoming internationalists than missionary children and third culture kids (Bowers 1998:244,245). In reality, Pollock and his co-workers (1998:31) discovered that 25% of missionary children went back as missionaries, and 17% became career missionaries. Therefore mission agencies and churches need to care for missionary children with a view to their future impact on the world for the Lord (Bowers 1998:110).

1.1 The history of education for Korean missionary children

The history of Korean missionaries abroad is not a long one (Oh 2008:21). Korean missionaries, having little previous experience, often have difficulty in deciding how to raise their children. They also have difficulty to know the educational options

² Unreached People is a group of people among which there is no indigenous community of believing Christians with adequate members and resources to evangelize them. <http://www.joshuaproject.net/definitions.hp#unreached>.

³ Eidse and Sichel (2004), Pollock and Van Reken (2001), and Bowers (1998) determined that missionary children have various advantages such as cultural exposure, ability to adapt and linguistic skills which is sought after in many cities in this world.

available and which to choose. Up till now, there are only few examples of Korean missionary children who have grown up on the mission field until adulthood. In general, before going to the mission field, many Korean missionaries are often unprepared to make decisions concerning how they will educate their children (Park 1999:35). According to Jung (1999:35), Korean missionary parents are often not seriously concerned with the educational system and options for their children. Rather, they send their children to MK/International schools without first considering the impact of these institutions on their children (Back 2007:2). Chan (1998:331) discovered that all MK/International schools are mainly based on the Western education system and are mostly English speaking. This causes several problems for the Korean missionary children regarding their education (Park 1999:35).

1.2 The rapid increase of Korean missionary children

“Since 1980 the missionary movement in Korea continues to grow faster than any other national missionary movement in the world” (Oh 2008:21). In 1979 there were 93 Korean missionaries abroad; by 2006 there were 14,905 Korean missionaries abroad⁴ and 174 mission agencies serving in 168 countries (Kidok Shinmun 2007.10.8). According to KWMA (Korea World Missions Association), there were 16,616 Korean missionaries in 2007 (Cha 2007). This number is conservative, for it includes only missionaries belonging to mission agencies, not independent missionaries sent directly by a local church. Nor does it include workers who have committed themselves to missionary service for less than two years (Moon 2007). As the number of Korean missionaries rapidly increased from 1980⁵, the number of Korean missionary children naturally increased (Park 1999:34). Today, there are up to 12,000 Korean missionary children around the world (Kidok Shinmun 2008.8.13). Of these, approximately 60% are in schools on the mission fields and 40-50% are at MK/International schools (Back 2007). Comparing this number to the number of children from other nationalities who live on mission fields around the world, it

⁴ There were approximately 5,000 Korean missionaries in 1999 (Korean MK Handbook 1999: 34), over 10,000 Korean missionaries in 2004 (Mission Journal 2004:31).

⁵ The turning point of the Mission Movement of the Korean Church occurred during the 1980s (Oh 2008:43).

becomes clear that Korean missionary children constitute quite a large percentage of the number of missionary children living in foreign countries. In Middle Asia and China, Korean children including Korean missionary children constitute up to 50% of the foreign children at MK/International schools (Haile 2007). For example, there are 42 Korean missionary children out of 90 international students at Davao Faith Academy in the Philippines (Lee 2007).

1.3 Reasons for providing for the educational needs of Korean missionary children

Apart from the above reasons why mission agencies and churches need to support education of missionary children which was mentioned in 1, there are other reasons why Korean missionary children need special care with education on the field.

Due to the fact that the number of Korean missionary children has rapidly increased since 1980, the need to reassess the educational requirements of Korean missionary children becomes imminent (Kwon 2006:4). Korean missionary parents experience more and more tension regarding their children's education. Jung (1999:28) states that Korean missionary children face problems concerning their education, such as the influence of western culture, difficult cultural adjustment on the part of both the MK/International schools and the Korean students. Other problems encountered are poor preparation for Korean higher education⁶, learning disabilities due to the lack of proper Korean language skills, and effective communication of Korean values and perspectives to Korean students.

For these reasons, Phil Billing, the director of the Murree Christian School in Pakistan, travelled to Korea to gain firsthand knowledge of the Korean educational system and Christian family life. He discussed the educational and care needs of Korean missionary families with Korean mission leaders. During Billing's visiting to Korea, Billing investigated the possibility of recruiting Korean staff for the Murree Christian School (Bowers 1998:488).

⁶ For higher education most Korean missionary children go to the America and other western countries where English is spoken as main language (Jung 1999:35).

The principal at the Faith Academy (MK school) in the Philippines visited Korea several times to challenge the churches and mission agencies regarding the needs of Korean missionary children who are studying at MK/International schools with the intension of discussing the education plan for Korean missionary children. He brought up the issues of language problems and cultural adjustment of the Korean children, and the lack of Korean teachers at MK/International schools (Kidok shinmun 2009.12.9). He has critically questioned what the exact needs of Korean missionary children are; where they will stay in future; which educational system should be best for them.

It is essential for Korean missionary parents, churches and mission agencies to cooperate with the schools in order to effectively support the Korean missionary children. Due to the influx of a large number of Korean students since 2004, the Faith Academy in the Philippines introduced some Korean subjects such as Korean language, history and culture. MK/International schools with many Korean and Asian missionary children and third culture kids have to scrutinize their curriculum for its sensitivity to its multinational student body, and they must work closely with mission leaders and parents to address issues of education for missionary children (Bowers 1998:489).

2. MOTIVATION FOR AND DELIMITATION OF THIS STUDY

2.1 My story

As a missionary for the past eleven years, involved in the ministry in South Africa for the past eight years, I have realized that for various reasons many Korean missionary children are struggling with their education on the mission field. I attended an education consultation⁷ held by SIM⁸ in 2007. At this consultation, the

⁷ 'Education Consultation for SIM Missionary Children' was held in Chiangmai in Thailand from 1st to 9th of November in 2007. The participators were the MK coordinators of SIM sending offices, and principals and MK care-givers of MK/International schools on the mission field.

⁸ SIM is an international, interdenominational Christian mission agency, founded in 1889, working in over 40 countries around the world. There are about 1,800 missionaries working in these countries.

education issues and care of Korean missionary children were an important issue as they constitute quite a large percentage of the students at the MK/International schools throughout the world. On the other hand, it was also realized that the cultural differences and non-English speaking background of the Korean missionary children pose a tough challenge for the teachers and coordinators at the MK/International schools to understand Korean missionary children as well as they understand other missionary children from a Western culture. From this consultation, the present researcher gained a greater understanding of the educational issues that missionary children experience, and a new insight into the educational support available to Korean missionary children. Missionary children have much potential (Bowers 1998:61) and need good advice and support for their education.

2.2 The story of my children

Since we became a missionary family in 1997, we have moved several times from one country to another, and from one area to another, experiencing difficulties with language and education every time we moved. My children have changed schools several times, and with these moves, experienced educational difficulties, as well as emotional difficulties. As “language is a central influence on the development of children’s sense of identity” (Kay 2001:55) my children struggled to adjust to new places and ended up with a low-self esteem. They have become very sensitive and are afraid to be separated from, their parents. They feel a deep sorrow at being separated from their friends when they leave a school.

Coming the children struggled with English for the first few years, from a non-English speaking background, struggled to get high marks in English, in spite of their fluency in English. English teachers at schools were prejudiced against their non-English speaking background. They have also struggled with the other local languages, such as Sepedi and Afrikaans, which they are obliged to learn at school as second and third languages. While they perform excellently with high marks in other subjects, their grade average is negatively affected because of Afrikaans. Accordingly they

have a lot of stress in this regard. Schools are not concerned with Korean students' problem with Afrikaans. The children often ask why they have to study those languages, which are not that valuable in the world and have questioned why they have to study South African history instead of Korean history. They became frustrated with all the stress they have to deal with, in spite of parental support and encouragement.

Sometimes they are marginalized at school being a minority among their South African peers, only 8 Koreans among approximately 550 in one instance. This resulted in a lower self-esteem than their South African peers, even though they are among the top performing academic students in their schools. Teachers pay no particular attention to the Korean minority. According to Kay (2001:51), "the children of minority cultures often do not get the same level of attention and responses from workers as other children do." Swadener and Lubeck (1995:188) maintain, "Minority culture groups are often seen by teachers to be dysfunctional or deficient, and are not recognized as useful even when they are potentially functional in existing classrooms."

Because schools expect scholars to be involved in many activities, such as group sports, music and other activities which leaves no time to study Korean subjects. There should be time for school work, Korean studies, family relationships, and some involvement in mission work.

As a result of the wide difference between the education system of South Africa and that of South Korea children also struggle with learning the Korean language, history and social sciences at home, together with their school work. In Korea, academic study is a priority for all age groups, and education fervor arise from observable phenomena such as competitive college entrance exams (Kim 2005:13). To fall short of the mark will affect their higher education and work opportunities in Korea.

2.3 The case studies of two Korean missionary families

The one Korean family lives in one of the Southern parts of Africa as missionaries. Their son and daughter attended and stayed at a boarding school in other countries,

away from their parents, from the ages of six to eight. Their son enjoyed being with his peers and adjusted well to the school, but their daughter really struggled with the separation from her parents. She is now a young adult and still struggles emotionally. Both struggled with cultural and language differences.

The other Korean family has been living in Botswana as missionaries and have been separated from their children for several years for their children's education. This family has two children, who live in different countries, one in South Africa and the other in America, for educational purposes. The parents are struggling financially to support their children's study. Emotionally the parents struggle by being separated from their children, and the children struggle by being far away from their parents.

The boy, aged 21, moved from the mission field to Korea for his high school education and was staying at a boarding school. During the first few years at the boarding school it was excessively difficult for him to settle down without his parents. He found that even though Korea was his home country, everything was strange since he had not grown-up there and he was extremely lonely without his parents. As well as coping with these difficulties, he struggled with finances since his parents did not have sufficient finances. After he graduated from high school he entered a university in Korea. However he was disappointed at the university and decided to complete his studies in North America. His parents worried about his adjustment and finances. These children are incorporated in this research.

2.4 The motivation for this research

This study is intended to help Korean missionary children, especially those who have difficulties with education on the mission field.

Korean missionary children have a different background from Western and other Asian children, specifically in terms of language, culture, society, race and the educational systems they are used to. Considering the struggle with education that

some Korean missionary children experience on the mission field this study aims to contribute towards the understanding of their situation and thus to help them through their research process.

To be effective, this study will focus on a small number, specifically five Korean young adult missionary children, currently living in South Africa, South Korea and North America. Information in this regard will be provided in chapter four.

3 GENERAL ASPECTS ABOUT MISSIONARY CHILDREN

Missionary children are defined in 3.1 and to understand their characteristics are described in 3.2. Educational issues which they have personally encountered will be investigated in more detail in Chapter three.

3.1 A definition of missionary children

Missionary children are the children of missionary parents. The majority of them were born and/or raised abroad. They are known as Third Culture Kids (TCKs), who Useem (1993:1) defined as “children who accompany their parents into another society”. Corresponding to this definition, the home culture from which the adults came, is considered to be their first culture. The culture amongst whom the missionary family currently resides, may be referred to as the second culture. They then identify the shared lifestyle of the expatriate community as an interstitial culture, or “culture between cultures,” and named it the third culture. Useem (1993:1) called the children who had grown up in that interstitial culture, third culture kids. Pollock and Van Reken (2001:19) define Third Culture Kids more broadly:

A Third Culture Kid is a person who has spent a significant part of his/her developmental years outside the parents' culture. TCK build relationships with all the cultures, while not having full ownership in any. Although elements from each culture are assimilated into the TCK's life experience, the sense of belonging is in relationship to others of a similar background.

While the benefits of cross-cultural living may be rich in the contemporary world, many missionary children have feelings of rootlessness and restlessness. This may result in the children's moving back and forth between two worlds – the world they become apart of and the world of brief visits to relatives and friends back home (Kephart 2000). Pollock and Van Reken (2001:39) discovered that, unlike immigrants, Third Culture Kids are expected at some point to be repatriated along with their parents back to their home country, where they are expected to settle down and live permanently. However, unlike their parents, who already have an established cultural identity with the homeland, Third Culture Kids are still expected to contend with changing cultural values and practices to achieve cultural balance, since they have not yet “completed the critical development task of forming a sense of their own personal or cultural identity” (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:39). The matter of how to fundamentally relate with the surrounding dominant culture remains, therefore, whether this is the host or the home culture (Kwon 2006:3). Pollock and Van Reken (2001:39) discovered that the problem for Third Culture Kids is not only to deal with cultural differences in a particular location, but with the entire cultural world in which they live that can change fast and often. Relationships are subject to equally dramatic changes as they or others around them constantly come and go. When people first go to another culture, they experience a culture shock and need a period of adjustment. For example, children have no idea of what people are saying in foreign languages when they go to foreign countries. They also state that the child's age, personality and participation in the local culture have an important effect on their life. A child's experience may be affected differently between the ages of one and four and between the ages of eleven and fourteen (Pollock and Van Reken (2001:27). It is therefore very important for parents to grant specific attention and intentional care at the very beginning of their time in a country abroad, in order for the children to feel safe and stable in the new country from the time of settlement (Hale 2003:1).

3.2 The characteristics of missionary children

Missionary children are raised in a cross-cultural and highly mobile world, which is an area of great potential for growth in vision and ministry. There are specific advantages of being missionary children because of the privileged lifestyle and variety of things that they experience. On the other hand, missionary children sometimes experience great pain, while struggling with various issues (Bowers 1998:29). In the following section the advantages and disadvantages relating to the lives of missionary children will be explained and compared.

3.2.1 The advantages of missionary children

3.2.1.1 Cross cultural experience

Eidse and Sichel (2004:3) describe how Third Culture Kids and missionary children absorb fragments of the many cultures they are exposed to and develop kaleidoscopic identities. Pollock and Van Reken (2001:79) also explain that “missionary children are growing up in a multiplicity of countries and cultures and they also learn how people view life from different philosophical and political perspectives”. Transferred from one place to another, they collect and absorb experiences. Their personalities are formed through a certain compilation of the mixture of those cultures they internalize and claim as their own. In a new environment, they experience each move as an occasion for growth, a chance to blossom in new ways. Iyer (2004:11) discovered that some never feel estrangement. Rather, they see the world in all its richness and variety. “They live in various cultures, they experience the world in a real way as they have lived in many places, smelled many smells, heard so many strange sounds and have been in many strange situations, throughout their lives”. This is a “privileged life, filled with opportunities to extend and enhance their knowledge of the earth and its people” (2004:21). Bilingual or even multilingual at an early age, immersed in an interrelated, interdependent world community, they are able to enjoy a broader and more mature perspective than their more rooted peers. There is a global education and wide range of the intercultural experience. Bowers (1998:61) says it carries with it the kind of flexibility

that allows well-balanced young adult missionary children to get a head start in coping with interpersonal relationships. They have friends from different countries and build a rich international network with them. They are grateful for the variety of experiences to which they have been exposed. If the entire world is alien to them, the entire world is their home. They realize themselves to be “citizens of the world”, “feeling at home anywhere” (Eidse & Sichel 2004:12). In any place they visit, they enjoy the privileges of an outsider: they are an object of interest and even fascination; they are a person set apart, able to enjoy the benefits of the place. They are open to adventure, secure in close family relationships, understanding the benefits of living a new life. Their perspectives are broadened, their childish souls opened to the wisdom new experience brings (Eidse & Sichel 2004:9-15).

3.2.1.2 Ability to adapt

Pollock (1998:49) explains that most missionary children develop significant flexibility and adaptability through their cross-cultural experience. “Seeing, hearing, tasting and smelling new things is a way of life for most and contributes to their ability to accept and adjust to what is new and different”. This cross-cultural experience of missionary children broadens their world perspective, brings rich memories and a confidence in change. Pollock and Van Reken (2001:87) found that missionary children have a great ability to adapt to any new place. They pick up the new culture and situation more easily and quickly than others and consider these aspects of their lifestyle to be part of the wealth of their heritage. “Their experience of being in foreign countries and places long enough to learn to appreciate the reasons and understanding behind some of the behavioral differences, rather than simply being frustrated by them being visitors, tend to be a challenge, as well as a privilege” (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:87). Most of the missionary children learn to value relationships and adapt more easily, because they have lived in many places. This is a gift they carry with them wherever they may go later. The missionary children develop feelings of confidence in many areas of life; however, they feel fearful of making mistakes in some situations (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:87,113). “Cultural adaptability may begin as a survival tool, but it also has immensely practical benefits” (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:92). Through their experience of adaptability and

flexibility (Bowers 1998:61) the missionary children have a solid foundation for life in an increasingly interdependent, multicultural world. They continue to relocate and to relate to many cultures (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:107-110).

3.2.1.3 Linguistic skills

According to Pollock (1998:53), most of the missionary children speak more than one language fluently, which is potentially for them, one of their most useful life skills. Pollock and Van Reken (2001:114) expressly states, “Children who learn two or more languages early in life, and use these languages on a day-to-day basis, develop a facility and ease with language unlike those who learn a second language for the first time as teenagers or adults”. To speak many languages as well as their mobility allows them to sample experiences around the globe and to move confidently among other cultures, and to be enriched by them, while they are young, pliant and still forming their personalities (Eidse & Sichel 2004:3). Bilingualism and multilingualism have advantages in addition to the obvious one of communicating with different groups of people. Heny (1994:186) believes that learning different languages early in life can sharpen thinking skills in general and can actually help children achieve academically above their grade level. Strong linguistic skills also have practical advantages as the missionary children become adults. For example, some careers are available only to people fluent in two or more languages. When children learn languages, they instinctively pick up the differing nuances of how people in that culture think and relate to one another (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:114-115).

3.2.1.4 Potential resources

According to Pollock (1998:53), missionary children, as adaptable and flexible observers, are sensitive to prejudice, tend to be compliant, and suspend judgment of others. They can build “cultural bridges”. Awareness of what the world is really like, international experience and multilingual capability are more valuable than degrees in today’s marketplace. Missionary children have this benefit that their skills and insights make them extremely important in today’s world (Bowers 1998:53). Pollock and Van Reken (2001:108) provide examples of adult missionary children who have

gone into international or intercultural careers and have developed new abilities, which may be useful in becoming a bridge between different groups of people in helping their company or organization with the sensitive and stressful situations in the work environment. Because of cross-cultural experiences, adult missionary children often find themselves particularly qualified when it comes to jobs or situations such as teaching or mentoring (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:108-109) and a particular type of occupation such as diplomatic work, NGO⁹ work and international business (Park 1999:66).

3.2.2 The disadvantages of missionary children

While the missionary children have many advantages, there are also many disadvantages of being missionary children. Ann (2004:31) expresses as a fact that while the missionary children have advantages through cross-cultural experiences, they are struggling with disadvantages. In many cases, a negative experience and the effect of pain that missionary children have experienced in their childhood emerged during their adult stage (Andrews 1995:418). This causes them to have a lower self esteem than children generally do. Thus, the missionary children are in need of being properly understood with reference to their experiences. A necessity that needs to be considered by both their parents and mission agencies (Park 1999:95).

3.2.2.1 Transition

A missionary family often moves around, from one place to another, from one country to another, and many missionary children struggle with moving around and coping with the consequent changing circumstances (Park 2004:30). Powell (1998:115) states that for missionary families transition from a field may occur due to a variety of reasons: illness, break-ins, kidnapping, threats of death, conflict with home leadership, conflict with home church, conflict with field leadership, conflict with nationals. Another reason is children's higher education in their home country. In

⁹ NGO: Non-Governmental Organization. Many mission organizations are registered as NGOs for effective ministries.

general, transition is difficult amidst a sensitivity to the specific demands and opportunities each one may be involved (Bond & Wagner 1988:69). Many different events can result from a sudden removal from the field, and it affects many missionary children (Bowers 1998:115). Powell (1998:115) argues that “mobility is not wrong, but being victimized by it may be destructive to individuals and those around them”.

The children have settled-in to establish a place of significance for themselves. They know where they belong in their current scene, and are recognized for who they are and what they can contribute. Pollock and Van Reken (2001:159) say that “All at once, their place is gone. All the patterns of daily living are gone.” The children realize that they have no choice in these matters that have affect their lives, such as when and where their parents move, where they can go to school, how they can cope with a new/foreign language, how to behave in new circumstances, or how they can express their inner passions (2001:168). At the time of transfer, the children usually do not have enough time to visit places where they have been and people with whom they have built relationships with, whom they now love. This transition is rather sudden and disruptive, such as the unexpected loss of a loved one, or on account of a serious accident (Park 2004:35-37). Pollock and Van Reken (2001:61) state, “A highly mobile lifestyle makes children fear loss, and have no confidence in relationships with friends”. Books (1998:67) says, “Children are under pressure to grasp the complexities of the new language and culture, they are reeling from a combination of losses that leave them feeling diminished and inadequate to meet the challenge”. Hence, if children are not allowed to express their feelings, they can turn inward, becoming morbid fearing and feeling helpless and hopeless (Books 1998:69). Moving around during their educational years may in the end be deeply disruptive for missionary children. Career paths can be frustrated by moving too soon and often, and the family may be stressed by the lack of stability and of proximity (Bowers 1998:50). Entering new cultures leave children open to exploitations and they remain vulnerable to risks and danger. “To leave the security of one’s home culture is to risk physical exposure in new places and psychological exposure among strangers. They have intense pain in severing with the familiar, and in the physical and emotional distancing of loved ones. They question both their centrality and importance, because their parents are dedicated to their missionary work” (Pollock & Van Reken

2001:62-63). Swadener and Lubeck (1995:188) emphasize that children may be harmed, because of the different environments they enter. For example that of the school environment which require different cultural patterns and values than those that they have learned. Life after transition is different from what it was before. They change cultures, as well as locations, which is also considered under the culture shock of transition. Some children refuse to get involved in a new culture (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:72). Therefore, parents and mission agencies need to give intentional care to their children, in order to move around in a way that is not too disruptive. During this research, it was discovered that most co-researchers changed schools from between 7 to 10 times. Children raised abroad who cannot form permanent roots in the foreign country, possibly causing them to feel isolated. They are sometimes sadly ignorant of national, local, and even family history. Mobile children may lack long-term relationships or a strong national identity (Eidse & Sichel 2004:3).

3.2.2.2 Rootlessness and restlessness

“Where is home?”, “Where are you from?” are the hardest questions for all of the missionary children to answer. Too many of them there is no answer to these questions. For them, home is not a place where they physically stay, rather, it is an emotional place somewhere they truly belong (Eldse & Sichel 2004:81). They seem to find their rootedness in relationships and in memories, rather than in geography (Bowers 1998:50, Eldse & Sichel 2004:11). “Missionary children are raised to conform to a group identity forged by their parents”, “They are expected by the churches, mission agencies and supporters to be committed and dedicated” (Eldse & Sichel 2004:82). Some of the missionary children moved so often, lived in so many different countries and attended so many different schools that they never had time to become attached to any. Some say, Home is “Everywhere and nowhere” (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:124). Others say, “Feeling at home anywhere” (Eldse & Sichel 2004:12). Others establish semi-permanent lodgings on foreign soil, returning to the place their parents call home for furlough or family events. The children shuttle back and forth between nations, languages, cultures, and loyalties.

Some of them visit places to find their roots. They wonder who they are and where

they can settle permanently. Somehow the settling down never quite takes place. The present is never enough. When a tree is transplanted too often, its roots can never grow deep. Missionary children tend to be open-minded and tolerant of many diverse cultures. They often feel more at home in culturally rich environments and can become “homesick”, as they may long for their mission field (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Missionary-Kids>). In many cases, missionary children know much more about their host country, its history, geography and politics than those of their home country (<http://www.tckid.com/group/17-ways-to-help-third-culture-kids/>). Other missionary children who have lived in one place during each leave or furlough may have a strong sense of that place being their home (Eldse & Sichel 2004:11). Some of them who have moved often cannot stay at one job long enough to build any sort of career. In some cases, they even change schools or universities without any specific reasons (Eldse & Sichel 2004:13).

The children who have been separated from their family for a long time, may almost feel an obligation to be far from their parents, siblings, or even their own children. They have spent so much time separated from their family that they do not know how to live in physical closeness. They often feel tired and restless due to their experience of separation. They may also feel certain anger towards their parents, the mission agency and God (Eldse & Sichel 2004:14). Being human, they do need strong relationships; a sense of belonging, of being nurtured and cared for, of internal unity, of significance; and a feeling of knowing themselves and being known by others. They need relationships they can share, and begin to discover many aspects about themselves. They have to receive the love and support they need as the foundation for living a life that is rich and meaningful. A sense of belonging is the second greatest need people have to live a full life (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:147). On the other hand, missionary children need to be conscious of their roots. Jung (1999:96) says the meaning of missionary children’s being conscious of their roots, is not confined to their diversity or internationalism, rather, it makes the missionary children’s sense of identity become healthy.

3.2.2.3 Statuslessness

Pollock and Van Reken (2001:68) found that, “a severe loss of self-esteem sets-in during this transition stage”. Particularly in cross-cultural moves, it seems that the missionary family has to learn to live again, practically from scratch. As teenagers and adults, nothing strikes at our sense of self-esteem with greater force than learning language and culture, for these are the tasks of children. People do not understand what they are trying to say and do. Their cultural and linguistic mistakes not only embarrass them, but also make them feel anxious and ashamed of being stupid. Both missionary parents and children feel that their basic position in the new community is one of statuslessness. None of their previous knowledge from the past is of any use in the new place. No one knows about their history, abilities, talents, accomplishments, or areas of expertise (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:69). Even though they are welcomed at a new school, they may discover that it is not as easy as they thought it would be to make new close friends. They may become resentful and begin to withdraw, which may result in feelings of isolation and alienation that cuts them off from any hope of making new friends. This increasing sense of loneliness may also lead to anger (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:70).

3.2.2.4 Identity

Definition

Kim (1999:77) defines the meaning of self-identity as that which is formed by connecting the past, the present, the environment one lives in and what will happen in the future to identify oneself as a ‘unique self’. According to Kim (1999:79) self-identification does not suddenly happen in one day. Rather, it is formulated by taking a fixed way of life and the requirements within one’s environment into consideration. The process of identifying oneself is affected by a variety of knowledge and experiences such as those which include both personal ones, together with that of the community. Some of these start from the moment of birth and are affected by the society’s cultural, historical, economical and educational factors and the world becomes broader in this way.

Constitution

There are various factors playing various roles in the constitution of an identity and stated below are particular elements indicated by Kim (1999:79-83) that fulfill a very important role in the development of a personal identity: culture, history, society, language, and nationality. The following are summary of identities.

(a) Culture and identity. Cultural value may be realized and accomplished when a person enjoys the ideology, beliefs and value systems that are impressed in the culture (Park 1999:79, Kay 2001:51).

(b) History and identity. History may be formed with essential contents, which may be maintained according to one's personal roots. It is accordingly a foundational principle to express who I am (Park 1999:80).

(c) Society and identity. People find identity when they have relationships with others in the society (Park 1999:81). A certain personal identity may be formed once people realize that they are part of a society that satisfy one's needs through inter-personal relationships (Park 1999:81, Holland 2004:2).

(d) Language and identity. According to Lloyd-Sidle and Lewis (2001:42), language is the basic tool of communication among people and is a very important symbol of identity for people, and mastering it is a sign of respect. Milroy (1982:207) also states that a basic and common social function of language is "a signal of identity".

(e) Nationality and identity. It is common that people usually recognize their identity by their nationality, because they find a root through the nationality of their parents and ancestors. The meaning of nationality in this case is the history of their family line (Park 1999:83).

Identity of missionary children

According to Pollock and Van Reken (2001:146), personal histories of missionary children may be fragmented by transfer, scripted by family mission, or silenced by the need to conform. Finding their identity can be difficult when language and location are always changing. "Adept at learning new languages and understanding new cultures, many mobile children are able to adjust quickly to changing

circumstances and often have a distinct advantage over more rooted children. Missionary children have little sense of their own personal identity, because they experienced much cultural or national confusion, while they were growing up". They often struggle with the answering of questions like 'who they are', 'where they are going' and 'where do I fit or belong' (Park 1999:12-13). Travel, risks and danger cause them to mature early, yet they continue to experience confusion about identity, direction, and belonging (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:146). Some of them often feel they are "citizens of the world" (Eldse & Sichel 2004:12), and "feeling at home anywhere" (2004:12) is enough to comfort them. Pollock (1998:47) argues that belonging everywhere and nowhere has a major impact on one's identity. Often the missionary children live with a sense of being "in the middle" (Bowers 1998:49) between home and host countries. They are touched by both and identify with both, yet without a sense of being owned or owning either one. Pollock (1998:49) explores the idea that for some, "the struggle with identity and belonging is intensified when they still have a sense of belonging overseas after having returned to their home country". Pollock and Van Reken (2001:147) argue that "missionary children are estranged from their parents' home culture and disconnected from their host culture, they proceed through the world identified as chronic outsiders". While missionary children are struggling because they feel as if they do not belong to a specific person or place, they feel that they are similar to the other missionary children and therefore they usually open up their hearts and are good friends with each other. According to Lim (2004:12), growing up globally, they often enjoy an expanded worldview, but may lack a particular national identity. The identity of missionary children is a combination of all the cultural influences they make their own. Sometimes the chord is rich; sometimes it is shrill and discordant.

Identity of Korean missionary children

According to Jung (1999:32), in the past most of the Korean missionary children went to America and other Western countries for university training, while their life in the Western countries shaped their identity and they became westernized. Because of this, Korean missionary children found it difficult to return and settle in Korea, and this affects their relationships with their parents and relatives. In contrast to their attitude in the past, mission agencies and missionaries in Korea have become

seriously concerned about how they can educate Korean missionary children in terms of the formulation of their identities (Park 1999:9). Thus, the Korea World Missions Association (KWMA 1993) averred the purpose of education for Korean missionary children according to principles as stated bellow:

To become

- (a) citizens of God's kingdom
- (b) citizens of the world
- (c) citizens of Korea

It is very important that Korean missionary children establish their identities and understand who they are (Park 1999:92). With this knowledge they may have the power to adjust to Korea and other countries (Park 1992:93). For this, missionary parents and mission agencies need to assist Korean missionary children to obtain a degree of fluency in the Korean language, as a language is essential in the formation of an identity (Milroy 1982:207). This is essential for the purpose of reentering Korea for further education and settling down to a new life. Besides language proficiency, Korean missionary children need to have a close connection with the Korean culture, society and people who are in Korea in terms of the development of their identity as Koreans (Park 1999:81,93,94).

3.2.2.5 Grief

Wickstrom (1998:164) explains that unlike anyone else, missionary children have difficulties in specific areas of vulnerability, unique to their experience. According to him, unresolved grief is mostly based on separation. Firstly, frequent moving is a central issue. It will cause a child to feel separated from their beloved ones. For example, they lose their friends and relatives, together with other significant things. The children's loss of their past is no longer available to them. These are major losses, and these problems may be carried over to their adult life, especially in marriage. The fear to lose a loved one can lead to a fear of close relations, which may lead to constant fear of losing a loved one (Bowers 1998:165). Secondly, educational choices such as boarding school or staying in the home country without their parents may create other major patterns of separation while children are still young. It may cause emotional difficulties such as unresolved grievances and

relationship difficulties with parents and brothers and sisters, because they are separated from them at an early age and for extended periods of time (Pirollo 2000:142; Pollock & Van Reken 2001:170). Thirdly, missionary children who have very busy parents may fall into another pattern of grief. They may think that they are not good enough, due to the fact that their parents do not take care of them in a way they expect. They may wonder why parents are always working and busy with other people, instead of being present with them (Bowers 1998:168). It causes a child to feel isolated. While many missionary children develop good intimacy patterns, some become very isolated (Bowers 1998:169). Bowers (1998:174) says, "Those experiences have bruised missionary children so much that they may often feel depressed or sad, fearful or anxious for seemingly no reason at all; while a low self-esteem may also sometimes occur". Anger, depression, over-sympathizing with others in grief, and sometimes delayed grief responses triggered by what may seem insignificant losses, may be indicators of unresolved grief (Bowers 1998:175). It is important for missionary children to deal with the grief which affects them during their lives. Pollock and Van Reken (2001) present the following concepts for the resolution of grief.

1) Recognize "hidden losses". Missionary children can acknowledge that proper mourning for losses is an affirmation of the richness of the past. By negating the present, they will continue to deny the longing for attention with the grief they have felt. Therefore, it is necessary to recognize hidden losses and to bring them to the surface to face the pain (p.167).

2) Allow oneself to grieve. Often missionary children feel that they are asked to be "brave soldiers" for God. They think that their feelings of fear and grief are not spiritual and that it is wrong to express their bad feelings. They learn that negative feelings show a lack of faith, consequently they start wearing a mask to cover those feelings (pp.172,173). Therefore, they need to know that human beings may express their fears and grief.

3) Give sufficient time to grieve for losses. A person who experiences loss needs a time to face the pain, to mourn it, and to accept the loss in order to be able to move

on. Therefore missionary parents should understand that their children are in need of sufficient time to face their personal pain and to grieve for their losses (pp.173,174).

4) Give genuine comfort. The lack of comfort is another factor that prevents grief to be assuaged. Missionary children who have negative experiences often receive simplistic encouragements from people. They need to be comforted from a genuine heart. Comfort does not change the situation itself, nor can it take away the pain, but it relays the message that someone cares and understands. Comfort gives people a feeling of acceptance and understanding. So they know that they are not alone in their sorrow (pp.174-176).

4. SUMMARY

In this chapter the educational needs of missionary children were described as the most important issue missionary parents are faced with. All too often mission agencies find themselves faced with resignations and requests for reassignment because of educational issues of missionary children. Therefore some of the essential reasons why the churches and mission agencies definitely need to support educational issues for the missionary children were investigated, with special focus on the educational needs of Korean missionary children.

The characteristics of missionary children and their advantages and disadvantages were examined. A few serious questions were asked in order to clarify important issues concerning Korean missionary children's education and life, such as: what kind of school option will be the best for them? What is a priority for their education? How can they catch up with their Korean studies? How are they able to maintain their Korean identity? KWMA (1993) determined that the purpose of education for Korean missionary children should be: to become 1) citizens of God's kingdom, 2) citizens of the World, 3) citizens of Korea.

It is very important that Korean missionary parents, churches and mission agencies need to assist the Korean missionary children to establish those identities in order to understand who they really are (Park 1999:92).

Recently, many of the Korean missionary children have returned to Korea for higher education, due to the fact that in 1995 the Korean government changed the merit system for entrance to colleges/universities in Korea (Park 1999:61). Specific high schools¹⁰ have been established in Korea, where it is easier for Korean missionary children and third culture kids to adjust to the school system and to labour. This new trend make it easier for Korean missionary children to reenter Korea for further education. But, since English is the predominant universal language, the Korean government has tried to implement and activate an English education system from primary school to high school in Korea. For this, the government has recruited many English teachers who are fluent in English and graduated at a university abroad. Some of the large companies in Korea even grant employment opportunities for the third culture kids and missionary children in order to benefit from their linguistic abilities. Hence, Korean missionary children have many job opportunities in Korea. They do however, need to be supported to understand the Korean society and culture, as well as to speak the Korean language to reenter the society. If the Korean missionary children have the knowledge indicated by KWMA (1993), they will be able to adjust to Korean life (Park 1992:93).

Therefore, Korean missionary parents have to consider where their children will live permanently in the future, prior to making a decision on how to educate their children. Once this has been decided, missionary parents need to decide on the correct long-term plan and the priorities of the different citizenships their children will then have, and needs for their future. With a long-term education plan, the Korean missionary parents may prepare for the correct direction for their children's lives (Park 1999:28-30). Being caught up in their day-to-day struggles, parents may easily lose sight of these long-term goals and fail to address some of the most important areas in which children need to develop (Sharon Haag 2005). It is important for missionary families

¹⁰ Foreign language high schools have completely different educational systems to Korean schools and teach many subjects in English.

to effectively schedule and implement long-term plans for their children's education from the very beginning.

Chapter three will especially focus on educational issues of the missionary children. While chapter one dealt with the general aspects of missionary children, chapter two will address the research paradigm and procedure of this study.

CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH PARADIGM AND PROCEDURE

1 RESEARCH PARADIGM

This study is a narrative research within the postfoundationalist and social constructionist paradigm which underpin the narrative approach to theology to gain a better understanding of the stories of missionary children. According to Müller (2006: 9), postfoundationalist practical theology should be seen as a way of understanding within the broad paradigm of the hermeneutical approach. It moves beyond hermeneutics as a metaphor for practical theology. While the hermeneutical approach as such does not provide a position in between the foundationalist and the nonfoundationalist approaches, postfoundationalism positions itself opposite both of these paradigms.

Within the postfoundationalist approach, this study firstly listens to the stories of missionary children to ascertain their education difficulties on the mission field. The aim is not to describe the general context, but to focus on the specific and concrete situation of missionary children.

In order to understand postfoundationalism, the history of modernism and postmodernism and their characteristic will be investigated, and then postfoundationalism will be described.

1.1 Postfoundationalism as reaction

1.1.1 Modernism

The Renaissance of the fourteenth to sixteenth century is generally taken as the origin of modernism. During the Renaissance the first secular humanism in human history emerged. Secular humanism designates the notion that man, not God, is the measure of all things. According to their own standard human beings are considered to understand and reshape, their destinies and the future of the world as well.

Renaissance thinkers returned to the ancient classical literature as the archetype of modernism (Burgess 2001:50).

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, modernism combined with the Enlightenment, the primary feature of which was 'seen as its assertion of the omniscience of human reason' (McGrath 1996:163). McGrath (1996:163,164) comments on this that "Reason, it was argued, was capable of telling us everything we needed to know about God and morality. The idea of some kind of supernatural revelation was dismissed as an irrelevance. Jesus Christ was just one of many religious teachers, who told us things that anyone with a degree of common sense could have told us anyway. Reason reigned supreme."

According to the Enlightenment, each individual was endowed with the following two things: first, an ability to find and reach the truth by means of observation and reasoning, and second, an inalienable right to participate in the process of governance (Gergen 1999:17,18). Herholdt (1998:215,216) argues that the Enlightenment placed emphases on both the certainty of reality guaranteed by natural sciences and the personal gratification achieved by the autonomous reason and political freedom of each individual person. The influence of the Enlightenment throughout Europe undermined and collapsed the ancient regime with its totalitarian government by a monarchy and religion.

The modernism of the Renaissance and the Enlightenment is an example of foundationalism in its comprehension of the truth. Through its universal, objective, pure, scientific and empirical sense, it attempted to determine the human cognitive ability with reason and observation as its absolutely firm and self-evident foundation. This epistemological foundationalism emerged in western society after the decline of the medieval age.

Not too long, however, did it take for modernism to come to an end. In contrast to the future prospect of late nineteenth-century thinkers that the twentieth century would be a culmination of the Enlightenment project, the past hundred years have marked the twilight of the Enlightenment representative of Western modernism (Grenz 1999:385). In the twenty-first century, however exaggerating it may be, the

modern way of thinking has become obsolete (Dockery 1995:13). Grenz (1999:385) comments on this unexpected phenomenon that the “acids of modernity” came to be turned against modernity itself. The foundation which modernism attempted to build up turned out to be a poison to it. The concepts of the universal, the objective and the pure which modernism pursued were fictitious ones, generally reflecting a set of presuppositions specific to Western society (McGrath 1996:132). In brief, modernism’s attempt to constitute a firm foundation can be acknowledged as, to borrow from the conceptualities of postmodernism, ‘at best flawed, and at worst an invitation to oppression’ (McGrath 1996:132).

The twentieth and twenty-first century postmodern era is an age of uncertainty and transition. In fact, the past hundred years mark the ‘questioning of the Enlightenment project and the increasing influence of postmodern sensitivities’ (Grenz 1999:385). Foundationalism of any kind – whether philosophical or religious – is no more welcome because it ‘is widely regarded as discredited’ (McGrath 1996:132).

Therefore, an alternative to the foundationalism of modernism, which is appropriate to the present postmodern era, should emerge. It should be, above all, a new paradigm to embrace the particularity and distinctiveness of things, including each individual community and its distinguishable story, while the Enlightenment tended to strip human beings of their particularities and distinctness (McGrath 1996:165).

1.1.2 Postmodernism

Van Huyssteen (1998:26) considered postmodern thought as a part of the modern and not merely modern thought coming to its end. In this way “the modern and the postmodern are also unthinkable apart from one another, because the postmodern shows itself best in the ‘to–and–fro movement’ between the modern and the postmodern.” The concept of postmodernism is generally considered to have emerged beyond modernism as a movement that transcends modernism, sometimes in contradistinction to, and sometimes inclusive of modernism (Beyer et

al. s.a.:32). According to Freedman and Combs (2002:188), “most postmodern thinkers would see the modernist worldview as one of many possible stories, one that is quite useful in pursuing criteria of predictability and control, but no more fundamentally ‘true’ or ‘real’ than many other stories about the nature of the universe.” Postmodernist scholars are more interested in difference than in similarity, in specific, contextualized details than in grand generalizations. Also exceptions are more interesting than rules.

Postmodernism is generally not regarded as a style or unified theory, but as a way of thinking. It allows for the simultaneous presence of different features of knowledge. Therefore, it moves from the objective to the subjective, from the universal to the particular, from validity to subjective integrity, from control to participation, from the quantitative to the qualitative. Postmodernism rejects equality and universality, but promotes openness, diversity, multiplicity and different subjectivities from the transparent perspectives in terms of culture and time. In a postmodern society, knowledge becomes functional. Postmodernism themes have, in theology, alternative interpretations and constructive appropriations, now become viable options (Van Huyssteen 1997:2). All claims to knowledge of self and the world lose their authority (Gergen 1999:29). The following definition (Van Huyssteen 1997:187) makes clear the notion of postmodernism:

Typical of postmodernism is its skepticism concerning the central role assigned to reason and rational thought. Over against indubitable truth-claims, and overconfident faith in science, and a metaphysical way of reasoning, the interrelatedness of truth-perspectives, ethical pluralism, and cultural relativism is typical of the postmodern perspective.

The postmodern movement sees the stretching of conventional mainstream boundaries regarding ideas about what constitutes legitimate knowledge, and allows for contextual influences of knowledge production. Thus, it influences individual existential realities, and specific local conditions are given recognition in the acceptance of knowledge. In a postmodern attitude towards knowledge production, the scientific method is not considered the most reliable and the only source for new knowledge. However, the scientific method with its emphasis on empiricism is not totally rejected, but rather seen as one possible way out of many for producing new

knowledge (Beyer et al. s.a.:32). The words ‘narrative’, ‘history’, ‘language’, and ‘text’ appear frequently in the postmodernist thinkers’ vocabulary (Freedman & Combs 2002:189).

The postmodern movement influenced theology as well. For theology the shift from modern to postmodern thought will mean that “central theological terms like religious experience, revelation, tradition and divine action can no longer be discussed within the generalized terminology of a metanarrative that ignores the socio-historical location of the theologian as an interpreter of experience and an appropriator of tradition” (Van Huyssteen 1998:26). In the postmodern paradigm, truth is relative and is influenced by the intellectual climate and cultural categories of every period (Herholdt 1998:221). In postmodern theology, there is not a fixed body of theological truth that needs to be communicated from generation to generation; but every generation needs to discover meanings for themselves through metaphoric reference. Thus, the epistemic construction of God is local and not universal (Herholdt 1998:224,225).

Freedman and Combs (2002: 189) formulate the characteristic of postmodern reality in a therapeutic context:

1. Realities are socially constructed.
2. There are multiple possibilities for how to describe and classify the ‘reality’ of any situation.
3. Knowledge is performed, not found.
4. Knowledge is constituted through language.
5. Realities are organized and maintained through narrative.
6. There are no ‘essential’ truths.

Before discussing postfoundationalism, modernism will be revisited in the form of foundationalism and postmodernism as its important roots or resources of nonfoundationalism.

1.1.3 Foundationalism

Foundationalism is the “thesis that all our beliefs can be justified by appealing to some item of knowledge that is self-evident or indubitable” (Van Huyssteen 1997:2). According to Müller (2008:2), absolute truth is available in the foundationalist approach. This would be a perspective faithful to the true foundation and a theory built on such a presumption could be referred to as a “universal rationality.” This is founded on the idea of a universe of knowledge that functions as an overarching frame of reference. Hence there is only one theoretical truth and that must be pursued. The religious quest for personal transformation has been deeply embedded in the powerful truth claims of this faith (Van Huyssteen 1998:1). Epistemologically, foundationalism always implies the holding of a theological position in an inflexible and infallible manner, invoking the ultimate foundations on which to construct the evidential support system of various convictional beliefs (Van Huyssteen 1997:3). Müller (2008:3) points out that foundationalists use their own expert knowledge as the unquestioned starting point and then engage the other rationalities from there. Foundationalism refuses to justify its view and theological standing. Rather, foundationalism as a concept, proclaims truth and in a theological sense, claims to have an absolute and single interpretation of the Bible (Van Huyssteen 1997:3). Foundationalists hold that some parts of the structure which we call human knowledge, and of the structures that each of us counts as our own belief system, are more basic than others. They cannot be justified by reference to other beliefs where derived beliefs can be justified by reference to basic beliefs. Thus, interdisciplinary work is made extremely difficult through this approach (Müller 2008:3). In the natural sciences, the implication of foundationalism is a positivist empiricism or scientific materialism that, per definition, renders all religion, theology and theological reflection meaningless. In theology, foundationalism implies biblical literalism or positivism of revelation, which isolates theology, in that it denies the crucial role of interpreted religious experience in all theological reflections, thereby leaving the theologian to speak a language that may be internally coherent, but, powerless to communicate its content to a wider audience. Foundationalism is unrelated to all non-theological discourses (Van Huyssteen 1997:226,227). Therefore, in both theology and philosophy, foundationalism is rejected in favour of

nonfoundationalism (Van Huyssteen 1998:23). Bosch (1993:186) points out that in theology or the natural or social sciences, they never think in mutually exclusive categories of “absolute” and “relative”. He also insists, our theologies are partial, and they are culturally and socially biased. For this, they may never claim to be absolutes. Bosch (1993:187) further insists, contrary to the natural sciences, theology relates not only to the present and the future, but also to the past, to tradition, to God’s primary witness to humans. Theology must undoubtedly always be relevant and contextual.

1.1.4 Nonfoundationalism

According to Van Huyssteen (1997:3), nonfoundationalism is one of the most important roots or resources of postmodernism. Nonfoundationalism is negated by its negation of any alleged strong foundations for belief-systems and support of nonbasic beliefs. Nonfoundationalists believe that all of our beliefs together form part of a web of interrelated beliefs. Nonfoundationalism also emphasizes the crucial epistemic importance of community, arguing that every community and context has its own rationality. Nonfoundationalism implies a total relativism of rationalities, proves to be fatal for the interdisciplinary status of theology, and claims internal rules for different modes of reflection. This relativism of rationality in its extreme form denies interdisciplinary conversation (Van Huyssteen 1997:3). Nonfoundationalism also proclaims neither “truth” nor “reality.” Tatusko (2005:114), quoted by Müller (2008:3), argues that the concept of a universal truth is no longer accepted in the contemporary world. The non- or anti-foundational position makes the interdisciplinary discussion even more difficult, because there is scepticism about any effort to create mutual understanding which is always diverse. Constructive discussions are difficult in a situation where everything is relative and subjective (Müller 2008:3).

Fideism, which deserves our attention, is another theological and philosophical position. Van huyssteen (1997:3) criticizes fideism in that fideism is uncritical, and a blind commitment to a set of beliefs. Thus, fideism can ironically turn out to be

foundationalism. This form of fideism and foundationalism go together in theology when the boundaries between the trust or the personal faith become blurred or hazy. In theology, the fideist move occurs on specific beliefs when it is isolated in a definite protective strategy and then confused with faith in God itself.

I have been a member of the Presbyterian Church (Hap-Dong) in Korea for my entire life and was proud of my Presbyterian background. I strongly proclaimed what I believed to be the truth in my teaching and discussion of the Bible.

From time to time, however, some questions came to mind. I believe the Bible is the word of God, but I have come to question how I should interpret Biblical text in the contemporary world and in practical theology. I recognize that my interpretation of the meaning of the Bible may be too narrow and I am thus careful as to how I apply my reading of the bible to my everyday life.

Within the role of a pastor's wife, to whom many people come for counseling from time to time, I have struggled with the traditional approach to pastoral counseling which is better known as Biblical counseling. In this counseling, people are compelled by pastors and counselors to follow their answers to a problem. I have often questioned why the answers pastors and counselors provide always seem to fall within their own framework rather than that of the people they counsel. Some people who have been counseled in the traditional way say that this kind of counseling can lead to counseling sessions that become closed or shut off. Within my philosophical position, I have thus found that there are some difficulties with regard to counseling. As I am a practical theologian, I must avoid the arrogance of prescribing overarching for counseling.

However, since meeting and entering into a learner-mentor relationship with Prof. Julian Müller at the University of Pretoria, I have been extremely challenged by his postfoundationalist beliefs. Postfoundationalism starts with the context, not a tradition. Beyond foundationalism, postfoundationalism is negotiable, less direct and dialogues with other disciplines. Having consulted Van Huyssteen (1997:s.p.) and other books about narrative and social constructionism, I have come to realize that many of my ways of thinking and pastoral counseling have postfoundationalist

elements. And I feel comfortable in the interaction between theology and science. As I have stated above, in both foundationalism and nonfoundationalism, dialogue with other disciplines becomes more difficult. Thus, in order to respond to both paradigms, I take my position within postfoundationalism as it is a “viable third epistemological option,” which is beyond the objectivism of foundationalism and the extreme relativism of non-foundationalism (Van Huyssteen 1998:23).

1.1.5 Postfoundationalism

According to Müller (2008:4), the postfoundationalist approach is “skeptical about both foundationalist and nonfoundationalist positions”, “this approach is sensitive to the danger of relativity and subjectivity in a multiverse rationality, and of the rigidity and false claims of the universal rationality.” Thus postfoundationalism consists of an effort to move beyond both foundationalist and nonfoundationalist claims. For this reason, it is called post-foundationalism and not anti- or non-foundationalism (Müller 2008:4). Van Huyssteen (1997:4) proposes a “viable third epistemological option” which he terms “postfoundationalism.” Müller (2004:4) says that this “third way” is a way out of the “stuckness” of modern or foundationalist (fundamentalist) science and theology, and on the other hand, the fatalism of some postmodern approaches. Demasure and Müller (2006:416) say further:

Postfoundationalist Practical Theology should be seen as a way of understanding within the broad paradigm of the hermeneutical approach... The hermeneutical approach as such does not provide a positioning in between the foundationalist and the non-foundationalist approaches. Hermeneutics can be abused if it tends toward either extreme. Postfoundationalism, on the other hand, positions itself firmly opposite both of these paradigms.

As postfoundationalism avoids the extremes of foundationalism, it is now important to critically question uncritical assumptions and attempt to challenge assumptions in order to explore and interpret people's experiences, which can be discovered through communication and dialogue. Thus, postfoundationalism engages in conversation with other disciplines to find new patterns that are consistent with the Christian paradigm, through critical theological reflection (Van Huyssteen 1997:4). A

postfoundationalist notion of rationality in theological reflection could open our eyes to an epistemic obligation toward plausible forms of interdisciplinary dialogue. And this claims to point beyond the confines of the local community or culture towards interdisciplinary conversation (Van Huyssteen 1997:4). Van Huyssteen argues for interdisciplinary dialogue between theology and science, although the domains of rationality of these two disciplines are different. For interdisciplinary dialogue between disciplines, paradigms, and practices to occur, transversal reason is employed. According to Van Huyssteen (2006:9):

Interdisciplinary discourse, then, is an attempt to bring together disciplines or reasoning strategies that may have widely different points of reference, different epistemological foci, and different experiential resources. This 'fitting together,' however, is a complex, multileveled transversal process that takes place not within the confines of any given discipline... but within the transversal spaces between disciplines.

We are empowered to step beyond the limitations and boundaries of our contexts, traditions, and disciplines when we engage in interdisciplinary conversation. "Here theology will share in interdisciplinary standards of rationality, which, although always contextually and socially shaped, will not be hopelessly culture- and context-bound. This will enable our theological reflection to aim for the reasoned coherence of a wide reflective equilibrium as the optimal epistemic goal of interdisciplinary dialogue" (Van Huyssteen 2006:41). In postfoundationalism, rationality is "an awareness of the shared cognitive, pragmatic, and evaluative dimensions" (Van Huyssteen 1999:239). Postfoundationalist rationality describes the dynamic interaction of interdisciplinary dialogues with one another, as a form of transversal reasoning. This rationality through transversal reasoning provides common ground for communication for people who have different beliefs and cultures. Van Huyssteen and Schrag proposed the notion of "transversal rationality." Van Huyssteen (2006:21), quoted by Müller (2008:5), refers to Schrag for transversal rationality as follows:

Transversal rationality is now fused with consciousness and self awareness, and this consciousness is then unified by an experience of self-presence, emerging over time from a remembering self-awareness/consciousness in which diverse past experiences are transversally integrated as we reach out to others to talk about the human subject that is now revisioned by resituating the human subject in the space of communicative praxis. Thus the notion of transversal rationality opens up the possibility to focus on

patterns of discourse and action as they happen in our communicative practices, rather than focusing only on the structure of the self, ego, or subject.

Postfoundational rationality is constructed on the basis of own experience, but is capable of reaching beyond. It starts with an individual and extends to community. This rationality is diverse from community to community. Thus, postfoundational rationality is context-specific and is embedded in tradition (Van Huyssteen 2006:11). Van Huyssteen, quoted by Müller (2008:5), says, "A postfoundationalist approach helps us realize...that we are not the intellectual prisoners of our contexts or traditions, but that we are epistemically empowered to cross contextual, cultural, and disciplinary borders to explore critically the theories, meanings, and beliefs through which we and others construct our worlds." Müller (2004:6) cites Van Huyssteen in saying that a postfoundationalist notion of rationality reveals that one's own experience is always going to be rationally compelling, even as we reach out beyond personal awareness and conviction to interpersonal (and interdisciplinary) dialogue. According to Demasure and Müller (2006:417):

The postfoundationalist approach forces us to firstly listen to the stories of people struggling in real life situations. It does not merely aim to describe a general context, but we are confronted with a specific and concrete situation. This approach to Practical Theology, although also hermeneutical in nature, is more reflexive in epistemology and methodology (Müller 2006:9). According to Van Huyssteen (2006:9) "...embodied persons, and not abstract beliefs, should be seen as the locus of rationality. We, as rational agents, are thus always socially and contextually embedded."

Müller (2008:4) says, "This way of thinking is always concrete, local, and contextual, but at the same time reaches beyond local contexts to interdisciplinary concerns. It is contextual, but at the same time in acknowledgement of the way in which our epistemologies are shaped by tradition." Postfoundationalism acknowledges contextuality, interprets experience and identifies human rationality in different modes of reflection (Van Huyssteen 1997:4). The shift of emphasis from individual to social, from subjective towards discourse is a part of the postfoundationalist paradigm (Demasure & Müller 2006:418). Müller (2008:5) states that the idea of socially constructed interpretations and meaning is clearly part of the postfoundationalist approach. Van Huyssteen (2006:25) says, "Because of our

irrevocable contextuality and the embeddedness of all belief and action in networks of social and cultural traditions, beliefs, meaning, and action arise out of our embedded life worlds.” In the postfoundationalist approach, contextuality is a key concept, and experience in each situation is always interpreted (Müller 2008:5).

Postfoundationalist practical theology will be discussed before social constructionsim is described as it becomes part of “doing theology” and takes the social constructions seriously. The practical theologian is not so much concerned with abstractions and generalizations, but rather with the detail of a particular person’s story (Müller 2004:3).

1.1.6 Postfoundationalist practical theology

Practical theology starts its theological reflections from practices, aims at empirically analyzing practices and should be directed towards the transformation of these practices. This aims at developing a hermeneutical action-theory or a hermeneutical-empirical approach to human actions. Practical theology takes the circular movement of ‘practice-theory-practice’ seriously and brings it into operation (Müller 2004:3). Theology can be practical when practical concerns are brought to it from the beginning. Practical theology has a particular task of shaping “theories of practice” (LeRon Shults 2006:327). And this approach can be summarized as the descriptive-empirical, the interpretive, the normative, and the pragmatic. Müller (2005:2) says, “Practical theology happens whenever and wherever there is a reflection on practice, from the perspective of the experience of the presence of God.” We cannot detach any reflections on religious experience from doing practical theology. Christians usually reflect on their religious experiences and beliefs within the presence of God, and through such reflection they construct their religious identity. In practical theology, which is always connected with ‘the moment of praxis (always local, embodied, and situated)’ (Müller 2005:2), theoretical context and practical context should be situated on an equal level. The primary subject matter of practical theology is Christian praxis in specific social contexts in the contemporary world. “It investigates this praxis empirically, interprets it to better understand and explain its patterns, constructs a

theological framework, and provides models of practice and guidelines for its future conduct and reform” (LeRon Shults 2006:328). Another important part of the new approach to practical theology is extensive attention to interdisciplinary work. And this is faced with practical theologians engaging the social sciences as a dialogue partner in their empirical or interpretive work. The basic objective for social science is to carry out analyses, interpret the status of values and interest in society, aimed at social commentary and social action and praxis (LeRon Shults 2006:331,332). Power is viewed not only in terms of its outcomes, but also as a process, best viewed as a network of unequal and mobile relations and interactions that are embedded in a community’s practices and discourses. Therefore, social science will contribute to the ongoing process within society. In the contemporary world, practical theologians confront the reality of pluralism in social science, as the result of interdisciplinarity within social science, which is appropriate to empirical research. Thus, practical theologians face the task of providing reasons for their evaluation of one approach as more adequate than the others (LeRon Shults 2006:333,338). According to Van Huyssteen, quoted by LeRon Shults (2006:87), the metaphoric language of our religious experience must be transformed in some way for maximal conceptual clarity. Thus, social science must play a part in influencing the theological plan and dialogue with theology. Van Huyssteen conceived the postfoundationalist theory of practical theology, and this rests on the relationship between rationality and interpreted experience as he claims (in LeRon Shults 2006:89) as follows:

We relate to our world epistemically only through the mediation of interpreted experience, and in this sense it may be said that theology and the sciences offer alternative interpretations of our experience... the rational agent’s self-conception and self-awareness is not only intrinsically connected to rationality, it is indeed an indispensable starting point for any account of the values that shape human rationality.

In the notion of postfoundationalist theory of practical theology, it is important that each individual person interpret their experience in meaningful constructions... Understanding the meaningfulness of human existence and the investigation of how meaning is constructed by individuals, societies, cultures, texts, and historical periods are essential in postfoundationalist theory of practical theology (LeRon Shults 2006:90). The idea that interpretations and

meaning are socially constructed is a part of the postfoundationalist approach...

“Contextuality is a key concept in the postfoundationalist approach. Experience is situated and experience is always interpreted” (Müller 2008:5).

For practical theology, it is important to reflect on the concept of social constructionism within the social sciences, as there is a strong connection between practical theology and the social sciences. Social constructionism is a growing theory within the social sciences with a rapidly growing body of publications on the term “social constructionism” (Hermans et al. 2002).

1.2 Social constructionism

According to Demasure and Müller (2006:4), the narrative approach has been linked to social constructionism, which exposes the stories and character of human life. The narrative approach emphasizes the social process while constructionism emphasizes the subjective. Language is a key role in this process. Meanings are shared and allocated by means of language. Thus the “act of languaging” and the ‘act of storying” can refer to “now” (Müller 1999:41). Hence, this narrative researcher is positioned within the social constructionist paradigm. This has implications for the way in which we try to be truthful in doing research (Müller & Scholeman 2004:9). Social constructionism, which is in line with a postmodern view, is the most useful theoretical position from which to conduct this research (Gergen 2001:33). Social constructionism functions as a guiding principle in this context and requires that the researcher and co-researchers all participate in the counseling, construct new realities and learn in the process (Müller & Scholeman 2004:2). Social Constructionism focuses on a person’s sense of self that is constructed by the interaction of that person with others (Freedman & Combs 1996:27). According to Müller (1999:41), the story of self cannot be told without connecting the rest of the stories. Everyone’s own story has a boundary, but is also explained by the larger story within which it functions. Social constructionists argue that realities are socially constructed from generation to generation and from day to day and are maintained through narratives (Freedman & Combs 1996:16,22), and perceptions with the

result that people interpret their own world when they encounter the world (Gergen 1985:266). Through social processes, knowledge is also produced by the relation between one person and others, the persons and their social context. A series of ideas and shared beliefs are created in the social process, and a social context where the boundary of what one is cannot be easily separated from what others are (Stevens 1996:222). Social constructionism is not a complete theory, but through reflection, constructionists appreciate the limitations of their commitments and the potential inherent in alternatives (Gergen 1999:235). But, since realities are constructed together and alternative understanding is reached socially through group action, social constructionism is applicable to this research. Müller (2004:6) says, "In social-constructionism there is a deep-rooted belief that we, with our rationality, are socially constructed." Van Huyssteen (2006:10) supports Müller that, "...embodied persons, and not abstract beliefs, should be seen as the locus of rationality. We, as rational agents, are thus always socially and contextually embedded". The alternative is not the sense of competing or conflicting interpretations, rather, it is the sense of complementary interpretations of the manifold dimensions of our experience." Müller (2004:6) understands "received interpretations", as the concept "that puts emphasis on tradition, on culture and on cultural discourses, all of which contribute to interpretations." Within this concept, a unique understanding of reality is always received, and reality is not constructed in an individual and subjective sense, but is rather socially constructed (Müller 2004:6). These ideas can then be applied to people's stories, cultures, and societies, rather than to information, systems and patterns (Freedman & Combs 1996:18). This approach also opens the way for the narrative approach. We are together continuously constructing our world by the stories we are telling, and through this, "we test our perceptions against each other and refine the macro-stories of our families and culture" (Müller 1999:41). Knowledge is also produced by the action of certain social processes, such as the interaction of people with each other and with their social environment. These realities provide the beliefs, practices, words and experiences from which they make up their lives (Stevens 1996:222). According to Freedman and Combs (1996:16), the stories of individual lives can influence the constitution of whole cultures, and cultural stories, in turn, can influence the way people interpret their daily experiences. The stories that people experience in their

personal lives with the stories that circulate in their cultures interact (Freedman & Combs 1996:16).

Demasure and Müller (2006:419) say that, social constructionism and the postfoundationalist approach are all part of one family with theology. These approaches support the narrative form of pastoral care and pastoral conversation on several points, which are formulated as guiding criteria for a pastoral conversation (Demasure & Müller 2006:419):

- Preference for stories instead of concepts and arguments
- To be locally contextual
- Socially constructed stories and identities
- In dialogue with the tradition
- Exploring interdisciplinary meaning

1.3 Narrative Approach

The narrative approach can be found within the framework of postfoundationalism and social constructionism, and is concerned with finding different meanings and the effects of stories on people within social interactions (Freedman & Combs 2002:191). From the theological position of postfoundationalism, the narrative approach is used to explore the context of people's experiences and personal stories. In terms of postfoundationalism, it is important to discover how people understand their own lives and behavior. According to Müller (1999:1), the "narrative approach has made the discovery that people do not tell stories only for interest's sake or for entertainment, but that life's grain is exposed through these stories." White (2000:9) assumes that narratives are peoples' expressions of life, consisting of units of meaning and experience. Thus, peoples' interpretation of their own behavior is explored along with a "scientific" interpretation of their behavior as well as the researcher's interpretation and the interpretations of others. In this sense, it is better to think of "story" instead of "pattern" or "label", and of "society" rather than of "system". According to Freedman and Combs (2002:106), narrative researchers collaborate with people to change their lives by storytelling. People are born into

stories and stories shape people's perceptions. Müller (1999:6) says, "Narrative therapy depends on the meaning-giving power of language and stories." Thus, as a narrative researcher, it is very important to understand and communicate the co-researchers' language. The co-researchers' language interprets the meaning of their life (Müller 1999:6).

1.3.1 Language and stories

According to Müller (1999:5), language is used to give meaning to personal experiences. And experiences are interpreted by using the words and grammar available to the story tellers. These stories are done within a time-frame. The experiences are raw and meaningless until words and concepts give meaning to them. Language is used to reframe past events into usable experiences. If the language is limited, the story is limited. And therefore the interpretation is hamstrung and less useful. The use of language gives meaning to experiences. And the experience is interpreted into a story when language is connected to this event. It becomes a story and develops meaning which provides motivation for new behavior, and creates new stories which lead to new meanings (Müller 1999:5). This is our way of thinking, doing and decision-making. Each story told, represents a struggle in the process of thinking, doing and decision-making. Through our stories we not only discover identity, but also build identity. Experience becomes useful when it turns into a story form. Thus, we organize our experiences into stories. The story is taken seriously and accepted as people's experience. Müller (1999:3) says about story development as follows:

Every story is always dynamic and developing, and therefore the story is formulating includes a process of development from one point to the next. The story also has a time-frame. This enables us to link experiences, events and time. In this way the story's plot develops. Events... develop into an unfolding line of suspense filled with intrigue.

Stories develop meaning when people's experiences are organized into story form. The narrative approach as a unity exists between the past, the present, and the future. In a narrative approach people's stories are continuously being told, so that eventually they can be reformulated into stories that would give a new meaning to life. Stories have the power to shape our experience of reality. The dominant stories

in society have power through networks of language, beliefs, institutions, customs, and laws, and these networks are called 'discourses' (Freedman & Combs 2002:106). According to Mustin (1994:19), quoted by Freedman and Combs (1996:42), discourses sustain a particular worldview, pointing out, "The ways most people hold, talk about, and act on a common, shared viewpoint are part of and sustain the prevailing discourses." Discourses have power to shape a person's choices about what life events can be as stories and how they should be storied. Our stories have been shaped by a variety of discourses (Freedman & Combs 1996:43). Postfoundationalism values each discourse in its own right and allows for respectful dialogue and insight, in order to help people grow in their understanding of life. Thus, conversations can be seen as stories and narratives, with stories needing to be listened to and heard with their intentional meaning in mind (Müller & Schoeman 2004:8). According to Müller and Schoeman (2004:8), "the challenge is to create a situation where people's narratives can be listened to and heard in a respectful manner, a situation where it is not only possible to hear the meaning of the narrator, but where the narrator is respected and not exposed by the research itself". In the narrative research, co-researchers are recognized as a unique domain of skills and techniques that enable people to derive meaning from their perceptions of the world. Thus, they should be voiced and formulated through the research process. This kind of research creates a sense of hope and therefore consists of positive intervention. This is a powerful, but a fragile intervention (Müller & Schoeman 2004:9). Therefore, it is important that this research is not aimed at any objectives of the researcher, but is rather aimed at being of benefit and value to co-researchers. "The aim is, through this research process, to empower the powerless" (Müller & Schoeman 2004:8).

Hence, in interviews, the researcher can assist his/her co-researchers to tell their stories in their own ways, and to interpret and assess their own experiences. This researcher will thus make an effort to listen to co-researchers' interpretations and will attempt to construct particular meanings, as Freedman and Combs (2002:141) suggest, rather than rely on any generalizations or assumptions. The success of the story of their experience provides people with a sense of continuity and meaning in

their lives. So, people renew their stories, making new meanings and creating new possibilities for a new future.

1.3.2 The not knowing position

A “not knowing position” has been adopted, which is an important position for narrative researchers to take (Freedman & Combs 1996:44). Anderson and Goolishian (1990a:159) see therapy as a process in which “we are always moving toward what is not yet known”. However, adopting a “not knowing position” does not mean that the researcher does not know anything, but that it is knowledge of the process of therapy, not of the content and meaning of people’s lives. The goal of therapy is to participate in a conversation (Anderson & Goolishian 1988:381). And thus, a therapist achieves a “not knowing position” when they do not see themselves as an expert taking control of the research or the research “object”, but rather as being open to the co-researchers and providing opportunities for them to share their stories (Freedman & Combs 1996:42; Müller 1999:1). The central concern of narrative therapy is to collaborate with people in developing new narratives (stories) about themselves that are more empowering and more satisfying, giving them hope for a better future (Freedman & Combs 2002:203,204).

The co-researchers in this study are aged between 20 and 23 and most of them are familiar with the researcher, which makes it easy for the researcher to want to give them advice or interpret the meaning of their stories. But making professional or “expert” assessments will be avoided as Freedman and Combs (2002:17) suggest. Adults who are involved in the ministry, especially of missionary children, tend to have prejudiced assumptions about them based on so-called ‘general knowledge’. So the voices of missionary children may easily go unheard and thus, they may be marginalized. According to Müller and Schoeman (2004:9), it is not easy to hear a ‘small story’ against the dominant stories. Therefore, one must always be truthful to the research process and also aim to concentrate on the small, marginalized and unheard stories of co-researchers. Van Huyssteen quoted by Clayton (in LeRon Shults 2006:88) emphasizes “the personal voice of the individual rational agent [must] not [be] silenced.” Thus, an effort will be made to hear the unheard stories of the co-researchers.

For this research, it is important to understand the meaning of the co-researcher's stories, rather than trying to analyse data about mission agencies, missionary parents and missionary children. Hence, the researcher will try to only participate in the interviews by listening to the co-researcher's stories and to stay in a "not knowing" position (Anderson & Goolishian 1990:s.p.) positioned as a respectful and non-judgmental interviewer. This approach tends to "centre people as the experts in their own lives" (Morgan 2002:2). For this reason, this research intends to engage in collaborative, horizontal relationships, in which co-researchers choose their preferred stories and attach their own meanings to them (Freedman & Combs 2002:205). Therefore, the "not knowing position" is of great significance to this research (Anderson & Goolishian 1990, 1992; Kotze et al. 2002).

Therefore, this narrative researcher takes a "not knowing" approach, rather than demand specific answers to questions. The focus will be on listening to people, asking them about their experiences and trying to connect with them as it is their perspective that orients us as to the specific realities that are shaped by their personal narratives (Freedman & Combs 2002:26). The researcher and the co-researchers participate in the co-development of new meaning. The focus will be on understanding the co-researcher's stories to 'under-stand' and not to 'above- or beside-stand' them. The "not knowing position" is remarkably significant (Anderson & Goolishian 1990:157). White (1995:69) emphasizes that researchers always have to put their "expert" knowledge in brackets, so that co-researchers feel less intimidated in the conversation. If a researcher has a strong opinion about what a person should or should not do, the co-researchers may feel that they have no choice but to submit to the researcher's opinion (White 1995:69). In the narrative approach people are centered as experts. Researchers are not expert. The people are the primary interpreters of their own experience. Thus, the narrative researcher should realize that everyone has all the resources they need to reach their goals. The co-researcher's interpretation of their experiences is thus highly important even though they may not have the skills necessary to explain their experiences. The researcher will thus develop her own interpretations in collaboration with the co-researchers in order for them to develop new narratives about themselves and the world in which they live (Freedman & Combs 2002:203-204).

According to Freedman and Combs (1996:45), narrative researchers are curious about peoples' unique answers and encourage people to develop them more fully. Genuine curiosity during the conversation gives rise to questions that highlight new possibilities for the group to consider (Monk et al. 1997:26). An attitude of curiosity enables the researcher to stay in a "not knowing" position and it prevents him or her from trying to achieve a "quick fix" (Monk et al. 1997:26). The "not knowing" position does not allow the co-researchers and the researcher to know where it will "end up" but it will rather allow them to know "that we are creating meaning through collaboration" (Kotze & Kotze 2002:154). Because this method is interested in people making their own evaluations, this does not mean that anything goes. The researchers are full participants in the process of research, and bring their own opinions and experience along with them... The narrative researcher seeks to examine problematic cultural stories in collaborative and multidimensional ways (Freedman & Combs 2002:16). For this reason, questions are asked not to gather information, but to generate experience (Freedman & Combs 1996:113). Questions allow the inquiring people to interpret and assess their own experience. Then the researchers describe where they come from and their intentions in asking them, so that people can evaluate their bias and decide how to relate to it. In narrative research, people are in a better position to interpret, make meaning of, and assess their own experiences than outsiders are. Thus, instead of assessment, researchers interested in hearing detailed, context-specific narratives (Freedman & Combs 2002:18). Narrative intention is to collaborate with people in living out moment-by-moment, choice-by-choice life stories that they prefer and that make their world more satisfying. Narrative researchers are interested in opening up possibilities. "The narrative metaphor biases us toward thinking about possibilities that unfold in living out a story, rather than about goals" (Freedman & Combs 2002:21). According to Müller (1999:30), true narrative research is not "result-orientated, but rather wait-orientated. It does not offer answers, but facilitates questions and wait(s)." "If we understand things too quickly, we may perhaps fail to understand them well enough" (Müller 1999:6).

1.3.3 Qualitative interviewing

Qualitative interviewing starts from the insider perspective, and “the goal is to describe and understand” (Müller & Schoeman 2004:7). Qualitative interviewing relates to narrative intervention which is appropriate to listening to the stories of my co-researchers and for positioning them in a subjective role in the research. According to Müller et al. (2001:67):

For us, the aim of the research is not to bring about change, but to listen to the stories and to be drawn into those stories. While the structuralist researcher has objectivity in mind by trying to be an observer from outside, and by trying to bring about change from the outside, the narrative researcher has subjective integrity in mind and strives for participatory observation.

Therefore, qualitative interviewing will be used, using a conversational style to facilitate the co-researchers' own interpretations of their experiences. Müller (1999:47) insists that, in narrative research “the conversation is a natural form of communication through which people share stories with each other. It is not technique-orientated conversations where every next question is precisely measured. This tool is simply conversational questions to enable the development of the conversation based on the appropriate significant stories.” It is applied meaningfully if it is aligned to the broad narrative approach. Everything depends on the creativity and “not-knowing” position of the therapist. “Whenever we work with stories, we work with memories” (Müller 1999:47). The stories impact our lives powerfully and it is a way to come to ourselves. This is the reason that people tell and re-tell their stories in such a way. “New stories need to be constructed on the basis of which a new future can be envisioned... A story which flows from the past to the future, possess the necessary change potential” (Müller 1999:48).

Rubin and Rubin (1995:2) define qualitative interviewing: (a) as a principal research tool, an intentional way of learning about people's feelings, thoughts, and experiences; (b) as held between strangers or among acquaintances; (c) as guided by the researcher who intentionally introduces questions and requests the interviewee to explore these questions in depth. And this encourages the interviewees to reflect their experience in detail. Rubin and Rubin (1995:6), also

explain three pivotal characteristics of qualitative interviewing that distinguish this from other research as follows:

- (1) Qualitative interviews are modifications or extensions of ordinary conversation, but with important distinctions.
- (2) Qualitative interviewers are more interested in the understanding, knowledge, and insights of the interviewees than in categorizing people or events in terms of academic theories.
- (3) The content of the interview as well as the flow and choice of topics, changes to match what the individual interviewee knows and feels.

As mentioned above, qualitative interviewing builds the conversational skill to hear what people say and takes considerable practice. It is more a technique to offer some practical guidelines in order to help develop the technical skills for qualitative interviewing. However, it is not just skills; rather, it is also a philosophical an approach to learning. Within qualitative interviewing, understanding is achieved by encouraging people to describe their worlds in their own understanding. For this reason, qualitative interviewing requires listening carefully sentence by sentence, and word by word, enough to hear the meanings, interpretations and understandings that give shape to the worlds of the interviewees. Qualitative interviewers understand that one's own experiences are unique and may be right, reflecting different perspectives or observations of different parts of the same event.

This remains true to this researcher's postfoundationalist position and use of the narrative approach in which people's interpretation of their behavior is important. Thus, this researcher will try to listen to the co-researchers' stories, told, interpreted and assessed in their own ways. They have to concerned with meaning rather than generalizations or assumptions (Freedman & Combs 2002:141).

Qualitative interviewing also requires an understanding of culture. Culture affects what is said and how the interview is heard and understood. Rubin and Rubin (1995:3) state, "in-depth qualitative interviewing helps explain how and why culture is created, evolves and maintained. Qualitative interviews also explore specific topics, events, or happenings, and can solicit personal histories to examine social and political phenomena". Through qualitative interviews, researchers put all the information they find together to form explanations that are grounded in the detail,

evidence, and examples of the interviews. Qualitative interviewing “allows us to share the world of others to find out what is going on, why people do what they do, and how they understand their worlds. With such knowledge we can help people to solve a variety of problems” (Rubin & Rubin 1995:4).

In a qualitative interview, researchers need to be dependent on the cooperation of their conversational partners in order to obtain high quality information in interviews. The relationship between the researcher and those who are being researched becomes a partnership, in which the interviewees are not simply objects of research. “Together the researcher and conversational partner decide what issues to explore, suggest what remains to be said, and work to provide the thick description that builds toward an overall picture” (Rubin & Rubin 1995:11). To understand a partnership, represents the goal of integrating those who give us information into the research. “If the partners can direct the conversation to matters that interest them and what they think is important, interviews gain depth and reality. If you impose on them what you think is important, you may miss important insights about the subject you are investigating” (Rubin & Rubin 1995:12).

Therefore during the interviews, I will be a participant in the conversation, develop the skills needed to listen carefully to what is being said, and encourage the co-researchers to describe their experiences, instead of trying to impose on them what I think is important. Broad descriptions are rooted in this type of conversation. The sharing of my own story can also contribute to participatory interaction and make the research participants feel more at ease (Müller & Schoeman 2004:4).

Being ethical and gaining a reputation for being ethical encourages people to be more open with researchers. In some cases, the interviewees may feel insecure and uncomfortable to be interviewed by researchers. Thus, the researchers need to encourage their interviewees in order to help them relax by showing them respect. The relationship between the researcher and those who are being researched, should grow and change, and should go through phases of openness, withdrawal, trust and secrecy in terms of the research process. As relationships become more involved, both partners develop expectations about what is going to be said (Rubin & Rubin 1995:104,110).

1.3.4 Externalization

Externalization following a narrative approach will facilitate externalizing conversations with the co-researchers which will help them to separate themselves from the problem. White (1988,1989) quoted by Freedman and Combs (2002:28) introduces the idea that “the person is not the problem, but the problem is the problem”, “people are separated from their problems.” “Externalization” is a practice supported by the belief that a problem is something that operates on, has an impact on, or pervades a person’s life. It is something separate and different from the person.

An externalizing conversation (White 1991:s.p.) is initiated from what the person finds problematic. Hence, a co-researchers’ feelings, problems, cultural and social practices may be externalized (Freedman & Combs 2002:28). In externalizing conversations, we can hear descriptions of the effects of problems. According to Freedman and Combs (2002:207), when listening to people’s descriptions of themselves, we ask the question, “what is the problem that causes people to behave in this way?” According to White and Epston, quoted by Gergen (2001:172), “a major step toward re-storying is taken when the person - along with family members and friends - can separate the problem from the self.” They say, “If family members separate themselves and their relationships from the problem, externalization opens up possibilities for them to describe themselves, and their relationships from a new, nonproblem-saturated perspective; it enables the development of an alternative story of family life.” When problems are externalized, people have a relationship with the problem. And in externalizing conversations, we are interested to hear descriptions of the effects of problems.

Naming a problem can also be a way of examining a problem and thinking differently about it. It can be poetic and compelling. As we ask people to evaluate their relationship to problems, we often hear what they would prefer. We listen for words in people’s descriptions that may serve as good names. As people name problems, we keep track of them. The explicit and direct discussion and their contrast to problems can be a vital part of therapy. Naming a problem begins the process of externalization for their problem (Freedman & Combs 2002:29). Gergen

(2001:173) says, the externalization of the problem began to reveal unique outcomes. This became the basis of creating a new story which proved successful in solving the problem.

I give some examples of externalized questions from Freedman and Combs (2002:32) below:

- What name would you give the problem?
- What is it like to have the experience of the problem?
- Have you ever been able to escape the problem for even a few minutes?
- Is the problem always with you?
- What effect does the problem have on your life?
- How does the problem alter your relationship with yourself?
- Is this what you want for yourself? Why or why not?

1.3.5 Deconstruction

Müller (2004:1) says, "Practical theological research is not only about description and interpretation of experience. It is also about deconstruction and emancipation... to develop into a new story of understanding that points beyond the local community". Deconstructive conversation moves effectively from "listening to experiences" to "describing the experiences". Morgan (2000:45) says that a narrative approach is interested in discovering, acknowledging and "taking apart" (deconstructing) the beliefs, ideas and practices of the broader culture in which a person lives and which are assisting the problem to develop.

Using deconstructive conversations makes the ideas that assist in sustaining the life of the problem become more available to questioning and challenging. Deconstruction deals with text analysis. Meaning is not inherent, but, rather emerges only as the reader converses with a text (Demasure & Müller 2006:5). One cannot enter into a dialogue with a text without having a pre-understanding or particular perspective of it first. Thus, deconstructionists try to discern the implicit and hidden meaning of a text and how the text relates to other texts and sub-texts (Freedman & Combs 2002: 26,27).

In deconstructive conversations, it is important that therapists do not try to impose their ideas or thoughts, or an outside point of view, on a person in order to “change a person’s thinking”. They must ask questions they do not know the answers to and must remain curious. They will trace the history of the problems, how the problems came into the person’s life and will ask questions to evaluate the effects of these beliefs, whether they are helpful or not. Morgan (2000:45,46) insists that narrative therapists can work with people, consulting with them in order to examine these ideas and practices, defining them, pulling them apart and tracing their history.

Deconstructive listening guides us to explore meaning and examine and illustrate how the meaning of any symbol, word or text is inextricably bound-up in its context. Deconstruction does not focus on the search for the ‘real’ meaning of any text, but rather focuses on the narrative gaps (Freedman & Combs 2002:206) and consists of a critical analysis of the text (Demasure & Müller 2006:5). Therefore, according to Demasure and Müller (2006:5), “deconstructionism is concerned with the historical and cultural production of knowledge and how a certain construction contributes to power and social action”. This work – finding meaning and its effects – can open up a space for the people, whose stories are being investigated, to think about the possibilities for a better future and for a new reality (Freedman & Combs 1996:46,47).

There are specific discourses or traditions that missionary children follow and thus, the notion of deconstructive conversation is used to assess how the in-context experiences of the co-researchers are informed by their discourses and traditions. Narrative therapy is the process of "re-authoring" or "re-storing" conversations. Humans are interpretive beings and our lives are influenced by the broader stories of the culture in which we live (Morgan 2000:45). Therefore, in this research, it is important me to understand the meaning of the co-researchers’ stories through their own interpretation of their experiences. This is because people are the primary interpreters of their own experience (Freedman & Combs 1996:46). It will be facilitated by asking questions to develop understanding of their stories and to enrich understanding with detail and meaning. Deconstructive questions will be asked in order to clarify meaning. They are used to help people unpack their life

stories so that they can see their life from different perspectives. Through deconstruction questions, problematic beliefs, practices, feelings and attitudes are revealed along with cultural and contextual influences. Asking deconstructive questions “invites people to see their stories from a different perspective, to notice how they are constructed, to note their limits, or to discover that there are other possible narratives” (Freedman & Combs 2002:209). Deconstructive listening will also be practised, as listening carefully to people’s stories and striving to understand their experience helps to develop both trust and a rapport with the co-researcher, and may also help to become aware of any particular constraints that their stories may carry (Freedman & Combs 2002:206). Thus, the co-researchers will be assisted in describing their stories, to use their language, and seek out and create new meanings.

The following are models of deconstructive questions Freedman and Combs (1996: 120,121) propose:

- What conclusions about your relationship have you drawn because of this problem?
- What behaviors have you found yourself resorting to in relationship to the situation that you have described?
- Does this situation that you describe encourage particular feelings in your life?
- What attitudes do you think must be there to justify the behaviors that you have described?
- What gets in the way of developing the kinds of relationships you would like to have?

1.4 Ethical consideration

For ethical reasons, pseudonyms will be used in the stories of the co-researchers to protect them, so that readers will not recognize who the participants are. The material will not be used to identify them as the source. For this reason, permission was obtained from the co-researchers to write down parts of their stories, but only for the purpose of this PhD thesis.

According to Müller (2004), the “narrative paradigm and conversational method do not guarantee a sound ethical relationship... The power relations in a therapeutic context (research context) can be obscure and covert, but they are nevertheless present...To be aware of the developing pastoral therapeutic relationship (research relationship), which includes the politics of power, is the greatest ethical challenge”. Ethical consideration has to do with the context in which it occurs and which can be unpredictable. When a researcher is compelled to make an ethical decision in a particular context, it is important to be aware of the unpredictability of the situation. Smythe and Murray (2000:312) argue that the traditional ethical principles governing research with human participants offer insufficient guidance in dealing with our own unique dilemmas. However, according to Gottlieb and Lasser (2001:191), “narrative research allows... new information to emerge from participants free of our assumptions and prejudices.” It is a new idea that narrative research is protecting participants within research ethics.

Smythe and Murray quoted by Gottlieb and Lasser (2001:192) emphasize the need to protect participants as follows:

Some individuals might not respond well to the exigencies of narrative inquiry that is, to the consequences of being open and reflective about their experience. Likewise, an individual ability to grasp the notion of multiple narrative meaning might be limited. Understanding this notion is essential to narrative research participation. ... As narrative researchers we much be prepared to exclude individuals who we believe might have considerable difficulty dealing with these issues.

Narrative researchers aspire to the goal of including all voices in their research. Narrative research also has the responsibility of protecting the participant from harm in this ethical consideration. Ethical obligations require researchers to avoid deception, to ask permission to record conversation or take a video, and to be honest about the intended use of the research. This also includes ensuring that interviewees are not hurt emotionally, physically, or financially because they agreed to talk with researchers. Researchers have an obligation to warn interviewees if something they are saying may get them in trouble and to give them an opportunity to retract what they said or tell you not to use the material or not to identify them as the source. Researchers should not take material from the interviewee for their own

purposes. Protecting interviewees from harm might mean leaving out exciting material from the final report so as to keep people out of trouble. If interviewees do not want you to use something they said, you should leave it out. Researchers may have to make some trade-offs between the accuracy and punch of their report and protecting their interviewees (Rubin & Rubin 1995:94). Instead of assumptions and prejudices, narrative researchers focus on people's narrative life story and try to learn to listen to their story attentively and empathetically. Narrative researchers are also very interested in people and intensely curious about people's sense of their lives (Smythe & Murray 2000:311). Thus, it is of great significance for the researcher to maintain subjective integrity and credibility throughout the research process. Both researcher and participants should learn in the process of doing research.

This research preferred not to speak of as 'research objects', or 'research population', but to use concepts like 'research participants' and 'co-researchers' (Müller & Schoeman 2004:9). It is important to this research not to serve the researcher's own objectives, but should benefit and be of value to the research partners, and to make it clear to the co-researchers that this researcher sees herself as being in a partnership with them. Therefore, in this research, an effort is made towards subjective integrity with the method of participatory interaction, to listen to the co-researchers' stories and to be drawn into those stories. An effort will be made to hear their stories which may have, up until now, been marginalized or even unheard (Müller & Schoeman 2004:9). The co-researchers may be worried about whether their stories will be told to their parents or others. Therefore, as a narrative researcher with integrity and credibility, the purpose of this will clearly be explained to the co-researchers at the outset of the research process and promises not to say or write anything about this research to others, and not to identify them as the source without their consent. This study should contribute to a greater understanding of their situation and needs. This narrative researcher will listen to the co-researchers' stories and try to seek a narrative approach with integrity and credibility. This research should be of benefit to the co-researchers and to the researcher.

Müller and Schoeman's (2004:11) stipulate four metaphors of the basic values of good research:

- (1) Research as action; research is action and therefore participation. The researcher is active and participatory... Research as action involves all the relevant parties.
- (2) Research as narrative; 'research-as-narrative suggests that research works by describing, exploring and changing the metaphors used in a process of finding during research'.
- (3) Research as facilitating; the researcher initiates and facilitates the research. A facilitator is not a manipulator. He/she merely directs the /band/ of researchers.
- (4) Research as responsibility; responsibility replaces 'objectivity'. By creating space for metaphors and for the development of new stories, the researcher takes responsibility. A responsible researcher is a self-reflective researcher.

1.5 Spiritual influence

All spiritualities are centered in relational experiences with the divine, and/or with humanity, and/or with all of creation (Carlson & Erickson 2002:216). Therefore, the researcher should be aware of the co-researchers' family's spiritual background and experience of God's presence without imposing own religious language on the co-researchers. Carlson and Erickson (2002:224) argue that it is common for therapists to purposefully share their preferences, and desires to connect with their spiritual beliefs and relationship with God using their own religious language. A therapist's job is not to share their spiritual beliefs or doctrines with their co-researchers, but, rather to consider the relational implications of their spiritual beliefs, spiritual selves and relationship with their co-researchers. The co-researchers are invited to tell and retell their experiences of God's love, compassion or mercy (Carlson & Erickson 2002:232).

Some of the co-researchers say that they are born again Christians and have been involved with their parents in some part of missionary work. They also know that the researcher is a Christian missionary too. Thus, there is common ground on which to talk about God freely and with an open mind. Knowledge of the co-researchers is of

great value, but their explanation of their experiences of God's presence has been respected, because each person's experience is unique. Some of them, however, question the meaning of faith in Christ and other questions of Christianity in their lives. They seem to ask how Christ can bring meaning to their lives and meet their deepest needs. Their versions were listened to carefully to catch 'clues' when they are talking about their experiences of God's presence. By listening carefully it was possible to interpret and respect the questions they may have and the things they say, rather than impose a personal understanding on them. The language of feeling, help, guidance, peace, delight, love, power, dreams, support, protection, or the answers to prayer have been used to talk with the co-researchers about the experiences of God's presence.

The researcher would also like to invite God to join in to help the co-researchers with their present suffering. God is invisible and the experience of God's presence is subjective. Thus, the different backgrounds of the co-researchers are taken into account. Some symbolic methods are used to facilitate the co-researchers' experience of "God-talk", for example, by introducing some Christian books and articles about meditation, and some Bible verses for their encouragement, where needed, also to pray for the co-researchers during the research period and to pray with them, if they wish, as a way of facilitating "God-talk", without imposing own religious language on the co-researchers.

Spiritual experiences have the potential to offer a wealth of hope and the ability to understand those who genuinely seek help. It is necessary for researchers to be sure of the role of spirituality in their personal lives and establish how this influences their co-researchers (Carlson & Erickson 2002:216-217). The Narrative approach is a relational effort which should be reflexive, thoughtful and critically careful about the relationships that researchers have with their co-researchers. Spirituality can be considered by some as being an ethical issue and perhaps even a way of being that is a living, day by day, effort. It invites us into communal relations of respect, mutuality, accountability, compassion and love with all humanity and creation. This researcher sees religion as a part of our spirituality and our lives involve a continual search for the spiritual, which flows from God – the source of all good. This search

is not easy and is often a very difficult and trying journey in which one may find themselves struggling with despair (Carlson & Erickson 2002:216-219).

According to Yancey (2002:242), even if it feels like God is a million miles away and has abandoned me, not answering my prayers, God is still real. My feelings are not important in the realization of God's presence and thus I trust God in spite of pain, I seek God during the trials of life, surrender myself to him when I suffer and depend upon him even when he seems distant. I believe that in times of sorrow, suffering is a gradual, progressive development in my life. I agree that it is impossible to understand God, as we are merely human beings while God is transcendental. The only way to approach Him is to realize the limitations of ourselves as human beings. We can never explain God and His existence in the world. Nouwen (1976:155) says, God calls us to tasks that may seem difficult and even impossible, but He does not ever forsake us. Hence, at this point, it is important to acknowledge the way people can think about God's presence. According to Carlson and Erickson (2002:220), our spiritual lives and our professional lives are inextricably interconnected. Carlson and Erickson (2002:220) insist that spirituality is often a tremendous source of help, strength, comfort, peace, security, serenity and hope for most people. As a narrative researcher, I realize that spiritual awareness can be a powerful source of help for people who need counseling. Thus, we need to develop our own spiritual lives, on which we can draw as a resource in our work (Carlson & Erickson 2002:220).

The co-researchers are as much God's children as I am, and thus they should be accepted as God's children. During the research, it was good to consider what God would do if He were the researcher and therapist. To think of God as "co-therapist" is to recognize that each of the co-researchers has their own specific experience and understanding of God which should be taken into account in this research.

2. RESEARCH PROCEDURE

2.1 Language

Language is used to give meaning to our experiences, and we interpret our experiences in terms of using the words and grammar available to us. Language allows us to reframe the past events into usable experiences. If the language is limited, the story is limited. Experience becomes useful when it turns into a story. Thus, we organize our experiences into stories (Müller 1999:5). Therefore in order to facilitate the conversation, both Korean and English are used. Since the co-researchers have grown up overseas, some of them have limited ability in Korean, especially in terms of giving meaning to their experiences in detail. Speaking in Korean is more difficult than listening in their cases. For this reason, the co-researchers and the researcher decided to speak in Korean and in English. Then the conversations were translated into English in order to write this thesis.

2.2 Interviews

The interview period in this research took place between September 2007 and November 2009 with five missionary children. The interviews were carried out regularly with three of the co-researchers and were carried out irregularly with two of them. The original plan was for both group and individual meetings with the co-researchers. However, as they are scattered in different countries, there was not an opportunity for all to meet together. On the other hand, some of co-researchers felt insecure about sharing their personal experiences with other people. Therefore it was agreed that individual interviews would be facilitated for this research.

Individual face to face meetings were held in Korea and in South Africa, and networking has been used when a face-to-face relationship was impractical. In the interview an effort was made to fully understand from their way of thinking, the stories of the co-researchers as well as the meanings within those stories. For this understanding, open-ended questioning was commonly used. According to Riessman (1993:34), the open-ended question assists co-researchers to arrive at

interpretations of their experiences together with the researcher, by telling a story that often links with different points in the interview.

2.3 Networking

Networking involves the use of distance technology to develop the network relationship. It can use e-mail, website, phone, or a combination of these varied means of communication. This means using e-mail or computer systems to support a network relationship when a face-to-face relationship is impractical (O'Neill, Wagner & Gomez 1996:39). Nowadays as many people use network programs, this is an effective way of achieving a wide range of counseling options. It creates a useful channel of interaction between researcher and co-researcher (Oh 2008:232).

As most of the co-researchers were distant, this tool was used to facilitate the research process. They were sometimes communicated with through networking such as by internet phone, e-mail and chatting. Internet phone is an exceedingly useful method for the research process. The researcher and the co-researchers often communicated through internet phone from a long distance, chatted via the internet and cell phone for short conversations for encouragement and to make appointments for meetings. E-mail is also useful as a convenient method for communication.

2.4 Notes

During each session, notes of the interview were made in order to keep track of anything important that was said, and to help the co-researchers to remember the conversation. Important conversations are carefully written down in detail. According to Morgan (2000:96) "the notes assist people to shift from the ideas that are associated with their perceptions of the problem to ideas about their lives that fit with the commitments and preferences that have been more richly described in the conversation."

2.5 Writing letters

Letters by e-mail were written between research sessions to facilitate the co-researchers' deep understanding of themselves and to give them encouragement. Sometimes a summary of an interview were written to note the important parts of the conversation during the interview. Words of encouragement were also communicated with letters. The co-researchers acknowledged the help of these letters to remind them of the important parts of a conversation, and to strengthen them with encouraging words. Writing letters has developed the relationships and opened our minds even more than talking face-to-face. The co-researchers gave willing feedback to these letters. Receiving feedback from the people to whom the letters are sent plays an important part in this process... people are more able to get free from the influence of the problem when they are more connected to the preferred stories of their lives (Morgan 2000:103).

2.6 Reflection

Feedback loops were constantly used in order to make sure that the co-researchers and the researcher grow towards a better understanding and interpretation of the conversations.

2.6.1 Feedback from the co-researchers

After each session, notes were interpreted and kept for future reference. The interview sessions were also discussed with the co-researchers to receive feedback about the researcher's interpretation. The co-researchers were respected as the "experts" of their own stories and experiences and thus, if the researcher's interpretations of their stories and experiences differ from theirs, it was discussed with them until both agreed upon an interpretation. This process was repeated until the co-researchers got a broader understanding and a clearer interpretation of their stories.

2.6.2 Feedback from the reflection group

As a reflection group missionary parents were consulted in order to verify the research, to assess whether the interpretation is correct or not. The reflection group and the co-researchers were asked for their reflections and interpretations of the sessions, and for any corrections they would like to make.

In terms of recurring feedback loops, the co-researcher's reflections about the interpretation were first listened to, followed by a discussion with the reflection group. The merit of reflection is that it moves us closer toward communal ways of working (Cattanach 2002:211). It is hoped that this feedback will enable both the participants and the researcher more fully to understand the stories and to participate more actively in the present research.

2.7 Interdisciplinary conversation

I allowed the scientific community to influence me in my decisions about the literature to study. Mostly, my supervisor, Prof. Müller helped with insight into and perspective on this research, and with guidance in the use of reliable and literature appropriate to this study. Some of the students who have been studying narrative therapy with Prof. Müller at the University of Pretoria gave advice on which literature to use concerning a narrative study.

Relevant materials from the following fields were used: (a) other disciplines (Missiology, Christian Education and Child Psychology) in order to find new patterns that are consistent with the Christian paradigm through critical theological reflection; (b) mission agencies concerned with missionary children, for example, the MK education department of SIM (Serving In Mission), ICHED (International Children's Education Department), KOMKED (Korean Missionary Kids' Education), MKNEST (Missionary Kids' Nest in Korea), who assisted in collecting relevant literature for this research; (c) some of the MK coordinators of these agencies, who helped with the collecting of various types of materials and literature that used in this study; (d) literature by specialists helped to identify some of the possible discourses operating in the lives of missionary children. All the information received were

thoroughly scrutinized and only the relevant material were chosen. Published and unpublished books, journals and articles, which are written by 'expert' authors were referred to; (e) relevant materials from Child Psychology helped to gain understanding of how childhood experiences affect the lives of the co-researchers.

Müller (2005:11) comments that 'the interdisciplinary movement is part and parcel of practical theology. It includes the conversation with other theological disciplines and with all the other sciences'. In postfoundationalist practical theology, the theological reflection can be integrated with various scientific disciplines as a cognitive scientific form. The description of experience developed through the interdisciplinary investigation.

3. SUMMARY

In this chapter, the research paradigm and procedure including the theological position of a practical theologian were stated. Van Huyssteen (1997:4) proposes postfoundationalism as a "viable third epistemological option." Müller (2004:4) points out that this "third way" is a way out of the "stuckness" of modern or foundationalist (fundamentalist) science and theology, and on the other hand, the fatalism of some postmodern approaches. Van Huyssteen (1998:5) also recommends postfoundationalism as a safe space for rational interdisciplinary work between theology and science. Therefore, the position within the framework of postfoundationalist practical theology and the social constructionist narrative perspective was taken in the present research. Postfoundationalist practical theology which has been developed from postfoundationalism for more effective collaboration within the interdisciplinary conversation which is carried out between the various social science disciplines and theological reflection from a narrative perspective was adopted. With postfoundationalism as guide in interviews, the co-researchers were assisted to tell their stories in their own ways, and to interpret and assess their own experiences. The co-researcher's interpretations and attempts to construct particular meanings were listened to, as Freedman and Combs (2002:141) suggest, rather than rely on any generalizations or assumptions. The aim was always to be truthful

to the research process and also to concentrate on the small, marginalized and unheard stories of the co-researchers (Müller & Schoeman 2004:9).

CHAPTER 3

MISSIONARY CHILDREN AND EDUCATIONAL ISSUES

1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter one, it was stated that the most important issue missionary parents are faced with, concerns the educational needs of their children on the field (Kim 1999:55). Hale (2003:13) and Kim (2006:205) ascertained that many of the missionary agencies discovered that the problem of educating missionary children is always near the top of the list of problems encountered on the mission field.

Missionary families face a variety of choices when it comes to deciding how to educate their children, and every option has distinct advantages and disadvantages (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:216). Missionary parents often face this major decision with little or no awareness of the different kinds of options available for schooling in a cross-cultural setting. Pollock and Van Reken (2001:216) aver that children's experiences in school dramatically shape how they view their childhood and whether they look back on it with joy or regret. Making the right choice for schooling is crucial for missionary children. Missionary parents have to consider some important questions about their children's schooling; such as what are the available options, what language and curriculum do local national schools use, what language and curriculum does the local international school use, who will pay for the extra cost of schooling (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:217). Often missionary parents fear taking their children into a cross-cultural setting at all, because they believe their children will miss out on too many educational opportunities offered at the home country. But the educational process for any child includes more than school. It includes all learning, in every dimension of a person's life (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:219). Thus, in considering a particular school, parents must ask for an explanation of its philosophy of education, its methods of teaching, and its policy on discipline, and then decide whether this school is a good option for their child. Even when an educational option seems to be good from the parents' point of view, or has been good for other children in the same family, some of these differences in the philosophical or psychological approaches to education can cause enough stress for

a particular child that a change to a school with a different method of teaching is justified (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:220). Therefore, parents must examine the total approach to education in any system of schooling, not only the academic aspect. Styles of discipline, teaching, and grading can vary widely from one culture to another. These differences can have an enormous impact on children. So, wise parents must have some basic principles about the educational process to make the best choices possible. It is also very important for missionary families to make a long term plan for children's education from pre-school to college/university in order to ensure educational consistency. It is often difficult for Korean missionary children to make a wise choice of education systems on the field which are mostly different from Korea, while Western missionary children have more opportunities to choose MK/International schools which are based on the Western education system and supported by Western teachers and staff (Park 1999:127).

In this chapter the traditional approach to education will be investigated, as well as the contemporary tendency, and the compare alternative options for schooling. Then, language issues and education view of Korean missionary children will be discussed. Since I am a missionary serving under SIM I will further describe the education policy statement of SIM¹¹ in order to understand how this mission agency supports its members' children. Through this study, a statement for the future education of Korean missionary children will be developed.

2 TRADITIONAL APPROACHES TO EDUCATING MISSIONARY CHILDREN

2.1 Historical approach

For various reasons, the traditional approach to educating missionary children has been to send them to regional MK boarding schools. For example, many

¹¹ SIM (Serving In Mission) International is a community of God's people who delight to worship him and are passionate about the Gospel, seeking to fulfill the mission of Jesus Christ in the world. SIM International was founded in the USA during 1893, and has 9 sending offices and has 2,000 active missionaries from 40 countries (www.sim.org).

missionaries find that there are often not schools in the area in which they live and thus they must send their children to boarding schools. These schools often draw missionary children from several surrounding countries and are normally run as 'inter-mission' schools. Governing bodies are made up of representatives from all the different mission agencies involved in establishing the school. The schools are often located in rather remote areas and students are mainly comprised of missionary children and possibly a few other children from Christian families (Hale 2003:13) either from the international community or from national families who want an American education for their children (Haile 2007:1). Typically, the "MK school" provides a largely American curriculum. Some missionaries have a special sense of call to the ministry of school-based missionary children education and have spent long and distinguished careers as missionary educators in one or other of these schools (Haile 2007:1). For the past 100 years, missionaries have followed the abovementioned traditional approach to educating their children.

2.2 Contemporary tendency

In today's world, many of these schools are facing many problems, including the difficulty of obtaining staff and teachers, decreasing student populations, increasing number of students from non-western countries, lack of adequate finances and inability to offer programmes which could be offered if there were enough teachers, finances and students (Hale 2003:13). Most missionary children are no longer spending a large proportion of their school career in boarding schools. Many missionary parents realise that this traditional approach is not always the best option for their children. The missionaries themselves were educated in this traditional way and have experienced the difficulties, especially the emotional difficulties such as unresolved grief and relationship difficulties with parents, because they were separated from their parents at an early age and for extended periods of time (Haile 2007:1). Pollock and Van Reken (2001:169-170) note that educational choices such as boarding school or staying in the home country for high school can create major patterns of separation for families when the children are still young.

Recent surveys (Haile 2007:1) among SIM missionaries demonstrate some growing trends that should be of interest to all who have a concern for the education of missionary children. In SIM's last survey, dated October 2004, 40% of 5-11 year old SIM missionary children were home schooled, and nearly all the rest were enrolled in Christian day schools. Even in the 12-18 year age group, traditionally the age group that has depended on boarding schools, only 25% were attending this type of school. SIM's policy (Haile 2007:1) for the education of missionary children is becoming more concerned with both missionary parents and missionary children, moving from the traditional approach to various other schooling options presented below.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS FOR SCHOOLING

Missionary families face various educational options according to the condition of the field. Generally they can make a choice in terms of their ministry, financial situation, and especially the education system (Park 1999:128). In order to make a wise choice for schooling, parents need to look at specific educational options and policies generally available to their families. The variety of choices may give parents the opportunity to discern the needs of each individual child (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:223). Current educational options available to missionary children are the following.

3.1 International schools

International schools are a popular option for missionary children in most major cities of the world (Hale 2003:14). Most of these schools originally catered for students primarily from North America and Britain, and the curriculum was generally either British- or American-based. Children from other countries had to adjust as best they could. British-based schools or American-based schools have different systems of education, of culture and of credit. In America 50 % is failure, but A's are given to those with 94 % and above. In Britain 50 % is passing, 70s and 80s are considered very good, and scores in the 90s are practically unheard-of (Pollock & Van Reken

2001:218). Some school systems practice learning by rote, and others employ only problem-based learning, where students must personally seek out the answers to each assignment. In some cultures discussion and other forms of student participation are encouraged, or even required. In others, this type of behavior is considered disrespectful. Ways of motivating students vary from culture to culture. Thus, in considering a particular school, parents must take into consideration the quality of the principal and teachers, the quality of the classroom experience, and ask for an explanation of its philosophy of education, its methods of teaching, and its policy toward discipline before they decide whether the school will be suitable for their child. The quality of the principal is a universal factor determining the level of a school's effectiveness in all the various countries of the world (Reynolds 2006:554).

International schools have a different curriculum and cultural framework from national schools. Many international schools are beginning to incorporate broader choices in their subject material, including the International Baccalaureate (IB)¹² degree and the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE). Besides French, Latin, German, and English, some other languages such as Chinese, Russian, or Korean may be included in some schools. Nowadays, international schools offer a greater diversity of subject matter, styles of teaching, basic curriculum, and philosophy of education (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:229). Therefore, parents must examine the whole picture of the international school, to make sure their child's needs will be met within the variety of subjects offered and the philosophy or cultural base of education it practiced.

These schools have advantages such as academically high standards, excellent facilities and equipment, enrichment and specialized programs, potential continuity with schooling during leave in the home country, and good preparation for re-entry if the curriculum is based on the home country's system. One of the greatest advantages of these schools is the diversity of the backgrounds of the students. Children develop relationships with peers from many different nationalities. These friendships open the door to knowledge and understanding of a much larger

¹² IB is a non-profit educational foundation created in 1968 and is based in Geneva, Switzerland. It offers programs for primary, middle years, and diploma. These programs are currently offered in 1,293 schools around the world. It is designed for highly motivated and academic students who hope to attend university (College Prep Handbook 2008:11).

worldview. (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:220-221) In international schools the transmission of cultural values and expectations takes place. The differences are that teachers and peers come from many countries and cultures, along with the curriculum itself (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:221).

Another important benefit at international schools is their general understanding of the internationally mobile experience. Many international schools have a 30 percent turnover each year as families are transferred in and out. So, students understand what it is like to be “the new kid in school” (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:230), and typically extend themselves toward the newcomer. The school staff also understand the transition experience, so they can support students and families in transition. Thus, parents can factor into their decision which school provides ongoing, institutionalized transition programming (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:231).

However, there are various problems that arise with international schools. One of these problems is the high cost of tuition. Not many mission agencies or missionaries can afford the high tuition fees of these schools. On the other hand, most of the students in these schools are upper class in their society and their life style is very different from that of missionary children. This, economic imbalance among students may be a back draw to missionary children (Hale 2003:14).

3.2 MK/Christian schools

The state of MK/Christian schools, and their boarding facilities will be discussed next, in order to understand how missionary children will adjust into these circumstances.

MK/Christian schools with boarding facilities have mostly been established by American mission agencies during the twentieth century (Haile 2007:1). Pollock and Van Reken (2001:232) explain that these schools were developed in the days when strong formal educational programs of any kind were severely limited in many of the countries where missionary families worked. In the early years of the twentieth century, various mission organizations founded boarding schools as an attempt to help missionary children remain closer to their parents. Before the days when on-

field boarding schools for missionary children were common, children were sent to their home country for schooling and lived with their relatives (Haile 2007:1). In such cases, many problems arose, such as children having to communicate difficulties with their parents because they were separated from them for long periods of time. It affected the relationship between parents and children. In considering a solution for this situation, mission agencies and churches in America started to establish MK schools with boarding facilities in many of the countries where a large number of missionary families worked. When missionary parents worked in remote jungle areas or villages, only a few educational options were available to their children. Thus, in general, missionary families had two choices either home school their children or send them to boarding school (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:232).

MK/Christian schools catered for students primarily from the United States or Britain, and mostly provided either a British or an American based curriculum. These schools have provided great opportunities for Christian education, having trained and committed teachers and staff caring for students. The benefits of boarding schools are the opportunities students have to make close friends with their peers who are all missionary children and can understand each other, and to have healthy competition in sports or other areas. Children also have the opportunity to understand their parents' work in mission (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:228-230).

The disadvantages are the following: Missionary children have no opportunities to experience the local culture and language as they spend most of their time in MK/Christian schools. Some of MK/Christian schools do have opportunities for children to learn about local culture as one of their school subjects. But they are very few. Another problem is the separation from parents and home when children are at boarding school. Many children leave home at an early age of five or six years, and are separated from their parents for long periods of time. Due to this experience, many people have emotional difficulties and sorrow from these early patterns of separation and still deal with these feelings as adults (Van Reken 1988:68). It is also impossible for parents to monitor what is happening to their children on a day to day basis. Many times, parents do not know that children are having many difficulties or problems with their studies or personal difficulties with a staff member. In the

extreme, there is the risk of child abuse at the boarding schools (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:233). In today's world it is also hard to find trained and committed Christian teachers and staff who will spend long and distinguished careers as missionary educators in the MK/Christian schools.

But the main disadvantage for Korean missionary children is the international MK/Christian school culture. Students coming from English-speaking countries, such as Canada, Australia, and U.K., may experience differences (as TCKs) between a British- or an American-based educational system and Western circumstances, but the feeling experienced by non-English-speaking and non-western students is even more complex. One Korean missionary confessed that he/she saw his/her children neither as Korean, nor American. To Korean students in particular, who come from a highly mono-cultural and monolingual society, studying in an international MK school does not readily translate to successful education. There are marked differences in educational values, deriving from different social and cultural milieus, between the westernized educational school system and the Korean school system. Several problems tend to crop up, such as the cultural adjustment on the part of both the international school and the student, poor preparation for Korean higher education, and learning disabilities due to lack of English language skills (Kwon 2006:3).

Nowadays, many missionary parents realize that boarding school is not the best option for their children as they see its difficulties, especially the emotional difficulties such as unresolved grief and relationship difficulties with parents. Recent surveys among SIM missionaries demonstrate some growing trends that should be of interest to all who have a stake in the education of missionaries' children (Haile 2007:1).

The statistics of SIM surveys (Haile 2007:1) indicate that boarding school is not a popular trend for missionary children in the contemporary world. There are specific reasons why parents choose a boarding school. If there are absolutely no other alternative options for children's education on the mission field, and if a child enjoys the boarding experience and has a positive attitude to it, boarding school is a viable option for missionary children. It is important that missionary parents consider the boarding school option and take into account the child's age and temperament, the character and reputation of the school, and how often they will be able to see the

child. It is essential to include children in discussions regarding their schooling. The decision about boarding school is one area in which their inclusion is vital. Children whose opinions are taken into account see that their thoughts and feelings matter; they do, indeed, feel valued (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:233).

Many MK/Christian schools have seen a change in their student body over the past decade as the number of non-American/Britain students is increasing at these schools. Recent reports from many schools show a growing number of Asian students. The larger number of Asian children reflects an increase in the number of Asian families on the mission field. Therefore MK/Christian schools need to think about educating multinational students. They should change the focus of the school's curriculum to meet the needs of children from a wider range of nationalities, while not disadvantaging those from American families. MK/Christian schools are facing the challenges of internationalizing the curriculum, and supporting multinational families. They will also be more effective as they incorporate the richness of cultural diversity among students (SIM Canada 2007:2). As Asian languages, cultures, and educational philosophy are very different from those of the West, Asian children have many adjustments to make at MK/Christian schools dominated by the American and British cultures. Once they get used to the MK/Christian schools, they find it hard to adjust to school and life in their parents' home country. Therefore, many Asian missionary parents struggle with their children who lose their mother tongue and become westernized. Simultaneously, the western teachers and staff may feel helpless to prepare these children for life and study back in their parents' home country (Ahlquist 2005).

3.3 Local/National schools

Local/National schools are another possibility and may in fact be one of the best educational options in some countries. For example, it enables children to become immersed in the culture, learn the language quickly, make local friends and become truly bicultural. Missionary children may build a bridge between local people and their parents. There are two varieties of national schools such as private schools and

government schools. Both kinds of schools have local curriculums in local languages. Another merit of government national schools is the tuition cost which is far less than the MK/International schools, and this reduces the financial burden of the parents. Private national schools also have advantages as well as MK/International schools, such as conveniently situated campuses, facilities, computers, sports and academic programs. Another vital advantage of this kind of school is that missionary children may stay with their parents at home and will have an opportunity for holistic education by parents (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:226).

But several issues have to be considered. In some countries there are not many schools with a Christian ethos. There is the risk of the overwhelming influence of the local religion and culture which is deeply rooted at Local/National schools, and these schools have insufficient consideration for foreign students (Kim 2006:21). Other problems, such as language difficulties and a different educational system to that of their home country might make it difficult or even impossible for a child to function properly upon their return to their home country, especially at college level (Hale 2005:2). If school is taught in a language different from a child's home language, parents must make certain their children have at least elementary language skills before entering the school to function comfortably. When a school requires more than two languages for school work, it may cause children to suffer. Children have too much of a burden if they have to learn extra languages such as different kinds of local languages and English apart from their mother tongue (Echerd 2005). Missionary parents need to understand the basic philosophical and methodological underpinnings of the local system. Another sensitive issue is that missionary children become part of the surrounding community faster, and sometimes children are immersed in language and culture and forced to sink or swim, with some children who want to settle permanently in the host country. Thus, missionary parents should take great care in making a choice of these schools. The possible long-term implications of school and culture need to be thought through at the beginning of the children's experience, not at the end (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:227). Many of the approaches that have been mentioned have indeed had a range of successes (Hale 2003:2). My own children are examples of how local schools can be successful in the education of missionary children. Korean missionary children need to take extra

lessons including Korean language, history and mathematics in order to prepare for their higher education in Korea in future. Recently, the Korean language has become popular among some of the Asian countries such as Japan, China, Taiwan, since Korean movies and singers are popular in Asia. Thus, the Korean language and culture can possibly be taught for both Korean and local students. (Back 2001:3).

3.4 Homeschooling

3.4.1 History

Modern homeschooling began in the 1970s in America and is increasing rapidly in various countries. Neuman and Aviram quote five stages (2003:133) in terms of understanding the development of the homeschooling movement in America:

- (1) Dissatisfaction with the existing public education system for political, economic and ideological reasons, which has resulted in an increased number of homeschool families.
- (2) Confrontation between the homeschool families on the one hand, and the establishment, the schools and the authorities on the other.
- (3) Networking among the homeschool families based on shared interests.
- (4) Cooperation between the school and the homeschool family, frequently following a court ruling in favor of homeschooling.
- (5) Compartmentalization, which occurs when the number of homeschool families increases, thereby also increasing their opportunity for contact with each other.

As a result homeschoolers are able, together with the other homeschool families, to explore the differences in educational philosophy, which leads to the formation of different approaches or schools of thought. At least two different schools of thought evolved in America. One school of thought is liberal, nonreligious, humanistic and pedagogical while the other adheres strongly to a religious/Christian ideology (Neuman & Aviram 2003:134).

Isenberg (2007:399) emphasizes the split between religious and educational homeschooling. The three top reasons for homeschooling in 1996 and 1999 were: (a) to give a child a better education at home, (b) religious reasons, (c) poor learning environment at school, a catch-all category that includes worries about peer

pressure, drugs, and safety. The methodology changed in 2003, but the top three reasons of 2003 are the same: (a) concern about the environment of public schools, (b) dissatisfaction with academic instruction at public schools, (c) to provide religious or moral instruction. There is also a significant number of homeschooled children due to physical or mental health/behavioral problems or other special needs. In 2003, 48 % of homeschoolers cited either school environment or dissatisfaction with academic instruction as the most important reason for homeschooling. The percentages of religious homeschoolers, and the percentages of the combined behavioral/special needs category are 14 % to 15 % in all these years (Isenberg 2007:399).

3.4.2 Characteristics

Homeschooling is perceived by those who practice it to be a solution to several problems in different areas of life. It is a process of heightened awareness and a willingness of parents to take responsibility for their children's education and self-fulfillment. In taking responsibility the person is required to acquire knowledge and make intelligent and considered decisions. The definition of self-fulfillment changes, and instead of the person maximizing their potential through their career or studies, they will be focusing on maximizing their potential. It is noticeable that homeschooling is increasing the level of parental involvement in their children's education. Thus, parents take full responsibility for their children's education and do not hand the responsibility over to other parties (Nueman & Aviram 2003:132). According to Feiler et al. (2006:451) the involvement of the family in the learning process and the links between home and school are vital to the success of raising standards. Nueman and Aviram (2003:135) says that parental involvement in children's learning acts as a lever to maximize the potential of the already advantaged. Therefore, homeschoolers regard the shift to homeschooling as a deep and fundamental change in their lifestyle. This change affects various aspects of their day-to-day life at different levels, including career and structure of the family unit. Another advantage of homeschooling for Christian families is that of Christian education. The goal of Christian education is to grow according to God's standards.

For this, the Bible is the centre and core of Christian education and its principles are used for the education materials (Nueman & Aviram 2003:135).

Homeschooling has disadvantages. Some parents do not have the ability to teach their children, cannot motivate them, are anxious about their children's academic capacity and social and emotional development, and they lack education materials. It will be investigated in 3.4.5.

3.4.3 Homeschooling on the mission field

Haile points out (2007:4) that there are two main varieties of missionary home schooling parents: those who have homeschooled their children before they became missionaries and prefer to continue doing so on the mission field, and those who homeschooled because their ministry location offers no other options. Sometimes homeschooling is the only way for missionaries living in isolated areas where there are no schools, to educate their children. In this case, the main benefit of homeschooling for missionary children is that children remain with their parents in the place where the parents stay and work. It decreases some of the disadvantages of separation from parents. In many cases the children of this second group are the younger ones. As they grow older their parents may request a move to a city with a school, or the children may go to boarding school for their high school years. Some of the former group of homeschooling families continues to use this option throughout the years of their children's education, but many of them find homeschooling for older children to be difficult in remote rural locations.

Unlike the success of homeschooling in the home country, homeschooling in a mission situation usually lacks the resources and support networks that abound in many home countries, which proves that the idea of homeschooling to be a completely "portable" education option to be fiction. Homeschooling is not always a viable option for a particular family, both socially and academically (Haile 2007:6) for the following reasons. On the one hand, some families are not suited to this type of schooling, because some parents have neither the natural nor the professional skills

to properly teach academic subjects. Other parents are struggling to organize the instruction circumstances. Some children do not accept their parents' authority, causing constant friction and confusion in the home. On the other hand, missionary children are potentially isolated from their peers, due to the local language and culture, particularly those raised in remote areas. Thus, parents intentionally need to make a plan for local language development and interaction with the peer group and the culture, especially when the children reach junior and senior school age, as teenagers like to be with their peer group and want to be independent from their parents (Haile 2007:6). Isenberg indicated (2007:406) that in America in 2003 children of fourteen years and older, 21% were homeschooled for behavioral or other special needs.

SIM and other international mission organizations actually recommend individual homeschooling and small school options because of their unique benefits. Home schooling offers a good opportunity for parents to impart their family values. It can also be flexible in order to meet individual learning and family needs. Another benefit is that the children can maintain continuity in school without having to jump from one system to another in the middle of the year (Hale 2003: 2).

Clearly the home-based education option has grown in importance in recent years, and the SIM surveys (Haile 2007:4) suggest that it will probably increase in use for SIM missionaries, so SIM must do whatever they can to make it successful. SIM is seriously considering ways in which they can provide enough support and resources of all kinds to enable homeschooling families to maintain good standards and a good morale even under difficult circumstances. These circumstances may include a difficult environment where the processes of daily living take a lot of time and energy, with limited electricity, very limited or completely unavailable internet access, and no public libraries. One option SIM is considering is an educational resource network such as SHARE¹³ and AERC¹⁴. These inter-mission resources provide a wonderful consultancy and troubleshooting when problems occur; they run conferences and consultancy training sessions. Both SHARE and AERC provide these resources to a very large geographical area their staff travel widely to visit families, and they have

¹³ SHARE; SHARE EDUCATION SERVICES. <http://www.share-ed-services.org>

¹⁴ AERC; Asia Educational Resource Consortium. <http://www.educatingourkids.org>

resources at central locations. An option which may be appropriate in smaller geographic areas is the “homeschool coordinator” based in a school, who offers services to families whose children are regarded as off-site students of the school. The school may offer standardized testing, assessment of suspected educational difficulties, the opportunity to take SAT¹⁵ tests or other external exams, library facilities, and the opportunity for children to join the school in special programs for class when the family is in town. All these resources can help to compensate for the lack of external resources of homeschooling families, many of whom often feel inadequate and uncertain in their desire to do their best for their children. Honest assessment and visionary leadership are required in order to provide quality education for missionary children. Mission agencies need to support homeschooling families. This might include a resource centre, and specifically assigned staff to work with homeschooling families in the rural areas. Distribution of staff to small resource centers and itinerant homeschool support ministries are important.

For Korean missionary children, homeschooling is practiced in two ways, namely a full time schooling system, and a part time schooling system. To study Korean subjects with the full time schooling system most of the homeschooled students choose their curriculum and materials from America and include some Korean subjects, because no Korean full time materials and curriculums for homeschooling are available (Park 1999:139). For the part time schooling system Korean missionary families conduct homeschooling as an after-school system or Saturday school in addition to their school work. In both cases, the study of Korean subjects is essential (Park 1999:137). Fortunately, Korean language material for young missionary children was published by KOMKED (Korean Missionary Kid Education) at the end of 2007. These materials are user-friendly to Korean missionary parents to teach the Korean language to their children more creatively (Back 2007:1). However, the disadvantage of the full time schooling system is that in Korea homeschooling is not yet authorized as regular education. Therefore homeschooled students have to take a national certificate examination to gain admission to higher education.

¹⁵ Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) is required to apply college/university in North America. <http://www.collegeboard.com>

There is another option which is receiving increased attention. This is the small satellite school and it will be discussed in the following section.

3.4.4 Small and/or Satellite schools

Another option is Small and/or Satellite schools, which can only accommodate a few students. In recent years, small and satellite schools have become popular on the mission field where students can join together into a slightly more formalized setting than at home (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:225). Haile (2007:5) explains that in these schools children of different ages are taught together or perhaps supervised as they study together using curricula from their home countries and sharing some common facilities. In Mongolia there is a small school which is constructed in this way and is succeeding very well. In these schools, parents are involved as teachers. The sponsoring agency sometimes sends out a qualified teacher to conduct the classes. Training for those who will teach in a one-room multi-grade classroom is now being provided in North America as part of the Pre-Field Orientation (PFO) program for teachers and boarding parents that is run each year by ACSI¹⁶ and Interaction. The training for this specialized role is a valuable new resource for those who will be teaching missionary children. These resource centers/one room schools have advantages in today's world. They do not require much capital to establish, and can relatively easily be transferred to a place where they are needed. Internet access may increase the resources available to the teachers and children in such centers, so that even online classes can be taken. Families on their own may use internet-based education, but sharing the costs and the resources is desirable where possible. Videotapes or interactive computer programs are also used in some schools. While parents or teachers supervise the proceedings, the children work with electronic tutors. Satellite schools usually have a good teacher/student ratio, with each child receiving individual attention (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:225).

Some families from newer agencies are facing the reality that they cannot provide for their children as they would like to, and some are even leaving missionary service as

¹⁶ ACSI; The Association of Christian Schools International. <http://www.acsi.org>

a result. For these families, the costs of traditional MK/ International schools are beyond their reach, and the curriculum offered in these schools may be inappropriate. The satellite school or resource centre can be a resource for the children of these families. One school in Bolivia plans to offer Internet access to Bolivian missionary children around the world. Those children could be part of a multi-grade classroom. The lower cost and more flexible approach of a resource centre or one-room school might broaden the scope of facilities that could be shared (Haile 2007:5). If the resource personnel of a small school or resource centre could include people with different languages and educational backgrounds it could perhaps meet the needs of a fairly diverse mission population. The resource centre approach may be accessible to a wider international range of children, as well as avoiding the huge capital cost of establishing a fully equipped school for a wide range of grades. These schools provide a bit more socialization than a strictly homeschool setting, and missionary children are still able to live at home with their parents (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:225). Additional advantages for Korean missionary children are that they have more opportunities to learn the Korean language and culture, and develop an identity as a Korean among other Korean children.

3.4.5 Assessment of homeschoolers for College/University

Bob Jones University in America discovered that home-schooled students are academically admirable and have good skills in social adjustment and high self esteem (Kim 2007:8). Ray (2004:7) discusses the academic performance, and social and emotional development of home-schooled students as follows:

3.4.5.1 Homeschool students' academic performance

Ray (2004:6) says, in many studies of the academic achievement of homeschooled students, it was found that the average home-school student tests in the United States and Canada scored, from the 65th to 80th percentile in standardized academic achievement tests, compared to the average public school student's 50th percentile. Homeschooled students have a strong ability to pursue their own goals.

Homeschooled students demonstrated similar academic achievement at college as students who had attended conventional schools. Similarly, Jones and Gloeckner (2004) cited the three studies of Gray (1998), Jenkins (1998), and Mexcur (1993) that showed that the home-educated student perform as well or better at college than institutional-school graduates, even though some college and university personnel showed animosity toward the homeschooling process. But it changed, and at present most of them are interested in welcoming the home-educated (Ray 2004:8).

3.4.5.2 Homeschool students' social and emotional development

Socialization questions are asked of nearly every homeschool parent and every homeschool teenager. Parents are usually asked whether the child will experience healthy social, emotional and psychological development. Numerous studies, employing various psychological constructs and measures, show the home-educated are developing at least as well, and often better than, those who attend institutional schools (Medlin 2000:110). No research refutes this evidence. The self-concept of homeschooled students is significantly higher than that of public school students (Ray 2004:7). Linda Montgomery, a principal of a private high school, investigated "the extent to which homeschooled students were experiencing conditions that foster leadership in children and adolescents who attend institutional schools" (Ray 2004:7). Her findings on 10 to 21 year olds showed that the home-educated were certainly not isolated from the social and group activities of other youth and adults. They were quite involved in youth groups and other church activities, sports, jobs, and recitals (Ray 2004:7). Ray quotes Foster "admission officers at Stanford University think they are seeing an unusually high occurrence of a key ingredient, which they term "intellectual vitality", in homeschool graduates (Ray 2004:8). As shown above, Homeschoolers have a distinct advantage because of the individualized instruction they have received. This, combined with homeschooled students' experience in studying and pursuing goals on their own, may be showing long-lasting effects.

3.5 Korean schools

As the number of Korean missionary children is increasing, the need to reassess their educational requirements becomes imminent in order to know how well Korean values and perspectives are communicated to Korean missionary children. For this reason several Korean MK schools were recently established by Korean mission agencies and churches on particular fields (Kwon 2006:4,5). This was also done to help the increasing number of Korean missionary children who re-enter Korea for higher education. The recent tendency of establishing Korean overseas schools as well as schooling in Korea is as follows:

3.5.1 Korean overseas schools

In order to maintain Korean values and views, the importance of Korean overseas schools is their aim to educate Korean missionary children toward the goal of being Christian, a citizen of the world, and Korean, as was laid down by the KWMA¹⁷. Korean missionaries and mission agencies need to be concerned about the situation of MK/International schools where many Korean missionary children are currently attending. Many of these schools have little or no understanding of Korean students. Even though schools realize the need to help Korean students, there is still a lack of understanding. Korean overseas schools have recently been established for the reason of awakening international schools to the need of helping the increasing number of Korean students (Huh 2002:1). There are two kinds of Korean overseas schools (Park 2002:39):

3.5.1.1 Formal schooling system

These schools provide full time schooling, teach international curriculums and include Korean curriculums (Park 1999:137). The advantages of these schools are that children can gain their Korean identity at school through Korean teachers, language and culture. Tuition fees are inexpensive compared to international schools, which lessens the missionary families' financial burden. These small schools may be

¹⁷ KWMA: Korea World Missions Association

an option to replace schools in Korea according to the situation (Park 1999:149-153). Its disadvantage is the children's possible loss of the opportunities of multiculturalism and internationalism of international schools. But the formal schooling system is not a schooling option for all Korean missionary families as it has not yet been established in many countries.¹⁸

3.5.1.2 Informal schooling system

These schools provide part time schooling to help Korean missionary children study Korean language, history, and culture. On various mission fields they generally operate after school or on Saturdays. There is an afternoon school during the week for Korean missionary children in Albania with extra lessons in the Korean language. In South Africa, a Korean school operates on Saturday mornings in order to teach Korean language and culture. These schools have difficulties in maintaining steady progress in education because parents and students do not attend regularly, and it is difficult to find teachers. Most of the teachers in these schools are parents. The greatest difficulty of Korean overseas schools is to recruit long term qualified teachers and administrators. The frequent moving of teachers affects the continuity of education and the immutability of the curriculum. These Korean teachers need to be flexible and broad minded to understand Korean missionary children as their experiences are different from other children who grow up in Korea. Korean schools should above all develop a Christian education system and curriculum, improve teachers' capabilities, improve the English level in these schools and create the balance of multiculturalism (Kim 2006:23).

3.5.2 Schooling in Korea

As a consequence of the different education systems and language problems, re-entry into Korea for higher education has many difficulties for missionary children. Hence, missionary parents need to understand their children and give special

¹⁸ The statement on Korean schools: according to the Korean Education Development Institute in 2000 there were 26 Korean overseas schools in 13 countries.
(<http://www.edpolicy.kedi.re.kr/Home.php>)

attention to help them. At the beginning of a new adjustment, children need intensive care by parents or other family members (Park 2002:61). According to Pollock and Van Reken (2001:234), an early start in the school system of the home country is a major benefit as this makes it easier for missionary children to continue successfully in that system through university. Parents should ask in what way changing cultures and facing all the issues of reentry during the height of identity formation in the early teen years affect their children. They need to hear reports from those who have been to university. In some cases, to return to the home country before university may be essential to prepare for entrance examinations. The major drawback of schooling in the home country is the great distance from parents even if e-mail and internet-phones make for easy communication (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:235).

Recently, education requirements have been changed for the following reasons (Park 2002:62): every year approximately 5,000 students come back to Korea from overseas and they constitute the minimum of 3-5 children in each class at primary schools in the national capital city. Some schools have special classes to care for these children (Kim 2006:32). On the other hand, the numbers of special high schools¹⁹ in Korea are increasing, and the foreign language high schools²⁰ make special allowances as circumstances require for admission for MK/TCKs, if they can speak a certain foreign language fluently (Joongangilbo 2008.4.18). Recently a variety of Christian alternative high schools²¹ have been established in Korea and

¹⁹ Special high schools have been established since 1980, and are classified as science high schools, foreign language high schools, art and music high schools and sports high schools. The schools choose students capable of specific subjects according to their requirement conditions, and conduct special education courses in order to educate them to reach an excellent standard. There are 18 science high schools. In 2007 they selected 1,395 students (of these 492 were special selection and 903 were general selection students). All of these schools are public and have boarding facilities. (The statement of the special high school and the discussion of its closing. http://www.reportshop.co.kr/data_view.htm/?rplD=188376, 2009.2.9)

²⁰ Foreign language high schools are established to educate Korean students to be effective international students with excellent foreign language abilities (skills) to become leaders in the creative world. There are approximately 29 foreign language high schools, and they selected 8,237 students (of this 3,144 were special selection and 5,093 were general selection students) in 2007. (The statement of the special high school and the discussion of its closing. http://www.reportshop.co.kr/data_view.htm/?rplD=188376 2009.2.9)

²¹ Christian alternative schools are established in order to provide an alternative way of education for Christian families against the secularization of the public schools and its problems. The aim is Christian education based on biblical principles. (The Kidokkyobo 2008.11.25. p1, Forum for spreading Christian schools of the churches; the movement for Christian education by the church for its duty to present an alternative Christian way of education, Kim Sunyo, <http://www.kspress.co.kr/kidokkyobo/section/detail>)

they are concerned with the re-entry of Korean missionary children in order to help them to adjust to Korean schools. Seoul, the capital of Korea plans to establish more foreign schools²² in the main part of Seoul until 2012 because of the insufficient number of these schools. Many of Korean overseas children are also allowed into these schools. Hence, missionary children have more opportunities to enter the schools in Korea than in the past. Universities in Korea also have special admission requirements²³ (Nho 2002:9) for missionary children who have studied overseas, for a certain number of years²⁴ at least as far as high school (Korean Council for University Education 2008:132). They have also started special courses with lectures that were taught in English (The New York Times 2008.6.9). Korean missionary children have more opportunities to enter universities in Korea. Unlike in the past, a problem is a rising that Korean missionary parents seem to be unwilling that their children to attend Korean schools for formal schooling during their home assignments or during visit to Korea. It is valuable for missionary children to have an experience in Korean schools during their childhood in order to learn the Korean school culture, Korean language and to make Korean friends. On account of home assignments they forfeit the opportunity of formal schooling for special qualifications to enter university.

There are few Christian alternative schools that take special interest in missionary children, such as Handong International school²⁵, Glovill Highschool²⁶, and Ansan

²² There are 21 Foreign Schools in Seoul city with 5,822 students, but they are insufficient for the demand. The Seoul city council has decided to establish three more Foreign Schools in Seoul by 2012. (Juh, J W Joongangilbo, <http://www.join.com>, 2008.4.18)

²³ Since 1997 special admission to universities in Korea has been available for the children of Korean embassies and Korean residents abroad. As the number of overseas Korean students are increasing, the object is to extend education at universities in Korea to educate Korean leaders as representatives overseas. 163 Universities (27 National universities and 136 Private universities) in Korea had admitted Korean overseas students in 2009 according the special admission requirements. Universities are allowed to select up to 10% of their subject courses and up to 2 % of their entry students each year. Moreover, the universities have no number limit to select students who have completed the course of study in overseas for over 12 years. (Nho, C R 2002:9, pp.87-120)

²⁴ There are two patterns of special admission. One is applied to children who complete the whole education system from primary to high school for 12years. The other is applied to children who complete school for a certain number of years overseas. Each university has different rules for application for special admission. (The important recruitment outline for an overseas Korean and Foreigner, Korean Council for University Education, 2008:132)

²⁵ Handong International school, <http://www.his.handong.edu>

²⁶ Glovill Highschool, <http://www.glovillhigh.org>

Dongsan Highschool²⁷. Other Christian alternative schools in Korea are listed below (<http://www.casak.org/sch>):

- ⇒ Sammuel Christian School (www.smcs.or.kr)
- ⇒ Dream School (www.dreamschool.or.kr)
- ⇒ Dongmeong Highschool (www.kdm.hs.kr)
- ⇒ Eagle School (www.eagleschool.com)
- ⇒ Doorae Highschool (www.doorae.hs.kr)
- ⇒ Newjirech Christian School (www.newjirech.org)
- ⇒ Logos Christian School (www.logosca.com)
- ⇒ Global Vision Christian School (www.gemgvcs.org)
- ⇒ Korean International Christian School (www.kicschool.com)
- ⇒ Sasa School (www.sasaleader.org)
- ⇒ Shema School (www.shemaschool.com)
- ⇒ Dream International School (www.dreamin.or.kr)
- ⇒ Hannoori International Academy (www.danvi.org)
- ⇒ Korean Christian Officer School (www.ko-ca.org)

In this section I have examined alternative options for the schooling of Korean missionary children. There is however no perfect schooling formula that guarantees a happy outcome for all missionary children (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:217). Each schooling option provides benefits lacking in others. Not one option can provide for the development of all the skills, abilities and attitudes that missionary parents want their children to acquire to be ready for independent adulthood (Haag 2005:2). Every child has different needs and abilities to cope with each situation, therefore it is very important to be sensitive to the abilities and inabilities of every child and make the appropriate adjustments (Robbins 2005:2). Thus, missionary parents should look for a comprehensive and balanced education for their children.

4. LANGUAGE ISSUES

Language is the basic tool of communication among people, a very important symbol of people's identity. Mastering it is a sign of respect (Lloyd-Sidle & Lewis 2001:42). Heny (1994:186) emphasizes that learning different languages early in life can

²⁷ Ansan Dongsan Highschool, <http://www.dsgo.net>

sharpen thinking skills in general and can actually help children achieve academically above their grade level. It is essential to emphasize that missionary children learn their mother tongue as part of their education. To learn a national/local language is valuable in various ways, not only for missionary parents, but also for missionary children, in order to make national/local friends and learn their culture.

4.1 Mother tongue learning

Today there is a universal recognition of the importance of mother tongue education as well as of multilingualism. UNESCO's new position paper encourages education in the mother tongue alongside bilingual or multilingual education. Languages are now regarded as an integral part of one's identity.²⁸ This will have a greater impact on the education of missionary children in the globalized world (Ng 2007:1). One of the current realities mission agencies face is that there is an increasing number of missionary children coming from a non-English speaking background. SIM and other mission agencies face this issue as well as the missionary children and the international schools. This phenomenon will continue to grow in the years ahead. The majority of Korean missionary children come from Korea, but there is a trickling in from many directions unknown in the past. It is the result of missionaries sent from Guatemala, Paraguay and Zimbabwe as well as from more traditional sending countries. Therefore now mission agencies have to take serious steps to address some of the issues. There may be missionary children who are unable to return to their home countries for higher education, or children who have lost their mother tongue. Missionary parents from new sending countries ask themselves how they can maintain their children's ability in their mother tongue, whether their children will be able to cope with English, and whether their children will be able to integrate into the education system back in their home countries when it is time for their children to enter university. The findings of Belinda Ng (2007: 2,3) why children's mother tongue is essential for the education for missionary children are the following:

⇒ Children gain a deeper understanding of the language and how to use it

²⁸ UNESCO; Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001)

effectively. They may be more flexible in their thinking through processing two different languages.

- ⇒ A strong foundation in mother tongue facilitates the learning of the majority language. It has the cross-over effects in improving literacy.
- ⇒ Children pick up majority language very quickly.
- ⇒ Knowledge of mother tongue will facilitate reentry to their home country. Missionary children who learn their mother tongue make it possible to return to their home country in future.
- ⇒ It also provides an option for higher education and settling down in home countries.
- ⇒ To see this as linguistic, cultural and intellectual resources. What these culturally and linguistically diverse children bring to the school and communities rather than view them as problems.

For the above reasons, missionary parents, mission agencies and missionary children educators need to be aware that when children have spent a number of years in a school where the language and education system originate in another country, their transition to a passport country is difficult (Haile 2007:3). Missionary parents, educators of missionary children, and mission agencies have a responsibility to provide the opportunity to missionary children to learn their native language to have the option of returning to their passport country for further formal education and settling down, if that is what they choose. A barrier to missionary children to acquire fluency in their home language is their resistance to it, as they do not realize its importance. Children follow their peers and see learning their home language to be extra hard work. As children are not aware of the demands after high school, parents and educators of missionary children must be sensitive to it and try to help their children see how learning their mother tongue is important for their whole life. Parents need to realize how to help their children to maintain their mother tongue and to develop their cultural identity. They can talk to their children in their mother tongue, instead of using a mixed language. Children need to be fluent in their home language and to expand its ability rather than to limit it (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:222).

Until the middle of the 1990s, many of the Korean missionary children lacked the ability to speak the Korean language because they did not use it while they were at the international schools on the mission field. The children had no opportunity to learn the Korean language at school, and were not motivated to study it by themselves while English was taught academically and used each day at school. As

a result of the difficulty of the Korean language, most of the Korean missionary children chose a college/university in America and other Western countries where English is spoken as a first language. At that time missionary parents thought that it was impossible for children to study in Korea because of their limited knowledge of the Korean language. Since Korea expended special admission allowances in 1997 to missionary children, a tendency has arisen that missionary children changed from a Western to a Korean college/university. Therefore missionary parents are more interested to enforce the Korean language on their children from an early age, in order to improve their Korean language for study at Korean universities. But there are many difficulties to challenge children to improve their use of the Korean language. It pertains to adequate materials, parents' consciousness and the lack of motivation for children. Missionary parents need to change their attitude about mother tongue learning, and to teach their children from an early age. Mission agencies need to support missionary families in various ways by providing language materials, and recruiting teachers in order to teach the Korean language at schools (Back 2007:1).

The following is a case study of the Ukarumpa International School in Papua New Guinea, which is a good example of how an international school could help Korean missionary children to learn their mother tongue (Ahlquist 2005) :

In 1993, a Mother Tongue Studies (MTS) program was added to the curriculum of Ukarumpa International School in Papua New Guinea. This program began in order to meet the felt needs of school parents whose first language was other than English. The previous year, two parents had given a presentation to the school staff explaining their perceived need for instruction within the school day in mother tongues other than English and giving suggestions for a proposed program to meet this need. At a subsequent meeting, the staff thoroughly discussed the proposal. Lists were generated giving the positives of the proposed program, the concerns teachers had at this point, and the ramifications to the school program. The areas of concern included such things as logistics, teachers, materials, the classroom time these students miss, and the content of the courses. The remainder of the 1992 school year was spent refining the program to get it to a workable course for the school. And in January 1993, MTS began its first year. The program runs two hours a week throughout the school year. Students go in a group of similar ages, grades 1-3 together and grade 4-6 together. MTS classes have been taught in seven languages: Japanese, Korean, Finnish, Mandarin, Swedish, German, and Dutch (and now

Latvian). Most language groups have been able to recruit a teacher from their home country to come and teach; otherwise, a parent from that language group in the community of Ukarumpa will teach. In 1999, the Finnish and Korean students began meeting each morning from 8am until 10:10am with an emphasis on language and mathematics. The goal of MTS is to help students from non-English-speaking countries be able to maintain their mother tongue and fit into the appropriate level in school when returning to their passport country. Possible areas of study are language, culture, and history of the home country. The program has also been included at the Secondary school for grade 7-12. Students take MTS classes during their free periods.

4.2 National/Local language learning

Children learn new languages best in an environment which reinforces their sense of who they are and who they are becoming (Lee 1998) English is a high-prestige language in most of the world today. If this is the language of the schools, and the language missionary parents expect their children to use, there is a great deal of positive reinforcement for speaking English fluently. If missionary families who are in the area tend to be from a higher socioeconomic level, their children may value learning English, and the positive reinforcement will come from speaking English with peers rather than speaking the national/local language. However, if missionary families are in a village or in the area where the majority language is the local one, or missionary children are in the national/local school, the national/local language may be more valued (Haag 2005). Missionary children then need to learn the national/local language to be able to make friends and socialize. Thus, in view of their situation missionary parents need to encourage their children to learn the national/local language. Positive parental attitudes toward the national/local language are essential for children.

4.3 Bilingualism

One of the biggest benefits of growing up overseas, according to many adult missionary children, is the opportunity to learn another language and culture. This skill has opened up many career opportunities or has enhanced their effectiveness

and the scope of their ministry as adults. Experiential exposure to another language and culture is often not sufficient to develop high-level language skills, but parents and teachers can provide a structure that will help children benefit more fully from the exposure they do have. Attitude is the single most important factor for success in learning another language. The influence of attitude outweighs aptitude, intelligence, learning styles, or teaching methods. Interactions with native speakers and a person's feelings about those interactions have a tremendous impact on how well he or she will learn the language. Positive relationships are extremely important for success. Learning a language in order to integrate with another culture provides motivation far beyond merely learning in order to accomplish a task. Learning the values of the new culture is an integral part of learning the language fully. Children may go through a period of rejecting one culture or the other, but should eventually come to appreciate the good and recognize the bad of both. Most studies say there is no critical period for beginning to learn a second language. However, certain ages are better for certain things: younger children have the advantage of being able to learn without a foreign accent; college-level students learn vocabulary more easily; adults understand the grammar (Haag 2005). If missionary children speak two or more different languages, it is of great benefit to them. Limited bilinguals are those who are limited in both their mother tongue and in the second language, which is obviously a disadvantage. But, balanced bilingualism brings many positive cognitive benefits: early readiness for literacy, good problem-solving ability, superior awareness of language properties, greater capacity for inventiveness and creativity with language, greater sensitivity to grammatical functions and higher performance than monolinguals on tests of intelligence and tests of fluency, flexibility, and originality.

5 THE EDUCATION VIEW OF KOREAN MISSIONARY CHILDREN

5.1 Historical approach

The history of Korean missionaries in overseas situations is not a long one (Oh 2008:21), and thus Korean missionaries, having little previous experience, often have difficulty in deciding how they can raise their children. They also have difficulty in knowing what educational options there are for their children and which options are best, because as of yet, there are still few examples of Korean missionary children who have grown up on the mission field and gone on to become properly functioning adults. Thus, in general, before entering the mission field, many Korean missionaries are often unprepared to make decisions concerning the education of their children (Park 1999:35). According to Jung (1999:35), Korean missionary parents were often not seriously concerned about the education system and options for their children. They rather sent their children to MK/international schools without considering the impact that these institutions may have on their children (Back 2007:2). Chan (1998:331) explains that all the MK/international schools are based mainly on the western education system and on the western culture, as teachers, staff and the majority of students are western. These schools are also mostly English speaking. This causes several problems and struggles that the Korean missionary children face regarding education (Park 1999:35). Korean missionary children have a different background from Western and Asian children, specifically in terms of language, culture, society, race and the educational systems they are used to.

For a western missionary family, it is easier to choose a school for their children as the schools in the field are mostly based on the western education system and curriculum. Korean missionary children have more difficulties in terms of the foreign language, education system and curriculum (Park 1999:127). Korean missionary children may also lose their identity as Koreans through school circumstances. As the time passes Korean children become familiar (Park 2002:30) with the western culture and way of thinking, and for further education, choose a college/university in America, Canada and other Western countries for its language, education system and culture. In such a case, Korean missionary parents have a heavy financial burden of education fees, boarding costs, and extra cost of living (Jae 2002:16).

Korean missionary children may face many difficulties to settle in a new country without their parents' care. They also become westernized, which may cause conflict between parents, children and family, and may cause an inability to readapt to Korea. In recent times many Korean missionary parents have a new insight into the educational tendencies of the past and attempt a careful approach to the education of their children (Park 2002:62).

5.2 The State of contemporary education

5.2.1 The numerical significance of Korean missionary children

Today, there are up to 12,000 Korean missionary children around the world (Kidok Shinmun 2008.8.13). Of these, approximately 60% are in schools on the mission field and 40-50% are at international schools (Lee 2007:6). Comparing this number to the number of children from other nationalities who live on mission fields around the world, it becomes clear that Korean missionary children constitute quite a large percentage of the number of missionary children living in foreign countries. In Middle Asia and China, Korean missionary children and third culture kids can constitute up to 50% of the foreign children at MK/International schools (Haile 2007:1). There are for example 42 Korean missionary children out of 90 international students at Davao Faith Academy in the Philippines (Lee 2007:6).

5.2.2 The education perspective of Korean missionary parents

As Korean missionary children grow older, and the number of Korean missionary children increases, parents experience more and more tension. Therefore, it is necessary to understand, support and assist missionary children in their educational endeavors. Parents also need to investigate all available educational options before deciding which school and which system of education is the best for their children. Parents have to consider which language and academic curriculum are best for their children, who will pay for the cost of schooling (including vacation travel for high

school and university students), what they can do both to help their children to appreciate the local language and culture, and to help their children maintain their own culture and language. And once they have chosen a school, what are the reasons for their choice of a specific school (Hale 2003:14). Any choice of schooling should be measured in terms of how well it will help meet the larger goals of the educational process. It is also important for Korean missionaries to consider factors such as where their children will settle in future (in Korea, the mission field, or in another country), before making a decision as to how to educate their children. Once this has been decided upon, missionary parents need to decide on the correct long term plan and what citizenship their children will have and need for their future (Jung 1999:29). Thus, from the very beginning missionary families need to make long-term plans for their children's education. A 'family educational plan' helps missionary families to focus on the long-term values and goals they have for their children. It can also help them to be aware of and take advantage of different schooling options. Being caught up in day-to-day struggles can make it easy to lose sight of these long-term goals and to miss out on addressing some of the most important areas in which children need to develop. The family educational plan can help missionary families to keep their long-term goals insight (Haag 2005:2).

5.2.3 The challenge for MK/International schools

During the 21st century, huge changes are taking place within many mission agencies and MK schools. Non-traditional sending nations are answering God's call to global missions in increasing numbers. Most of the children of missionaries are no longer from the average evangelical missionary society of America. The majority of world churches sending out missionaries, are facing the challenges of evangelism, church planting and missionary care in more and more of the countries of the world. In the case of SIM international, missionary families have changed significantly from western countries to international compilation. The SIM Korea office has grown from 46 adult missionaries and 26 children five years ago to 75 missionaries and more than 60 children in 2007 (Haile 2007:2). At present SIM supports families from Guatemala, Hong Kong, Paraguay and Zimbabwe as well as from more traditional

sending countries such as America, Canada and the UK. Therefore SIM international is looking at changing the education system and structure of the MK schools in order to support SIM's multicultural missionary children, and to provide opportunities for SIM missionary parents to choose between options compatible for their children by providing information about various education options (Haile 2007:3,4). Korean missionary children who have become the majority are a new challenge to MK/International schools, which are run on western education systems with western teachers. Western teachers and staff members lack understanding of Korean culture (and characteristics) which can cause conflicts. They recognize the necessity of extra lessons for Korean students. Some of the teachers and staff at MK/International schools have visited Korea to better understand Korean students, and have attended a forum with mission agencies in Korea. They discussed ways to help Korean missionary children at MK/International schools in the field. It led to some MK/International schools offering an additional Korean curriculum with Korean language and history, and requests for Korean teachers, caregivers and counselors to teach Korean students. These schools include the following (Back 2007:6):

- Faith Academy in Philippines

There were 205 Korean students among 580 international students from preschool to high school in 2007. Since 2003 the school has offered Korean Studies comprising of Korean language, history and social science. The school holds Korean festive days, shows Korean movies, and shares Korean food and culture. As a result of the Korean studies and the experience of Korean culture, 12 Korean students out of 21 entered universities in Korea in 2006 (Kim 2007:12).

- Davao Faith Academy in Philippines

In 2007 there were 46 Korean students out of 90 international students from preschool to middle school. Since 2006 this school has offered Korean culture studies for an hour a week in preschool and primary school, and has offered these studies as a choice in middle school since 2007 (Lee 2007).

- Hope Academy of Bishkek in Kyrgyzstan

Since 2000 this school has offered a course in which Korean language is taught as

an academic language for 4 and half years. It stopped for 3 years in order to reconsider its course of action. Since 2007, the school has offered a Korean language course for children from grade1 to 10 (Kim 2007).

- Tien Shan International School in Kazak(h)stan

Since 2005 this school has offered a Korean language course. Children can choose Korean language study from among the compulsory foreign languages. From grade 11 children can also choose Korean history instead of American history (Lee 2007:12).

5.2.4 The state of College/University entrance

Since special admission for missionary children was granted in Korea, many changes have occurred to the university entrance of Korean missionary children. Unlike in the past, Korean missionary children prefer to enter universities in Korea through the special admission (Jae 2002:15). As explained in 5.1, Korean missionary parents were burdened financially with the support of their children's higher university education in western countries like America and Britain (Jae 2002:16). It became more difficult as the UK pound and the US dollar appreciated against the Korean won. Hence, it adversely affected the standard of life of missionary families and their ministry (Interviewed Huh 2008.7.10).

Children who have entered university in Korea and settled there are still in the minority and seem to be at risk in a strange land. Children face many difficulties when they enter university in Korea with a limited knowledge of the Korean language, a different education system, the cultural shock, and the separation from their parents. But their experience of the Korean culture and relationships with Korean people will help them to settle in Korea in the future.

6 THE EDUCATION POLICY STATEMENT OF THE SIM INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL

The education policy statement of SIM International Council is examined to understand how this mission agency will support their members' children. SIM has a long history of overseas mission²⁹, a broad distribution of mission fields³⁰, numerous missionary members³¹, and a policy of intensive care for the education of its members' children. Their education policy statement on the care of SIM missionary children is presented as an example.

Information of SIM IMKEC (International Missionary Kids' Education Consultation) 2007 and from the SIM international council will be used.

6.1 SIM policy statements about parents' responsibility and accountability

Though the education of missionary children is the personal responsibility of parents, SIM is prepared to assist parents to meet the educational needs of their children. Parents are given the opportunity to weigh the factors involved, and make their own decision of educational options for their children. SIM requires that the quality of educational systems that their mission personnel choose be verified and validated at regular intervals.

In the minutes of SIM's 2007 International Council (Haile), they clarified their policy on the primary responsibility for the welfare of members' children as follows.

SIM affirms that the primary responsibility for the general welfare of the children of SIM members rests with the parents. In offering services for children, the mission recognizes its responsibility to consult with the parents, and that any assessment of the children's wellbeing will be done with the parents' consent. As an organization, SIM also affirms its supportive role and may intervene if necessary to ensure the wellbeing of

²⁹ SIM International was founded in the USA during 1893, when Walter Gowans and Rowland Bingham of Canada and Tomas Kent of the United States landed in Nigeria, determined to evangelize the Sudan region of Africa. (<http://www.sim.org>)

³⁰ SIM has 9 sending offices and SIM missionaries are working in around 40 countries. (SIM Korea prayer diary, www.simkorea.org)

³¹ They support more than 2000 active missionaries from 50 different countries. (<http://www.sim.org>)

the children of SIM members. Thus, SIM has stated that we believe the primary responsibility rests with parents, but that SIM may intervene if necessary.

6.2 SIM's responsibility for the education

In 2007 SIM had 363 school age children in the field. 42 % were in MK/Christian schools, 33 % were in home-based education, 10 % were in secular international schools, and 13 % were in national/local schools.

SIM is composed of missionary families from international backgrounds and this has changed significantly in the last ten years. SIM provides excellent opportunities for Christ-centered education of their members' children, with education strategy and planning as their greatest responsibility. As the composition of their membership changes they re-evaluate their overall purpose with the education of their missionary children, to be relevant for today. SIM has reviewed their philosophy on the education of their missionary children, specifically how it relates to the core values of their mission:

In support of our purpose to glorify God, SIM is committed to identify and facilitate quality care and education options for our missionary children. SIM recognizes the special calling of missionary educators and care personnel whose roles are vital to the mission's mandate to make disciples of all nations. As people of prayer, we call upon the Holy Spirit to empower our ministries. Our educational philosophy reflects a biblical and multi-national perspective, which seeks to develop potential for godly living to facilitate our children's transition into the educational institutions of their country of citizenship and to fulfill God's calling in their life.

SIM values its children and wants them to succeed, wherever God puts them in life. The following are some of the basic reasons why SIM cares about the education of missionary children.

- SIM members are the extended family for each other in overseas situations
- Unhappy children make unhappy parents - unless the kids are happy parents will not stay on the mission field
- Missionary children's educational needs are a common cause of attrition for

missionary families

- Helping the SIM family (and each individual in it) reach its/their own personal goals for ministry (in achieving balance between ministry and family)

As the result of the Education Consultation by SIM MK coordinators in 2007, SIM developed statements on the education for SIM members' children. The following conclusions were arrived at during the consultation.

6.3 SIM policy of subsidy for education

Children of long term and special assignment SIM missionaries participating in an elementary or high school program approved by the appropriate council are eligible for a subsidy as available and needed. SIM will provide an amount of money based on need, to the extent that funds are available in the following ways (SIM 2000):

- Up to 90 % of the tuition costs in excess of three month's MK salary allowance per year up to a maximum of 3 members
- Plus up to 100 % of the related field transportation costs in excess of one month's MK salary allowance per year, based on the least expensive mode of travel with a maximum frequency of one round trip per school term
- Plus room and board costs in excess of seven months' MK salary allowance per year

The subsidy for SIM missionary children was cut in recent years. In 2009 SIM only provided approximately 15 % of the tuition costs for SIM missionary children.

6.4 The possible role of the SIM sending offices and of the field offices

6.4.1 Sending offices

SIM sending offices can help missionary parents and their children cope with educational issues through stimulating their questions, providing resources, finding answers to specific needs. Below are some ideas:

- Publicizing the needs through relevant media resources inside and outside SIM
- By finding all possible recruits and to stimulate them
- Take every possible opportunity for input and influence
- Discussing SIM's educational principles, policies and options
- Helping educational staff to understand the “big picture” of their role in discipline, mentoring, and contributing to the work of families
- Provide information to prospective missionary families
- Encourage and stimulate recruitment of education resource personnel
- Make sure the selection and training department staff consider missionary children education issues in selection and preparation
- Make sure education-related issues are included in pre-field orientation
- Watch and listen for education-related issues faced by families
- Collect individual family questions, including questions regarding schooling needs and concerns
- Encourage links with a schooling support network, for example, homeschoolers' association/network of families; teachers from their part of home country.
- Continuation of dialogue: planning for the specific place for specific children
- Checking to see that no one slips through the cracks, for example, adjustment during the early months overseas
- Resource and network supply, for example, for homeschooling families
- Guide missionary children to prepare for home assignment schooling
- Help missionary children to prepare to enter university
- Regular communication, home assignment debriefs, and other informal opportunities
- Regularly provide educational materials to missionary families
- Interviews with SIM children at arrival for home assignment

6.4.2 Field offices

SIM field offices can also help missionary parents and their children in the field in various ways. Below are some ideas:

- Make sure the field office considers missionary children's education issues in the selection and preparation of missionaries for the field
- Make sure education-related issues are included in field orientation
- Through stimulating their questions, providing resources, finding answers to specific needs
- Work with “personnel” staff to include missionary children education issues in the Area/Field Handbook and other materials
- Regular communication, annual and education orientation reviews, other informal opportunities, and encouragement through conferences

- Know who the experts and resource people are
- Provide information to applicants (prospective teachers and resource staff, families with children)
- Discuss field's policies and options, especially on educational issues
- Provide contact with a family already doing the same proposed option
- Have an assigned person who keeps in touch with families and helps to meet their needs as they arise and test their resources
- Provide reentry seminar information
- Provide personal support and encouragement to children on their various campuses, to ensure that they are surviving often with parents far away on what are usually secular university campuses
- Ensure that parents and children have provided a family/friend/church support network for their university student
- Need to co-operate with sending office and missionary family toward effective work

6.5 The perspective of SIM parents on their children's education

The most important issues concerning children's education was discussed by SIM missionary parents at the 'SIM IMKEC 2007'. The results are as follows:

- Parents need to know different school options and their child's needs as each of them are unique and in different stages
- Give attention to the comparison of various school options
- Make long term plans from preschool to university in a consistent education system like the American system, the British system or the Korean system
- Parents need to understand their own educational philosophy compared with that of the local system
- Parents need to know that each child will get a full and total education - comprehensive in every aspect
- Make a holistic plan for education: balance between academic work, art, sports, music, culture, and emotional development
- Biblical basis needs to be formed by parents and outside help
- The importance of Christian education, emotional needs, spiritual needs, emotional security and safety needs: priorities to be evaluated
- Children's emotional needs, safety and security are valued
- Understand each child's action, emotions and abilities
- Consider the academic language level of each child
- Quality of education in a school setting - as good as home country (not disadvantaged for the future - adequate preparation for return to next educational setting, including caring teachers)
- Maintain mother tongue and improve its level
- Good quality of higher education and teachers

- Caring of teachers for students
- Communication with school about the child's peace
- Development of life skills, social skills and each one's gift
- Keep track of what each child is doing at the school
- Peace of mind when children are in boarding in another country - someone needed to communicate with
- Children reaching their full potential
- Guidance through the process, access to help when needed
- Consideration of school fees
- Special need for guidance for university/college information in home country and overseas
- Counsel children with different personalities and consider each situation
- Most of SIM parents prefer SIM MK schools on the field

6.6 Parents' responsibility and accountability

At the consultation, balancing missionary parents' responsibility and accountability in relation to their children's education were discussed as the first topic. The main question is, "Are parents accountable to the mission agency where their children are concerned?" The definition of "accountable" was discussed to the role of the parents in the education of their children.

The following issues were suggested as a general framework of a family's needs which should be provided by the mission:

- Early information on educational options available and mission policies
- Opportunities to discuss educational options and choices
- Family ownership of their own education decisions and philosophy
- Ways of monitoring the educational options
- Effective screening and supervision of all those involved in the education and/or care of missionary children
- People and/or resources of other kinds to assist parents in the education and care of their children
- On-going educational planning

Discussion and questions about the parents' responsibility and accountability reached the following conclusions:

- Accountability is needed for the child's protection because in the homeland there are many mechanisms for the protection of the child but when the family goes overseas, many/most of those protections are lost
- The triangle of accountability is the sending office, field leadership and the individual family, all working together
- People and/or resources of other kinds to assist parents in the education and care of their children
- Parents need to take responsibility for their children in overseas situations. They fulfill the educational part of this responsibility directly while the children are young, and later on most parents delegate some of their responsibility to others.

Education for missionary children is an immensely complicated and highly emotive subject. Missionary parents retain the primary responsibility for their children as they know their children best. But they do not necessarily have the best knowledge about education providers, nor do they know the local situation as well as the agency. Thus, as part of the believing community of church and mission, the mission agency should be able to help its families to make an informed decision about the most appropriate educational provider for their children, at least in the initial stage. Later on the family may change their minds in light of what they learn and of changes in their own family situation. It is important that the mission agency provide and/or ensure the above resources. The mission agency has the responsibility to ensure communication with key sending church/supporters when/if adequate education for the children becomes a problem.

7 SUMMARY

This chapter examined the educational issues of missionary children in the following ways: traditional approach was noted. The contemporary tendency in education with alternative options for schooling has been investigated by comparing, international schools, MK/Christian schools, national/local schools, and homeschooling with small and satellite schools. Korean schools overseas and schooling in Korea have been examined in order to understand the educational aspect of the Korean missionary children. Language issues have been discussed, and the past ideas about the

education of Korean missionary children were compared with the state of contemporary education. The education policy statement of SIM was investigated to consider how this mission agency supports the education of their members' children.

Missionary families face various education options on the mission field, and options differ according to the situations on the field. Affluent countries have various educational options, but a less affluent country has limited educational options (Park 2002:70). The variety of choices may give parents flexibility to consider the needs of each individual child (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:223). There is however no perfect schooling formula that guarantees a happy outcome for all missionary children, as every option has distinct advantages and disadvantages (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:217). Each schooling option has its own richness. Not one option can provide for the development of all the skills, abilities and attitudes that missionary parents want their children to acquire (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:216).

Hence, missionary parents must consider the total approach to education in any system of schooling, not merely its academic aspect, but also their style of discipline, teaching, and grading. The parents have to consider each child's character, ability, the parents' ministry and financial condition, and especially the education system (Park 1999:128). In order to make a wise choice of a school, parents need to look at specific educational options and policies generally available for their families (Park 1999:145).

Most of the Korean missionary parents have high expectations for their children's education as they expect children to have a good academic career after graduating from university. They place a great value on education, expect good marks, and force their children to study hard in order to enter top universities in America, Korea or any other country. But Korean missionary parents and children lack insight as far as education is concerned and have no long term goal for life (Park 2002:38).

Korean missionary families need to pay attention to the specific research³² done about Korean students who have been studying at Harvard and the Ivy League in America. This research discovered that 9 out of 10 who failed in the universities are

³² This research was recently done by the Harvard University in America. (Chonan Sinmon 2008.4.7)

Korean students. Harvard found that the reason was that Korean students have “no long term life goal” while they are studying. It affects them, because the education system in Korea normally focuses on the examination to enter a top university. Hence, it is difficult for Korean children to have a broad view of their future, and are without long term life goals, and a vision of what they will do after they graduate from university. Therefore children are confused and not motivated to overcome circumstances which they encounter at university. When people have an ultimate purpose of life, they also have a purpose for each stage. A broad picture of their life plan gives purpose to children’s lives (Chonan Sinmon 2008.4.7).

The failure of Korean students in the Ivy League in America shown by the research challenges Korean missionary parents to have a new insight in education. Parents need to recognize the uniqueness of missionary children and encourage them to make the most of their strong points. Parents also need to provide extra lessons at home in order to supplement the insufficiency of the school program (Park 1999:128). Korean missionaries have to consider where their children will live permanently in the future before making a decision as to how to educate their children. Once this has been decided upon, missionary parents need to decide on the correct long term plan with a balance between the reality and the ideal, their financial position, which citizenship their children will have, and the subsequent need for their future (Jung 1999:29). To decide where their children will go for college/university, the preparation at high school has to be appropriate. Some of the Korean missionary children fail in the universities in Korea because of their lack of knowledge of the Korean language and their incapacity to adapt to the Korean culture (Seong 2006:191).

From the very beginning the Korean missionary family needs a long term plan for their children’s education. Being caught up in day-to-day struggles make it easy to lose sight of long term goals, and to miss out on addressing some of the most important areas in which children need to develop. A ‘family educational plan’ helps missionary families to focus on the long term values and goals they have for their children (Haag 2005).

CHAPTER 4

THE CHILDREN'S NARRATIVES

1 INTRODUCTION

This narrative research within the social-constructionist paradigm has implications for the view on truth, and truthfulness in doing research. According to Müller et al. (2001:2,3), the aim of research is not to bring about change, but to listen to the stories and to be drawn into those stories. The intention of this research is to engage in collaborative, horizontal relationships, in which the co-researchers choose their preferred stories and attach their own meanings to them (Freedman & Combs 2002:205). Therefore, this research strives for subjective integrity and for participatory observation.

All the co-researchers are in their early twenties and were introduced by their parents, who were concerned about their struggles with education and life. Within this reason I engaged with the co-researchers. This research is not aimed at any personal objectives of the researcher, but rather at being beneficial and of value to the co-researchers. "The aim is, through this research process, to empower the powerless" (Müller & Schoeman 2004:8).

The co-researchers have spent most of their childhood and adolescence (and some into their early twenties as well) with their parents on the African continent, and in substance they have been educated on the mission field. Some of them went to high school and/or universities outside Africa, to South Korea and/or America, as the educational situation on the mission field was inadequate.

In narrative research the story of the action part is about the NOW of the story. "The researcher must learn to stay in the now – not the last now, not the next now, but this now" (Müller et al. 2001:4). The now is never fixed and never acts as a given or even as a curse. In the narrative approach, the now is action, and thus dynamic in nature. To take the action seriously and to have it told is to open up a possibility, to create a new now for tomorrow. Therefore, the now must be described as the very first step of narrative research (Müller et al. 2001:4,5).

To start telling the stories, the co-researchers were asked which difficulties they experienced with education. The problems the co-researchers are currently facing are the issues that result from their educational experiences. Thus, after the interpretations of the now of the story were understood, their educational experiences from childhood to university were listened to in order to understand the background.

Müller et al. (2001:7) says, "Background is where you let us see and know who these people are, how they've come to be together, what was going on before the opening of the story". People are influenced by their past experiences, therefore it is important to explore their background in order to understand them better. The background story is not only concerned about the now, but to revisit the rooms and places of their past. Through this recollection, people can begin to understand the origin of their problem stories and its influence on them, and it can stimulate the development of now stories.

It is important to discover the co-researchers' understanding of their own lives and behavior. Therefore their stories and the interpretation of the stories were listened to. Morgan (2002:2) avers that in the narrative approach people are the center experts of their own lives. According to Müller (1999:2), "The narrative approach has made the discovery that people do not tell stories only for interest's sake or for entertainment, but that life's grain is exposed through these stories. Through our stories we not only discover identity, but also build identity." The narrative approach looks at the unity between the past, the present, and the future. In the narrative approach people's stories are continuously being told, the telling of the story of their experience provides people with a sense of continuity and meaning in their lives. People renew their stories, make new meanings and create new possibilities for a new future.

From the ethical side the co-researchers were assured that none of their stories will be told to anyone else and that pseudonyms will be used in their stories to protect them. Their pseudonyms are based on their characteristics which have become apparent through the research process. The co-researchers took part in the choice of the pseudonyms as symbols of their preferred future.

This chapter will examine and describe the interpreted stories of the co-researchers' educational experiences. The now of the children's stories will first be presented and then the story of the past. "The action in the now is played within a background that must be pictured, but it is alive with associations and connotations of the past" (Müller et al. 2001:8).

The co-researchers' open-hearted narratives are presented below.

2. LISTENING TO THE CHILDREN'S NARRATIVE

2.1 The story of Hope

Hope is a young woman of twenty-two years. She graduated at college in America, and wanted to do her master's study in that country. But she was not accepted at the college that she applied for. As a result she recently returned to Korea. Because of the failure she could not renew her study permit for America and because of financial constraints she could no longer stay there. Her parents called her to Korea where they are living. In Korea she found a temporary job to save money for further study in America. But she could not adjust in Korea because she saw herself as a foreigner in Korea. She wants to return to America in future for further study. Her mother does not approve of her going back to America. She wants her to settle in Korea. This causes many problems between Hope and her parents. Her mother worried as Hope did not share her real thoughts and feelings with her parents. There is always tension between them.

I contacted her in this regard and interviews were carried on from the beginning of 2007 through the end of 2008. Interviews carried on mainly through networking and internet phone, with face to face interviews during the time of my visit to Korea.

At the first interview, she talked about emotional distress which often leaves her feeling down. This feeling of depression seriously affected her, so that she could not concentrate on her work, she lost confidence in life, and was really unstable. I was

quite surprise that she immediately brought the issue of her emotional distress instead of giving an answer to my question. In this regard, I was aware that this was the most important matter for her at that time of the interview, so I decided to discuss it with her. In her stories the theme of separation recurs time and again during the interview sessions. Other issues were also discussed. The story of Hope is summarized below in the order she preferred.

2.1.1 Separation from parents for primary education

For the sake of missionary work, Hope's family settled down in a rural area after their arrival. There was no school for the children. Thus, in order to consider their children's education, her parents chose to send the children to a boarding school as most of the missionary families in the team generally did. Thus, she and her brother were sent to boarding school a few days after they arrived on the mission field. She was nine years old at the time. The children were not involved in the decision making process of schooling options. A few days after they arrived on the mission field, they were sent to the boarding school, where nothing was familiar to them. At that time their parents had no knowledge of alternative ways of schooling. They thought boarding school was the best option for educating their children on the mission field. Because of their way of thinking, the children were separated from their parents from the ages of seven and nine.

She still remembers that they were terribly afraid to be separated from their parents and of being strangers at the boarding school. She said that she had always struggled with fear since she was 'a little girl'. She thought that her parents chose God and the ministry above her and her brother, and she did not know how to deal with it. In her mind her parents only thought of God and the ministry, but did not care about their children. She said, "I was very angry with my parents and with God." "My parents only thought about God's calling. When I needed them and their love, they didn't care about me, they only thought about God and the ministry. I was really afraid of being alone at the boarding school." In this way, she thought that her parents showed great integrity for missionary work and God, but she did not receive

the love from them which she needed.

At the boarding school, children had dorm parents and they were grateful, but she was not satisfied with them. She needed to get love from her parents. She said, “Actually, I remember that I cried a lot when I was a little child. Emotionally I could not say good bye to my parents. I cried a lot when I left home after the school holidays. I did not want go back to school.” It seems that she had real difficulty being separated from her parents after spending time at home. She was hurt and had bad memories of reunions and separations. At the boarding school, she noticed that there were other missionary children whose parents were staying close to the school. She envied them.

2.1.2 The atmosphere at the boarding school

Another major problem she faced at school was its atmosphere. She stated that the school exercised a very strict discipline, and expected the children to obey the rules. Even though she agreed with discipline, she disliked school for its too strict environment. Children were caned when they made mistakes. Some teachers even spanked the children until they were bruised. It fostered her sense of fear and insecurity. She said, “Because of fear I was obsessed to be a perfect child. So I was never satisfied with what I did. I had no freedom. The school was much too strict, so I always felt that I was not good enough.” “I think a child needs to be free. I have felt like that all of my life. If I try just to be myself, I still struggle with it. I always think about what other people think about me, but ironically I don’t care about others.”

She also stated that the school’s religious sentiment had been too excessive for little children. She said, “One specific night the teachers confiscated children’s dolls, stating that they encouraged fantasy and superstition, so the dolls were burnt in a fire. The dolls were presents from their parents to comfort the children. They symbolized the love of their parents. So many children were shocked, hurt and very sick. We were shocked and crying. We couldn’t understand why the teachers did such a thing... even now I don’t know whether it was a Christian act...” In

surroundings like this she was unstable and missed her parents immensely. She was terribly afraid to stay at school away from her parents. Because of the separation she spent all of her energy coping with feelings of sorrow, uncertainty and unrest. She had no interest in study because of her confused feelings. Looking back, she has negative memories of primary school because of the experiences mentioned above. However, she has some good memories of friends at the school.

2.1.3 Better adjustment in high school, but still hurtful

At high school she was not seriously concerned about the separation from her parents, because most of children were also separated from their parents. The high school was situated in a different area as the primary school. She enjoyed the environment as teenagers prefer to be independent as their parents. She had good memories about high school, because of its atmosphere which different from the primary school. She remembered that the dorm parents as good people who tried to create a peaceful atmosphere for the children. They often took them on trips that left good memories with the children. At college she was encouraged through these memories whenever she became depressed. She said, “I have good memories about high school, it was more exciting than staying at home... It was like a small family. With the dorm parents’ care I was happier than I had been in the primary school.”

She realized that her real emotions, feelings, and thoughts had been hidden for a long time. She discovered this while taking a counseling course at college. She said, “You know, I was so hurt at the boarding school, and even at the high school, I really missed my parents, I really needed them and their love. When I really needed them, they were not there for me. They didn’t care about me, they just worked for God and the mission. They didn’t love me.” She strongly expressed her feelings of deep hurt which she experienced at high school due to the absence of her parents. And to this day it affects her relationship with her parents. “With this kind of emotional background I can’t talk nicely to my mom. I always blame her when we talk. For a long time, it has been difficult to show them affection, or to speak about my feelings,

or to show love... to my parents. Talking about these issues made us uncomfortable. There is much tension between my Mom and me on these issues..." While she was sharing these feelings her voice was shaking and I was aware that she was almost crying with pain.

Hope did not refer to academic issues much during our conversation about primary and high school education. So I realized that her need was not academic problems. She was more concerned about the emotional issues. She mentioned that academic issues were not very important to her as she was not interested in school work. Instead, she was seriously concerned about life and people. Hope thinks she was not a good student, "Something was lacking, I was not very smart, but I was always unhappy with God and my relationship with my parents and friends. I thought more about these issues than of my studies. I was confused and unstable during my school life. I questioned many things in my mind.. She also said that she and the other children did not find the Korean class which was provided at the high school interesting. She had negative memories about the class because some of western children at school teased the Korean children about their special relationships. She was worried that her western peers looked upon her as different and she was ashamed of being different. She now realizes that this kind of feeling was caused by the western environment at school.

2.1.4 College education in America

After she graduated from high school, she went to America for study at a college. She encountered many difficulties to adjust to the new place without her parent's support. In spite of it, she enjoyed university life and its freedom. Yet, she thought that something was missing in her life, she was struggling with many feelings of uncertainty such as loneliness, sorrow, and sadness. Often she was depressed by her feelings of uncertainty. Because some of her friends complained about it she decided to take a course in counseling at college. During the counseling courses a lot of things came to her mind. She found that she was very hurt by her parents because of her boarding school experiences, and became very angry about it. She

thought that her parents should have homeschooled her and her brother instead of sending them to boarding school. But she realized that at that time her parents did not know about other possible options for their children's education, and only thought about God's calling.

Her discoveries during counseling motivated her to study psychology. She studied psychology at college, worked hard, and found it very interesting. She spent much time thinking of her childhood and her parents. She wanted to continue with psychology and applied for the postgraduate course in that country, but without stating a reason she was not accepted. Therefore she could not obtain a visa to stay there. As a result of this failure, her parents persuaded her return to Korea after she graduated from college, to get a job, and to stay with them. It was extremely difficult for her to return to Korea as she felt that America was the place for her to settle. She had made good friends at college and felt that they had become a family who were really important to her, so she wanted to stay in America. She said that missionary children were always moving, which she experienced to be difficult, and she really wanted to settle down in one place. However she came to Korea because of her visa and financial problems.

2.1.5 "Reentry into Korea is not easy"

As the time passed in Korea, she realized that the best thing about coming to Korea was re-connecting with her parents. She tried to take advantage of being close to her parents in order to build a new relationship with them. She said that in many ways she tried to accept them, and gradually build up a new relationship with her parents. She felt that her parents had missed out their parenting and that they were also struggling with these feelings. They were trying to feel better themselves by doing things for her. She struggled to control her anger toward her parents, and tried hard to control these feelings. Her parents had missed family functions such as birthday parties. As the children were far away they missed a lot of family things, and felt deprived. But she still felt that her parents ignored her needs because they always did what they wanted to do. Her mother did not want her to return to America for

further studies. She wanted her to find a secure job and settle in Korea. Therefore, she thought that her mother was not concern with her needs, but always wanted to control her daughter.

She complained that her parents were always busy doing mission work and she feels isolated. I asked her what made her feel that way. She responded, "He is so busy with missionary work that he has no time to talk to me... Even when we have time, he doesn't ask about me, he only wants to talk about the mission." Because of her father's deep concern for the mission without showing interest in his daughter, she feels discouraged. I asked whether she has someone else with whom she feels free to talk about her difficulties. She said, "Not many people really understand me. Other missionary children just say they were blessed to be missionary children, because many people say that missionary children are blessed. Because of this common idea missionary children do not honestly show their feelings. They rather defend themselves. But I can be honest I think... because I'm isolated. So I don't want to talk with people about myself. I think no one can genuinely understand me." In saying this, it seems that she has a preconceived idea that her parents cannot understand her and this affected her relationship with them. She was afraid to share her thoughts with her parents and with others, as she thought no one would understand and genuinely accept her. So she tried to hide her real thoughts and emotions from people, and felt isolated.

I recommended a specific book³³ in order to encourage her to get perspective on her life from similar experiences of others at boarding schools. She was glad when I talked about this book as she said, "I read that book when I was at college, it was the first time I heard about other missionary children's hurtful experiences at boarding school. I cried a lot as I read that book. She had similar experiences to mine. I still have many needs of my own. It doesn't necessarily solve any problems for me, just helps me to cope."

She was recently confronted with some issues, such as making a choice of career and marriage. In the same way many of young adult children face to these issues, she has been struggling with these issues, and she has been looking for someone to

³³ *Letters never sent*, Van Reken, R E 1988.

share these problems with. Yet, she could not find the right person. In fact, she was really glad to contact me since we know each other.

She was not satisfied with her job, and was looking for another way to find herself. She was struggling in life and was not sure what she really needs or wants to be in future. She explained her struggle as follows:

I don't know. I really don't know what I want right now. I'm tired, just very tired... In Korea, the culture is different from America; I don't understand people in Korea. Many other MKs feel like I do, but I feel I'm alone. When I was younger at boarding school, a Korean teacher came to my school. And one day she told my parents that I was an outsider at school. My parents didn't understand me. I felt that my parents look different; I look different from the other students and their parents. There were all kinds of differences. Every time they came to visit me and my brother, they said that we must have a Korean identity because we are Korean. So we have to learn the Korean language as it is very important for us. But I didn't understand its necessity, because I was a little child. For a little child, it was so confusing. I endured much of a culture shock. I was so shy and was very ashamed of my differences.

Then, I asked her why she was ashamed of the differences between herself and her western friends. She said, "My feelings were most negative. Because there were only two to four Asians in the group, I always felt unattractive by contrast. Maybe it's my personality?... Somewhere inside me I didn't feel that I was Korean. I didn't like the fact that I was a Korean American. I think that Americans have more understanding and are interested in other cultures. Even now, I'm afraid that Korean friends will emphasize the fact that I am Korean. They are very nationalistic. I'm not sure whether that is true or not, but I feel more comfortable with my western friends." She further expressed her feelings about being Korean as follows, "I feel uncomfortable with my Korean friends, because we don't really communicate with each other. The difference in culture is part of it, but language is also a part of it. I would like to make some Korean friends and try to improve my Korean, but I know it will be hard. I feel tired at the thought of doing it." My observation was that in her telling she often used the term "tired", so in order to deconstruct her feelings of tiredness I asked her to explain more about her feelings of tiredness. She said, "I always feel too tired to do anything. I only want to do something for myself. I just want to be free. I just want to

be myself in a natural way. I struggle to think of other things. I'm so 'tired'..." Then she started to talk about her present issues as described in the following paragraphs. These stories helped me to understand her feelings of tiredness.

Recently she was offered a position as a part time teacher at a Christian school. She hesitated to make a decision, because she thought, "I'm not excited about it, because it is a Christian school and all the kids are Christians, it is too religious. I can accept it as being a part time job, but, I wouldn't like to be tied down to it. It's a Christian school." It seems that she was not happy about being involved in a Christian school, so I asked her why she was not happy about being tied to a Christian school. Then she explained her feelings, "I have a genuine relationship with God. I want to know Him in my own way, not through my parents or the religious environment. I will be confined to certain religious boundaries if I work there. That's not how I want it. That's not me. In many ways, I know myself better... My own real personality is repressed and hidden. It's not good for me to work in a environment similar to the one I grew up. Inside me, somehow I feel this will follow the same pattern as the one in which I grew up. In some way, it's still the way I was, still part of me. It's like going back to boarding school. I just want to run away from it. It's the way I feel... Honestly, I don't want to work at a Christian school, it's scary..."

Because of her experiences at boarding school, she was afraid to be in a similar environment. She was aware that it would remind her of her painful experiences in the past, and that she would be hurt again. She knew, and had difficulty in accepting it. At the same time she really wanted to face it, and to surmount it. It seemed that she had come to a fork in the road, and was struggling to know how to make the right choice. Indeed she was afraid to work there, "It would be so tiring to work in that religious atmosphere. If I work there, I will be hurt, my head knows it." Yet, she was not able to show her real thoughts, feelings and emotions about the Christian school to her parents and the principal of the school.

2.1.6 “I want to return to America”

Since she came to Korea she longed to go back to America and to settle there. She feels comfortable with western/international people, so she was convinced that America is the place where she will be able to stay comfortably. She said, “I should have stayed in America. I wanted to stay there. But, at the same time, God brought me to Korea. Reason... He wants to help me to survive?... It’s why I am staying in Korea, it’s not my decision. I’m unstable here... I want to go back to America for further study.”

2.1.7 Reflections on Hope’s narrative

Hope’s interviews reflect that she focused more on the separation from her parents than on any other issues. The significant stories about the separation from her parents emerged through the research process. In her stories the theme of separation reoccurred time and again. She said that she was terribly afraid of being separated from her parents and to live with strangers in a strange place. She was really confused about her parents’ priority concerning their children, the mission, and God. Instead of trying to adjust at school and concentrate on her studies, she spent her energy coping with sorrow and unstable feelings about her separation from her parents. Fahlberg (1994:139) avers that children who are separated from their parents during primary school years, “are spending their energies coping with feelings about separation. It may interfere with their ability to accomplish the primary developmental tasks of this age, which include learning in school, developing friendships, and internalizing values and conscience... Separation during these years is likely to cause a temporary regression to more concrete thinking and less mature behaviors.” Even though she was brought up in a MK school by missionary teachers and staff, she was not able to share her sufferings with any of the staff members. Ironically she was more hurt by them because of their strict rules and their attitude.

In spite of her age as a young adult, she is still struggling with her relationship with her parents due to her past experiences; she was hurt so badly by her parents and God that she feels isolated, and suffers emotional difficulties, which she cannot aptly control. This kind of thinking and feeling often caused her to feel instable and restless in making decisions for life.

She wanted to study psychology at university as the alternative way to her interior suffering and struggling in life, but her parents did not agree as they thought it not to be the real for her. They rather wanted their daughter to have a certain and steady job in order to settle down comfortably in Korea. Between these gaps, Hope was struggling with her parents and confused about her purpose in life.

Since our stories were related we felt sympathy for each other in understanding missionary life. She trusted me and opened her heart freely to share her painful stories with me. While listening to her life stories, I felt genuine empathy with her, and had specific times of prayer for her to seek God's help. Müller (1999:20) insists that narrative researchers must allow themselves to be drawn into the other's story in order to understand their world of experience. With empathy, we can communicate with others.

While the research was carried on I had an opportunity for a short visit to Korea due to the situation of my parents. During that time I had a chance to meet Hope. We met three times at coffee shops with delight and affection toward each other. One day she invited me to her flat. I was excited to see her place. Visiting her flat gave me a great opportunity to see her drawings and paintings which contained her life stories. The wall was covered with her pictures. It seemed that they were an expression of Hope's hidden stories. They gave me new insight to understand her memories of childhood and her real thoughts and feelings. I was considerably impressed with them. A little child who was growing up in isolation and confusion has now become a beautiful young lady, but still with sorrow, instability and uncertainty in life, and she seemed fragile. Müller (1999:2) said, "we make progress and life becomes a journey, since we take past experiences, organize them into a story, which then in turn becomes a map of the unknown territory that lies ahead".

2.2 The story of Dreamer

Dreamer is a twenty-one year old, male, university student. Recently he transferred from a university in Korea to America in order to get a better education. He was confused and struggling while he was studying in Korea. In America he is confronted with financial difficulties and loneliness. He did not settle as easy as he expected.

Three interviews were held at my home between July and September in 2008 when he visited his family. Therefore we communicated through networking till 2009. At the beginning of the interviews we focused our conversation on the issues of his university education in America and turned to the past stories of his educational experiences that were connected to the story of now.

The following stories we composed from the story of Dreamer's primary school up to his university experiences. I present the whole process of his stories of education below to gain a deeper understanding of his educational difficulties.

2.2.1 Foundational education in the Philippines

Dreamer and his family arrived in the Philippines when he was five years old. He started at a local preschool where the majority of the children were locals and the local language was used exclusively. His parents enrolled him there because it was close, and as a help with their relationship with the local people. He has very limited memories of preschool as he was too small, but good memories of primary school. After he graduated from preschool he attended a Korean school in that country, and completed grade one and two. This school was established by Korean missionaries in order to provide a Korean education system for Korean missionary children, and most of teachers and staff were recruited from Korea as missionaries. The Korean language was used as the official language at the school. He studied Korean, history, mathematics and science. Because of this environment, the Korean language, culture and society are familiar to him.

2.2.2 Korean school on furlough

His family returned to Korea for a year of furlough when he was in grade 3. He experienced the primary school in Korea negatively, because the Korean children often teased and beat him. At school in Korea he was unhappy and felt inferior. He wondered what made him different from the other Korean children who had grown up in Korea, and why the Korean children did these things to him? ...

Later he realized that there were many differences between Korea and Philippines. He became aware that Korean children think differently about him than he realized. He thought that it was his fault that the Korean children teased and beat him. He also said, "My conception of the conduct of Korean children was negative. For instance, they ignored the fact that some children misbehaved and were disobedient. Children in Philippines never behaved like this. I could not understand the Korean children, and they could not understand me either..." He said, "Korea was very institutional and systematic, I was uncomfortable in Korea." However he enjoyed playing games and liked some places.

2.2.3 Follow-up education in Botswana

After a year, his family left Korea in order to continue their ministry. His parents decided to change their mission field from the Philippines to Botswana, and he was not unhappy about moving, because of his struggle at the Korean school.

He was in grade four when he started at the new school in Botswana. Contrary to expectation he struggled in the new country. He said, "I have bad memories about Botswana, they are only negative, I especially didn't like the schools." He remembers that people in Botswana ignored and teased Korean children as they put Koreans and Chinese in the same category. The image of the Chinese was very negative in that country and this kind of attitude caused Dreamer to be teased at school. Moreover he was struggling to study English, and found difficulties with all his subjects except mathematics. His difficulty with English was based upon his past

education which had been in Korean. He had attended Korean schools in Philippines and in Korea. So, he had had no opportunity of learning English as an academic language and his English was very poor. In spite of the struggles with his studies, he had some positive memories of school and the environment of the country. It was a Christian international school and the children were well behaved. Yet, he was isolated among his peers, because of different nationalities, languages, and culture.

On account of the financial condition of his family and the school environment he had to change schools three times since arriving in that country. He liked the first school much more as the second school where he was more ignored for his Korean nationality. The second school was also a private but a local school. Most of the children at that school did not have a good comprehension of foreigners, and teased him a lot. The language was a difficulty. The local language was spoken by everyone and he could not understand it. French was also taught at the school which he found difficult to learn. There were a small number of Korean children at the school. He sometimes joined them, but was struggling with both his local and Korean friends. He had a better relationship with his Angolan friends as they were the minority group at the school and he felt they could understand each other. The children always gathered in the same language groups and he was angry at this kind of racism. He realized that he did not belong to Botswana, and felt himself to be a stranger. He realized that Botswana was less developed, and he developed distaste for the country. He asked his parents to send him back to Korea. He was isolated both at school and at home, because his parents were very busy doing mission work and lots of guests often came to their home. Hence, he thought that their children were not important to his parents, and he felt lonely both at school and at home. He really wanted to go back to Korea, complained to his parents and said, "Why did I come here?", "Who am I?", "I have no reason to stay here, I want go back to Korea." Even though he had had a negative experience at the Korean school while his family was on furlough, he wanted to go back to Korea rather than stay in Botswana. He knew that Korea is a developed country and would have more opportunities for him.

He changed school again in grade eight due to the financial position of his family. The academic standard of school was low, and the children were not well behaved at

the new school. He was dissatisfied and really missed the previous school. However he did not show his real feelings and thoughts to his parents because he was concerned about their financial situation. He said, “The rest of my life in Botswana was terribly tough, and I was really isolated both at school and at home. My parents only valued their ministry and did not care for their own children. I always felt angry towards my parents and against them, so I really wanted to go back to Korea. I felt emptiness in my heart when I was in grade 9, and tried to replace it with something else, but couldn’t find anything. I felt upset that I had to change schools on account of our financial situation, but I couldn’t show my feelings to my parents. I didn’t like being a missionary child. I had a sense of inferiority in comparison with the other children. So I didn’t like to invite friends to my house, even on my birthday. I had an inferiority complex. In my thoughts missionaries have no opportunity to earn money, but I didn’t want to say anything to my parents, because I knew that they couldn’t deal with it. I felt isolated most of the time... No one could understand my loneliness, and inferiority. It was really difficult...” He was struggling with all his subjects because of his lack of English competency. The result of this was that he lost interest in anything academic. However, in order to prove himself at middle school, he was more enthusiastic about sports and music than about his studies. As the time passed he did so well at sports and music that his friends were impressed and he was proud. He was also good at science because it involved experiments, where his lack of English was not such a big drawback. As time passed his English progressed, but he still struggled with it. In spite of many difficulties, he completed middle school in Botswana.

He applied to a high school in Korea and was accepted. He could go back to Korea and boarded at the school. He was so glad to leave Botswana where everything was boring and hurtful for him. He added the following reasons for wanting to leave that country. Firstly, he was very angry with his parents because their mission work took priority over their children. He felt that his sister and he were neglected as their parents concentrated on their mission work. It was difficult for him to understand and accept that situation. Secondly, he struggled with his identity as a Korean boy growing up in Botswana. In his mind he had to live in Korea. He was wondering why a Korean should live in that kind of boring place where they were not accepted.

2.2.4 Reentry into Korea for high school education

He was extremely happy to leave Botswana when he reentered Korea for high school education. The school he attended in Korea was a Christian school, missionary children were understood, well accepted, and well taken care of by teachers and staff. He was deeply impressed and challenged by its atmosphere and he was able to find a vision for his future. However, contrary to his expectations the adjustment in Korea was not easy for him.

Before he went to Korea he supposed everything would go well. But living by himself at the age of sixteen without his parents' support was unexpectedly difficult. He faced difficulties with Korean subjects which are taught mostly in the Korean language. It was really difficult to understand the meaning of Korean history with his limited ability in Korean. The standard of mathematics was higher than his level, and he could not catch up. The school was known for the fact that most subjects were taught in English, but in his experience Korean was generally used due to the teachers' poor English. During his whole high school course his Korean improved dramatically. A major problem was accommodation. The school dormitory was closed during school holidays and according to the rules the children had to leave. Most of the other children went home during holidays, but he could not go to home because of the expensive air fare. Therefore he had to stay at inferior places during school holidays. Each school holiday, he had to look where to stay temporarily and he felt tired.

Since he was just a high school boy and his parents were far away, he often felt stressed by the difficult situation he had to cope with. He needed the comfort and support by his parents, but they were away from him. He did not understand why missionary children should live such a difficult life. And he thought that his life was like living in a wilderness. He likes Moses³⁴ and thought about him often in his times of distress. He was encouraged when he thought of Moses' life in the desert of Midian and could understand that it would be God's plan to train him in those difficult situations. Yet, he regretted his academic achievement as he found that he was

³⁴ In the Bible book Genesis Moses was the famous leader of the people of Israel that come out of Egypt.

insufficient to apply to excellent universities in Korea. As the result, he entered a university where he had many problems and was not satisfied with it.

2.2.5 University education

He entered university in Korea and received a full scholarship. When he entered university he first had a good experience of 'human nature' among the students at the university. As 'human nature' is a unique feature of Korean culture, he was inspired by it. He also experienced university culture and was alert to recognize what was right and wrong. He was eager to acquire decent learning, but after six months of studying he was disappointed with the education system and academic standard of the university. He said, "I found all that interested the Korean students was employment at famous companies, and that academic background is exceedingly important in Korean society's evaluation of people. As the present Korean society sets great value on outward appearance university students are also exceedingly concerned about their outward appearance. As this seemed to be the most discussed issue among students, I was confused. In this environment I began to think that the education system at Korean universities was going the wrong way. I was strained to breaking point because of the education system and environment of the Korean university, and was thinking, 'what will I learn here? I can't study in such a system.' I was distressed with the environment of the university in Korea." Because of so many complications he left the university after six months and started wandering.

The following year he applied to four of colleges/universities in America and was accepted by all of them. He actually wanted go to A or B universities, but due to the financial situation of his family he chose a college in order to get a scholarship. Because he was least interested in a college he was dissatisfied from the beginning. To survive alone in a new country was difficult in the first year, especially regarding finances. He received financial support from his parents besides the scholarship in order to pay the educational expenses and dormitory costs, which was very expensive. His parents made a large loan in order to pay for his college education. It

made him feel uncomfortable to receive financial support from his missionary parents, and so he looked for a way to get a college subsidy. He presented the matter when we had interviews. Furthermore, he failed in some subjects in the first term examination. He realized that the education system in America was different from Korea's and it confused him. He expressed his plan to transfer to a university after he finished his second year course, because he was not satisfied at the college. I asked him what made him dissatisfied at the college, and he said that the academic standard of the college was not good enough for him to accomplish his goal in life. He needed to transfer to a university where the academic standard is higher. For this, he had to achieve an excellent academic record in all his subjects, but his academic result was not up to standard. Hence, contrary to his expectation he realized that his ability to study was insufficient to reach his goal, in this regard he felt regret at the inferiority of his educational situation during his childhood.

2.2.6 Reflections on Dreamer's narrative

In Dreamer's narrative the matter of interest was the frequent changing of schools. I observed that it had adversely influenced his study. He was struggling with inconsistent education systems during the period of primary and middle school. The moving from private school to local school fostered in him a low self-esteem due to the difference in environment. The financial condition of his family was the main reason for the frequent changes of school; it inhibited Dreamer from making good friends and also caused instability. Pollock and Van Reken (2001:61) state that frequent moving makes children fear loss and have no confidence in relationships with friends. The pressure of financial poverty caused him to rebel against the mission and God. Moreover he had problems with his parents, because he believed that his parents valued their ministry higher than their own children. He complained loneliness most of time. He was angry with his parents and felt enmity towards them for a long time. Racism among his peers also afflicted him. The atmosphere in Botswana negatively influenced his identity as a Korean, and it led to his negative attitude toward the locals. It still influences him in his negative image of that country, even though he became an adult, who absolutely do not want to stay there, and

grew to hate being a missionary child. Dreamer's education was inconsistent from primary to middle school because of his family situation, and so he lost interest in study. At high school in Korea he was stimulated by teachers and staff. Yet, he had to cope with many difficulties at universities in Korea and in America, and ultimately realized that his study ability is insufficient to be excellent. Furthermore, he always struggled to settle. Therefore he plans to transfer to another university because of his dissatisfaction at college. In my observation, the frequent changing of schools during his growing years caused his inability to settle.

2.3 The story of Challenger

Challenger is a young lady of twenty-four who graduated from college in America. She stayed in Korea temporarily to prepare for further study in America.

I met her in Korea at the time of my visit in 2007, and the first interview was in a coffee shop in Korea. The following year interviews were continued at my home in South Africa since she moved for temporary work in one of the Southern Africa countries which borders the country I live in. I had more opportunities to see her because of her proximity to my home.

Challenge's problem started when she was looking for an opportunity to do voluntary work at a hospital to prepare for medical study at a university in America. She struggled to find such an opportunity. I tried to understand her problem and we searched for descriptions of the problems she experienced. She said that she tried hard to find an opportunity for voluntary work at hospitals both in America and in Korea, but did not succeed because of her own unstable condition. As an international student in America, she was not allowed the opportunity. In Korea she was turned down as a foreigner with her limited knowledge of the Korean language and her western way. She was discouraged by the situation and regretted her academic results at university. To be accepted at private medical schools, she would need excellent reports, but her academic results were not good enough. Therefore,

she could not even apply to a private college, and regretted her past education.

During our conversations the story of her education history unfolded.

Her narrative started with the story of her college education, and then turned to the story of her past. In the telling of the story of her past, she revealed the issue of the Korean class that was operated on the mission field, and proceeded to other issues. Her narrative is presented below following her order of preference.

2.3.1 Korean class, as an extra lesson

She went to the mission field when she was in grade 2 and luckily stayed with her family living close to the primary school. On the mission field, she attended MK school as a day scholar, because her parents were staying near to the school. She said that she was lucky not to stay in the hostel. At the beginning of the first interview she brought up the issue of the Korean class which was provided for Korean missionary children as an after school subject. She attended it at her parents' request. The Korean class was held twice a week, and Korean language, history and customs were taught. She showed her feelings about this class by saying, "It was really boring, I didn't like Korean class, and I didn't like the Koreans gathering together, because I didn't want to be different from the western children who would come into the classroom and say, 'Something smells different, Um~ Korean smell, such a bad smell...' I was ashamed, it hurt me a lot! I didn't know what smell they were talking about, I didn't like my family to be too Korean. I really didn't like being different. I wanted to be American. I wanted my parents to make my home like a western family and have the same smell as the other children. Until I was twenty years old I didn't like being different." "Now I understand that my parents did try their best for their kids... But at that time, I didn't know it. The majority of friends were American, but some were Canadian, British, and Australian." Through these experiences she became non racist and wanted the children to be integrated and tried to associate with a diversity of children.

She struggled to learn and to follow Korean customs which were strange and inconvenient to her. Another burden she faced was the many classes and activities

expected by her parents. She said, “Being a Korean child brings much pressure, because most Korean parents made their children work very hard and made them participate in many activities. This is the Korean way, it bothered me. Because of so much pressure I couldn’t do anything well. Korean children felt pressurized to be a good example to others, but for me it was too hard. I couldn’t do anything well.”

2.3.2 The atmosphere at the MK school

Challenger said, the school had so many strict rules and the teachers were very strict, and there was too much religion. She was really confused about Christianity due to the behavior of the teachers and staff. The teachers and staff liked quiet, well behaved children as they said that it shows their Christianity. But she disagreed with them. She said, “I was different. I didn’t agree with the staff. I tried to be quiet and well behaved like the other children. But I couldn’t be the same, so I was depressed. I always misunderstood the meaning of Christianity. Some kids were labeled as bad kids, I was one of them... Other children also felt the same as I did. Racists cursed us, cursed me a lot. The school had a western environment as most of the teachers, staff and children were western. I didn’t like being a Korean; I wanted to be an American. I wanted to be same as the other kids.” There was ongoing conflict between herself and a certain pastor. The pastor wanted her and some of her friends to be quiet and nice. She always misunderstood his discipline and his idea of good Christian behavior. So she was hurt and really didn’t like him. She said the teachers taught the children that good Christians are quiet and gentle, and have good manners. They preferred such children, but she was loud and talkative, so the teachers thought that she was not a good child. She said, “I had a best friend and we were loud and active. The teachers said we were bad because we were noisy and not quiet. So we were sent to discipleship class, that’s funny (inconsistent)...” She spoke of the environment at the school, “The teachers and staff were very old fashioned. I was wondering what Christianity is... I liked to go to school, because I liked being with my friends, not the school, the teachers or the study. They negatively affected my Christianity...” She also insisted that the school made the mistake not to appoint good teachers and staff. Many teachers and staff lacked the background to

understand missionary children, and this affected their attitude towards the children. It is therefore important to examine the motivation and the disposition of prospective teachers.

She left school when she was in grade 9 and the family went back to Korea. All the time she was at the school she never felt God's presence there because of the teachers and the school environment. She said, "When I think about my school life, I hurt a lot. I really didn't like the school." Even now she has negative memories of her experiences at the school. My observation was that her voice was wavering and she felt chilly while she was expressing the above experiences, she still experiences pain in this regard.

2.3.3 Homeschooling on furlough in Korea; hurtful experiences

Challenger's family went back to Korea for a year for home assignment. She found it difficult to readjust to life in Korea. Due to her scant knowledge of the Korean language and the different education system she could not go to a Korean school; She tried homeschooling and was not interested in it. Homeschooling was very hard both on her and her parents, because she did not enjoy it. She also struggled to cope with the Korean culture being a stranger to the Korean people. Especially the Korean elders criticized her by saying she was impolite and was very westernized. She was also incompatible to other Korean children who were about her age because of her being different to them. Thus, she was estranged and isolated during that time. Even now she does not want to think about that time and the hurt that she experienced.

2.3.4 Transition to another country for high school education

After a year Challenger transferred to another country to complete her high school education. She was separated from her parents and stayed at a hostel. The school with boarding facilities was established by western missionaries to cater for their

children's education. She studied there for two years until she graduated from high school, and was happy with the academic standard and with the school environment. For her the most important benefit of the school was that she could prepare for college in America which was what she wanted. Even though many children did not like the school due to its strict rules, she was happy. She enjoyed the school's religious atmosphere which she felt was more open than the previous school on the mission field. She said that she could share her mind more openly to teachers and was readily accepted by them. She was happy there. But she did not like the Korean children to gather separately as they would be seen as different. Therefore she did not join the Korean group, and was reviled by these Korean children. She wanted all the children to be integrated and to try to associate with a diversity of children. It was because of her inclination to be non-racist that she found her identity. Since she started at this school, she was challenged to work hard and tried to have a genuine and hard working life style in order to prepare for her future, but she regretted the short time for study. She regretted that she had not found her purpose earlier, for then her attitude towards study would have been changed and she would have receive better marks in order to apply to university.

2.3.5 College education

She entered college in America and enjoyed a new life there. Personally she felt that she was more accepted and free at college as she said, "At the college, I could speak or ask questions of the professors, and this was allowed. I could try new things there. So I was happy." She was challenged by the new environment because of the acceptance and the freedom she found. At college she started to think seriously about which career she would follow in future. That was when she decided to be a medical doctor. But she had a problem in applying to the medical school at the state university in that country, because she did not have a permanent permit. In addition financial constraints and academic results prevented application to private college. To be accepted at private medical schools, she needed excellent reports, and experience of volunteer service, which she could not obtain as an international student.

She was unhappy with her lack of ability to study due to the many transitions in her life. In spite of hard work in grade 11 and 12, she did not do as well as she wanted. I asked her whether there was any possibility for her to enter medical schools in Korea, but she answered that it was impossible due to her limited knowledge of Korean as well as her lack of knowledge of the Korean society. She wanted to go to medical school in America because qualified as a doctor in that country would guarantee work anywhere in the world.

2.3.6 Challenger's view on education for Korean missionary children

Challenger averred that most of the Korean missionary children lack the information to apply for college and various available job opportunities. They also need guidance and to discuss career choices. Since Korean foreign mission outreach is relatively recent, the problems relating to missionary children are still a challenge. This applies especially to young adults who are the first generation to explore these unknown situations. Thus they need good sensible advice and guidance by adults who have a better understanding. Challenger also pointed out that Korean missionary children have more difficulties than western missionary children on the mission field due to the difference in language and culture. At her school most of the western missionary children spoke English as their home language and only needed to learn the local language and culture. But Korean missionary children needed to learn additional languages such as English, the local language, their home language and perhaps more. Through her experiences she realized how difficult it is for Korean children. Hence, she stated that teachers and staff need to be more concerned about the Korean children. They need to understand that they have different challenges from the western children.

2.3.7 Reflections on Challenger's narrative

Challenger was struggling with a school atmosphere where there was too much emphasis on religion and the teachers' too strict discipline. She was hurt by the racist

attitudes of the teachers and students against the minority of Korean children. As she said earlier her Christianity was adversely affected by the school environment and she became very critical of Christianity. She also complained about the atmosphere in the Korean class. For these many reasons she was not interested in studying and did not want to stay in the country. David (1994:149) argues that if teachers are unfair, unsympathetic, and unmotivated towards children, the children are affected by these attitudes and perhaps the precious years of preparation for life may slip by.

However, even though her family went back to Korea for a year of furlough she was unhappy in Korea, because she had a culture shock and had to face the prejudice of church members. People criticized her different way of thinking and acting. She was hurt and felt a stranger in her home country. On the other hand, she was struggling with being homeschooled by her parents. When she transferred to another country to complete her high school education, she was separated from her parents but adjusted well at the new school. As she studied in the country for two years, she found a new interest in her studies. However, it was not long enough to make the kind of progress that needed for college entrance. In spite of these difficulties, she studied at a college in America. At college, she found a purpose for her life so she made every effort to make her dream come true. Even so, acceptance at medical school in America was denied since she did not have a permanent visa. She was also denied the opportunity to do voluntary work at the hospital. Yet, she did not give up and endeavored to look at all possibilities. She stated that to prepare for a career was the most important issue for her at that time. But after her graduation from college years went by and she began to worry about her situation.

2.4 The story of Visionary

Visionary is a twenty-one year old university student, at present staying in Korea for her university studies. She came to the mission field at the age of eight and grew up on the field until high school. I had interviews with her at the time she visited her family in South Africa.

I asked her about the current issues she faced at university in Korea. She said that

she was exhausted by the studies, and with coping alone in Korea as it was her first experience to stay without her parents who are very far from Korea. She felt very tired because of study and extra work, and also missed her parents a lot. Her parents asked her to visit them in order to have a rest and to meet the family during school holiday. Unfortunately, she had an awful experience of racism during this time. I cannot report on this happening in this thesis as it was her private experience. During this visit she experienced real anxiety from the social atmosphere in South Africa and this reminded her of her painful experiences of racism in childhood in the country. At the outset of this interview, she wanted to talk about her childhood experiences which brought out the issue of the social atmosphere in the country and its violence which had influenced her since childhood. Then, she turned to her experiences of primary and high school, and university education. The follow is her interpretation of educational issues.

2.4.1 The social atmosphere on the mission field

The social atmosphere in South Africa was one of disorder and racism was prevalent when she and her family arrived on the mission field. From the time that Visionary entered primary school, she experienced much racism from her peers and teachers. She was teased by peers because of being Korean. She said, “At that time, it was hard for Asians to hire a house or to enter school. Because of these circumstances my family was struggling and I was being teased by my peers at school. One day a white girl hit me in the face because I was Korean, and others often teased me because of the different color of my skin. It hurt me a lot; I didn’t know what’s wrong with my appearance. But I lost my self-confidence and felt ashamed when I changed clothes for sports at school.” At the first school, she really struggled with racism and strict school rules. So, her parents decided to change schools. The new school had a more peaceful atmosphere than the previous school, and she soon adjusted well.

2.4.2 Primary and high school education

From grade 1 she worked very hard at all her subjects especially English because she understood its importance in the country. Because of her hard work she became fluent in English. She practiced hard to master the piano, and put efforts in sports in order to prove herself to her peers and teachers. She received good support from her parents and teachers in learning language and school work. She was happy with the academic standard of the school but struggled with racism. She said, “Until I reached grade 9 I had a very difficult time coping with the racism at the school, some children teased me and made fun of me, other children wouldn’t talk to me because of my nationality. So I decided to excel in my studies, piano and sports in order to show the teachers and my peers that Koreans can excel.” Visionary accomplished the purpose that she had decided on. In order to do this, she had to manage her time wisely. As a result, she was identified as one of the top students at high school. Yet, she had difficulty in learning the local language, Afrikaans, until she reached grade 7. Her marks for this subject were low. “I couldn’t find any reason for learning a language, which is only used in that country. For several years I complained about it, and my ability in the language was deteriorating.

One day my father encouraged me by saying, ‘The language would be useful in future if you can speak it fluently.’ I was challenged by his words. From that day I changed my mind and tried to use the language with my peers at school, moreover I joined a group in order to take extra language lessons. As a result of my hard work, I achieved 80% average in the language every year since grade 8. I also got a distinction in it at matric.” For help in studying the language Visionary asked for support from her school teachers, and concentrated on writing and listening. She thought that the teachers were helpful in the learning of the language and she was encouraged to approach the teachers confidently. However, she struggled with mathematics since she decided to study at university in Korea. Because she knew that the level of mathematics is much higher in Korea, she took extra lessons in mathematics and worked very hard.

Racism was still prevalent among students, and thus, she was often daunted by native and western students. So she regretted it that she was not involved in leadership at school because of it. She said, “I regret that I was not involved in

leadership at high school because of its atmosphere. If I had been, it would have made a difference to my experience at school.”

2.4.3 University education in Korea

She initially planned to attend university in Korea in order to experience Korean culture and society, and to build personal relationships in Korea for the future. Because she was not aware of the requirement of an entrance examination for the universities in Korea, she was unable to apply to universities in Korea in the year that she graduated from high school. Instead she entered a university in South Africa, on the mission field. She intended to study in that country for a short period in order to complete the requirements of the university in Korea. So she took advantage of the experience of studying at the university in that country for a short period. After a year she applied to one of the top universities in Korea and was accepted through the special admission³⁵. Preparation for the entry examination for the Korean university required so many things and lack of information was the biggest problem when she applied. However she completed it successfully.

She left South Africa for her university education in Korea and has been staying in a dormitory at the university. At the university she was happy with the academic standard and the environment, but soon she realized that her academic ability was not good enough in comparison with the other students who had studied at high school in Korea. Because they were all top students at high school, their academic abilities were excellent. She experienced difficulties especially with mathematics and science, since the levels of these differ so much from Korea. She felt oppressed among Korean students. She recognized that she missed some of the important aspect of these subjects at high school. Thus, she focused on these subjects in order to make a good progress. So she had to work extremely hard as she said, “When I compared myself to them I realized that academically I was far behind. So I studied very hard for that year. I stayed at the university all day long. I even slept at the library and went back to the dormitory early in the morning just to shower and

³⁵ See, chapter 3, p87.

change clothes.” She said that the university had high academic standards and excellent professors. She also remarked that 50% of first year students taking the course would be selected to take a special course the following year. She studied very hard in order to be selected for the course which she wanted to take, which brought much tension. She also struggled with cultural and social adjustment in Korea, because everything was new for her. She could not understand the busy Korean life style. She felt tired by looking at them. Furthermore, she struggled to make good relationships with students at the university as they were biased against her as a special admission student.

In addition, she was burdened by her lack of finances to pay for tuition and living expenses. To help cover her financial needs, she worked very hard in order to get a scholarship and she tutored some primary school children in English. She also volunteered at a hospital in order to gain extra marks towards her course. She said that she stressed out all the time doing so many things at once.

Above all, she had a problem finding accommodation during the school holidays, because the dormitory was closed during that time and so she needed to stay in different places during each school holiday. Recently, she is facing a problem of having to move out of the dormitory because of a university law and she needs to find other accommodation which would cost more. She was nervous about this situation.

2.4.4 Reflections on Visionary’s narrative

Visionary’s narrative started with the social atmosphere on the mission field, and her awful experience of racism when she visited her parents. It reminded her of her childhood experience that was tainted by the racist attitude of her peers and teachers since she was a little girl. At the time of her arrival the country was in a political transition, but racism was still wide spread. Because of this, Korean families faced many difficulties in the country. As Visionary experienced discrimination when she took part in any kind of competition, Rust (1989:17) states that minority children often gain racial perceptions which are harmful, and negative feelings about race

cause self-doubt. He (1989:18) also indicates that “The teachers and principals are sometimes the source of the racist attitudes... The effects of racism begin to impact children more directly after eight or nine years of age.” Even though she had excellent results, she would not be given top marks, due to her nationality as Korean. She was discouraged and lost confidence.

Similarly to my other co-researchers she pointed out that language learning was one of her big problems during her primary and high school years. To learn many languages at the same time was not easy. It needs a lot of time and effort. However, since she was challenged by her father she changed her attitude toward multi language learning. She realized that learning those languages could have advantages in future, like the ability to communicate with different groups of people. Therefore, she improved her ability in Korean since she entered university in Korea. Heny (1994:186) agrees that learning different languages at an early age can sharpen thinking skills in general and can actually help children achieve academically above their grade level. Visionary received a good education in spite of her suffering through the social atmosphere on the mission field, because the school she studied at, is one of the country’s top schools academically and in many other ways. The school caters for international students from many different countries, local students included, and so Korean students found more acceptance and encouragement than they would have had at the local schools. At present she is suffering tension to adjust to the new situation in Korea, trying to cope academically and facing financial issues.

2.5 The story of Faithful

Faithful is a twenty-four year old male student at a South African university. He came to the mission field when he was in grade 9. He was one of the top academic students in Korea before they moved to the new country. He works hard at his studies and has an amazing ability to manage his time. Yet, he is stressed by his studies at university.

I visited him twice at the beginning of the interview sessions and at the end of the interview sessions. The rest of the interviews were conducted through networking, internet phone and email. Initially, I wanted to listen to the story of his adjustment on the mission field and how he coped with his school work during the time he was at high school, and also to understand how this situation influenced his study at university. Then we turned to discussing his current education issues. The following is the narrative of Faithful.

2.5.1 Transition to the mission field during high school

He had a positive view of his high school education on the mission field, compared to his previous high school in Korea. He earnestly wanted thank the teachers because they always encouraged and helped him with his studies and his adjustment. He liked the environment at the school. However, he experienced problems with the education system which differed from the one in Korea. He found communicating in English difficult, and studying English was a great problem. Mathematics was his favorite subject because it was based on formulae, but other subjects were difficult because they had so many words to read and understand. He worked very hard to do well in English, did self study for two or three hours in all his subjects every day, and this helped him a lot. He was progressing well in his school work after three months, better after six months, and better still after nine months. In grade 10, reading text books and understanding the meaning was getting easier, yet he needed to find a lot of unknown words in the dictionary in order to write down the meanings in the text books, that he needed to work extra hard. Mastering English was the most important issue for him and this caused him much stress. Moreover he regretted that he could not form close relationships with his peers at high school because of a lack of time, as well as his inability to communicate in English.

Another difficulty he experienced was the separation from his parents. His parents moved to another city to continue their missionary work, while he and his younger brother remained at the same place in order to continue their high school education. Although, the separation from his parents was not a big problem for him emotionally,

he missed the parental support and encouragement for his studies. He wondered whether he would have worked harder if his parents were with him. However, he accomplished his purpose during high school and made good grades to enter university. He pointed out that the school used a system of individual thinking rather than cramming, a uniform system of education, and teachers were helpful. He was grateful for it.

2.5.2 University education on the mission field

Faithful entered a university on the field, and was happy with the academic standard and attitude of the professors. He found that the university had a high academic standard and that the students were eager to study. In spite of his satisfaction, he found studying difficult since the education system differed so much from Korea and his limited English was a drawback. Even though he genuinely worked hard, he failed some subjects. He said, “I worked approximately twelve hours daily during the exam period and worked three or four hours daily at other times. If I didn’t do this, I would have failed, so I had to do it. My studies caused so much stress but I depended on God in order to find mental stability. My faith grew stronger during my university period.” It is clear that he tried to make every possible effort with his studies. But he often felt discouraged by his marks in comparison with that of the local students. He pointed out that his imperfect knowledge of English was the main reason for his marks. On the other hand, he was suffering with insufficient finances since his parents had moved to the other city, and he had to tutor Korean high school students in mathematics and English. Time management was really important for him to do his best in his studies. Not freed of financial problems he was always careful with his money.

While this research was carried out, he received a written notice from the university that his results failed to qualify him for graduation. He could not understand this failure and was very upset, because he had completed all the requirements for the graduation assessment, and he thought everything was completed. In fact, the result meant that he had to change his plans for the future and he was devastated. He had

an extremely difficult time coping with this. Moreover, his parents unexpectedly had to find money for extra payments and educational expenses. He studied for a year longer than he expected, and due to this, his future plans have been completely changed. He was really discouraged and felt anger towards the university.

When he looked back on his high school and university education in that country, he saw that his difficulty with English was the main problem both for his studies and his relationships with people. Also he stated that he felt let down by the lack of information he received in terms of entering a university and studying overseas. In these circumstances, he often felt lonely and he needed someone to discuss these matters with him. He felt sorry that it was difficult for him to make close friends with his peers at high school due to the language problem, cultural differences, and time limitations. But, actually he felt nervous and tense in approaching the native children for the above mentioned reasons. This kind of attitude still causes him to keep his distance from the native people but this is not his real intention. Now he realizes that building close relationships with his peer group is essential, he regrets not doing this.

2.5.3 Reflections on Faithful's narrative

During my first interview with Faithful, I tried to focus my research on the effects of change during high school years in order to discover the following: how does changing cultures and facing all the issues of transit during the teenage years affect children? How do children cope with a new language, their studies and a new culture at this age? How did this situation influence his study at university?

He noticed the major differences in schooling patterns between Korea and the mission field. In his experience, changing cultures and facing language differences during high school years made it really difficult for him to cope. As mentioned above, he often got low marks at university in spite of the excessive effort he put into his studies. He observed that English was the primary factor to overcome his studies. In comparison to the native students, he needed to study many more hours than they did. Even though he did, he became really discouraged because he never coped as well as the native students did. So, he sometimes felt to commit suicide because he

became so discouraged and/or depressed with the results of his studies. Since he failed to graduate from university, he was very stressed because this caused him to change his future plans. For instance, he faced having to join the army which is obligatory for Korean men, instead of going to America to study for his master's degree.

3. SUMMARY

In this chapter, the children's narratives of educational difficulties emerged from the discussion with them. During the research period, my co-researchers were dispersed in Korea, America and South Africa for university study and for preparation of further study. They have experienced many difficulties in their unique situations and most of their problems are connected with their background. "The action in the now is played within a background that must be pictured, but this background is alive with associations and connotations of the past" (Müller et al. 2001:8). People are influenced by their past experiences, therefore it is important to revisit past situations in order to gain a better understanding of their stories. Lamott (1995:62) quoted by Müller *et al.* (2001:7) emphasized that "Background is where you let us see and know who these people are, how they've come to be together, what was going on before the opening of the story". When people recognize that their problematic stories are influenced by their backgrounds, they may be stimulated in the process of story development. Hence, in this chapter I first tried to listen carefully to my co-researchers' stories of the now, and then tried to discover the stories of the past which is connected to the now.

Dreamer had changed schools frequently while he was growing up on the mission field, because of the financial situation of his family, and this matter had essentially influenced his study. He was struggling with an inconsistent education system from primary school to middle school, and it prevented him from adapting to schools on the mission field. Hence, he was sent to Korea for high school education for a better education opportunity. He entered university in Korea after he graduated at high school. But, he could not adjust in Korea because of insufficient support from his

parents and his struggle with his financial situation. Faithful really struggled with English and could not make good progress at high school. At university he still experienced difficulties with his studies due to his inadequate ability in English. This caused him more stress. Hope had serious emotional difficulties when I first met her. She stayed in Korea for a short while to prepare for further study in America, but she suffered feelings of depression and instability, and struggled in life. We discovered that these feelings were the result of her past educational experiences. She experienced emotional difficulties at boarding school which influenced her life adversely. Challenger had the vision to be a medical doctor and put effort in her study. However, she struggled to find volunteer work at a hospital to fulfill the requirements for admission at a medical university in America. Visionary reentered Korea after 13 years since her family went to the mission field. She studied in South Africa from primary school to high school, and went to Korea for university education. During the first year at university in Korea, she struggled to understand the education system that was immensely different from that of South Africa, and also needed to put extra effort in her study to accomplish the academic competence required at university. Furthermore, cultural adjustment and understanding Korean society and people were problems, and with insufficient funding became her burdens in the new country.

My co-researchers had many difficulties with education, and interpreted the meaning of their experiences from their point of view. Freedman and Combs (1996:8) suggest that the “performance” of stories does not happen automatically. It does happen when a person is immersed in the story and when he/she experiences the story as meaningful. Müller et al. (2001:9) cites the metaphor of the Polaroid used by Lamott (1995:39) to explain narrative research. Doing narrative research is like waiting for a Polaroid to develop. After taking the picture with the camera, we cannot see the picture on the film; we need to wait for a while to obtain a clear picture. The picture becomes clearer and clearer as time passes and finally we see the whole picture on the film. Narrative researchers have to be patient and curious to listen to the participants' stories and wait for the research plot to develop. Müller et al. (2001:10) suggested that “the contribution of the researcher is to reflect and facilitate and wait until the plot emerges. It’s like being the assistant for someone who is writing an

autobiography”. Thus, I was curious about the unique stories of my co-researchers and to understand its meanings. I had to wait for the research plot to develop.

The following are the traditions of interpretation that emerged from the collaboration with my co-researchers through the research process.

- MK/Christian boarding school
 - ⇒ separation from parents
 - ⇒ atmosphere at school
- Relationships with parents and friends
- University education and reentry
- Financial situation of Korean missionary family
- Language learning, cultural adjustment and identity
- Young adult issues

Müller (2004:1) says, “Practical theological research is not only about description and interpretation of experience. It is also about deconstruction and emancipation... to develop into a new story of understanding that points beyond the local community.” Narrative is interested in discovering, acknowledging and “taking apart” (deconstructing) the beliefs, ideas and practices of the broader culture in which a person lives and which are assisting the problem to develop (Morgan 2005:45). Thus, I attempted to get my co-researchers to reconstruct the problems in order to create new meaning.

I will describe how the traditions of interpretation were developed through deconstructive conversation from the discussions with my co-researchers, and explore alternative stories in chapter five.

CHAPTER 5

THE DEVELOPMENT STORY

1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, the traditions of interpretation that emerged from the collaboration with my co-researchers were as follows:

- MK/Christian boarding school
 - ⇒ separation from parents
 - ⇒ atmosphere at school
- Relationships with parents and friends
- University education and reentry
- Financial situation of Korean missionary family
- Language learning, cultural adjustment and identity
- Young adult issues

For the next stage, I tried to investigate my co-researchers' experiences more deeply in order to seek a better understanding of their interpretations. To do this, I used deconstructive conversations to assist my co-researchers to develop the deeper meaning of their experiences. Demasure and Müller (2006:5) aver that deconstruction deals with text analysis and that meanings are not inherent, but, rather emerges only as the reader converses with a text. Using deconstructive conversations, the co-researchers' stories were effectively listened to from "listening to experiences" to "describing the experiences" (Müller 2004:1). In this sense, the development of the stories of the co-researchers was identified through deconstruction. They were helped to 'unpack' the dominant stories of their lives to view them from a different perspective (Morgan 2000:50). Within this new perspective of possible stances available within their traditions, the processes of reconstruction of their problem were realized (Monk et al. 1997:208). As reconstruction developed, my co-researchers' expectations of themselves changed. This different positioning brought them very different life experiences. They gained

courage and found a new sense of strength in order to seek a new future. Alternative stories of my co-researchers would then emerge through the plot development.

2 CHILDREN'S STORIES RETOLD

From among the traditions of interpretation, in this section I will classify the retold stories of my co-researchers according to the different concepts.

2.1 MK/Christian boarding schools

The traditions of interpretation on the matter of MK/Christian boarding schools were identified in various ways from the collaboration with my co-researchers, and this was developed by Hope and Dreamer as follows:

2.1.1 Separation from parents

During the interview sessions Hope mainly described her emotional difficulties as feelings of tiredness, depression, loneliness and anger. She expressed frustration at not being able to show her real thoughts, feelings and emotions to others. She said, "My own real person is repressed and hidden". Using the narrative to help people to develop the meaning of their stories, I asked Hope why she feels that her real person is hidden. In response to my question she said, "... because I don't know how to deal with my emotions... I have been afraid to show my real feelings to others since I was a little girl. I think my parents don't understand me, and I have no one with whom to honestly share my feelings about myself... So my own real person is repressed and hidden..."

Using the externalization of Freedman and Combs (2002:32), I tried to examine the reason why her real person is hidden in order to understand her view of it. Morgan (2000:17) demonstrates that externalizing conversation can assist people to separate their identity from the problem. It requires a particular shift in the use of language,

making an important distinction between people and the problem. Therefore, we can reveal dominant discourses with externalizing questions about contextual influences on the problem. Moreover, I tried to name her problem in order to help her to separate her identity from the problem. Freedman and Combs (2002:29) insist that “Naming a problem can also be a way of examining a problem and thinking differently about it. It can be poetic and compelling.”

I asked Hope if she could give a name to her real person. She thought carefully for a while, then said, “Well... unstable girl?” By giving a name to the problem, ‘unstable girl’ appeared. Hence, in order to examine the cause of her instability and to externalize it, I asked the following questions. “When can you see the ‘unstable girl’?” “What made her become unstable?” “What kind of effect does ‘unstable girl’ have on your life?” “Is the ‘unstable girl’ always with you?”

She was wary of giving answers to the above questions. She said that she had been alone ever since she was a little girl, and she always felt isolated. She had experienced that people, her parents, friends and teachers, always left her unexpectedly, and this made her very fearful. Indeed, she really needs stability in her life, but she has no confidence, because of being left by special people so many times in the past. Thus, instead of showing her real feelings, emotions, and thoughts, she built a wall around herself to protect herself. She said, “I lost confidence, and am often depressed... recently I am always depressed and tired... I am unstable... Maybe it’s my personality?...”

By using externalizing conversation, we discovered that the cause of these feelings is based on separation from people through her lifelong experiences, originating in the separation from her parents from a young age. It is an undeniable fact that early years of separation from her parents caused Hope’s deep emotions of insecurity, instability and loneliness. She rarely saw her parents during her school years, so she had no chance to communicate with them honestly about school life, her thoughts and her feelings. Instead, she simply told her parents that everything was fine. She presumed that her parents were so busy with their mission work that they had no time and no interest in their children. While she was speaking about her childhood, she was almost crying as she told of her desperate need of her parents’ genuine love,

care and support during her school years, but she was always so far from them. Because Hope was not able to share her difficulties and problems, even her interests, with her parents while she was growing up, this lifelong experience still causes her to hide her real person.

After 'unstable girl' surfaced, she wanted to express more about her real thoughts. She said, "I want 'unstable girl' to come out from her hiding place, and be stable, but I did not know how to do it... but now, I'm thinking... I talked to my friend about our last conversation, and we (Hope and her friend) were thinking that my problems could be over and gone... They will not punish me anymore. I'm thinking now... I have found some possibilities in me since our last conversation..." It was a 'sparkling moment' when she became aware of her desire and was able to speak about it to others. She wanted 'unstable girl' to come out from the hidden place and she wanted to be stable. She also realized that she has the possibility to bring unstable girl out into the open. So I attempted to reconstruct the problems with the following questions. "Can you explain more about the possibilities you mentioned?" "When can you see your possibilities?" She said thoughtfully, "Well... I am now thinking of things in a different way... I have gained courage to talk to you honestly since our first conversation... now I know that I have someone to talk to about myself honestly... so I think my problems could be over... I have been praying for a long time to find someone to talk to about my problems, and I think you are an answer to my prayer." She identified her abilities which brought a different view on her problems. Finding someone to whom she could talk honestly was the first step to solving her problem. Monk et al. (1997:7) describe that many people adapted to their problems and did not see the extent to which it influenced them. People are also unaware of their own resourcefulness to minimize the extent of their problems. By drawing my co-researchers' attention to subtle changes which may accompany the escalation and reduction of their problems, they may develop new insights into their abilities, and this helps them to develop a clearer perspective on how to address their concerns. When the dominant ideas and beliefs that support the problem are exposed and discussed, and my co-researchers have stood up to the problem that disturbed or challenged them, it becomes clear. If this is significant to the person, it is a unique outcome (Müller 1999:45).

By externalizing conversations, Hope could attempt to focus attention on the problem rather than on her inadequacies. Thus, I was deeply impressed with her new insight for her future. She is now aware of her power and potential, and wants to give new meaning to her life. According to Gergen (2001:173), the externalization of the problem begins to reveal unique outcomes. And this became the basis to creating a new story which proved successful in solving the problem.

Dreamer's pain related to the fact that his parents did not understand him and were not concerned about him. He needed to share his interests and difficulties with his parents, but often found that his parents seemed so busy and had no time to care for their children. He said that even though he has grown up, he still faces many difficulties in his life and his studies at university, and still needs the emotional and financial support of his parents, but he has no confidence to share his thoughts with his parents. I asked him what made him hesitate to communicate with his parents, and he responded that since he was at primary school he could not express his feelings to his parents. He felt that his parents were always busy doing missionary work and seemed not to have enough time to be concerned about their children. I also asked him if he ever talked to his parents about his thoughts and feelings and he said that he complained about this matter when he was a little child, but his parents did not understand his emotions, they always said that they were very busy doing God's work. The attitude of his parents hurt him emotionally and he thought that mission work is more important to his parents than their children. This experience so influenced him that he was not able to open his heart to his parents even up to the present time. I was aware that he was prejudiced towards his parents in some ways and I tried to deconstruct his prejudice by deconstructive conversation to question and challenge the ideas that assist in the sustaining of the problem (Freedman & Combs 2002:206).

I asked him if there were times when he experienced any positive reactions when he was communicating with his parents about his difficulties. He looked thoughtful in response for a while and said that his mother liked to read the Bible every day and wanted him to share the meaning of the Bible with her by internet phone, and he knew that this was a chance to share his thoughts with her. Yet, he did not want to

open his real thoughts to her honestly, he rather tried to interpret the meaning of the Bible as he understood it. I asked him again what it was that prevented him from opening his heart honestly to her, and he answered that he was influenced by his past experiences. He had no confidence to share his difficulties honestly with his parents. Because they supported him financially for his university education, he was afraid to cause any trouble. In fact, he had financial problems, but could not share these with his parents. He felt that they were so far from the country he stayed in, that they would not understand his situation. So, he often thought that his needs were disregarded by his parents and also by God, and he became angry toward them. I was able to understand his feelings toward his parents and God due to his very difficult situation. It was difficult for him to solve the problems and manage his life without emotional support from his parents. However, he was upset about his relationship with his parents, and felt that they were drifting apart from each other and said that he wanted to develop a closer relationship with them. I suggested that he share his difficulties with his mother when she wanted to share with him the meaning of the Bible. I explained that in sharing its meaning it is important try to apply the meaning of the Bible to his real life situation. He agreed with my suggestion as he recognized that interpretation of the Bible has no meaning without its application in our real world, and so, he was courage by our discussion. Morgan (2000:45) describes that a narrative approach is interested in discovering, acknowledging and “taking apart” (deconstructing) the beliefs, ideas and practices of the broader culture in which a person lives and which are assisting the problem to develop. When the time of sharing the meaning of the Bible came, he tried to open his heart and was able to talk about his problems more openly to his mother. In spite of his effort, he still felt uncomfortable to open his heart fully to his mother, but he was happy with his ability to take the first step to rebuild his relationship with his parents. He found that his mother was willing to listen to his stories and expressed her feeling of pity for him to some extent. He was aware that his mother could not open her heart fully to him. But, he was encouraged by the opportunity, as he thought that this communication may become the first step to rebuild a better relationship between himself and his parents in future. I asked him if he experienced God’s help during his difficult times at university and he responded that God showed His love to him when he asked for His help and expressed that his personal

experiences of God's existence inspired him with a vital power. God's love has given him courage, not only in the past, but also in the present. We talked about spiritual experiences more deeply and I found that he was convinced that when he faces problems, and people cannot help, God will help him. Carlson and Erickson (2002:217,232) state that spiritual experiences have the potential to offer people a wealth of hope in their life. As God is invisible, the people's experience of God's presence is subjective. By deconstructive conversation, he recognized that the time of separation did not only have painful stories, but also had the power to motivate him to be independent and to help him manage his life.

The retelling of Dreamer's story was meaningful and promoted a new perspective toward a better future. Müller (2004:8) states that the aim of narrative research is to empower the powerless. A unique outcome is anything that defies the problem or that contravenes the problem. If they start thinking differently and see the significance of the dominant story, it can be considered a unique outcome. When unique outcomes are identified, they are openings to alternative stories (Morgan 2000:50).

2.1.2 Atmosphere at MK/Christian schools

The atmosphere at MK/Christian schools seriously influenced children's feelings in negative ways. The stories of Challenger and Hope's development will be represented in this regard.

Challenger was sensitive when she looked back on her childhood at MK school. Her self-esteem was damaged by teachers and staff because she was labeled as a naughty child, lacking quiet and well behavior to qualify her as a good Christian to them. Challenger was confused about finding the real meaning of Christianity, because the teachers and staff were narrow minded Christians in their discipline of children. Children suffered from their narrow-minded thinking and really struggled to find the real meaning of faith. Thus, she became very critical towards Christianity and Christians. She is still struggling with it. So, we spent much time discussing the meaning of Christianity. I suggested that we read some books that teach the

essential qualities of Christianity and the way it can be applied in this world. She agreed with my suggestion and we recommended some books to each other.

Through the research process, she became encouraged to find new meaning in the stories of her past. She said that bringing the painful stories to the surface and interpreting them were an effective way to gain new insight. In order to develop new stories, she resolved that she would no longer avoid thinking and/or telling the stories of her past experiences, instead she wanted to try to give new meaning to them. Monk et al. (1997:24) define that narrative conversation is a process of unearthing dormant competencies, talents, abilities, and resources that tends to produce numerous moments of excitement and vivacity.

Another negative influence that she experienced at that school was its western environment. She was ashamed of being different among western people. She worried about being perceived as different by her western peers. Some teachers and staff showed racial discrimination against Korean children, and some of the western children teased the Korean children because of their differences. In this atmosphere she did not like the fact that she was Korean. She now realizes that these feelings were caused by the western attitudes that permeated the school. She did not really want to change her nationality, but was influenced by the atmosphere at the school.

Since she returned to Korea and was working with western people she became aware that she was recovering from her low self-esteem about being Korean. She now recognizes that Korea is a developed country where many people from the west want to come to find good jobs. She also recognizes that people in Korea have adjusted to western ways, since there is a different social atmosphere these days. Western people now look familiar in that country as so many of them are coming to Korea as tourists, or are looking for employment, or are immigrating. A great number of Koreans go overseas for similar reasons. She now feels more comfortable with her Korean identity among her western colleagues in Korea.

Hope explained that the atmosphere at primary school was very strict in order to discipline the children that it affected her negatively in many ways. These effects

lasted until her young adult years. Because she was afraid and felt insecure in the very strict environment at school, she felt that she had to be a perfect child as children were caned when they made mistakes. This caused tension. However, as the rules at the school were too strict, she always felt that she was not good enough. She became tired and discouraged because of these strict rules and by the excessively religious atmosphere at school. These negative feelings still cause her to avoid similar environments. Hence, she struggled to decide about the offer to become a part time teacher at a Christian school. She did not look forward to be involved in a Christian school. Her parents urged her to work there as a good step in her career, to earn a salary and especially because of the principal of the school. The school has very good environment and education level, and the principal has a good understanding of Korean missionary children, but she hesitated in making a decision. When she brought this issue to me, she had only one week left before giving her final answer to the school. She was fretful and confused.

In order to discover Hope's real feelings toward that school, I attempted to use deconstructive questions, "Can you tell me more in detail why you are hesitating to make a decision?" "What makes you feel afraid to work at a Christian school?" She responded thoughtfully, "Well... it is too religious; it would be so tiring to work in that religious atmosphere. If I work there, I will be hurt, my head knows it." "I just feel... I will be confined to certain religious boundaries if I work there. That's not what I want, that's not me. I want to be free from religious boundaries." She felt afraid to work at a Christian school as she felt it would be like going back to boarding school. Indeed, she was afraid to think about her childhood experiences which were stained by pain. As Challenger told her feelings about that Christian school, she felt so much pain. She worried that if she was involved in religious duties, she would be afraid to take part. I asked her if she would be required to take part in these activities, and she responded that she would not be compelled by the school, but she seemed sensitive and really worried about the atmosphere at that school.

I realized that her fear was a reality, so I asked her if she would feel differently about the situation at the Christian school if she worked as a part time teacher, she thought carefully and then said, "Well, I think that I will not be involved in religious activities if

I don't want to be. The principal understands the situation of Korean missionary children, so he won't expect me to take part in religious duties if I don't want to." By deconstructive conversation, she recognized that her fear about that Christian school was not based on the real situation, rather, it was underpinned by her experiences at boarding school and by her preconceived idea of the religious atmosphere. Moreover her lack of communication with her parents caused her to be uncomfortable in showing her weakness to her parents, and they could not understand why she was struggling to make a decision.

By talking of her real thoughts and feelings about that school and its religious atmosphere, she became aware of her sensitiveness in this matter. She seemed encouraged to discover the meaning of her fears. She gained confidence to consider working at that school and decided to meet with the principal again in order to honestly share her fears about the atmosphere. Afterwards she decided to work as a part-time teacher before taking up the position full-time. She could understand the basis of her worries which explained her anxiety and her hidden thoughts and feelings, and had the desire to solve the problem. In the time between the interviews, Hope's interpretations of this specific issue changed gradually. Freedman and Combs (1996:46) say, "When we listen 'deconstructively' to people's stories, our listening is guided by the belief that those stories have many possible meanings... We seek to capitalize on this by looking for gaps in our understanding and asking people to fill in details, or by listening for ambiguities in meaning and then asking people how they are resolving or dealing with those ambiguities." People cannot be helped by our questions and comments, but they can examine their own stories in new ways. Thus, this work – in finding meaning and realizing its effects can open up a space for people, whose stories are being investigated, to think about the possibilities of a better future and of a new reality (Freedman & Combs 1996: 46,47).

2.2 Relationships with parents and friends

The traditions of interpretation on relationship were exposed by all of my co-researchers as they realized its importance. Faithful described his relationship with

local friends and Dreamer and Hope emphasized their relationship with their parents. Their retold stories are the following:

Dreamer had a grudge against his parents while he was growing up because he was thinking that his parents put greater value on their ministry than on their own children. Therefore he was angry with his parents and felt enmity towards them for many years. He realized that there was a big gap between his parents and him. Actually, he was dissatisfied with the financial situation of his family, and this distressed him. He faced extreme financial difficulties when he was applying to a university in America. This provoked his feeling of antipathy toward his parents because they did not have the means to solve the situation.

“My parents were so far from me and were always busy with their ministries, I was aware that they couldn’t help me as there was a big distance between us. I also knew that they had paid such a big amount of money for my education. So I was afraid that my parents are burdened by my needs. But I am not sure how they will think if I share my problems with them.” In saying these things, he seemed to regret his attitude toward his parents, and continued to say that his feelings of anger and instability might be underpinned by the insufficiency of communication with his parents and their lack of understanding. He did not know whether it was good to share his difficulties with his parents honestly or not. I suggested that he should take a chance and share his difficulties more openly with his parents during his visit. He looked thoughtful for a while and then told me that he would try this in order to get their spiritual and emotional support, but was hesitant to do it.

He visited Botswana for three months during the university holiday in order to spend time with his parents and to help in their ministry. He did not actually want to go there because he could not find anything of interest there. However, he had a good time with his parents while he was staying with them. When I first interviewed him, he felt uncomfortable to discuss his difficulties with his parents, but now his attitude toward his parents had changed. He told me that during his last few days he was trained by his mother each day to meditate on the Bible, and he felt assured that his life will be successful through prayer and meditating on the Bible as he believed that this is the

way to depend on God. His new experiences in Botswana of being involved in the ministry of orphaned children gave him new insight into the missionary work of his parents. Before this experience, he would not look back at the past experiences of his childhood as he thought that they were filled with hurtful memories. But now he found a different meaning to his family's life by joining in the mission work and spending time with his parents. His view of his parents and the life as a missionary family was renewed in this time.

Even though Hope was a young adult, her relationship with her parents did not develop in a natural way. She often felt tension between herself and her parents when they talked about special issues. She knew that her mother became sensitive and felt guilty toward her children because of their boarding school experiences. Because her mother was upset about this matter, Hope also felt angry with her parents for the same reasons. They became sensitive emotionally and argued with each other. Her boarding school experiences caused her feelings of anger toward her parents and as a young adult, she still feels lonely. She wished to be close to her family, wanted her parents to understand her better, and to be fully accepted by them. She recognized that it would be best to come to Korea and reconnect with her parents. She tried to take advantage of being close to her parents in order to build a new relationship with them.

Hope realized that she was expecting too much from her parents, but she did not know how to deal with it. She was still angry and struggling in her relationship with her parents. In order to clear up her understanding of her expectation of her parents, I asked her what sort of issues she wanted to share with her parents. She said she wanted to share about herself, her feelings, her thoughts, and the normal things of her life. I asked again if she could open her mind to her parents and genuinely try to share her real thoughts and feelings to them. She said, "No... I think my father somehow cared more about the mission than for me." Because of this, she had no confidence in herself to be close to her parents. However, during the research process, she indicated different thoughts toward her parents. She realized that the expectations she had had of her parents were unrealistic, and she was aware that these high expectations would affected her attitude toward her parents. Taking this

into account, she wanted to stop blaming her parents, and instead, she looked for positive things in their relationships. She tried to have a better understanding of her father and the fact that he was so busy doing mission work. She wanted to thank her mother for her support in various ways. With her different perspective, she was now able to see how much support and love she had been receiving from her parents while she was settling in Korea. She felt sorry about her critical attitude toward her parents. Yet, she still thinks that she and her parents need to talk more openly about the issues in the family and that they should do this on a regular basis.

Faithful regretted that he had not built up relationships with local friends. He felt sorry that during his high school years he put all his time and effort in his studies, because he worried about his academic ability to enter university. During his high school years he did not think that making close friendships with the local children was important. At university he was able to have good relationship with some of the Korean children. However his relationships with the local children did not develop. He realizes now that building relationships with them was vital as he was living in their country. In spite of this awareness, he could not change his attitude toward the local people because of the differences between him and his local friends. Furthermore he recognized that he had limited knowledge about the country and its people. I suggested that he read books on the sociology and culture of that country. We both agreed that it was a good idea to read those books to understand the country and its people. We also expected it to provide some ideas of how to develop communication skills with the local people. He hoped that it would help him to understand the local people, their culture and society. He also recognized that without a genuine effort on his part, relationships with the local people would not develop, so he was determined to make an effort to develop his relationships with the local people in future to enrich his life. Morgan (2000:50) observe that the unique outcome may seem very small (no need to be large or spectacular) and what will become significant is if the person determines that it is indeed a unique outcome. Narrative approach might focus on building a fuller picture of the plot development (Monk et al. 1997:6).

2.3 University education and reentry

Because of the situation on mission field, Korean missionary children in general have many difficulties to start at university. In many cases, it is difficult to collect enough and/or right information about universities in Korea and in other countries, and making preparation for an entrance examination is not easy on the mission field. Missionary children need to take into account the financial situation of their family before choosing a university.

Faithful entered university on the mission field because of his concern for his family's situation. He was happy with the academic standard and attitude of the professors at the local university. However, he struggled with his studies since the education system differed so much from Korea and his limited English was a drawback. In spite of his hard work, he failed some subjects every year. Sometimes he felt to give up because he experienced stress in his study. He was discouraged when he compared his results with those of the local children.

He failed to qualify for graduation at university while this research was progressing. He could not believe it and was very upset by it. On account of these results he was devastated and changed his plans for the future. He had an extremely difficult time coping with it. The following year I interviewed him twice in order to encourage him in this difficult situation, and focused our conversation on his problems. He said that he fell into despair. He complained about the people who had been in charge of making the decision about his graduation and felt anger toward the university. He initially thought that it was unfair and a kind of racism. During the first interview session in that year he found it hard to control his negative feelings over the situation. He especially worried about his future. I asked him how he would go about to explore possibilities for further studies, but he was not sure about other possibilities. What discouraged him most was that he did not understand God's will for him in this situation. He could not understand why God allowed this situation while He knew his plans for the future. He questioned God many times and prayed a lot. I tried to encourage him from God's word in the Bible and we prayed together for His guidance.

At our next interview six months later I was amazed at his changed attitude. He seemed so different from the previous interview, so I asked him why his attitude had changed. He smiled and explained that he had significant experiences during his extended year of study and because he was able to clearly understand some specific principles of mathematics. He said that he would have missed these important opportunities if he had not taken this extend study. Hence, he was able to calm down, control his anxiety and depression, and will try to complete the course successfully. He was still praying to find God's plan for his future that was uncertain since his study time had to be extended. Morgan (2000:50) explains that when a person reconstructs the dominant stories, the times that person has stood against problems may become visible, if it is significant to the person, it is a unique outcome.

Dreamer reentered Korea for high school, and faced many difficulties with adjustment without his parents. He entered university after graduating from high school, but, was exceedingly confused at university. He fell into despair through his culture shock at the university and with the Korean society. He realized that children at university pursue very different goals from what he expected. He was deeply distressed with the environment at the university and left the university after six months because of many problems.

Dreamer wandered aimlessly after he left university and ran away from God for a year. During that time, he did not want to go to church and did not meet with Christians. Instead he tried to make a big money and was lead into temptation. Through his wandering he lost his purpose for life. He had a lot of painful memories and was afraid to share these experiences with his parents. He was burdened by his mistakes and worried that his parents or other Christians would find out about his failure. He felt ashamed and guilty before God. He said that he was extremely lonely as he had no one who could share his difficulties during that year, and also felt isolated since he had left God. He continued to say that he had sinned before God and this spoilt his relationship with Him. He felt that there was a big wall between God and himself. He no longer had the confidence to seek God's help and grace.

His expression of these feelings made me empathize with him. I tried to encourage him by telling him that all human beings have weaknesses. I told him that we can easily fall into temptation in the world, and explained about Jesus who is able to understand our weaknesses because he had experienced being a human. I carefully listened to the stories of his mistakes in order to understand its meaning, and deconstructed his feelings of guilt and doubt in God, in order to help him to give new meaning to his past. He opened his heart and said that he was too young to cope with the difficult situations in Korea without parental support. When he looked back on his mistakes he realized that they were caused by his resistance to his parents and to God as he felt so bitter towards them. I asked him again why he felt bitter against them and he answered that he was so tired of suffering financially and needed to blame someone on which to vent his anger. Dreamer realized that this was not the right way to solve his problems. He wanted God to forgive him for his mistakes. I felt sad for him and wanted him to be freed from his distress.

I asked him what kind of relationship he wanted with God. He said that he wanted God to forgive his sins, and become closer to God, but was not confident that he would be able to have a good relationship with God because of all his sins.

I tried to remind him of God's love and forgiveness by reading the Bible and discussing what we read. We read some of the Bible verses³⁶ that reveal the forgiveness of God for our sins. We spent meaningful time discussing this topic, and he was encouraged by it. God's love has given him courage and he wanted to seek His help continually until his feeling of doubt would disappear.

Visionary had different experiences from Dreamer about university education in Korea. She was satisfied with the academic standard and environment at university because that university is one of the top universities in Korea with a very high academic level. Yet, she had many difficulties with her studies on account of the high academic standard at that university. Students worked very hard and she felt oppressed among them. She had to put all of her energy into her studies, while also struggling with cultural and social adjustment to everything new in Korea.

I asked her if she found, even for a short time, a way to dissolve the tension of her study. She said that she had to work hard even though she had tension. Otherwise,

³⁶ For examples, Isaiah 1:18, 1 John 1:9, 1 Peter 1:18,19 and Colossians 1:13,14.

she would not achieve the goal she had planned. I asked what she did during her spare time, and she said that she liked swimming when she had time because she felt refreshed by it. She also explained that most of other students at that university worked very hard in order to accomplish their goals. Therefore, she had to work harder than they did, due to her academic deficiency. She was challenged by the atmosphere at that university. Her view of Korean students and the atmosphere at the university changed as time passed. During the first year in Korea, she could not understand the busy lifestyle of the Koreans that tired her by just watching them. But she gained a positive view of this social phenomenon and she thinks that it is the vital power of Korea. She was challenged by this kind of social atmosphere in Korea as she said, "In Korea people work very hard, they even work at night. Students at university also study very hard. So I mustn't complain about my situation. Rather, I must also work hard in order to accomplish my purpose. I know that time management is the key to doing all things." By telling and retelling the stories of the university studies and the atmosphere in Korea, she came to realize her situation, and that she was fortunate to be a student at that university. When she looked back at the previous year, she remembered her effort to enter that university. Due to this, she was able to change her mind and to enjoy studying at that university although she still has lots of stress in her studies.

Challenger discussed the development of her story of reentry to Korea. She stayed in Korea twice since her family became missionaries. The first time was for high school during a year of her parents' furlough. During this time she was hurt by Korean adult Christians who were prejudiced against missionary children, who judged her on her attitude and her misunderstanding of Korean culture. She was also teased and excluded by her peer group for similar reasons. This gave her a negative concept of Koreans and Korean society. She felt uncomfortable with Koreans.

At the time of our first interview she was staying in Korea in order to make specific preparations with a hospital for further study. She still found many Christians in the Korean church to be prejudiced missionary children. The people at the church she attended were especially critical of her westernized attitude, often pointed to her makeup, and reacted unkindly, because they saw differences in her. The attitude of these people hurt her deeply and she did not want to go to that church. She said that

people at that church seemed to be observing her closely at all times. She realized that nowadays the Korean community has become more tolerant toward foreigners and Koreans who have grown up overseas. The social atmosphere toward them has been changing rapidly in Korea. She was more comfortable in this situation and was freer in the society. Unfortunately the attitude of people in that church has still not changed.

Another advantage she enjoyed in Korea was the opportunity to earn money. She worked at an educational institute as an English teacher, while she was waiting to take up an opportunity of voluntary work at the hospital, and she received a good salary with which she was satisfied. However, she often experienced a culture shock with her parents, who disagreed with the things she did. She said that Korean parents interfered too much with their children's education and were too sensitive about the results of examinations. She was struggling to find volunteer work at the hospital.

2.4 The financial situation of Korean missionary families

The financial issues were mostly referred to Dreamer, Faithful and Visionary as presented in chapter four. Dreamer mainly showed deep suffering through this issue. In this section, I will focus on the development of Dreamer's stories.

During primary and middle school years Dreamer struggled with an inconsistent education system. The move from private school to local school fostered in him a low self-esteem due to the different environments. The financial situation of his family was the main reason for the frequent changes of school and his life at college. This provoked antipathy towards his parents and God, because he could not understand why missionary children should face such difficulties with finances, while God has power over everything. He had been struggling with this problem for most of his life, and I was saddened by his situation.

Dreamer expected to take up a position as a chairperson at his residence when he

went back to college. As a chairperson he would get a full scholarship for boarding expenses. He was really eager for this opportunity to help cover his financial needs. Two months back in America I received an email message that he was appointed chairperson at his residence. His finances are now more stable, but he is very busy at college, and needs to manage his time to strike a balance between his duties and his studies.

Dreamer was encouraged by one of his friends who said, "Poverty is a blessing, because only a person who has experienced suffering in poverty can understand the needs of the poor." The new insight from his friend impacted on him because he never thought that poverty could be a blessing. He said that he and his friend had a long discussion on this issue. Dreamer felt more comfortable with his family's financial situation and was able to change his perspective on this matter. Before he had never thought positively about poverty, but now he was able to thank God for his situation. He now sees his experiences of poverty as a good lesson which might become his strong point in life. He is convinced that a person who has faith in God has confidence in life, and is able to work hard to accomplish his/her goal. He expressed his conviction saying, "In the Bible, God said that He will lift the poor and the humble³⁷, I am encouraged by this word. I have confidence in Him since I found my dream. I will do my best if God raises me up." He earnestly desired that Korean churches and their members, and/or Christian organizations in Korea might have more understanding of the financial situation of missionary families so as to have some support system for the education of missionary children.

2.5 Language learning, cultural adjustment and identity

The traditions of interpretation on these matters were exposed by all of my co-researchers. They faced many difficulties in different situations, both in countries on the mission field and in Korea. The development stories of this topic overlapped with the stories of 'university education and reentry', and will not be repeated. Yet,

³⁷ Luke 1:52, "He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble."

different aspects emerged on the issue of language learning among my co-researchers. While Hope, Challenger and Visionary found no difficulties in learning English, Dreamer and Faithful found many difficulties both in conversation and studying. The experiences of these two groups differed from one another according to the age at which they arrived on the mission field. During the research, we recognized that children who move to the mission field while they are young. Acquire the new language much easier than children who moved to the mission field during their teenage years. Dreamer and Faithful had lots of stress with language learning from the time they arrived on the mission field. This was especially true in the case of Faithful. He often felt discouraged because of his lack in English competency compared to the local students. He could not understand why his capacity in English did not improve as he would have liked. But, through the research process, by telling the problematic stories and listening to the interpretations of the co-researchers, he felt encouraged. He came to a better understanding of his struggle, and felt freer to accept the situation. The development stories of Faithful emerged as a 'sparkling event' (Morgan 2000:55). According to him (2000:55), unique outcome is anything that does not fit the dominant story and this "can be a doorway to alternative stories". Freedman and Combs (2002:210) also aver that the new ideas embodied in the emerging story can support new perceptions and behaviors.

2.6 Young adult issues

The theme of young adults was discussed with all of my co-researchers taking into account their ages. Through the research process, the co-researchers' stories concerning further studies, careers, marriage and future prospects were developed in collaboration with them. Regarding this, special care of young adult children of Korean missionaries was required in practical ways in order to help them.

According to Dreamer, the most important thing young adult Korean missionary children need is to discover their strong points and strengths in order to develop their competency for the future. He agreed with the general concept that in many cases missionary children are suffering with mental and emotional problems, and the

healing of these feelings is important to them. Yet, he emphasized that they face more difficulties in real life beyond their emotional problems when they become young adults. He said that a person who has experienced healing from the past would be empowered to renew the past stories, and thus the painful stories about the past become refreshing. Therefore, making the connection between the past, the present and the future helps to go forward toward the future. He emphasized that young adult children are more aware of their careers, marriages and the future instead of thinking about the past. Thus, they need motivation and guidance in order to find their potential capacities and to develop them. Sometimes Dreamer felt some misgivings about the future and was looking for someone with more wisdom than he had, who could provide guidelines, but they are hard to find. He has suggested that mission agencies and/or the Korean church should be aware of the importance of this matter and make an effort to help young adult missionary children by providing guidelines. He said that he had been learning how to depend on God and to seek His help since his renewal by the grace of God.

Challenger's experiences of the past were becoming faint. Since she was restored she focused more on the present and the future. She was seriously concerned about the career she would choose. Since she found a new purpose she put all her energy into preparing for the future. During the interview sessions she emphasized that at present preparing for a career was the most important matter for her. Currently, she focuses all her efforts on preparing for her future career.

Faithful worried more seriously about his future than my other co-researchers as his future plans have been altered completely through his failure to graduate from university. He worried more about possible conscription for military service, because in Korea it is obligatory for young men. By law young adult males have to join the military for over two years as soon as they graduate from university. There are only two exceptions: children who have a resident permit in other countries are free from this obligation, and children who continued their master's studies can reserve this obligation up to the age of twenty-eight.³⁸ This caused his tension. His parents

³⁸ Military Manpower Administration in Korea; <http://www.mma.go.kr/kor/indexhtm/>

suggested that he do his master's studies in Korea, but he felt uncomfortable with it, because he worries about the different education system and culture in Korea. He is praying to seek God's help and guidance for the future. During his extended year at university he gained new knowledge of the principles of mathematics, which he did not understand before. But, he had more free time for things he could not do in the past years. He was satisfied with the result thereof.

2.7 Reflection

In this section, the traditions of interpretation of my co-researchers' events were developed. Müller (2001:11) avers that "The research process is not only about storytelling, but also about story development". Thus, I tried to stimulate discussion regarding the influences of their education problems. While speaking about these influences, my co-researchers began to understand their problems and tried to focus on deconstructing their problem-saturated stories. They attempted to understand their situation and to search for other interpretations that could lead to unique outcomes. According to Morgan (2000:52-57), "a unique outcome can be anything that the problem would not like; anything that does not fit with the dominant story". It is a doorway to new and different stories. So, as more and more unique outcomes are traced, grounded and given meaning, a new plot emerges and alternative stories are created (Morgan 2000:59).

In order to assist the co-researchers in creating a new and preferred story for a better future, I will explore their alternative stories in detail in the next section with the reflections of other voices and the interaction with interdisciplinary conversations.

3 INTERDISCIPLINARY CONVERSATIONS

My position within the postfoundationalist and social constructionist paradigm which underpin the narrative approach expects me to cooperate with other disciplines and find a new paradigm in theology. Within my postfoundationalist practical theologian

world view, I avoid asserting my own rights, and instead, try to open up myself to and appropriate other theoretical positions. Extensive attention to interdisciplinary work is an important part of the new approach to practical theology (Osmer 1990:330). Van Huyssteen (1997:4) says that the postfoundationalist notion of rationality in theological reflection points beyond the confines of the local community or culture towards interdisciplinary conversation (Van Huyssteen 1997:4). "The interdisciplinary movement is part and parcel of practical theology. It includes the conversation with other theological disciplines and with all the other sciences" (Müller 2005:11). In postfoundationalist practical theology, the theological reflection can be integrated with various scientific disciplines as a cognitive scientific form. A description of experience thickened through my interdisciplinary investigation. I think that this interdisciplinary conversation helps me "...to develop into a new story of understanding that points beyond the local community" (Müller 2003:10). Thus, for the interaction with interdisciplinary conversation, I engaged with other disciplines such as Missiology, Christian Education and Child Psychology, in order to find new patterns that are consistent with the Christian paradigm through critical theological reflection.

From a narrative social constructionist view, the traditions of interpretation of my co-researchers were based on their unique experiences in specific circumstances (Freedman & Combs 1996:16). Hence, I consulted with Korean missionary parents in order to gain deeper understanding of my co-researchers' particular situation as Korean missionary children. These voices were helpful in supporting my co-researchers' voices and offering new perspectives (Smith & Nylund 1997:43).

After I listened to other voices I summarized the substance of the themes on my computer and emailed it to my co-researchers. Thereafter I contacted them by email, internet phone and/or face-to-face meeting in order to discuss these external voices in an alternative manner, through deconstructive methods. Our discussions are presented below.

3.1 Reflections from missionary parents

The interviews with missionary parents were held twice in 2009. At the time they travelled to South Africa for a conference for Korean missionaries. I planned to have interviews with one missionary father and two missionary mothers, but the voice of father will not be described in this section because the substance of his reflection overlapped with his wife's. The voices of the mothers are described here to protect them. I will use pseudonyms which are commonly used as nicknames for these mothers. The following are their reflections.

Prayer Warrior (a pseudonym of the first mother) is the mother of Honest, serving on the mission field the past sixteen years. She has two children and both are abroad for studies. She lives in Botswana with her husband ministering to orphan children and developing church leadership.

When her children went to boarding school she and her husband realized that they had a lot of time available without the children, so that they were able to focus on their ministries, and as a result, their ministries grew. They enjoyed the advantage of being able to move around according to God's calling and people's needs. For the above reasons, she was sure that her choice of the boarding school option for her children's education was the correct one. Being human she really worried about her children while they were at boarding school. But, instead of being anxious over her children, she prayed at all times with her whole heart. She trusted God to take care of her children and to guide their life according to His will. I agreed with her opinion of God's care over missionary children, yet, I realized that she did not completely understand her children's difficulties. I asked her if she understood the situation of her children. She said that she was aware of some but not of all the implications. She was confident that children whose parents pray hard for them could not go to ruin. She emphasized that her children were really satisfied at boarding school. She was convinced that boarding school is a good option for Korean missionary children for the sake of their parents' ministries for world mission.

Trust (a pseudonym for the second mother) had a different view from Prayer Warrior on this matter because her son had many difficult experiences at boarding school. Her older son went to boarding school from the time he was very young, because there was no other choice for their son's education as they were living in a remote area. He unexpectedly developed serious emotional problems at school as he felt extreme lonely, lost and insecure. Trust said, "The school was in an isolated area, and this was difficult for my son. He had such a difficult time that he is still struggling in life. It was our mistake to send him there. I am very sorry for him." Before she realized the problems that her son was experiencing, she believed that genuine parental love and a good attitude toward their son is vital for life at boarding school. But, she regrets her hasty decision. Through this experience, Trust and her husband did not send their other children to boarding school. They homeschooled their children instead. Her younger children adjusted well to homeschooling and grew up with feelings of stability and security. Through her experiences with her elder son, she argued that missionary parents must seriously consider all the implications of the boarding school option for their children's schooling. She emphasized that children's personality, preference and school environment are very important considerations when considering boarding school. Yet, she thought that the situations of different missionary parents differ. But some parents cannot do homeschooling for their children and cannot find any school in their home area that will suit their children, what sort of schooling option would be suitable? She was wondering what the best option for a Korean missionary family would be in different situations.

Prayer Warier talked about financial issues concerning their children's education. Actually she was upset because she realized that the financial situation of her family made it difficult to support her son adequately. In fact, she regretted that her son had not had consistent schooling because the financial situation of her family necessitated the frequent changing of schools. She did not realize that this matter had essentially influenced his studies. She also knew that her son wanted to go to another university if the financial situation of their family had improved, but he could not go to his preferred university due to their financial situation. This made her feel sorry for her son. However, her family was able to acquire a loan from their mission agency to send their son to America for a better education for his future. The family

thanked God for this provision. She worried about the high cost of education and boarding expenses for her two younger children. She would have felt better if her eldest son was able to focus more on his studies, instead of doing other things to earn money. Yet, she placed her hope on the fact that her son will mature through his suffering, and she trusted God's grace with him. Her way to support her children is through prayer, as she believed that God is the source of all supply.

3.2 Reflection from literature

In the previous section, the voices of missionary mothers were heard in terms of MK/Christian boarding issues and the financial condition of the Korean missionary family. This was important in order to understand my co-researchers' particular situations in an alternative manner. Through the deconstructive method, young adult issues were discussed in the interdisciplinary framework of the MK/Christian boarding school, relationships with parents, university education and reentry to Korea, the financial situation of Korean missionary families, language learning, cultural adjustment and identity.

3.2.1 Deconstruction of the stories of MK/Christian boarding school

According to Pollock and Van Reken (2001:232), many adult missionary children face difficulties to come to terms with early separation from their parents for education. Children experienced emotional, mental, physical and spiritual abuse at boarding school, and these caused problems with their relationship with their parents. Children are seriously hurt and their feelings of anger often come out in depression and anxiety, which they cannot share until they become adults. Separation from parents can promote children's independence in a positive way, but it can also negatively shape feelings of insecurity, instability and loneliness (Kim 2006:214). Winnicott (1986) quoted by Fahlberg (1994:133) states that separation from parents of a young child means that his/her whole world collapses and everything is lost. The trauma of loss could be so huge that the child feels helpless in the face of it, and may lead to depression. Separation interferes with the development of a healthy

balance between dependency and autonomy. A child spends his or her energies coping with feelings about separation and loss, and this could interfere with his or her ability to accomplish the primary developmental tasks of this age, which include learning in school, developing friendships, and internalizing values and conscience. In fact, a child cannot handle separation or loss without supportive help. Therefore, it is important to help a child to cope with parental separation (Fahlberg 1994:136). Van Reken (1988:1,4) observed that normally young children cannot share the difficulties they face at boarding school with their parents for various reasons. For instance, children are afraid to disobey God's will for their family, because they know that the Bible says that God requires them to give up family rights that they would normally choose to keep, for His sake and the Gospel. Children also feel unsure of their parents' reaction and whether they will believe their children or believe the teachers and/or staff's justification. There are many other reasons why young children cannot share their problems fully with their parents. Thus, parents need to observe their children's behavior carefully when they display any unusual behavior. If parents find their children seriously upset they need to help them in various ways. It is most important to show genuine care for the child by the warmth and sincerity of the parents' behavior toward him or her. The child needs to develop confidence in the parents' reliability to cope with his or her feelings and behavior. Parents need to be seriously concerned about the environment at the school and see if the children feel safe, respected and valued by teachers and staff, and can gain confidence and develop a positive self-esteem (Gilmours 1988:145).

Above all, as Christians we can help children through God's word, because in the Bible God showed his great love for his children and promised to heal their pain. In his book 'Healing for Damaged Emotions' (Seamands 1986:22), Seamands explains that the consequence of damaged emotions is that people cannot acknowledge their self value. They continually worry, treat themselves as unimportant and have a low self-esteem. People who struggle with damaged emotions have no confidence in God's love and forgiveness. Hope and Dreamer had no conviction about their relationship with God since their emotions were damaged. Reading the Bible and Christian books did not effectively help them to be free from the past and the emotional difficulties they continually experienced. I studied the role of the Holy Spirit

from the book by Seamands (1986:22) in order to understand how Christians may conquer their emotional problems. According to Seamands (1986:22), God our father heals people whose spirit has suffered. The Bible says, “The Spirit helps us in our weakness”³⁹, He is our companion and counselor in order to join in helping in our weakness. In Hebrews, Jesus Christ is described as a high priest and a wonderful counselor.⁴⁰ During the days of Jesus’ life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to God⁴¹ because he realized the pain of cross. He was abandoned, was mocked by man and was separated from God at the cross. Thus, he can understand our weakness, feelings of pain and fear that come from separation because he experienced it. He is able to understand the problems that affect our emotions. Therefore he does not blame us for our painful emotions, rather, he understands our inner sorrow. He promised that he would send the Holy Spirit⁴² in order to help his people to the very end of the age. As Jesus promised, the Spirit stays with us and helps us also in our painful experiences.⁴³ Therefore, since we recognize God’s plan for us we need to be encouraged by His word. In the Bible, Jeremiah (29:11) reports: “For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future”.

Since Hope went to a boarding school she had many painful experiences. She believed in her heart and was sure in her mind that she had been forsaken by her parents for their missionary work. Her self-esteem was damaged by the situation and she experienced so much pain and sorrow and anger toward her parents and God through her whole life. Even as a young adult she was controlled by these feelings. She worried that she would not overcome her emotional problems, and that they would affect her for the rest of her life. The input of the missionary mothers of the reflection group on the matter of boarding school helped her to be able to understand the situation of her parents in choosing her schooling option, and to consider her parents’ pain about it. She wanted to forgive her parents and said, “As I think about where all this anger and sorrow of mine came from, the most obvious

³⁹ Psalms 89:21

⁴⁰ Isaiah 9:6

⁴¹ Matthew 26:42

⁴² Matthew 28:20, Acts 1:8

⁴³ Seamands, D A 1999. *Healing of memories*.

source is separation. The key may have something to do with forgiveness. I have to go back and do a good bit of forgiving, especially in the areas where I felt pain, even when it was never intended by those who caused it". A new awareness helped her to stop blaming, made her willing to forgive her parents, and to develop her story towards a better future. She realized that the emotional difficulties from separation described by the missionary mothers were similar to her stories, that she was not such a problem child. In discussions about ideas from Fahlberg, her feelings of self-reproach that came from emotional difficulties, were eased.

Above all, she was strongly impressed by the discussion of the principles of Seamands and the word of God and gained new insight in her emotional difficulties. Before she had listened to these voices, she had no confidence in her own value, worried about her life, and struggled with a low self-esteem. However, in discussions with them she was able to regain hope in Jesus our Lord, and was convinced that her past was forgiven. She was glad to know that God wants to give his grace and forgiveness to her and bore all of her sins in his body on the cross⁴⁴. She was greatly impressed by the life of Jesus and that He had experienced the same feelings of pain, shame, anger and loneliness as she experienced, since He was separated from God, so she knew that she could trust him and that he is able to understand all of her feelings and pain, and will be able to change her life by helping her overcome her suffering. She was surprised to be reminded of the story of Jesus and that He suffered from being separated from His father, God, and how hard He prayed about his pain; she said that she had not thought about this story in a personal way before. Her new awakening to the existence of the Holy Spirit and His influence on His people was a great encouragement to her and strengthened her positive view of her life. She now has hope that she will be released from her emotional problems.

In spite of the knowledge that God wants to give him his grace and forgiveness Dreamer often felt doubt about God's promise of forgiveness and his sense of guilt often caused his relationship to God to waver. However, the suggestion of Seamands (1986:23) that we must forgive ourselves by the grace of God and

⁴⁴ 1 Peter 2:24

accept His forgiveness helped him to gain a better understanding of the role of the Holy Spirit. Before he recognized this he was struggling with his doubt about God's forgiveness, but now he was sure that the Holy Spirit would help him to trust God's forgiveness of his sins whenever he doubted God's promise. Instead of doubt he tried to depend on the Holy Spirit. This new self consciousness strengthened his faith in God. His mother taught him that missionary children whose parents pray for them cannot be ruined. Because he knew that his mother was praying for her children, he felt confidence the same confidence his mother had in God.

Challenger could not accept the fact that Jesus required her to forgive people who had caused her unhappiness all her life. She showed feelings of anger against this theory and would not accept it. She could not forget how much unhappiness people had caused her at MK school on the mission field and in the churches and Christian communities in Korea, and how she had suffered tremendously at their hands. She felt that she is not able to forget these painful memories. Why should those wicked people need to be forgiven without any punishment? In her mind, it was unfair to forgive them, even though this is what Jesus wants. I could understand her feelings of anger in her situation and felt sorry for her. Thus, with deep empathy I attempted to ask some questions in order to help her to deconstruct her strong feelings on this matter. I asked her what kind of feelings she had toward those people and what her alternative plan was if she was suffering over these feelings. Moreover, we discussed the fact that a person who cannot forgive others may suffer guilt and anger, and this would cause deep anguish in their soul. This is why Jesus wants us to be set free to love one another and to forgive others their sins. After a while, she told me that she was thinking about what Jesus said, and then made a decision to try to forgive her enemies (people who had hurt her), but was not ready for it yet. It was because she felt so much pain when she thought about them, and she wanted to be free from her painful feelings. Thus, she tried to depend on God who promised her new life. But, it was not easy to forgive all the people. She still finds it difficult to forgive some of the people.

Hope and Challenger had different opinions on the feelings of the first mother, Prayer Warrior, who felt that 'boarding school was a good option for Korean missionary

children for the sake of their parents' ministries'. They questioned the priority of these parents, since God had given them their children. They felt that the first priority of parents is to take care of their children. They also felt that missionary children should not be marginalized for the sake of their parents' ministry. Furthermore, they suggested that before boarding school was chose, parents must take into account the child's age and temperament, the personality and reputation of the school, how often they will be able to see the child, and whether their child's communication with them will be unhindered.

In my opinion, the first mother, Prayer Warrior, had limited knowledge and understanding of the situation of the Korean missionary children and their negative experiences at boarding school. So, I sent an email to her to ask if she knew of any serious problems of Korean missionary children at boarding school. She was surprised at this question. We discussed this matter more thoroughly and she became more sensitive in her understanding of her children's situation, and arrived at a new insight in the problems many children face at boarding school.

We carefully listened to the opinion of the second mother, Trust, as she explained her child's difficult experiences at boarding school. Then we discussed the schooling option of Korean missionary children. We asked what sort of schooling option would be suitable. Is homeschooling better than boarding school for all the children? We also asked: if there are parents who are unable to homeschool their children and cannot find any school available in their home area that will be suitable for their children, which other options do they have?

3.2.2 Deconstruction of the stories of relationships with parents

Because of their painful experiences at MK/Christian school, my co-researchers had experienced many years of unhappiness. For this they blamed their parents, and it influenced their relationship with their parents in a negative way. My co-researchers often had problems communicating with their parents. They could not understand the attitude of their parents who did not respect their opinions and thoughts, and always wanted to control them in any situation in order to show their authority. My co-

researchers asked why their parents could not understand them fully, and why they were discouraged and hesitant to communicate openly with their parents. One of the main reasons was that my co-researchers and their parents have different views and values on family life.

I studied various publications on the cultural background of the concept of family, in order to gain a better understanding of the influence of family conflict on my co-researchers, and of the characteristics of a healthy functioning missionary family.

3.2.2.1 The cultural background of the family concept in Korean society

According to Olson (1989) quoted by Yoo (2004:28), the western family tends to respect independence of the individual with a view to their personal development. The communication between family members is essential in order to understand each one's interest, and to respect it. For this, free communication, individualism and respect are primary factors among western families.

Korean families place greater value on the family than on the individual, which is different from western families (Kwan 2008:160). The family and its traditions are very important to Korean families, and they value family stability more than change (Yoo 2004:38). According to Shin (1998:128,139), the Korean idea of the family has been influenced by Confucian traditions that place an emphasis on patrilineage, respect of elders, filial piety, and the continuity of the patrilineal family. Shin (1998:146) said that the influence of patrilineage has strong requirements that demand that children obey their parents. As mutual relationships are more important than individualism in Confucianism, the existence of the outside world is categorically different than the sense of self. That is, each person should be concerned about others, and making decisions is a family responsibility. Confucianism also influences the communication between family members. Communication, gratitude and/or the expression of affection is not practiced among family members (Yoo 2004:38).

3.2.2.2 The co-researchers' new perspective of their parents

Because the individual is more respected and valued in western society and the

value of the family is more important than the individual in Korean society (Kwan 2008:160), my co-researchers were able to understand the attitude of their parents and of other Korean elders. They recognized that their parents were strongly influenced by Korean traditions and culture that were formed by Confucian teachings (Kim 2004:61), and their westernized thinking and behaviour could not be accepted by their parents. Hence, the differences between my co-researchers and their parents brought about complications in their relationships. Korean parents often forget that the cultural values and behaviour of their children's teachers and peers have influenced their children far more and in different ways than they expected. "Educating Korean students in a school based on the American values of independence, free speech, and individualism had deeply affected the family's cultural heritage" (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:221).

For a long time, Hope and Dreamer bore a grudge against their parents because of their separation. They had conflicts with their parents due to their parents' attitude of strong authority and narrow mindedness towards their children. During the research sessions, Challenger and Hope repeatedly complained about the fact that their parents did not respect their differences of opinion and their individual inclinations. They demanded obedience of their children to the decisions they made. They often felt angry about this and argued with their parents over specific issues. They judged their parents to be egoistic and narrow minded people. But, by reading other books, my co-researchers acquired a new insight and began to understand the attitude and/or mindset of their parents. They recognized that their parents were not as wrong as their children thought, instead, they understood that their parents' thoughts and values had been shaped by Korean society and culture as they were growing up until they reached middle age. Because of the cultural influence upon them, the parents felt constrained to control their children, and they concentrated on the needs of the family and their benefit rather than the individual desires of family members. Their parents' inability to express love toward their children was influenced by Confucian doctrine. Since the parents were aged between forty and fifty, they found it difficult to express their true feelings towards their children. They were steeped in Korean tradition. My co-researchers have different values and mindsets from their parents, as they grew up on the mission field where they were living in a western

environment. From our discussions, my co-researchers were more able to understand their parents, and they agreed that the differences are not wrong. But that it is important to understand each other's specific views and values, and to accept them, in order to develop a closer relationship.

However, my co-researchers argued that their parents are not followers of Confucian traditions as they are Christians and pastors. They should therefore behave differently, to follow their religious beliefs. They argued that their parents should try to get rid of the influence of Confucian traditions, and need to follow the principles of the Bible faithfully. Their parents should concentrate on understanding their child's values rather than demanding obedience at all times. In this regard, I suggested to them that they share this matter with their parents in order to help their parents to realize the importance of a Christian upbringing rather than following Confucian traditions. My co-researchers agreed with my suggestion and were willing to try it.

Furthermore, my co-researchers and I discussed ways a missionary family can build healthy relationships and a strong family bond. Howing et al. (1993:5) emphasize that a positive and intimate relationship between parents and child is vital to the child's social adjustment and positive sense of self (Mueller 1999:53). I studied various publications on the characteristics of healthy functioning of a missionary family in order to help Korean missionary families to gain a better understanding of this matter and build an intimate relationship with their family members.

3.2.2.3 Building a strong family bond

The following elements are essential to building a strong family bond as adapted from the ideas of Morris (1998:182-189), and Pollock and Van Reken (2001:189-197).

1) Relationship between parents and missionary children

Kim (1999:55) stresses that missionary families are expected to be committed and dedicated to their mission. Missionary children may inherit their parents' sense of mission, yet they often experience deep loneliness and rejection by their parents' dedication to God and their mission. Whether parents were too busy for them, or were physically or emotionally absent, the child has been left with a chronic feeling of

emptiness. Nothing and no one else seems to be able to fill this need (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:147). Many of the missionary children often feel that they are less important than the people of their parents' mission, which is confirmed by the dedication of the parents to the needy people around them. Thus, the relationship between parents and children in a cross-cultural living setup is the most significant factor in determining how the missionary children accept their situation (Andrews 1995:418). According to Pollock and Reken (2001:190), one of the special challenges for parents in a cross-cultural setup is that their children are growing up in a different world compared to the home country where their parents themselves have grown up. The way in which children may feel differently from their parents about the mission field should be taken into consideration. On the mission field they are foreigners, a different race from the local people, speaking a different language that others may not understand. Often this places them under stress, making it difficult to maintain their identity, causing misunderstanding in their school work and miscommunication with peers and teachers. Thus, missionary children need confidence that their family accept them as they are. It is very important that parents notice and understand their children's needs in order to properly and effectively care and continually pray for them (Mathes 2000). People are centered in Korean culture and thus many Korean missionaries are suffering from the dilemma of how to properly manage their time and bring about a proper balance between other missionaries and their own families. The children often have no hope of getting their parents' attention regarding their emotional and physical needs. Hence, Korean missionary parents need to set aside specific times for their family to spend together.

2) Relationship between the missionary father and his children

According to the research of ICHED, "the absent father is one of the biggest issues in the missionary family" (Purnell 2005). In many cases, a father often leaves home for ministry and this causes problems with the children. The absent father in foreign countries causes families to feel insecure and unstable. I know a Korean missionary family who has experienced several robberies at their home since they came to the mission field. Their experiences were terrifying. Crime is very high in that country, so the family has experienced tension in this social situation and always feels afraid. But, the father in that family travels to other countries for ministry and is not often at

home. He rarely comes home and when he is at home, he is too busy to spend enough time with his children. His children have the conception that their father does not want to take care of them, and they feel insecure. Dobson (2001:72) stresses that the role of the father is essential for dealing with the children's emotions in difficult situations. Cunningham and Rogers (1992:30) argue that a father's attitude toward his children is so important, even if he absent often because of his work. If children know their father loves them, affirms this love to his children, and is attentive to his children's needs, then to be always with them is not the only answer. Hence, missionary parents need to think about their priorities and develop a balance between their ministry and their children. Only then children may feel stability and security in foreign countries (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:193-194).

Providing strong protection

Back (1988:1) discovered that many missionaries go overseas when their children are still very young. In any new place, the parents are often so busy trying to settle in and adapt to the new culture, being so involved and busy that the children may not receive the attention they need from their parents. This is not only applicable to young children, but also applicable to all other age groups. For this reason, many missionary children are separated from their parents from the very beginning of their settling in process, which is also very often not understood by others. Often, most of the parents do not realize how vulnerable their children may feel or be in these situations. Parents need to keep clear open lines of communication with their children, and need to teach their children concepts of personal safety. Pollock and Reken (2001:193) stress these important facts saying, "Children need to know beyond all doubt that their parents love them enough to protect them from unnecessary hurt or harm and that Mom and Dad will be available to comfort and console them when painful times are unavoidable".

Therefore, parents need to understand their children well enough and be sensitive to their children's feelings, to provide physical and psychological safety and security, as it is a basic parental task to care for the young child. The importance of this gradually diminishes as the young person becomes more capable and self-reliant. Parents need to build a strong protective base for their children (Fahlberg 1994:17,145). The concept of protection applies to a much wider range of aspects of the child's health,

well-being, growth and development (Kay 2001:84).

A child's view of the parents' ministry and its spiritual value

Many missionary children say that they feel proud of their parents' ministries, which can be beneficial to people on mission fields. In this way, children may feel a sense of ownership and of significance themselves. Pollock and Van Reken (2001:196) emphasize that parents who feel and act positively toward their situation and the people of the host country with whom they are working, communicate that attitude to their children. It is important for missionary children to have a deep personal faith and a stable set of values. If the children are aware of the fact that there is a stable spiritual core of faith in their parents' lives and in the life of the family as a whole, children will usually have a strong spiritual foundation in their own lives (Pollock & Reken 2001:197). According to Dobson (2001:303), most children make a decision to believe in Christ, prior to the age of twelve years. Thus, missionary parents need to help their children to have a truly positive spiritual core of faith and to grow spiritually from a very young age.

The above evaluations are described as the basic guidelines for the healthy functioning of a missionary family to create a strong family bond on the mission field. Hope, Dreamer and Challenger were deeply impressed by the new insight which they gained during the discussions and felt sorry that they had not received this kind of caring from their parents while they were growing up on the mission field where they felt insecure, and struggled. They were wondering how different their lives would have been if they had received real care and understanding of their suffering. As a result of their experiences, they suggested that there should be an orientation course for Korean missionary children to give information about the field, and/or to provide them with counseling.

Jeon (2006:57) emphasizes that a strong family bond would provide stability among family members and this will be a strong base to enhance their self-confidence. It will enable children to become leaders who can overcome difficulties in a dignified manner.

3.2.3 Deconstruction of the stories of university education and reentry

In this section, I will discuss the co-researchers' experiences of university education at universities in Korea and western countries, and issues of reentry.

3.2.3.1 University education

1) The influence on the Korean missionary family by the social atmosphere on the education in Korea.

Most Korean missionary parents have high expectations for their children's education because the social demands concerning education takes high priority in the thinking of the Korean people. They consider a high standard of education to be the way to success in the life of their children. Thus, Korean parents put all their efforts into educating their children to send them to top universities. The social atmosphere in Korea also influences Korean missionary parents and thus they tend to follow this tendency for their children's education on the mission field. This causes Korean missionary families to use a lot of energy for their children's education (Park 2002:38).

2) The difficult choice: to take advantages in Korea or in a western country

According to Back (2007:1), a tendency has arisen among Korean missionary children to change from Western to Korean universities. The following are reasons why Korean missionary parents prefer to send their children to universities in Korea. Since 1997 special admission allowances have been made and this opened more possibilities for children to enter universities in Korea. With worldwide economic depression growing, Korean missionary children have to consider university education in Korea instead of in a western country. Missionary parents consider it an advantage for their children to gain a better understanding of Korean society and culture by studying at a Korean university. They may build good relationships with Koreans that may be useful in future. The children's Korean identity will be established during their time at university in Korea, and this may lead to the possibility of the children's future settling in Korea (Jung 1999:32).

However, most of my co-researchers argued against the above opinion. Hope, Dreamer and Challenger, who had studied at a university in America, realized that the educational expenses between universities in Korea and those in America where they had studied were not so different. Dreamer received a scholarship at the college and knew that there are more possibilities for missionary children to obtain scholarships at Christian colleges in America than in Korea. Hope, Dreamer and Challenger had different opinions on the ideas of shaping their identities as Koreans. They argued that at present, Korean missionary children have various possibilities to experience Korean culture and society and to choose an occupation or work in Korea, and this will help them to gain a better understanding of Korea.

Visionary was satisfied with her past two years at university in Korea and agreed with Jung that there are many advantages to studying at a university in Korea. She thought that with these advantages she was able to accomplish her first purpose during the second year. But recently she discovered serious differences between herself and the other university students. She felt more stressed in Korea in spite of her satisfaction with her studies. She realized that missionary children whose Korean is insufficient may suffer in their studies because the lectures are mostly offered in Korean. She is able to take a specific course in English at the university, but this is unusual. The other co-researchers argued that studying in America have more advantages to develop broader thinking and a globalized perspective, to experience western culture and customs, and to get to know the people. They could also make contact with Korean churches in America that offer support to missionary children. They suggested that personal character and preference of university options must be seriously considered, as they see the idea of 'one-size-fits' is not appropriate for all.

A large number of Korean people criticize the special admission allowance. They feel this to be preferential treatment. The system of special admission allowance for university entrance has recently been complicated and this system may be more stringent in future (<http://www.k.daum.net/qna/view>). This new attitude towards the special admission for university entrance will influence Korean missionary children in future.

In order to take into consideration these diverse cases, Korean missionary parents

and/or mission agencies need to be open minded instead of persisting in preconceived ideas concerning university education. Alternative options are needed.

Challenger and Hope wanted to do further study in America in future, but their parents did not agree with their plans on account of their financial situation and the advantages that children may have in Korea. The children struggled to present their plans and to persuade their parents. The view of their parents influenced them and made them uncertain about whether to study further or to find employment. But by comparing the advantages of further study in Korea or America, they chose America, and found reasonable reasons to persuade their parents.

3.2.3.2 Reentry

A missionary family may return to their home country for various reasons such as furlough, family functions, health problems and their children's education and military service. A culture shock often strikes once the children go back to their country of origin. Going home for missionary children is not the same as going home for their parents (Bowers 1998:47). Children experience stress during this transition to their home culture. Parents must not forget that their children may have a shock when they return to their home country, and to give them extra attention and care (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:245).

1) The reasons why reentry is so hard.

There are various reasons that missionary children face difficulties at the period of reentry to Korea. The children and the people of the home culture have unconscious expectations. The people expect the same from missionary children and the children at home, because they have the same racial, ethnic and national background as those that are at home. The children are often expected to be the same, but finally, they realize they are "different" (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:245). Missionary children expect so much when they go back to their home country, but the country may look very different from what they think. The missionary children and their peers at home do no longer share a common worldview, because their life experiences have been totally different. People in the Christian community (church and/or mission agency)

have high expectations of missionary children's Christian faith. In general, these children are seen by church members in Korea as "little missionaries" and are expected to be a good example to other children. This places too much pressure on the missionary children. For some missionary children this period of reentry is a dangerous time, as they might be negatively influenced by their peers. They may still find that for all their external adaptation, something still does not fit and they believe this something will never change. They are really struggling to fit in at initial reentry (2001:246-248). In this regard, the missionary children need special 'pre-departure reentry preparation' while they are still on the mission field (Park 1999:114-115). Parents need to give special care to the children and to help them towards successful adjustment during the time of reentry. Pollock and Reken (2001:188) emphasize that missionary "parents must never sacrifice their children" in making a cross-cultural move for reentry. Parents need to consider their children's level of education, especially the grade they completed and its importance (2001:188). At least the last two years of high school should not be disrupted. Most of the missionary children want to spend their last year with their friends, in order to graduate with them. They also need their parents' support during the first year of college to help them to settle (Anon 2005).

2) Effective ways to help missionary children with reentry

Park (1999:113) suggests some of the following guidelines towards helping missionary children at reentry to the country of their new residence: (a) Take time to discuss certain information about the new home country's culture, social, political issues, mass media, sports and fashion of peer groups. (b) Inform them and help them to get to know how to engage in proper relationships with elders, families and peers. (c) Teach them about different school systems and school culture. (d) Develop practical skills to adapt to the new home country's transport, currency, shopping, and geography.

Powell (1998:110) says that good reentry adjustment is not an event, but it is a process encompassing the life of the cross-cultural sojourner. The inputs of family, school and Christian community have structured the missionary children's perspective regarding God, as well as keys towards adjustment regarding him- or herself. If care is to be made available to all the missionary children, there must be a

certain concentrated effort by parents to take initiative to prepare the way and encourage their children to take advantage of available services (1998:110). Pollock and Reken (2001: 254) emphasize that “it is the parents’ responsibility to make sure their children are protected under their supervision” (2001:255).

In general, it is culturally difficult for Korean missionaries going back to Korea to support their children during their time of reentry to adjust to high school and/or university education, due to the fact that most of the churches and mission agencies in Korea do not have a good understanding of the missionary children’s need of their parents’ support during this time (Park 1999:63). Recently MKNEST⁴⁵ and the Han Dong Global University⁴⁶ have started regular meetings⁴⁷ for Korean young adult missionary children to help each other (Park 1999:44). There are few hostels⁴⁸ that offer accommodation to reentry children, although there are not enough for everyone. For this reason, some of churches and mission agencies in Korea are concerned to establish more hostels for Korean young adult missionary children (Kidok Shinmun 2008.8.13).

3) The co-researchers’ new perspective

Challenger could not understand why people in the Christian community were prejudiced against her and criticized her. Through our conversation, she understood people’s expectations of missionary children, and that people in the Christian community may be disappointed with the children’s different attitude from what they expected. Yet, she strongly felt that people were too narrow minded to understand missionary children. They were quick to judge the children by their standards instead of considering the children’s specific situation. She said that she could not understand why children were called “little missionaries”. It is an unacceptable title for young children. She said that most missionary children a great burden to be called that. How can children show their faith to people while they are young? However, in spite of her feelings against this attitude, she was glad to know people’s

⁴⁵ MKNEST is established based on the vision of Helping Korean missionary children through Networking, Educating, Supporting and Training ministry. (<http://www.mknest.org>)

⁴⁶ Hang Dong Global University was established in Korea in 1995 with a vision of world change, global education of 21century leaders for Korea and the world. (<http://www.han.ac.kr>)

⁴⁷ There are regular meetings for Korean missionary children at Han Dong Global University and in Seoul.

⁴⁸ For the past few years, some Korean churches and mission agencies have established hostels for Korean young adult missionary children who reenter Korea for education.

thoughts and expectations of missionary children. She felt a bit more at ease with the fact she was not the only one to be criticized, but that other children experienced the same. She agreed with the guidelines towards helping Korean missionary children at the reentry stage. Dreamer showed great interest in this matter and emphasized the need for careful handling of children who were reentering a culture, as it is vital for them to adjust in Korea. In his opinion children will not succeed in adjusting to their home country without careful attention, without which they will get into trouble the same way as he did. He thought that the MK hostel was a good option to care for children, as long as there is a special program in place to help children cope with their emotional difficulties and proper adjustment to Korea.

3.2.4 Deconstruction of the stories about the financial concerns of Korean missionary families

Many Korean missionary parents face difficulties to finance their children's education. They need financial support not only for their salaries and work funds, but also for their children's education (Oh 2008:167). Their financial concerns were the main issue among the Korean missionaries in Southern Africa as shown in the results of Oh's questionnaire (2008:169). According to his statistics the most important personal problems among Korean missionaries in Southern Africa were financial concerns. They had financial difficulties to support their children for university education in Western countries, for example, America and Britain (Jae 2002:16). Recently it escalated with the stronger UK Pound and the US Dollar against the Korean Won. It affects the life of missionary families and their ministry who have to use a large percentage of their available funds for their children's education (Interviewed Huh 2008.7.10).

Korean churches and mission agencies need to allow support to be raised for the education of Korean missionary children. Some mission agencies in Korea have a good support system for the educational expenses of their member's children. The

Paul Mission International⁴⁹ has a good support system for the education of their member's children to help with educational expenses by providing a loan up to university level. SIM International provided subsidy for SIM missionary children for educational expenses for many years, but could not provide any tuition costs for SIM missionary children in 2010 because of the shortage of funds (www.sim.org). In spite of it, it is SIM's priority that their member's children receive as good a quality of education as possible, because they value their children and want them to succeed wherever God calls them in life. A good long term goal for Korean churches and mission agencies will be to raise funds for an education subsidy to support the education of Korean missionary children.

Dreamer struggled financially, but took on a part time work to supplement his funds. By listening to his mother he came to a better understanding that the financial situation of his family was not his concern. He realized that his parents wanted him to focus on his studies to secure his future, instead of being involved in many things. He was impressed by his mother's concern, and she convinced him that God is the source of all supply. With this new perspective he was able to depend more on God for His help in all aspects of his life. He was encouraged to seek God's help in every situation. Yet, he decided to refund his educational expenses to his parents when he starts earning after graduation, because he was aware that missionary parents are suffering financially most of the time.

Despite her hard work at her studies, Visionary often felt ostracized by other students who came from a rich family background. This led to her low self-esteem and feelings of loneliness. She felt that her life in Korea was becoming too difficult. In order to help her in her emotional difficulty I emailed her encouraging words from a Christian book and a summary of the other co-researchers' interpretations of their financial issues. She realized that most Korean missionary children have similar problems and felt affiliated to them. She was especially encouraged by Dreamer's mother's assurance that God is the source of all supply. This comforted her and she was encouraged to patiently accomplish her purpose at university.

Moreover, she was challenged by the other co-researchers as she learned that the

⁴⁹ The Paul Mission International: www.bauri.org

academic level and educational environment in America is better than in Korea, and that educational expenses at a university in America is similar to that in Korea. Thus, she decided to attend university in America for further studies for a better future, even though it may be financially difficult.

3.2.5 Deconstruction of the stories about language learning, cultural adjustment and Identity

3.2.5.1 Language learning

Haag (2005:2) indicates that learning another language and culture overseas during childhood is a great benefit to open up many career opportunities for the future. Speaking two or more different languages brings many positive cognitive benefits. To learn another language and culture is often not sufficient to develop high-level language skills, but parents and teachers can motivate and provide a structure that will help children benefit more fully. On the other hand there is today a universal recognition of the importance of mother tongue education as well as multilingualism. The children who are fluent in their mother tongue are able to return to their home countries for further education and settle down more easily (Pollock & Van Reken 2001:222). On the other hand, learning a national/local language promote intimate relationships with the local people and their culture. In this regard, missionary children are challenged to be conversant in both their mother tongue and the national/local language in view of its many benefits.

In spite of the great advantages children often experience difficulties learning a language. Older children struggle more than younger children in this regard. Because of mistakes and limited language ability they often feel stupid in the new culture (Hiebert 1987:81). According to William Smalley (1978:698) quoted by Hiebert (1987:82), people who are learning a new language feel insecure and discouraged when others mock them. To master a new language needs patience until the goal is reached.

Faithful tried to learn English from the time he arrived on the mission field at the age of sixteen. In spite of his effort he still has difficulty with the English in academic study. Hope and Challenger are conversant in English as they entered to the mission field at the age of six. Visionary studied hard to learn the local official language which was used at the school as well as learning English, but she did not manage the local language, except for some simple sentences even though she understood the grammar and vocabulary. Dreamer struggled with language learning while he was growing up on the mission field, and he had no desire to learn the complicated language. He found it stressful to learn Korean, English, French and the nation/local language at the same time. It affected his self-esteem as he could not speak any of the languages fluently even though he became a university student. As I discovered the different attitudes and results of language learning among the co-researchers I recognized that children's age should be taken into consideration. In order to gain a better understanding of language learning I cite the description of Haag and the data of ICHED.

Haag (2005:2) described that in language learning certain ages are better for certain things than others. Younger children pick up a language without a foreign accent. College-level students learn vocabulary more easily. Adults understand the grammar. ICHED provides the following data concerning the speed children acquire a second language according to their academic level (Haag 1999:1):

A child can sound like a native speaker of his or her second language yet not be able to function cognitively at the same level. This is a caution for those considering using a second language as the main vehicle for education. It takes one to two years for a 5 or 6 years old child to reach the speaking level of a native speaker. But, it takes five to seven years to reach the native speakers' cognitive, academic, learning-proficiency level or ability to function cognitively like native-speaking peers. The older a child is when he starts learning the second language, the longer it takes to reach those levels of competency.

By reading the data and through discussion with other disciplines, I was beginning to understand the situation of my co-researchers more clearly. The results of the process of language learning were universal. The situations of Dreamer and Faithful were not unique. My co-researchers' reaction to this work was interesting.

Faithful said that he felt happier since he read the data as he recognized that his struggle with English was natural, due to the age at which he moved to the mission field, he was able to understand why his academic standard of English did not improve to the level of the local children. Instead of being stressed, he decided to make an effort to learn English progressively. Hope has been challenged to learn Korean as she recognizes the importance of her mother tongue for her future. Dreamer made up his mind to concentrate on learning English and French, since those are valuable for his studies at university and for further studies. He realized that he had been lazy in this matter. My co-researchers were challenged to new aspirations to overcome their problems of language learning. They were motivated to learn languages even though they realized that learning a new language is not easy at their age.

3.2.5.2 Cultural adjustment

According to Hiebert (1987:76), people create various cultures and each culture is unique in its specific context. People eat different foods, build different kinds of houses, speak different languages and greet in different ways. People understand the world through their own culture and this often causes trouble between cultures. Missionaries have to learn to adjust to other cultures. Usually all missionaries experience stress as they settle down on the mission field. They are often confused about their value when they enter a new culture. Cultural adjustment to the new society and culture on the mission field is one of the requirements from the missionary family in order to be successful in their ministry and family life. Missionary parents and children need to accept that they are human and expect cultural troubles to pass with time. Hiebert (1987:95) suggests that positive thinking and attitude is essential in terms of adjusting to the new culture. Lingenfelter and Mayers (1986:81) challenge missionary families to set it as their goal to build up the unity and fellowship of the body of Christ. To achieve that goal, they have to consider other cultures better than theirs and learn to think as they do.

Korean children experience more difficulties than western children with cultural adjustment on the mission field. Sung (2006:33) states the following reasons:

western people are familiar with multicultural environments because they have more readily contact with other cultures in their countries. Korean people are unfamiliar with such a situation. They are used to a single culture and a single language, and are proud of it. Therefore Korean missionaries find it difficult to overcome cultural prejudice on the mission field, and this has an influence on their children (Vlemincks & Smeeding 2001:151).

As well as their problems in terms of adjustment to the local culture, most of my co-researchers were confused how to cope with differences between Korean culture and Western culture. They often have problems to communicate with the local people because of misunderstanding western culture. They sometimes feel uncomfortable to express their opinions freely to older people because it is not acceptable in Korean culture where they come from. On the other hand, they are rebuked by their parents for their western attitudes. This causes confusion in their behaviour among different cultures and they often feel angry with their parents and the local people who do not understand their confusion. However, through our discussions they were able to understand that the complication was common among Korean children. Positive thinking and attitude is essential to adjust to the new culture. The suggestion by Lingenfelter and Mayers (1986:81) that missionary families should consider the local culture better than the Korean culture and learn to think as the local people do, in order to build good relationships with them, motivated my co-researchers to reconsider their attitude to the local culture. It prompted them to have a more positive view of the local culture. However, the prejudice that my co-researchers experienced on the mission field from the local people and the western people had a bad influence upon them, and negatively affected their self-esteem. The social environment influences the way children are treated in different societies, and it affects the quality of children's lives (Rust 1989:7). According to Rust (1989:7), "racism interferes with the normal development of children subjected to it. It hampers their ability to function at their full potential as children, and later as adults." It aggravates their social problems, diminishes their human resources, and impedes intergroup relationships. It promotes harmful assumptions which interfere with the development and functioning of the minority-group children. Racism cumburs child development (Rust 1989:16). Children who have experienced racism fail to

recognize their worth as human beings equal to others. They are especially disadvantaged in racist societies which label them as unequal in every respect and discriminate against those with different nationalities. As Rust (1989:16) says, the co-researchers could not recognize their worth as equals of the western children. Even when they became young adults this still affected some of them. With low self-esteem and the struggle with their identity, they had no confidence in being Korean. Thus, in order to address their feelings of confusion and to help them build a positive self-esteem, we discussed the identity issues as follows.

3.2.5.3 Identity issues

What is the meaning of identity? Kim (1999:77) explains that self-identity is formed by connecting the past, the present, the environment one lives in and what will happen in the future, to identify oneself as a 'unique self'. In general, missionary children are known as rootless, in pain, and that they struggle with their identity. My co-researchers said that they were unstable for most of their lives. Challenger was not sure to which country she belonged, whether to Africa, Korea or America. She felt that Korea is the home of her parents, but not hers. She agreed that missionary children are rootless. According to Olson (1984:27), they have "To develop a sense of personal identity that consistently establishes who he or she is as an integrated individual throughout each life role." Hence, it is important for Korean missionary children to establish their identities and understand who they are. With this knowledge they will be able to adjust to Korea and other countries (Park 1992:93). Actually, the Korea KWMA (1993) defined the purpose of education for Korean missionary children to be citizens of God, citizens of the world, and citizens of Korea. Since the definition was proclaimed by mission agencies and missionaries in Korea, they have tried to help Korean missionary children to establish these identities. In order to gain a better understanding of how Korean missionary children identify themselves, I will cite various definitions of identity from a book⁵⁰ written by Korean missionary children:

⁵⁰ Korean Missionary Children, 2007.

- It is like torture to go back to Korea every four years. It is true that there are more possibilities in Korea to do many things, eat delicious food and have more freedom. However, I don't like to live there, it's hard for me... When I return to Russia and lie down in my bed, I feel comfortable and happy, and recognize that my home is here in this country.
- I am 30 % Korean, 30 % Philipino and 30 % American. Korea is my passport country, but I am not the same as Koreans. The inner part of me is very different from Koreans even though my outward appearance is the same as they are. "Who am I?"
- I am more familiar with Chinese culture and customs because I have been living in China for fifteen years. People recognize me as Chinese because my language, the color of skin and outward appearance may be the same as Chinese. Yet, I like to be known as "Korean".
- It is true that our identity is important for MKs, but it is more important to be spiritually mature than to acknowledge our uniqueness... I am no longer bound by the question of 'who am I?' I am happy the way I am, confused at times, but still certain of my own unique identity. I am a MK. I may never feel that I belong to any country or culture, but I am sure of myself and what helps me to have this mindset is that there are others who have very similar lives.

As the children expressed themselves above, Korean missionary children in many cases do not identify themselves as either Korean or citizens of the mission country in which they grew up, but rather as of both. Some agonize about this issue and some have overcome it. The last child said that he has lost his identity as he may never feel that he belongs to any country or culture, but he is certain of his own unique identity as an MK. But instead of his unique identity as an MK, he emphasized the importance of being spiritually mature.

Dreamer identified himself as a Christian and was satisfied with this position. He said that it is not very important whether he belongs to Korea or any other country. In his opinion, to establish their identity as Koreans is not very important to Korean missionary children. He rather emphasized that personal experience of God's existence is vital for missionary children to find a dream for life. With their vision of God his children can find the meaning of life, and put in all their efforts to accomplish their life purpose. He emphasized that Korean missionary children need to have a broad mind, beyond their limited thoughts as Koreans in order to accomplish their vision in the world.

Challenger and Hope were confused about their identity since they moved to the mission field. Neither of them was comfortable with their Korean identity as a result of their experiences of racism and its social atmosphere. They sometimes wished they were western. But from reading other books they were helped to have a new consciousness of their identity. Challenger ultimately identified herself by saying, “I am neither Korean nor American. I am a citizen of heaven”. Since she was able to identify herself as ‘a citizen of heaven’, she no longer struggles with her identity, but in this knowledge she developed a sense of security.

The social atmosphere in Korea influenced Visionary in such a way that she was able to change her view of Korean society. She recognized that Korean people are in eager pursuit of their goals and liked to see people work hard. These days there are lots of foreigners in Korea and they are fascinated by Korean culture, social stability, and economic development. She became proud of Korea when she found many positives in the country, and enjoys its environment. Yet, sometimes she struggled in Korea and missed South Africa. Even though she had suffered racial discrimination in that country she missed its slow going atmosphere. After reading publications and discussions with other Korean missionary children, she recognized that she was more comfortable with her identity as a Christian than as a Korean or South African. Nationality did not matter to her anymore.

Most of the co-researchers recognized their identity as “Christian” and/or “citizens of heaven”. They said where they belong is not really important since they found their existence in God. They were comfortable with the fact that their home is in heaven. This new perspective gave them confidence no matter which culture or cultures they may have to live in. They felt secure with this new position. Müller (2005:6) said that the narrative approach might focus on building a fuller picture of the plot development. However, I was aware that something was missing in terms of describing the identity of my co-researchers. Since they feel secure with their identity as “Citizens of God” and/or “Children of God”, the idea of being “citizens of Korea” and “citizens of the World” that are emphasized by missionaries and mission agencies in Korea still need to be discussed. Arnett (2000:473) explains that most identity exploration takes place at the time of young adulthood. In this sense, there is

a possibility that my co-researchers may build their identity as “citizens of Korea” in the future. However, they were not concerned about this matter since they had found security in their position as “children of God”.

In order to gain a better understanding young adulthood, I will describe its features.

3.2.6 Deconstruction of the stories about young adult issues

The co-researchers are between 20 and 23 of age, the period of young adulthood. It was obvious that they were concerned with the issues of university education, careers, occupations, marriage and the future. Challenger put all of her energy into preparing for the future, so she worked hard to build up her career. She said that her career was the most important issue at that moment, but finding possibilities for volunteer work were difficult. In the same way, most of my co-researchers were concerned about their careers and marriage, so they worked hard to prepare for the future. Yet, they still need to make the decision of which career to choose, which country they should go to in future, and whom they should marry. Furthermore, the obligatory military service in Korea is of great concern to the young men.

Arnett (2000:469) focused on people between the ages of 18 and 25 and identified it as an ‘emerging adulthood’. This period is neither adolescence nor adulthood but is theoretically and empirically distinguished by relative independence from social roles and from normative expectations. Having left the dependency of childhood and adolescence, they have not yet entered the enduring responsibilities that are normative in adulthood. Chisholm and Hurrelmann (1995) citing Arnett (2000:469) state that for most young people the years from the late teens through the twenties are years of profound change and importance. A key feature of emerging adulthood is that it is the period of life that offers the most opportunities for identity explorations in the areas of love, work and worldviews. Most identity exploration takes place during this period, and identity formation involves trying out various life possibilities and gradually moving toward making enduring decisions (Arnett 2000:472-473). Emerging adults are still in the process of obtaining education and training for a long-term adult occupation. This period is the age of possibilities, many different potential

futures remain possible, and personal freedom and exploration are higher valued than at any other time by most people. For most people, this period is the most volitional years of life.

My co-researchers suggested that young adult missionary children need motivation and guidance in order to find their potential capacities and to develop them for the future. I recognized that young adult missionary children desperately need guidelines in order to prepare for their future. They lack information concerning careers and opportunities. They do not have enough information to choose a career because their knowledge was limited by living in under developed countries. Their struggle is common to that of other children in this period. Most of them find particularly difficult to handle the requirements of this period. Some of the problems my co-researchers faced were related to the age of emerging adulthood. Hence, the situations may change when they achieve a more stable social position. There are possibilities for them to be English teachers at English institutes and/or at government schools in Korea. Since the Korean government strengthened the English education system for Korean children of school age, numbers of English teachers are needed, especially from overseas where English is spoken as an official language. Korean missionary children who are educated in English and speak it fluently are welcomed as English teachers. This is an opportunity for Korean missionary children to starting a career until they find a career that suits them. They can use this opportunity to save money for further studies. Besides English, fluency in Chinese, French and Spanish, as well as Korean is a great advantage for job opportunities and university admission. Korean young adult missionary children have many opportunities for a better future. In considering this, my co-researchers were able to change their view of their position from uncertainly struggling to a period of potential. Morgan (2000:52) insists that the dominant ideas and beliefs that support the problem become visible when they are exposed and discussed, and people have been challenged to stand up problem. If this becomes significant to the person, it is a unique outcome, and this is a doorway to open possibilities for the discovery of alternative stories (Morgan 2000:52). The new meanings of the stories were discovered on young adult issues through discussion of literature related to the problems. Thus, the co-researchers remained curious about their own progress.

Müller (2001:11) avers that “The research process is not only about storytelling, but also about story development”. “We relate to our world epistemically only through the mediation of interpreted experience, and in this sense it may be said that theology and the sciences offer alternative interpretations of our experience... the rational agent’s self-conception and self-awareness is indeed an indispensable starting point for any account of the values that shape human rationality.” In the notion of the postfoundationalist theory of practical theology, it is important that each individual person interpret their experience in meaningful constructions (LeRon Shults 2006: 89).

4 SUMMARY

In this chapter the influences of traditions of interpretation on my co-researchers were discussed from the collaboration with them, and alternative interpretations on their traditions emerged through interdisciplinary conversation.

The following are the issues that were discussed with other disciplines on the traditions of interpretation: For the MK/Christian boarding school issues, the guidelines for healthy family relationships and strong family bonds were discussed in connection to separation difficulties and relationships. The important role of the missionary father emerged. In the case of University education and reentry, I first studied the social atmosphere of education in Korea and its influence on the Korean missionary families, and then the tendency of universities in recent years to make comparisons between Korea and western countries. The difficulties that arose from reentry into Korea were discussed as well as guidelines for taking care of Korean missionary children. I looked at the financial difficulties that the Korean missionaries were experiencing in connection with their children’s education, and used Paul Mission International and SIM International’s educational policies as examples of how the Korean churches and mission agencies should assist these missionaries. On language learning, cultural adjustment and identity, the importance of learning the languages used on the mission field, as well as cultural adjustments, the missionaries’ attitudes towards these things, as well as the importance of

bilingualism and multiculturalism was discussed. When it came to young adult issues, I used articles on 'emerging adulthood' by Arnett (2000:469) as a foundation for my research on the features of young adults. I also looked at the employment issues of missionary children resulting from Korea's recent tendency to study English, with the need for more English teachers. The reflection of my co-researchers upon the discussion was included in the previous sections.

The co-researchers were able to gain a better understanding of their stories from different perspectives through alternative discussions with various disciplines and could attempt to reconstruct their stories toward a better future. According to Müller (2005:11), this new understanding of narrative should be different from the outdated generalization. "It is rather a case of doing contextual research with such integrity that it will have possibilities for broader application."

In the next chapter, the reflections of the co-researchers upon the alternative interpretations that emerged will be described.

CHAPTER 6

DREAMING THE FUTURE STORY

1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter one, I studied the definition and characteristics of missionary children, the state of the education of Korean missionary children from the historical background to the present condition, and discussed the research problem. In chapter two the research paradigm and methodology were examined. In chapter three the educational issues of Korean missionary children were studied from various publications. In chapter four my co-researchers' narratives were presented from the collaboration with them. In chapter five the co-researchers' retelling of their stories were described by deconstructive conversation and the alternative interpretations emerged through the interdisciplinary discussion.

At the beginning of this research, I was aware that the co-researchers were discouraged by their problems and were anxious about the uncertainty of their future. They seemed hopeless. Thus, I tried to concentrate listening to their unheard stories. Through the research process their marginalized stories were told, and by telling and retelling their stories the co-researchers were empowered to understand and to give meaning to their situation. According to Demasure and Müller (2006:8), "Marginalized voices can then be given a chance and shed a light on alternative stories." Narrative intervention is an integral part of the research process. "The aim is, through this research process, to empower the powerless." (Müller & Schoeman 2004:8). Through this narrative research process my co-researchers were lead to understanding and empowerment, and they developed new meanings for their preferred stories for the future. Morgan (2000) avers that "The role of researcher is to assist people to break from thin conclusions and to re-author new and preferred stories for their lives."

In this chapter, the reflections of the co-researchers on the alternative interpretations that emerged will be described in the form of their development of their individual stories.

2 THE ALTERNATIVE STORIES OF CHILDREN

2.1 The preferred stories of Hope

2.1.1 Renewed identity as God's new creation

Hope suffered from emotional difficulties during her whole life, especially with feelings of instability and isolation, which caused her not to be concerned about her present occupation or her future. They caused her to wander. Since the hidden existence of Hope emerged as an 'unstable girl' through deconstructive conversation, she identified her hidden power of hope, which brought a different view on her problems. From this new view, she was able to find new self dignity. Müller (1999) states that the narrative approach does not come with pretence of powerful possibilities; rather, narrative researchers continuously search for the hidden potential of a solution.

Moreover, she was stimulated by reading and discussing ideas from Seamands (1986:22) that God heals people whose spirit is suffering in pain. She was also enlightened to the Spirit and Jesus Christ's understanding of our weakness, feelings of pain and fear from separation, because Jesus had experienced it Himself. The fact that Jesus understands the problems that cause our emotions, encouraged her greatly. Before she recognized this truth, she had no hope that her emotional difficulties would vanish. She worried about her problematic life. With new hope, she tried to find ways to cope with the problems. She wrote letters to the people who had caused her life-long unhappiness. She asked why she had been the object of their abuse, and expressed her anger against them. She was weeping and crying while she read these letters. She drew meaningful pictures to express her unresolved grief. She spent several days expressing her painful memories and emotions toward those people and obtained relief and freedom from the past restrictions. Morgan (2000:98) explains that drawing pictures can assist people to stay connected to an emerging alternative story. I agree that Hope's specific experiences of drawing pictures and writing letters made a significant contribution towards expressing her lifelong hidden feelings and thoughts, and she has

sustained the positive developments through these discussions, letters and pictures to make meaningful breakthroughs a better future. A new perspective was gained through this work and she held on to God's promises to solve her problems. She felt more stable with God's comfort and came to love this verse from the Bible, "Perfect love casts out fear"⁵¹. White and Epston (1990:16) explain that people can be invited to ascribe meaning to themselves when unique outcomes are identified. This new meaning will, quite obviously, be different from the previous meaning, and from this new meaning, an alternative story develops, which we can be used to create a better future.

Hope was encouraged by God's words in Isaiah 61:1-4, while she was reading the Bible. In her mind, she believed that God gave her those verses to help her to think about her existence in a different way. So, I asked her if she could interpret the meaning of those verses in her present situation, and she explained that God wanted to rebuild and renew her ruined self that had been devastated. Through these words, she was extremely encouraged that God really wanted her restored and renewed from past and present wounds to become a new creature. Instead of being bound by the past experiences, and struggling in the present, she saw herself from God's point of view through Isaiah 61:1-4. She could have hope in God's promise for her in spite of feelings of depression and instability.

However, she often struggled with negative feelings that caused her to lose her positive perspective toward her future. The past experiences often caused her to lose confidence in her thinking. She said, "When I read the Bible it reminds me of His promises so I feel free from my past and worry goes away. But when I only think of myself as a human being I become worried." However, she realized that the pictures of her past were getting faint since she had opened her mind to share her problems with me and had written the letters to those who distressed her in the past and by drawing the pictures she recognized that the problems were not as strong as before. Yet, she often forgot those verses and fell back into her feelings of depression in spite of realizing that God's promise to her from the Bible gave her power. Thus, we made the decision that she would read those verses daily in order to keep God's promise continually in her mind. She recognized that this helped her to remember

⁵¹ 1John 4:18

God's encouragement. Furthermore, we tried to read those verses together at each of our interview sessions. She seemed more comfortable and was encouraged by doing it. Thus, Hope tended to read those verses before each session ended and I was aware that her voice was wavering while she was reading them. After reading the Bible, I suggested that we pray together to seek God's help to give His real comfort and peace to her. She had confidence in God's word as it reminded her of His promise to her. This continued until the last interview. At this stage, she was able continually to keep God's promise in her mind and found the significance and meaning of her existence. According to Müller (1999:28), Christian hope can be dealt with by emphasizing the promises of God for a better future. People are challenged on the basis of these promises. Carlson and Erickson (2002:220) insist that our spiritual lives and our professional lives are inextricably interconnected. They (2002:220) state that spirituality is often a tremendous source of help, strength, comfort, peace, security, serenity and hope for most people. I considered the relational implications of my spiritual beliefs, spiritual self and relationship with Hope (Carlson & Erickson 2002:232). Thus, I invited her to tell and retell me about her experiences of God's love, compassion or mercy at each interview session. I also participated in the conversation by sharing my own experience of God's existence in my life. God's grace was poured out on her in order to rebuild the crumbled part of her experiences and renewed the inner part of her mind (Freedman & Combs 2002:141). She felt free, had peace by trusting God's word and became stronger than before. She now has hope that she will be released from her emotional difficulties, and looks forward to her bright future as she trusts God's promise.

2.1.2 Endeavour stronger than self limitation

Even though Hope had a new hope in finding herself to be God's new creation, nothing changed on the surface. But the difference was that by this time she could acknowledge her weakness and was able to express her difficulties to God with an open heart. She also tried to keep God's promise firmly in her mind.

As Hope was continually aware of her possibilities, she tried to conquer her struggles and tried to think about herself in a positive way. She realized that she was too

sensitive about the matter of the religious atmosphere at the Christian school, but now she seemed more encouraged. With this new awareness, she decided to work at the Christian school as a part time teacher. “There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear”, even though she still worried about her new position, she trusted that God’s love will take care of her fear (1John 4:18a). Müller and Schoeman (2004:8,9) aver that in narrative research, co-researchers should be voiced and formulated through the research process, and it creates a sense of hope. It therefore entails positive intervention. “This is a powerful, but a fragile intervention.”

Actually, Hope had planned to go back to America for further study, but her goal had been changed after she went on a mission trip with her church. She had compassion for the poor children whom she encountered on the mission field, because they reminded her of her boarding school experience. She was deeply impressed and remembered her childhood. In tears she gave testimony about her boarding school experience before the children. Through this trip, she became aware of what to do with her life, and was motivated to overcome her problems. Now her eyes were opened to see a goal for her life, and a desire to accomplish it. She is sincerely seeking God’s guidance in this. Freedman and Combs (1996:16) state that “the narrative researcher is interested in working with people to bring forth and thicken stories that did not support or sustain problems. As people begin to inhabit and live out the alternative stories, the results are beyond solving problems. Within the new stories, people live out new self images, new possibilities for relationships and new futures.”

2.1.3 Rebuilding relationships with parents

Since she has returned to Korea Hope’s new priority is to develop her relationship with her parents. Hence, she has tried to spend more time with her family, and is trying to stop blaming her parents, since she has realized that her expectation of her parents was too demanding. She was aware that this kind of high expectation could influence her attitude toward her parents. Thus, in a different way, she is trying to think positively about her parents. In fact, both of her parents showed their great love

and concern for her at the time of her settling in Korea and they are continually helping her in various ways.

Moreover, she tried to understand the gap between her parents and herself, since she had a new consciousness through interdisciplinary work that they have been influenced by Korean tradition and culture. She now recognized that the difference of mindset between herself and her parents caused the breakdown in their relationship, and they need to understand each other's differences. With this new insight she is attempting to understand her parents' mindset and attitude instead of blaming them, and she also expects her parents to understand her as well. But she still has a conflict with her parents on a decision that will have consequences upon the family and herself. She sometimes feels upset and argues with her parents about that decision. But, she realizes that they both need more time to understand and accept each other better, and that they all need to strive towards it.

The mission trip motivated her to understand the passion of her parents for missions. She no longer falls into despair or self-pity since she has acknowledged her new identity as God's new creation. She does not want to look back on her past experiences that caused her depression. She is determined to focus on hope for the future. So she is able to understand the situation of her parents, and this new insight has been vital to building a good relationship with her parents.

2.1.4 Reflections on the preferred stories of Hope

Interviews with Hope carried on for two years, and I was aware that Hope's problems were difficult to be resolved. I also took quite a long time to carry out this research, but I felt assured that the time was essential to arrive at the alternative stories of Hope. Müller (1999:23) says, "Pastoral intervention is always concerned with change. The gospel is concerned with change. No matter how strong our identification is with the core stories of our own group, we must always hold on to the possibility of change that result in being freed from damaging interpretations."

During the first interview sessions Hope was overwhelmed by her problems and was very depressed. She seemed hopeless and was really angry because her problems

had not improved with time. I was aware that she expected some “magic thing” to lead her to solve her problems quickly. She did not comprehend that a long-term commitment would be needed. In this situation she was often depressed about the difficulties, and struggled with feelings of instability. When I made contact with her, it was amazing that she could genuinely open her heart to me, and I felt sympathy for her. We were both aware that our minds were in tune with one another. It was a great privilege that she genuinely trusted me and easily opened up to share all her particular stories, which had not been told before. By her attitude of expectation toward this research project and of her faithful heart, she had the determination to conquer her negative feelings. The word of God, especially Isaiah 61:1-4 and 1Corinthians 5:17 was powerful to renew, restore, and rebuild her damaged existence to become God’s new creation. This new position gave her a positive view of herself, and she was motivated to work toward a great future. As I mentioned earlier, she started to work at the Christian school as a part time teacher and was satisfied with the new position even though worries sometimes still disturb her. As she remembers God’s promise, she is more able to cope with situations when she feels a sense of oppression in the religious environment at school.

She was grateful to me, and said, “thank you for your encouragement and love. Now I have hope ... You are a big answer to my prayer, I have been praying for a long time to find someone who I could trust to talk about myself, and now... I have found you. I can honestly talk about myself to you.” She was laughing when she mentioned our honest talking. She also used a metaphor said that I am like an oak tree in terms of her being. It was a significant moment when she could change from being a person with no confidence and feelings of depression, to being a rebuilt, restored and renewed creature through God’s love. I sincerely thank God for helping us to open our hearts honestly to each other, and for using me as his tool on the way to help Hope.

I will conclude the preferred stories of Hope by presenting Isaiah 61:1-4, 10 which was the meaningful and powerful promise of God to her.

Isaiah 61:1-4, 10

The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve in Zion - to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the LORD for the display of his splendor. They will rebuild the ancient ruins and restore the places long devastated; they will renew the ruined cities that have been devastated for generations... I delight greatly in the LORD; my soul rejoices in my God. For he has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

2.2 The preferred stories of Dreamer

2.2.1 Affirming identity as a child of God

In the case of Dreamer, shaping a new identity as a child of God was the most important matter to resolve, for him to find self-fulfillment and a purpose for his life. He insisted on the importance of it and said, "Many people say that Korean missionary children can shape their identity as Koreans by living in Korea for certain period. I have a different opinion about it. In my opinion, it is not a precondition to live in Korea in terms of forming an identity. Children are more influenced by the consciousness of their parents. If parents are sure their Korean identity, it influences the children to shape their identity as Koreans. Identity can also be formed through relationships with Korean friends, and by watching Korean news and drama. The most important thing is the family environment. The consciousness of parents, their attitude and life style are essential in order to shape an identity as a Korean." His identity as a Korean was already shaped in Botswana under the influence of his

parents. But he was able to establish his identity as a Christian when he experienced God's presence and had the confidence that his sins were forgiven by God's grace. He was stable in this new position as a child of God and was able to have a positive self-image. He found his dream in God. He challenges people who are involved in the ministry with Korean missionary children saying, "I think that by this time we need to be concerned about the importance of helping Korean missionary children. I am opposed to people who only tell Korean children that they should shape their identity as Koreans. Children need to detect their self-esteem in God and be convinced that they are aware children of God. Moreover, they need to find their purpose for life in God."

Above all, he was glad to have been released from the bondage of guiltiness before God through his reading of Seamands (1986:23) and the Bible. Dreamer was deeply impressed by the Bible verses that promise God's forgiveness of sinful man such as Romans 3:10, 23-26, 28, 5:1-2, 6-11, 6:11-14, 17-23, 8:1-2, 35-39. As we read those verses together, he was deeply impressed and confessed his sins that separated him from God. He was deeply touched by God's grace. Through this experience Dreamer was able to have confidence in himself as he built a new relationship with God, and was determined that he would never doubt His promise to him.

2.2.2 Rebuilding relationships with parents

He did not want to go to Botswana when his parents asked him to visit them, because he had negative memories about Botswana. He did not want to think back on his painful childhood in that country. However, he went since his parents had requested him to.

Unexpectedly he had good experiences while he was visiting there. He held a vision camp for Korean teenagers in Botswana, and found it worthwhile, as he was able to challenge them to accept that they are valuable. He was involved in his parents' ministry to help orphan children, and was impressed by this work. In his childhood he had no understanding of their ministry, but he became aware that his parents were devoted to their ministry to the orphan children and to God. This changed his mind

toward his parents, and caused him to respect them. As a child he disliked it that his parents were doing mission work among poor people, while they suffered financially. He complained about it to himself. But now he had a different perspective, understood the life of his parents as missionaries, and could see their reasons for helping orphan children in such a sad situation. He felt proud of his parents' ministry and their devotion to missions. Yet, he honestly said that he would not want to visit Botswana again as he still thinks that the country is boring.

2.2.3 Seize future dreams beyond financial problems

Since Dreamer knew that his parents had taken a loan to support his educational and boarding expenses, he felt sorry for his parents' difficult financial situation. He planned to pay back those expenses to his parents once he find a job after graduating from university. His mother sympathized with him and felt sorry that he accepted such a financial burden. She wanted Dreamer only to focus on his studies during his university years, in order to accomplish his dream, rather than doing other things to earn money. Yet she had confidence that God is the solution of all needs and that He will help her family in this situation. She prayed seeking God's help for her children, and encouraged Dreamer not to worry so much about finances. Dreamer was able to understand the heart of his mother and it stimulated him to focus on his studies and to discard idle thoughts. He worked harder at his English and French studies since he recognized that his parents had high expectations for him.

Through his experiences of financial difficulties, Dreamer was able to understand the financial situation of missionary families, and this gave him a vision and motivation in future to establish a foundation for scholarships for the education of Korean missionary children. He recognized that financial difficulties are an obstacle to most missionary children to pursue their plans for their future. He was unhappy with the fact that because of financial constraints he could not attend the university of his choice. This became his motivation to support Korean missionary children with their education in the future.

Dreamer reflected on our interviews saying, “It was beneficial to look back at the past experiences that were stained with wounds. During the interview times, I was able to awaken to the value of God’s existence and his forgiveness of me. In my life, I often wandered on account of my difficulties with God and with my parents. But now, I want to say that it is God’s grace to be myself. God guided me until now and everything in my life is God’s plan.” It was a significant point for him to think of God’s grace for him. He said, “Before I started my interviews with you, I couldn’t believe how much love God showed me in my life, I forgot it since I wandered in life. But, by telling my life stories and giving new meaning to them, I am aware that God always guides me (even though I do not realize it). I could find a power in me through the interviews. It is very important for me to think of my life in a positive way. I was a complaining person before you heard my stories. I really thank you for giving me a great opportunity to find my reality and a power with a new perspective, and especially I am so glad to think of my relationship with God. I feel really comfortable as I know His love and care are still upon me.” He is assured that, “People who have their dream in God are not ruined. Because they walk straight toward their dream, and so have confidence and enthusiasm. Now I have a dream in God and am walking toward it. I know that I am not a perfect man. I am an insufficient person. But, I have confidence in God that He will raise me up if I do my best in Him.” Dreamer has real faith in God as he has recognized God as the source of all power. This new awakening challenged him to do his best in his studies and his life at university, to make his dream come true. Even though he faces many difficulties to accomplish his goal, he will not give up the dream that came from God. He knows that his time as a young adult is the time to prepare for his future and times of change.

2.2.4 Reflection on the preferred stories of Dreamer

Interviews with Dreamer were carried out for a year. Twice the interviews were held at my home, while he was visiting his parents in Botswana, and thereafter I contacted him three times by internet phone. I felt pity for him especially concerning his financial difficulties as I realized that was the main point of his sufferings. I was

aware that this situation influenced his self-esteem. Though he was determined to do well in his studies, he often felt discouraged and angry with his situation, and lost self-confidence. He recognized that his problem was to miss seeing God's love through blindness to what God had accomplished in him. Through the process of interviews he was assured of God's love and guidance for him, and it led him to trust God. He said "To recognize my power comes from God empowers me in the present and in the future."

In spite of his difficult situation, this new perspective empowered him to find meaning in his studies. The new, embodied in the emerging story, can support new perceptions and behaviors (Freedman & Combs 2002:210).

He asked me to write the following sentences in my thesis and I agreed to his suggestion: "It's the grace of God to be myself. God guided me until now and everything in my life is God's plan." He confessed that everything done in his life was the result of the grace of God. His expression reminded me of a beautiful gospel song which was composed by a Korean musician that described God's grace. Thus, I wanted to sing this song with Dreamer, but unfortunately he did not know the song. Hence, I sang this song for my young friend, Dreamer, as a gift and he was delighted with it. After singing, I wrote down the words of the song and gave it to him in order to remind him of God's love and grace in his life.

As I conclude the preferred stories of Dreamer, I will present a beautiful gospel song in order to express his admission of God's guidance in his life. The words were originally written in Korean as it was composed by a Korean singer and I translated it into English in order to help readers.

Grace of God

It is God who made me, it is God who created me, and it is God who sent me here.
It is the grace of God to be myself; Grace that has no limitation, Grace that I cannot
repay, Grace that can manage my life.

By the grace of God, I can step on the land without fear.

2.3 The preferred stories of Challenger

2.3.1 A new perspective on Christian education

Challenger expressed her feelings on the matter of education by saying that “Being a Korean child brings much pressure, because most Korean missionary parents made their children work very hard and made them participate in many activities to prepare for university entrance. It bothered me a lot. Because of so much pressure I couldn’t do anything well. I always felt that I was a failure. I didn’t like the attitude of Korean parents, and I thought that Korean missionary children missed great advantages as human beings and as missionary children.” She stressed that Korean missionary parents have too high expectations for their children’s education. The children experience pressure due to the expectations of their parents for them. In this way they lose the advantages that missionary children should have in living unique and meaningful lives. Since her parents forced her to study, she was stressed by the possibility to miss her goals for her future. Taking the situation of Korean missionary children into consideration, Challenger and I discussed Christian education. According to Wilhoit (1986:11) the aim of Christian education is “to lead students to a more Christian view of life and the world”, and to help people gain a comprehensive view of God’s world and the meaning and purpose of life. The Christian educator must understand children as they are, guide them in their goals and the best means to achieve these goals. He/she must guide them in the search for meaning. Christian education must give children a sense of purpose in life. So, Christian education can facilitate the search for personal meaning and help children detect God’s purpose for life (Wilhoit 1986:13). Challenger was glad to discuss Christian education and argued that Korean missionary parents need to recognize the uniqueness of their children as missionary children, rather than compel them to study hard in order to enter one of the top universities. They also need to encourage their children to make their own unique contribution to the cause of God’s people in the world (Wolterstorff 2002:56). In this way, missionary children will discover their potential and find God’s purpose for them.

I invited my co-researchers into our discussions by email and received their replies. I found that they were interested in giving their views of Christian education. They agreed that the goal of the education of missionary children must be Christian. They had similar ideas on what we were discussing. We have a strong desire that God may help in the world to contribute our gifts to His glory. We were encouraged by the fact that we can be light of this world even though we are weak. Challenger, Faithful and Dreamer suggested that it would be good to encourage Korean missionary parents to see the importance of Christian education and to guide their children in this way, rather than just to participate in the competitiveness that exists in Korea. They eagerly desire to accomplish this goal, and realized that this new awareness was vital for them.

2.3.2 Restoring self-esteem

Because of the negative experiences at MK school, Challenger struggled with Christianity as she was marked as an ill-behaved child by some of teachers with their strict discipline of the children. She was also hurt by Korean people who were prejudiced against missionary children. These affected her negatively, she lost confidence in herself, and felt angry towards her parents, the Korean Church and God.

During the interview sessions, we tried to focus on the issues about Christianity and its application in this world. During the first two sessions Challenger and I discussed the issues, and for the rest of the interview sessions her closest friend joined us in discussing this matter. We recommended some books to one another in order to help broaden our thoughts and brought many themes about Christianity into our discussions. We earnestly tried to find the correct view on Christianity, and as a result, Challenger was able to explore alternative ideas concerning her traditions of interpretation of Christianity. Through our discussions Challenger realized that the failure she experienced at school had not originated in her. It came from the wrong attitude of the teachers and staff. They and the other children made a lot of mistakes in their dealings with her. Through reading books and discussing the principles of Christianity she gained confidence in her faith in God. She could recognize that she

was not the same as she had been in the past. She found differences between the past and the present. In the past, she was too young to explain her feelings to her teachers and her parents, and was marked as a trouble maker, and was discouraged. This still affects her and she easily becomes discouraged. Yet, she was encouraged by the process of our interviews as she recognized her difference from the past. Teachers and staff at the MK school defined a good Christian as a well-behaved child, and she was the opposite of it. What does it really mean to be a good Christian? We both agreed that genuine faith in God is the most important fact in Christianity. Who knows another person's heart? We believed that only God knows a person's inmost thoughts and desires. We want Christianity to be alive instead of dead. We became to love this verse from the Bible, "Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free (John 8:32)." She has been set free from the past, and is able to see her power to overcome the pain. She is determined to avoid thinking of the past, and will rather try to think of her power that has emerged through facing the past. She said "I have become a different person now, since I realized my power, thus, my past no longer troubles me. I now clearly understand my purpose and have courage. I now have a clear dream and have hope for my future."

2.3.3 Taking opportunities to prepare for the future

Challenger was struggling to find a hospital in which to do volunteer work in order to prepare for medical school in America. She had been looking for a suitable place for six months, but had failed to find anything. She thought finding volunteer work at a hospital in Korea was almost impossible due to her unfamiliarity with the Korean culture and people, as well as not being fluent in the Korean language. However, after six months she was accepted at a private hospital in Korea and joyfully took this opportunity. Through the hospital experience she was more assured of her future dream to be a medical doctor. As was mentioned earlier, she had found the power herself during the research process through seeing the difference between the past and the present. Therefore, she has hope to accomplish her dream to be a doctor even though the course will be difficult.

2.3.4 Rebuilding relationships with parents

Challenger has been working on the development of her relationship with her parents while she had been staying in Korea. By listening to the voices of other missionary parents and interdisciplinary conversations about Korean family life and society, she gained understanding about the attitude of her parents and their life as missionaries. Recently, she also experienced missionary work overseas for several months, and this helped her to gain understanding of her parents. She was dissatisfied with her parents' parenting of their children in the past, but now she has a different view on the situation. She is aware that her parents did their best for their children while they were growing up on the mission field. By being challenged in different ways, she now has a new insight in missionary work and the life of her parents on the mission field. This has influenced her to have a positive mindset toward her parents, and stop blaming them. It has given her hope that her relationship with parents will improve.

2.3.5 Reflections on the preferred stories of Challenger

Interviews with Challenger stretch over two years. Initially, the interviews were started in Korea when I visited that country and were continued by internet phone. Due to her personal situation of moving around the interviews were stopped after three months. Personally, I felt that the interviews were not enough to accomplish the goal, and I was looking for more opportunities to contact her. Then, I heard that she had moved to a country close to the country where I live. It was a great privilege for both of us to communicate with each other regularly and more deeply through visits and phoning. We both enjoyed our reconnection in Africa, and she took the opportunity to share her difficulties at a deeper level. Our relationship became closer as we freely talked about sensitive issues in a relationship of trust. Thus, I had many opportunities to listen to the stories of her past and present, to her interpretations of traditions, and was able to hear the alternative interpretations of those stories. We thank God for guiding us to be close in such a miraculous way to be able to share our uncertainties. I could help her to find the power to face the future.

She returned to Korea after visiting Africa for a short term, and at present is working hard in order to prepare for her future. To accomplish her dream seems difficult, yet, she does not give up trying. She said, “I now have a clear vision, have courage and hope in my future.”

Having summarized the alternative stories of Challenger, I would like to present the gospel song that reminded her of God’s grace that restored her life. By God’s grace she was able to establish a positive self-esteem and has a future dream.

You raise me up

When I am down and, oh my soul, so weary, when troubles come and my heart burdened be. Then, I am still and wait here in the silence until you come and sit awhile with me. You raise me up so I can stand on mountains. You raise me up to walk on stormy seas. I am strong when I am on your shoulders. You raise me up to more than I can be.

2.4 The preferred stories of Visionary

2.4.1 Accomplishing the first purpose at university

“I must work hard in order to accomplish my purpose. I know that time management is the key in doing all things.” This was the statement of Visionary that was presented earlier in this chapter. With this determination, she worked very hard during the first and second year of university and put all of her effort into making good progress to keep up to the same academic level of the other Korean students. As a result she caught up to them and accomplished her first goal. This gave her the opportunity of being chosen for a special study course at the university. She tried to think positively about the present and the future, and managed her time carefully. She tried to keep her dream for the future in her mind at all times. Sharing her difficulties with me and listening to other voices during this research journey also helped her to have a better understanding of her situation, and encouraged her to focus on her studies. Moreover, she said that trusting God is the primary factor that sustains her life in a

difficult situation in Korea. Yet, she recognized that she was not up to standard in mathematics and science even though she worked hard at them, so she needed to focus on them.

In addition, she pointed out the following merits of studying in Korea. She had the opportunity to improve her Korean language fluency, of to learn more about the Korean society and culture, and to enjoy them. Another opportunity was tutoring, and she has a great opportunity to build human relationships with Koreans for the future. She was happy with all these advantages in Korea. She realized that she had become independent, and has accepted many responsibilities while she living in Korea without her parents' supervision. As an answer to prayer she found suitable accommodation in the private home of a Korean family after leaving the dormitory. She may have to pay more for her new accommodation, but she is satisfied with its location as the house is close to the university. Since she has to pay more, she realizes that she will have to do more tutoring, but she encourages herself to focus on her purpose for the future.

2.4.2 Dream a future dream

Visionary wanted to succeed in life for the sake of God. Since she accomplished her first goal at the university it became evident that she could make her dream come true in the future. She said, "A person who has a dream is not ruined in life". She said that the dream she has will not only satisfy her, it may also reveal God's glory to the world through helping other people. She said, "I am empowered by God to accomplish my dream. The dream will come true in future if I work hard in the present, so I must be patient. I cannot complain in any situation." Dependence on God and prayer support from her parents are vital to sustain her. She constantly dreams the dream of her future, and the image of a better future leads her to carry on to accomplish this purpose. "Miracles are what we expect to happen when we wait and depend upon God for the future" (Müller 1999:45).

2.4.3 Reflections on the preferred stories of Visionary

For the last two years, Visionary has visited South Africa, where she grew up, to see her parents during school holidays. I had the opportunity of meeting with her three times as part of this research. She seemed so stiff when I first met her and I was aware that her life in Korea was tough. Reentry into Korea after fourteen years of living in South Africa has not been easy for Visionary in terms of her studies at the university and of her adjustment in an unfamiliar country without parental support. However, during the last two years she has persevered and worked hard at her studies in order to accomplish her purpose.

Recently she struggle to adapt to the Korean culture and social life that she experiences at the university among the students. During the first year at university she had many positive experiences in Korea and enjoyed its environment. But in the second year she found many differences between Korean students who had grown up in Korea and her values, thoughts and world view. The world view she has is very different from other students at the university. Therefore she is struggling to form close relationships with other students and feels lonely among them. I know that it is not unusual to experience a culture shock in the culture of Korean young people, since she grew up in Africa. Reading Hiebert (1987:76) helped her to gain a deeper understanding of her situation as he explained that people understand the world through their own culture and this often causes trouble between cultures. She now recognizes that her struggle is not different from what other Korean missionary children experience, since her world view and values were shaped while she was growing up in Africa. Her experiences in Africa influenced her to embrace a different world view from the students in Korea. She also emphasized her identity as a child of God more than her identity as a Korean. She found stability in this position. She is sure that she will succeed in future and that the present is an important period to prepare for her future dream. She is convicted that her unique experiences as a missionary child have added strength to her life, and will become a powerful influence in her future.

I contacted her by email after she returned to Korea and hope that my support in prayer and by letter may give her comfort and courage.

I will quote Isaiah 40:28-31 in order to encourage Visionary in her study difficulties.

Isaiah 40:28-31

The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom. He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak... but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

2.5 The preferred stories of Faithful

2.5.1 Alternative interpretations on the matter of graduation

While Faithful needed to extend his studies at university by a year, he found new meaning from this experience as he wondered if the reason for his failure originated with him. He realized that he had gained more understanding of uncertain parts of his studies during that year. He said that he may have missed some important points in his studies if he had not extended his studies by a year. Finding this new meaning opened up his perspective to an alternative interpretation of the matter of the failure to the graduate. According to Müller (1999:65), "If people can be helped to be able to see the road in front of them, their whole experience of the present will be changed." In addition, Faithful could overcome his stress about his lack of English ability to cope academically at university by the new insight discovered when he read Haag (1999:2), he understood that the effect of language learning is different from one age group to another. This new awakening helped him to accept his ability in English, and he had a more positive opinion of himself as a student.

2.5.2 Reflections on the sovereignty of God

During the extended year, Faithful was seriously thinking about the sovereignty of God. He became more humble through this experience and tried to pray more and to

meditate on the Bible in order to find God's will for his future. He also tried to depend on Him more. Doing this, he changed and grew in his understanding and his faith strengthened. He learned more about God's will by reading the Bible. He was encouraged by the statement in Proverbs that "To man belong the plans of the heart, but from the Lord comes the reply of the tongue... Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and your plans will succeed... In his heart a man plans his course, but the Lord determines his steps" (Proverbs 16:1,3,9). "A man's steps are directed by the Lord, How can anyone understand his own way?" (Proverbs 20:21). Since he did not know what his future holds, God helped him to be able to have stability in his thoughts through His Word. His stress from English and mathematics reduced by depending on God, and his faith in Him developed during that year. He also realized that financial problems were normal among missionary families. He learned this as he listened to the other voices during the interdisciplinary work. He learned to take this burden to God in whom he learned to trust throughout the suffering of that year. Instead of worrying about his future, he tried to firmly hold onto God's promises that he found in the Bible.

2.5.3 A new perspective upon the future

After a year Faithful graduated from the university and went to Korea to study for his master's degree as his parents suggested. The matter of joining the army was postponed because he was doing further studies. He worried about going back to Korea on account of the language medium of the study, a different education system and a different environment. Since he had moved to South Africa he had not visited Korea for eight years. However, he was determined to trust God and to depend on Him. He was sure that there was a special reason why God guided him to Korea as he had no thoughts or plans for his future. He would wait for God's guidance. Even though he was not sure of what kind of life Korea held for him, he was willing to follow God's guidance, as he had learned to trust Him.

2.5.4 Reflections on the preferred stories of Faithful

I started the interviews with Faithful with the intention of helping him to get rid of his stress about his studies. We had two face to face interviews and continued by email for reflection and to investigate some issues. It took a year. However, after a year I heard from his mother that he failed to graduate and he was really disappointed and depressed by the results. Hence, I reconnected with him by phone and was glad that he did not hold back. He expressed his feelings of anxiety and fear over his failure. During the year he had lost confidence to pursue his dream for the following year. I thank God that He did not leave Faithful alone in the dark world. God challenged him through the Bible and met him in prayer. During this time Faithful was contemplating the sovereignty of God and became more humble before Him. This experience changed his future plans and motivated him to trust God with his whole heart.

This year Faithful started his master's studies in Korea. He is finding it very difficult to study in Korean, and in a different education system. He is struggling to cope socially, and financially to pay for tuition and boarding which are very expensive. He knows the financial condition of his parents and is trying to find a solution. To solve this problem he plans to tutor school children but has not yet found any students. However, he is sure that God who guided him to Korea will help him in this situation, and so he waits and depends upon God. "Miracles are not contrived, but rather happen when one waits and depends upon God for the future" (Müller 1999:45).

As I conclude the alternative stories of Faithful, his confusion about the future is reviewed in my mind. Hence, I would like to give these meaningful words from the Bible to my young friend Faithful in order to encourage him and bless his future.

Philippians 4:6-7

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

3 SUMMARY

In this chapter, the preferred stories of the co-researchers that emerged were described. There are many outcomes of the stories of the co-researchers during this research journey. Yet, the co-researchers are still struggling with their problems, but are expecting an alternative interpretation to their stories for a better future. According to Müller (1999:45), true narrative work is “not result-orientated, but rather wait-orientated. It does not offer answers, but facilitates questions and waits.” The narrative approach is open-ended rather than results-oriented so I am waiting on the ongoing process for my co-researchers problems. Müller (1999:45) cites the metaphor of the Polaroid used by Lamott (1995:39) in order to express that narrative researchers must be patient and curious to listen to the participants' stories and wait until the plot emerges. There is no quick solution to children's problems. Miracles happen when we wait and depend upon God for the future “to bring about a new thing in His own surprising way” regarding the problems (1999:45), thus, we need to facilitate waiting. Therefore, as a narrative researcher, I made every effort to avoid the short term solutions of my research and rather learn to wait for the full scope of the research to develop. Hence, my co-researchers are remaining curious about their progress. My role as a narrative researcher is “to help people dream dreams in the midst of hopeless situations and to imagine a better future... I must with all effort seek to help create stories of the future-stories which fit into the realistic hope of the gospel.” (Müller 1999:73). Hence, this research is not closed-ended, but rather allows for growth and development to take place. I will continually develop my relationship with my co-researchers in order to support them, so that we can become ‘companion[s] on the journey’ (Müller 1999) of our lives.

CHAPTER 7

REFLECTIONS ON THE RESEARCH

1 REFLECTION ON THE RESEARCH PROCESS

1.1 Period of the research interviews

The research interviews for the present thesis have been carried out over a period of around two years. Initially, I planned to complete the research within a year. But it was insufficient for specific situations of some of the co-researchers. Thus the period was extended. It was difficult to continue the research for this long period. However, interviews with the co-researchers went well. They all cooperated with me and enjoyed to participate with the research since they agreed with my intention with this research. I deeply thank them for being patient during the long period of the research interviews.

1.2 Reflection on the research aims

For this research, I have had the following five aims: (i) to understand the educational difficulties Korean missionary children face on the mission field. (ii) to study various schooling options for Korean missionary children on the mission field. (iii) to describe an alternative understanding of Korean missionary children's educational difficulties through interdisciplinary discussion. (iv) to examining the advantages and disadvantages Korean missionary children will face, at university either in Korea and/or in another country. (v) through discussion with the co-researchers to propose practical ideas to help Korean missionary children focus on their education and other issues.

By fulfilling these aims, my co-researchers and I would make significant contributions toward the research process and would obtain a beneficial result through our

conversations in this research project. I present the benefits the researcher and the co-researchers obtained as follows:

The researcher

- I developed a close relationship with the co-researchers through the research process and I have the possibility of counseling them in future.
- I obtained a better understanding of the educational challenges Korean missionary children face on the mission field, and a new insight to help Korean missionary children. This also helps me in different way to guide my own children in their education.
- I take my role seriously to help Korean missionary children in future and I have gained some practical ideas in the discussions with the co-researchers; these ideas will be introduced later.

The co-researchers

- By telling and retelling the stories, the co-researchers could add value to their stories of powerlessness and create new meanings to understand their problems. They were encouraged by alternative perspectives.
- Unlike the past the co-researchers were able to relate their stories to others through the narrative research process, and their stories will be reconstructed in future as narrative research is an ongoing process.
- Through telling the stories they also revealed common problems which Korean missionary children face with education and the issues young adult missionary children may face. My co-researchers proposed some practical ideas in order to help other Korean missionary children. I will present these practical ideas as a proposal for an alternative perspective on the pastoral care of Korean missionary children.

1.3 Proposal for an alternative perspective on the educational difficulties Korean missionary children face on the mission field

1. To providing an orientation course for children when they enter the mission field is essential. My co-researchers felt that by taking an orientation course at this stage, children would have a pre-knowledge about the field including schools, and this would help them to have more confidence in a new country. To providing counseling when necessary is also useful in order to sustain and protect them.
2. To having regular meetings in a small group with other missionary children would be helpful. My co-researchers agreed that missionary children need to belong to a specific group with significant people with whom they share common interests, their difficulties and their Christian faith. Young adult children and teenagers especially need to develop relationships with the same age group.
3. Knowledge of the academic language needed to enter university in Korea is important. This is an important matter Korean missionary children have to understand if they plan to study at a university in Korea, because Korean is used as the official academic language at most of these universities. Children whose Korean is not up to standard may face difficulties in completing the course at university. In the case of Visionary, English was offered as the main language for study at the university, but this is unusual in Korea. English is taught there only at a small number of universities. Thus it is important for children to understand the language issues before they decide on a university.
4. Young adult children need careful guidance for further studies, careers and marriage as these are the issues that confront this age group. They also need guidance to find their potential for the future.
5. Helping children to develop their Christian faith in God is a priority for missionary children. My co-researchers pointed out that missionary children may become stronger, more motivated and powerful when they meet God in a personal way. According to them, children who know God personally will not be overcome by difficult situations but will find security for their future in Him. Since this is so important, they argued that parents should not only

focus the academic achievement of their children, but also make the development of their children's Christian faith their priority.

6. Caring for children who have problems with their studies and with other issues is necessary, and counseling helps them. Most of the co-researchers were seriously concerned about other missionary children who have serious difficulties with their studies and their everyday lives. At the beginning of the research project they were not concerned about others, because they were immersed in their own problems. But now they are able to show concern for other children, and are willing to help them with advice with the problems they face. I was deeply impressed by their changed mindset and attitude. They were empowered through the new stories that point beyond traditions, to have better dreams for the future.

My co-researchers hoped that the proposal may be useful in helping Korean missionary children and wanted inform missionary parents and mission agencies of this proposal. As an expedient they suggested to me to help Korean missionary children in some ways, and I was also seriously concerned about their suggestion. Hence, ideas discussed from the collaboration with my co-researchers and the following plans were made: (1) organize an orientation course in my area for children of school age before they enter a new school and help them to adapt. (2) help children by providing study materials for some Korean subjects. (3) with some of the co-researchers organize regular small group meetings for Korean young adult missionary children. (4) provide counseling for children who have difficulties.

The plans will begin in the year following the completion of this thesis.

1.4 Selection of the co-researchers and the physical distance between the researcher and the co-researchers

When I started this research, I wanted to study various educational options in order to understand the educational difficulties Korean missionary children face on the mission field. I selected the co-researchers from different educational backgrounds in order to take into account their various experiences. Children from different countries

such as Korea, America and South Africa were selected.

As most of my co-researchers were living far from me, I used networking with them for the research process. I sometimes communicated with them through networking such as internet phones, email and chatting. Internet phone was an extremely useful method in my research process. My co-researchers and I enjoyed communicating through internet phone from a long distance. We also chatted via the internet and cell phone for short conversations. However, due to the great physical distances between the researcher and the co-researchers, there were times when it was difficult to communicate with my co-researchers as we needed to communicate via internet phone rather than via email, and there were times when it was difficult as the change in their problems were slow. Therefore, I sometimes wondered if I should not have selected the co-researchers from the area in which I live. Other missionary children in my area would have been easier to communicate. I sometimes felt that the physical distances between the researcher and the co-researchers was an obstacle in the research. Yet, I have no regrets over my selection of the co-researchers, because I wanted to have a better understanding of educational issues Korean missionary children experience by listening to children from various educational backgrounds, and I have achieved my purpose.

2 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

This research studied the difficulties that the Korean missionary children experience at MK/International schools and boarding schools run by Western missionaries. Information on the Korean MK schools recently started on the mission fields and their educational statuses, as well as boarding and lodging is not yet available and needs more research. Furthermore, the emotional difficulties Korean missionary children experience in their schools and on the mission field need to be understood. The number of Koreans missionary children that choose to go to Korean universities is increasing. Although most universities in Korea only lecture in Korean, Korean missionary children experience difficulties with their studies as they are deficient in Korean. To help Korean missionary children who intend to study at Korean

universities, more research is needed about how Korean missionary children can adapt to study in Korea. Research is also needed on the status of university education in Korea as compared to other countries.

As Korean young adult missionary children are going to Korea for employment teaching English and other jobs, more research is needed about the ability of Korean missionary children to adapt to Korean society.

This research included the educational difficulties of Korean missionary children on the mission field. Further research is needed on the difficulties of Korean missionaries with regard to their children's education. This research revealed the educational problems Korean missionary families encounter on the mission field, and I hope that the Korean churches and mission agencies can help Korean missionaries with regard to their children's education in an effective way.

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