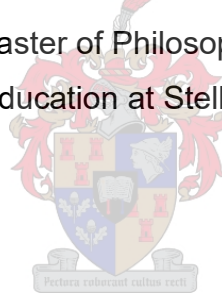

An interpretative phenomenological analysis of academic identity development in part-time lecturers at a private higher education institution in South Africa

By

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DECLARATION

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ABSTRACT

The origins of this study lie in a personal struggle to define my academic identity. My frame of reference is that of part-time lecturer that later moved to a full-time academic manager position in a private higher education institution. The main academic focus of the private higher education institution is on teaching rather than research. The nature of the private higher education institution furthermore entails that there is ever-present spectre of profit. The profit driven nature and the teaching focus led me to doubt if I was in fact an “academic”. This led me to the aim of the study that investigated what the academic identity of part-time lecturers in a private higher education institution is and how this academic identity develops. This initial interest led to reading about identity and I came across Goffman’s theory of dramaturgy, that proposes that daily life could be compared to a theatrical production. When later focussing exclusively on academic identity, I came across Henkel’s work around academic identity in a changing environment. She proposed that three sources of academic identity can be found: discipline, institution and profession. These two scholars’ work formed the theoretical framework for this study. An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) research approach was followed. IPA was appropriate as it allows one to describe how the respondent experiences the phenomenon given the context in which it takes place. A purposive sample of five part-time lecturers at the Cape Town campus of a large private higher education institution was selected for the study. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the five respondents. The data gathered was analysed using a six-step process that initially analysed each respondent’s interview to find themes. The themes from each interview were then compared to find commonalities and create overarching themes. These themes were interpreted and analysed to allow for findings to be made. The findings indicated that the respondents exhibited a definite academic identity, although most denied being academics. In addition, a clear professional identity was displayed by all the respondents. Respondents showed how they easily, and with comfort, code switched between these two identities depending on what the situation demanded. In some cases, the academic identity was invoked in the professional setting and *vice versa*. Lastly, it was shown how identity takes time to develop and that agency plays an important part in the development of this identity showing academic identity development as an ongoing process rather than a static point. The study contributes to the body of knowledge allows for a better understanding of how part-time lecturers function in the private higher education environment. This information may be used to assist in the appointment, training, ongoing

development and management of part-time lecturers within these institutions in the future. A large-scale quantitative survey is suggested as a possible future study to determine if similar results are found in the broader population. A second study that may be considered is to compare the academic identities of part-time lecturers in private and public higher education institutions, to discover how this might be similar or different.

Key terms: academic identity, part-time lecturer, private higher education, IPA

OPSOMMING

Die oorsprong van hierdie studie lê in 'n persoonlike stryd om my akademiese identiteit te definieer. My verwysingsraamwerk is dié van deeltydse dosente wat later na 'n voltydse pos as akademiese bestuurder in 'n privaat hoër onderwys instelling verskuif het. Die hoof akademiese fokus van die privaat instelling vir hoër onderwys is eerder op onderrig as op navorsing. Die aard van die privaat hoërondewysinstelling behels verder dat daar 'n fokus op winsgewendheid is. Die winsgedrewe aard en die onderrigfokus het my laat twyfel of ek in werklikheid 'n 'akademikus' was. Dit het my na die doel van die studie gely, wat ondersoek ingestel het na wat die akademiese identiteit van deeltydse dosente in 'n privaat hoër onderwys instelling behels en op watter wyse hierdie akademiese identiteit ontwikkel het. In navolging van hierdie belangstelling het ek begin lees oor identiteit, en ek het Goffman se teorie van dramaturgie teëgekom, wat daarop dui dat die daaglikse lewe vergelyk kan word met 'n teaterproduksie. Toe ek later uitsluitlik op akademiese identiteit fokus, het ek Henkel se werk rondom akademiese identiteit in 'n veranderende omgewing ontdek. Sy het voorgestel dat drie bronne van akademiese identiteit gevind kan word: dissipline, instelling en beroep. Die werk van hierdie twee geleerdes vorm die teoretiese raamwerk vir hierdie studie. Die navorsingsbenadering was interpretiewe fenomenologiese analise is gevolg. Interpretiewe fenomenologiese analise was 'n gepaste benadering aangesien dit 'n mens toelaat om te beskryf hoe die respondent die verskynsel ervaar, gegewe die konteks waarin dit plaasvind. 'n Geriefssteekproef van vyf deeltydse onafhanklike kontrakdosente op die Kaapse kampus van 'n groot privaat hoërondewysinstelling is vir die studie gekies. Semi gestruktureerde onderhoude is met die vyf respondente gevoer. Die versamelde data is geanaliseer deur 'n proses van ses stappe te gebruik wat die onderhoud van elke respondent aanvanklik ontleed het om temas te vind. Die temas van elke onderhoud is daarna vergelyk om ooreenkomste te vind en oorhoofse temas te skep. Om bevindings te kon maak is hierdie temas is geïnterpreteer en geanaliseer. Die bevindinge dui aan dat die respondente 'n definitiewe akademiese identiteit toon, alhoewel die meeste ontken dat hulle akademici is. Dit is duidelik dat alle respondente 'n professionele identiteit toon. Respondente het getoon hoe maklik en gemaklik hulle tussen hierdie twee identiteite wissel, afhangende van wat die situasie vereis. In sommige gevalle is die akademiese identiteit in die professionele omgewing toegepas en *visse versa*. Laastens is getoon hoe identiteit tyd neem om te ontwikkel en dat agentskap 'n belangrike rol speel in die ontwikkeling van hierdie identiteit, wat akademiese identiteitsontwikkeling

uitbeeld as 'n deurlopende proses eerder as 'n statiese punt. Die studie dra by tot kennis in die veld, wat dit moontlik maak om 'n beter begrip te kry van hoe onafhanklike kontrakdosente in die privaat hoërondewysomgewing funksioneer. Hierdie inligting kan in die toekoms gebruik word om te help met die aanstelling, opleiding, deurlopende ontwikkeling en bestuur van onafhanklike kontrakteurs binne hierdie instellings. 'n Groot skaalse kwantitatiewe opname word voorgestel as 'n moontlike toekomstige studie om vas te stel of soortgelyke resultate in die breër konteks gevind word. 'n Tweede studie wat oorweeg kan word, is om die akademiese identiteit van deeltydse dosente in private en openbare hoërondewysinstellings te vergelyk, om te ontdek hoe dit of soortgelyk of anders is.

Sleutel terme: akademiese identiteit, deeltydse dosente, privaat hoër onderwys, interpretiewe fenomenologiese analise

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Sitting down to write this after completion of the research project it feels like a long arduous journey has been completed and no such journey can be undertaken without the help of people along the way.

Firstly, to my parents who instilled a love of reading at a very early age thereby placing me on a path of lifelong learning, I owe you a debt that cannot be repaid.

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CHAPTER 1 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

Higher education in South Africa has undergone significant change in recent years. Probably the most notable change is the “spectacular growth” in private higher education since 1994, as identified by Jansen in the National Review of Higher Education (Council on Higher Education, 2007). If one considers that enrolment in private higher education grew by more than 84% between 2010 and 2015 (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2018), it is clear that this growth has been ongoing. In the same period (2010 to 2015) enrolment in private higher education as a percentage of overall enrolment in Higher Education in South Africa increased from just over 9% to almost 15% (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2018) – showing that private higher education institutions are substantially growing in popularity.

¹More than 20 years ago a group of University of South Africa students got together to form a study school and to hire a tutor, this eventually evolved into one of the first registered private higher education institutions in South Africa. Over time, the organisation developed several different educational institutions with each one forming a “brand”². A stock exchange-listed company owns the private higher education organisation that formed the context in which this study took place. The organisational brand that was the focus of this study hosts nine campuses across South Africa. These campuses combined have almost 20,000 enrolled students, with the site of this study, Cape Town, hosting more than 2,500 students.

Academic staff at this institution comprises two groups, namely full-time lecturers and independent contractors, the latter group mostly teaches part-time and is not considered as staff of the institution. These independent contractors constitute approximately 85% of the academic staff complement. Independent contractors teach differing numbers of hours, ranging from as little as two hours a week to almost full-time – with the maximum hours that an independent contractor may teach in a year being 600 hours which is increased to 800

¹ I provide no referencing or additional information in this section to protect the confidentiality of the organisation as required by the institutional permission granted to me.

² Brand names are used to distinguish between the different institutions that belong to the same organisation but trade under different names and target different educational markets, with a different mix of qualifications. Although terms such as “brand” and “market” are commonly used within private higher education, they remain contentious in the public education sector (Álvarez-Mendiola & González-Ledesma, 2017).

hours if it is a scarce skills position. Full-time lecturers are seated in an open plan office and are provided with equipment (such as laptops). At the time of the study, independent contractors used the “Lecturers Lounge” as a base to work from. Here basic desks and desktop computers were provided, the independent contractors were, and still are reliant on their own laptops to do presentations from. All lecturers (independent contractors and full-time lecturers) must have a “one-up” -qualification, meaning that to teach on an NQF level 7 qualification, a lecturer would need an NQF level 8 qualification. In the recruitment of independent contractors, specific attention is paid to ensure that people are contracted who have practical industry experience and expertise; thus, a recently qualified honours student would typically not qualify for employment until they have several years of industry-related experience. It is part of the institution’s value proposition that students are not only equipped with the relevant academic knowledge, but also practical explanations and examples which are directly related to industry.

There is a central academic team responsible for the academic integrity and development of curricula for the whole organisation, across brands and campuses. As such, programmes are centrally developed and then implemented across the various brands mentioned above. In addition, the central academic team takes the responsibility for the development of formative and summative assessments, which means that the lecturer of the module has limited input into these assessments and only has responsibility for 10% of the assessments through exercises typically assessed in class. This situation is distinctly different from that in public higher education institutions in South Africa, where academic staff have much more freedom in developing their curricula, including learning material and assessments. This difference might have implications for the development of identity, and more specifically, academic identities within the context of private higher education institutions, which is the focus of this study.

At the most basic level identity is “what it means to be who one is” (Burke, 2003) and thus forms the basis of the roles that we play in our day-to-day lives and how we enact those roles. If we do not understand how identity, and specifically academic identity, develops in part-time lecturers, such as the independent contractors, it is difficult to manage, develop and support these independent contract lecturers.

1.2 Purpose of the study

Research into issues related to academic identities has gained prominence in recent years (Mula, Rodríguez, Segovia & Cruz-González, 2021; Brown & Edmunds, 2020; Van Lankveld, Schoonenboom, Volman, Croiset & Beishuizen, 2017; Hudson, 2017), yet there is a paucity of research in this area in the South African context in general, and within private higher education in particular. Private higher education institutions are significantly different from public institutions on several levels, the most important difference being that they are profit-driven and do not receive any subsidies from the government (Badenhorst, 2019) this includes subsidies for graduation rates and research output. In many private higher education institutions, part-time lecturers make up the majority of staff (as permanently employed staff have significant cost implications) and such part-time staff typically have other (full-time) occupations. This duality may create an identity conflict between their “career” or professional identity and their “lecturing” or academic identity. Even those independent contractors who teach almost full-time are not included in the day-to-day running of the institution, but rather arrive, deliver their teaching for the day and leave, and are therefore not fully integrated into the academic milieu of the institution. There is no incentive for research, nor community engagement as the emphasis in these positions is on teaching. Lastly, private higher education institutions tend to limit the academic freedom of any lecturer, providing them with a curriculum and clear, and typically strict, guidelines, as well as providing centrally set assessments.

The purpose of this study is to investigate how the academic identities of these independent contractors are shaped by, and developed, within the particular institutional context and thereby to start filling the gap in research and thus to contribute to the body of knowledge in this field.

1.3 Problem statement

Most of the lecturing staff at the private higher education institution in question are independent contractors, who have had, or may still have, a career outside of the academe. This may create a duality between their professional and academic identity, or as Winter (2009) puts it, an “identity schism”. The lack of information and research on the development of an academic identity amongst part-time staff in private higher education institutions means that we do not know if this schism exists or not, and what role this plays.

Given this problem statement, the following research question was posed:

How do part-time lecturers at a private higher education institute in South Africa describe the development of their academic identity?

I have, purposefully, focussed on only the one question rather than adding sub-questions as the methodology, introduced below, lends itself to rich and in-depth data on one focused aspect. An additional reason for limiting this study to only one question is the fact that this is not a full Master's level thesis, but rather a half thesis as the rest of the course was completed through coursework.

1.4 Research design and methodology

The study used an interpretivist paradigmatic lens. Kivunja and Kuyini (2017:33) state that this paradigm allows the researcher to “*get into the head*” of the respondents being studied. Thus, the researcher sees things from the point of view of the person that has experienced them. Reality and knowledge are constructed by individuals through their interaction with, and experience of, the environment (Scotland 2012). Interpretivism uses the viewpoint of the individual and their experience of the environment to understand how they have constructed their reality and is ideally situated for this study.

The methodology for the study was phenomenological, and more specifically Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) as influenced by Heidegger and further developed by Smith (Robberts, 2013:216). Lindegger (2014) states that phenomenology allows us to investigate the dialectical relationship between the individual and the lived world. He further states that there can be no separation between the person and the world they inhabit as the two influence each other. Robson (2011) takes this a step further in stating that a researcher in phenomenology is inseparable from assumptions and preconceptions of their respondent and rather than bracketing these biases, they are used to help explain the phenomenon and are integrated into the study. This inseparability is in line with one of the key differences between Husserl and Heidegger's approaches to phenomenological research; Husserl insists that one “brackets” out one's own experiences to remain unbiased (Reiners, 2012). Heidegger's stance is different from this, as he believes that the researcher cannot negate their experience and that personal experience is a key part of phenomenological research (Reiners, 2012). This difference in stance between Heidegger and Husserl is explored in detail in section 3.3. In my reading of Heidegger's approach, I came across interpretative

phenomenological analysis, which is a relatively new development. In a 1996 paper in *Psychology and Health*, Jonathan Smith, proposed a psychological methodology that was both experiential and qualitative but could be used in mainstream psychological studies. This eventually led to the seminal guide “*Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis: Theory, Method and Research*” by Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009). Since being proposed in 1996, IPA has found footing in several fields outside of psychology, such as the health, human and social sciences. It was appropriate for this study as the roots of identity studies lie in psychology, (although I do not pretend that this is a psychological study) and the methodology relates to Heidegger’s approach particularly where bracketing and intersubjectivity is involved and yet it allows me to see the world as another would see it. Indeed, intersubjectivity plays a key role in IPA. Intersubjectivity is defined by Daanen, Sammut and Horvath (2016) as the ability to take the perspective of another, they argue that if we cannot take another’s perspective how can we understand them? Consequently, by using my experience in the position of an independent contractor to achieve this intersubjectivity, I was able to utilise IPA in this study.

1.5 Data collection method

In IPA, a small sample is used (Roberts, 2013) as there is more interest in the richness of data than in the ability to generalise the findings, therefore, the sample of this study consisted of five respondents. This was a small sample, but consideration should be given that the idea is not to generalise the findings to the population, but rather to strive for richness of data as in IPA the adage “less is more” (Hefferon & Gill-Rodriguez, 2011:757) holds.

Due to its nature, the IPA methodology is best suited to a data collection method that provides in-depth data and with much detail (Smith et al., 2009). Therefore the preference in IPA is for semi-structured in-depth interviews as this gives rich and accurate data (Kumar, 2011). I was inclined to do face-to-face interviews as, over and above the rich information, this method provides the non-verbal cues that would have assisted me to determine when to probe or to increase or decrease the pace of the interview (Berg, 2001). Face-to-face interviews would also have allowed me to record non-verbal clues, such as body language, which may have provided additional data. However, at the time of the study (2020-2021) the Covid-19 pandemic guidelines (World Health Organisation, 2020) suggested avoiding unnecessary contact with others and practising social distancing, which made face-to-face contact undesirable. Individual interviews were therefore conducted by video platform;

several platforms (Skype, Microsoft Teams, and Zoom) were available and the one the respondent preferred was used in each case.

For the interviews, open-ended questions were used to ensure a consistent framework between the different subjects discussed and to introduce the main topics that needed to be covered. I used an aide memoir (Appendix A) to ensure that I remained within the framework. Within these main aspects, there were no pre-determined sub-questions and this allowed respondents to freely express themselves and thereby provided me with the richest possible data. Where the respondent addressed an issue but did not fully explore it, a probing or follow-up question was asked to clarify or to garner more information. All interviews were recorded and verbatim transcriptions were made. These transcripts were used as the raw data.

1.6 Analysing the data

To ensure that I remained within the framework of IPA, the six-step analytical framework suggested by Smith et al. (2009) was used to analyse the data. A basic overview of the framework is given here, and the detail is dealt with in section 3.5. The first step was the transcription of the interviews and then reading and re-reading the transcripts. Then cryptic notes were made around important statements by the respondents. I then moved to working more and more with the notes I had made, a reduction of information started taking place, allowing me to group data. In a fourth step, the themes that were related were grouped and those that did not contribute to answering the research question were discarded. This process was repeated with each interview, making sure that each was treated on its merit and not influenced by the themes from the other interviews. Lastly, the themes of each interview were compared to those of others. Through the above steps, I converted the information that I received during the interviews to data that was structured in such a way that I could now interpret and give meaning to it.

1.7 Ensuring the quality of the research

As part of the purpose of this study was to contribute to the limited body of literature on the topic, it was essential to ensure that the quality of the research adhered to the highest standards. To this end I followed the approach of Yardley (2008), who suggested several principles that need to be adhered to, to ensure quality in the research. Yardley's (2008)

principals are: sensitivity to context; commitment and rigour; transparency and coherence; and, impact and importance.

I agree with Smith et al. (2009) that by selecting interpretative phenomenological analysis as my methodology, I showed a sensitivity to the context. In addition, the use of purposive sampling indicated my awareness of the context and the need to ensure that I consulted the most relevant people to interpret that context. The use of quotations and the discussion of examples (Gauntlett, Bickle, Thomas, Collins, Heaslip & Eccles, 2017) further ensured that I stayed true to the context of the respondents.

I took several steps to ensure rigour. Before the study, I did a pilot interview to ensure that the correct data is collected and that I was comfortable with the interviewing technique. Quotations are used to substantiate the findings and conclusions and to support the analysis. In this regard, the small size of an IPA study was of considerable help as it allowed the time and space to do the in-depth analysis.

I have made every attempt to be transparent in the process that I have followed by explaining the what and the how of what I did. In addition, I have tried to include my reflexive thinking to show what my thoughts and experience was during the research process as exposing my position was crucial for the transparency of the study. To ensure coherence of my theoretical approach, the question, the methodology and the data analysis (Yardley, 2008) are all aligned and suitable for this study.

1.8 Outline of the study

Chapter 1: Overview of the study

This introductory chapter gives an overview of the study conducted to orientate the reader to the study. A brief background is given, situating the study. The purpose of the study and the problem is briefly stated before the research design is addressed. As part of the research design, an appropriate methodology is introduced to the reader. Then the data collection methods are discussed and briefly motivated. The data analysis steps of Smith et al. (2009) data are introduced as being typical in an IPA study and each step is briefly discussed in the context of this study. Lastly, the quality of the study is discussed, and principles are introduced to enhance this.

Chapter 2: Literature review

The literature review has several functions in a study (Kumar, 2011): it provides a theoretical background, links the current study with other studies that have been done, and situates the findings in the current body of knowledge. The literature review is divided into three parts. Firstly, the theoretical base that deals with the theories that are used to underpin this study; secondly, a discussion of academic identity based on previously published work on the topic, and thirdly, the research that was done around lecturer identity formation in higher education institutions. Lastly, this chapter looks at how a person becomes a lecturer and what the ongoing processes are that the person goes through.

Chapter 3: Research design

In this chapter, interpretative phenomenological analysis is expanded on as the preferred approach to this study. Tuffour (2017:3) states that IPA is used where one wants to “explore, describe, interpret, and situate the respondents’ sense-making” of a particular situation. It was therefore particularly suited to investigate the development of part-time lecturer’s academic identity.

Chapter 4: Results and discussion

After analysing the data according to the steps proposed by Smith et al. (2009), as described previously, the data was interpreted and the findings are discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 5: Conclusions

In this chapter, a summary of the current study is given, conclusions are drawn to answer the research question posed above. In addition, possible future research avenues are suggested.

1.9 Chapter conclusion

This chapter has highlighted that the purpose of the study was to determine how part-time lecturers at a private higher education institution describe the development of the academic identity. I showed how interpretative phenomenological analysis is the appropriate methodology for the study. Lastly, I have given an overview of the study. In Chapter 2, I will lay the theoretical foundation for the study and give an overview of the current literature on academic identity as it pertains to this study.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This section provides the theoretical foundation for the study. The study poses a question that is focused on the concept of identity, how the notions of professional and academic identities interact, and how especially the academic identity develops. Therefore, this chapter explores conceptions of identity based on existing relevant scholarship in the area. Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical approach lends a broader view of how people act in specific situations, whilst Henkel's (2000) use of the phrase academic identity and definition of academic identity provide a theoretical basis for the topic of this study. The transition into the academe is considered, with a focus on the perspective of the part-time academic within a private higher education institution.

2.2 Theoretical foundation

In 1959, Erving Goffman published "The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life", in which he proposed that a theatrical performance can be used as a metaphor for life. For this reason, this approach is known as the dramaturgical approach. Goffman (1959) stated that people would play out specific roles, dependant on their audiences, the social settings presented to them, and the situations within which they find themselves. Their identities would therefore be fluid and develop and change as the settings and the circumstances changed. Goffman introduced several points to consider: performance, team, stages, discrepant roles and impression management.

Performance is the setting of a stage with actors, audience, and interaction between the two (Bauman, 2011). The notion of performance is not seen in the strictest sense of the word, where one person is acting, and others are observing. It is rather an interaction where all concerned are playing specific roles. In the context of this study, this will be the lecturer teaching her respondent, or doing other activities, in the class with the students as the audience.

Team refers to a group of people who work together on the performance, such as colleagues. These team members have a collective responsibility to ensure that the performance continues (Grove & Fisk, 1983) as they are interdependent to ensure the

continued success of the performance. In this study team will refer to the teaching body; part-time as well as full-time staff that ensure that the curriculum is delivered to the students.

Stages refer to the three stages (Goffman used stages and regions interchangeably): frontstage³, backstage, and outside. The frontstage is where the performance takes place; this is where the team will act as is expected of them by the audience. For this study the frontstage will be where lecturers have direct contact with students, mostly in class, but also when students come to see lecturers individually regarding questions that they have. Seen differently this is where the lecturers would act formally. It is also here, I would argue, where academic identity will, mostly, come to the fore. The backstage is where the team interacts with each other and where there is no audience present; this then allows the team members to drop any pretences. Goffman (1959) describes how there is a different language and behaviour used in this less formal space. Typically, this was the conduct in the staff room and canteen at the institution that was studied. Although informal, many discussions and storytelling take place in this setting. Storytelling is an important part of corporate culture (Gajić, 2020), which is in its turn a factor that plays a role in the development of academic identity (Henkel, 2000). The outside is, as Goffman (1959:82) puts it, “neither front nor back”; thus it is a different setting than the current one. Take for example one of the lecturers meeting a student, perchance, in a shopping centre. Depending on the reaction of the lecturer, a new frontstage is created, or the lecturer may choose to treat this as an interaction on the outside. Depending on the choice made it may contribute to the lecturer’s development of academic identity.

Discrepant roles refer to people who are in a position to disclose the secrets of the team to the audience and thereby damaging the team in some way. This can influence the academic identity, for example, if an older, more experienced lecturer, was to speak badly of a younger lecturer in front of students and the younger lecturer comes to hear about it.

Impression management, sometimes called self-presentation, includes the actions that people take at an individual level to ensure that the audience forms the “correct” impression of them. As the impression that others form of one have implications on how you are perceived, people will make an effort to ensure the “right impression” is created (Leary &

³ The spelling used for frontstage and backstage is the same as Goffman uses.

Kowalski, 1986:34). Many lecturers will manage the way they look, or dress, to ensure that they create the right impression with students (Tsaousi, 2020).

I use Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical approach as an analogy of the teaching environment and how people act within that and developed it into a framework for this study. As an example, a person who is an accountant and lecturers accounting on a part-time basis would have several different stages on which they will be acting. When they are seeing clients in their practice, they would be acting as registered professional, and their demeanour would most likely show that. In the classroom, busy with first-year students, there will be a change of behaviour, as they will try to simplify complex concepts to the first-year students' level. Similarly, this person would be in a different performance when they are in the lecturers' lounge surrounded by teaching colleagues as opposed to being in a room of accountants. These different performances and changes in role, and therefore identity, leads us to how a different identity is formed by professionals in the role of lecturer.

In one of the early texts to focus particularly on the concept of academic identity, namely Mary Henkel's (2000) *Academic Identities and Policy Change in Higher Education*, she describes academic identity as a relationship between identity and three possible sources of influence: discipline, institution and profession.

Discipline is described by Henkel (2000) as the most basic unit where people gather who have similar beliefs and therefore develop their identities around these beliefs. Discipline is the key driver for an academic and the primary identifier of self for an academic. She states that the first exposure to the discipline is when interest develops in the discipline, then the individual becomes a student in the discipline, and on completion of studies becomes an academic in the discipline which then binds the individual to the discipline.

Henkel (2000) argues that whilst discipline can pull people together, it can also be a destructive force. The discipline may split, as knowledge is discovered, into sub-disciplines or strong alternatives that can cause division as competition for resources increase and ideological differences emerge. Henkel (2000) states that in these situations, where division is taking place at a disciplinary level, the institution will be the overriding and binding force and thus the institution has a definite influence on the identity formation of an academic. Badley (2015) takes this notion a step further and states that academics are "bound up" with

their institution. This bond is so strong that many academics struggle to give up this bond, even in retirement.

Henkel (2000) states that the third contributor to identity development should be the profession. In this regard, she is referring to academia as a profession, however, she rejects the idea of profession as part of the formation of identity in the confines of her study, as she considers the academic profession to be fragmented. To illustrate this fragmentation, she uses the comparison of the British and American academic systems and illustrates how differently they are organised (Henkel, 2000). Other authors (Colley, James & Diment, 2007) see the profession, as well as professionalism, as a key part of the identity of academics and one that can therefore not be ignored. Becher and Trowler (2001) expand this idea and place the anthropological terms tribes and territories into the discussion on professions. These authors state that disciplinary cultures are the tribes that hold their disciplinary knowledge as their territories. In this regard, Archer (2008a), in drawing on a conference paper presented by Colley and James (2005), concludes that membership in the academic profession is important in the development of identity. Membership of the tribe should, however, not be seen as a permanent achievement, but rather something that can be attained and lost. Archer (2008a) expresses the fluidity of tribe membership as “becoming” and “unbecoming” an academic and emphasises the idea of identity not being a fixed point but something that is flexible and changes over time. Here Archer (2008a) is echoing the sentiments expressed by Colley et al. (2007) who state that there is fluidity in the profession and that attainment of a profession in education is not an achievement that is automatically retained for life.

As a theoretical departure point, this study used Goffman's (1959) and Henkel's (2000) work as discussed above, but included the idea of profession as described by Colley et al. (2007) and Archer (2008a). Since academic identity became topical in the early 1990's much research and publications have been done and in the following section, I will define academic identity in terms of some of these studies.

2.3 Defining academic identity⁴

This section will give an overview of the concept of identity and will then move on to the specifics of academic identity.

The origins of identity as a concept came, mostly, from the work done by Erikson in the 1950's (Fearon, 1999). Erikson is still considered as the father of the concept yet he did not define it as such, the closest he came to a definition of identity and its formation, according to Fearon (1999), was a complex explanation of the concept. This explanation can be distilled down to identity being how we see ourselves, as well as how this changes due to the way we think others see us. Fearon (1999) argues that this view is antiquated as various academic disciplines had since come to use identity as part of their nomenclature and hence new meanings were attributed to the word.

According to Stryker and Burke (2000), there are three main definitions of identity in general use. The first definition describes the culture of a group of people, and, in this usage, there is no distinction made between culture and ethnicity. One should also consider work done by van Schalkwyk (2017) in this regard, as she found that culture and ethnicity were the sources from which identity is derived.

Secondly, identity is used to describe commonality between people or social groups as part of social identity theory. In this regard, Stets and Burke (2000) take the conceptualisation further in saying that there are overlaps between identity theory and social theory to such an extent that there are fundamental links to be made between the two. This usage of commonality has been confirmed by Williams-Gualandi (2020) who found that commonality is used to categorise people according to things that are the same across groups to attempt to reduce discrimination.

Lastly, Stryker and Burke (2000) describe identity as used by people to describe the parts of the self that have been constructed due to the varying roles people play in different situations in society. Here there are clear echoes from the work of Goffman described earlier.

⁴ In the context of the current study, academic identity will always refer to the identity of a lecturer and not to students, unless otherwise specified.

Brubaker and Cooper (2000) make a strong case as to the overuse of the concept of identity. They, Brubaker and Cooper, go further and suggest alternative terms that can be used to better describe identity as they argue that it is so widely used that one cannot be sure what is meant by the term and thus one should use other terms to describe what is meant. The alternative terms suggested by Brubaker and Cooper (2000) are:

Identification and categorization: In this, one is called upon to identify oneself by an external force such as a government or institution or is identified by such an institution or organisation. As such, identification and categorization are seen as an external force. As this study focuses on how people see their own academic identity, I initially did not find this conceptualisation particularly useful within the context of my study. After, I had done my data analysis and was busy reviewing my work my supervisor mentioned there may be a link to this study. As lecturers are seen in two groups, permanent or independent contractor, by the organisation this can be seen as them being categorized and identified, and this may affect how their identity develops.

Self-understanding and social location: In opposition to the above conceptualisation of identity, self-understanding and social location is an internal force of how one sees oneself. Brubaker and Cooper (2000:17) describe this as both “cognitive and emotional” at the same time. The authors make the point that this understanding of the self can be a static force but can also be dynamic with the understanding changing over time. I would argue that this way of looking at identity aligns well with the context of this study as I was looking at how people situate themselves and how describe their academic development journey.

Commonality, connectedness and groupness: In this last alternative to identity, Brubaker and Cooper (2000) state that the usage of these terms will describe how an individual sees themselves in a bounded group that can be formed through a variety of factors such as race, gender and ethnicity to name just a few. I would like to stretch this idea of belonging to a group, to describe the independent contractors as a whole, as mentioned previously, there is a difference between being an independent contractor or being a permanent staff member and this can sometimes be acute, for example, separate rest areas and working areas are used.

I am in agreement with Brubaker and Cooper (2000) on the concept of “identity” is oversimplified and used in too many different and unrelated contexts. In this study, at various

times any one of the categories or terms that Brubaker and Cooper (2000) suggest, may have been more appropriate to use than “academic identity”, however, a change in the conceptualisation of the key terms would change both the scope and the focus of the study and thus I continued to use the more universal term of “academic identity”.

Bamberg (2010) describes identity as the simultaneous attempt to integrate and differentiate the self in various social and personal situations. Thus, identity could be used to show affiliation to a group, and yet at other times claiming an identity would specifically exclude membership of a group. Bamberg (2010) mentioned several factors (such as ethnicity, race, affiliation, socio-economic status) that could influence identity, and, important for this study, occupation. Here there is alignment with the concepts that Stryker and Burke (2000) put forward earlier. The argument thus follows that – depending on the situation – various roles may be claimed in different social settings, and this will differ from person to person (even in the same situation). Another way of looking at this is the different roles that one can adopt in the same setting, this as the situation in the setting changes the roles may be changed. This was shown in a recent study of Chinese tour guides and their interaction with tourist that they were leading on excursions. Zhu and Xu (2021) showed how guides would change the roles they played and role shift depending on how the circumstances demand it. Much the same way a lecturer may change their approach from being friendly and approachable, to stern, strict and unapproachable depending on the behaviour of the class. This idea of claiming different identities at different times aligns with the roles that Goffman (1959:15) proposed, and how these roles are played out, and indeed, Zhu & Xu, (2021) use Goffman (1959) as their departure point. Recent work done by Harold, Prock and Groden (2021) compliments the work of Zhu and Xu (2021) discussed above. They looked at the academic identities and the personal identities of 31 academics. In their findings they show how “code shifting” is done to convert the personal self to the academic self, and if people are unable to code shift, they need to hide the personal self in the academic setting to feel more secure. Although this study looked at personal identity rather than academic identity, I believe that the principals hold true for academic and professional identities. If one considers the work that This relates well to the work of Bamberg (2010), as people would code switch to integrate themselves in that community and one would look at how an independent contractor lecturer code shift, if at all. The idea of integration also relates to the work of Henkel (2000), as discussed in section 2.2, discipline and how this can unite or divide people.

The question arises how the independent contractors see themselves in different settings, for example would they see themselves differently in the institution than at their “other” work or do they see themselves as the same in both settings and this issue speaks to the very heart of the current study.

Cinoğlu and Arıkan (2012) see identity as a reflection of society in which it developed, they argue that for each social role, a new identity is developed. This places the self and the identity as two separate entities. An example of these role identities (modified from Cinoğlu and Arıkan (2012)) is of two lecturers meeting each other in the staff room between classes, here the meeting is taking place between two people who identify as colleagues in this social context. Imagine the same two people meeting at an industry-related conference where the one is acting as a specialist speaker. The identities that are now invoked are different, yet in both cases, the self has not changed, just the identity. Although an interesting concept, I would argue that developing a new identity for each role is not achievable as some of these roles are very short-lived or insignificant in comparison to others. Here the terminology suggested by Brubaker and Cooper (2000) as discussed above may be appropriate.

From this general description of identity by the various authors cited above, I distilled a definition of identity that I used in conducting this study. This distilled definition is multi-faceted and proposes that identity is how others see us, how we describe ourselves, and the social groups within which this then places us. From this definition of broader identity, we can now start refining it to the academic identity.

When we move on to academic identity, we find it differs from the notion of identity in general, in that academic identity is a narrower definition that is located within a context of the academic world. Although a relatively new concept, academic identity has gained much interest.

The term academic identity was not coined by Henkel (2000), but she was one of the first to contextualise and define academic identity as it pertains to the lecturer rather than the student. She stated that it was central to the Western academic world (2000:13) and that the idea of a singular notion of identity has been discredited (Henkel, 2000:14) and rather that there is the opportunity of “a myriad of choices or reformulations of personality, concurrently as well as over time”. McNaughton and Billot (2016) support the idea of the ongoing development of identity and caution against seeing a person’s academic identity as

a completed project. McNaughton and Billot (2016) conceptualise academic identity as an ongoing development that changes as the situation changes and as the person's experience changes. Trautwein (2018:997) states that throughout their careers, academics reflect and reassess their position concerning "practices and roles, identification of development challenges and goals". This ongoing reassessment then leads to developmental needs and, in addressing these needs, the current identity of the academic is challenged and can lead to changes in the current academic identity. Trautwein (2018) studied the changes in the academic identity of eight academics going through a development programme. She found that the challenges faced during development could lead to academics feeling less competent in the short run, and as such could affect their academic identity. As they mature in the role of teacher, they gain more confidence, and this enhances their academic identity. This reminds of both Stets and Burke (2000), as well as Stryker and Burke's (2000) work on the alignment between social theory and identity theory.

A study by Flecknoe, Choate, Davis, Hodgson and Johanesen (2017) confirms that academics may have feelings of initial inadequacy as previously described by Trautwein (2018). In Flecknoe et al.'s (2017) study, nine respondents who had changed roles were investigated by the use of autobiographical reflective writings. The respondents were transitioning into a new academic role and this caused disruptions in their identity. Flecknoe et al. (2017) found that mentorship and communities of practice assisted in the transition and forming of new identities for these respondents. Academic identity should, therefore, be considered an ongoing process (Degn, 2015) and any study looking at individuals' academic identity could only make a finding on the state of the academic identity at that point. It is based on these sources (Degn, 2015; Flecknoe et al., 2017; Henkel, 2005; McNaughton & Billot, 2016; Trautwein, 2018) that my study discusses the "development of academic identity" rather than the "academic identity". To focus on "academic identity" in the context of this study, would negate the evidence of an ongoing development rather than something that has been completed or lays in the past in a fixed position.

The process of academic identity development is heavily influenced by circumstances. Several studies (Le, Hayden & Nhan, 2019; Huang, Pang & Yu, 2018; McNaughton & Billot, 2016; Winter, 2009; Winter & O'Donohue, 2012; Ylijoki & Ursin, 2013) have shown how a change in the environment changes the construction of academic identity. Henkel's (2000) work was done in the context of environmental change and the introduction of

managerialism⁵. Situating this study in a corporatised higher education environment as opposed to a traditional public university is one of the distinguishing factors of this study. In addition, the institution where this study was done has started to emphasise research as an important factor of evaluation of the full-time staff. This trend is different to what was reported in Henkel's (2000) study. Expectations regarding research had not expanded to the independent contractors at the time when this study was conducted, and it is therefore difficult to predict the influence such a shift may have on their identity.

2.4 Becoming a lecturer

In this section, I discuss various studies related to the transition from practitioner to academic and the formation of academic identity.

Rosewell and Ashwin (2018) found that being an academic has different meanings to different people. Their findings indicated three main categories: being a teacher; a researcher and, lastly, a more general view of an academic. Few people in the particular study saw themselves primarily as teachers, and those who did consider themselves to be teachers, saw it simply as a job, although one that they enjoyed and loved. The finding that the respondents just saw it as a job but one that they enjoyed, may seem contradictory. However, their job satisfaction in terms of teaching did not necessarily translate into viewing themselves as academics. As a result, I did not focus on whether the respondents in the current study liked their work or not, but rather on the identities that they developed.

In the second role, that of the researcher, three dimensions were identified by Rosewell and Ashwin (2018), namely creative process, discovery, and professional recognition. As a creative process, research was described as a puzzle that needed to be put together. The reading, understanding and sense-making of this puzzle are seen as a creative process. This creative research process was also described as an essential part of identity and how happiness depended on this research element. Research as discovery was seen as a key element of being an academic. Respondents in the Rosewell and Ashwin (2018) study voiced the desire to be able to research and discover ways of solving a real-life problem, with some of the respondents describing this as an essential element of themselves. Yet the majority of the respondents provided a more general view of being an academic, which

⁵ Managerialism is seen as the corporatisation of the university (Habib, Morrow & Bentley, 2008:141) and the desire to show profit and where the power shifts from the academics to the administrators.

Rosewell and Ashwin (2018) divided into two broad groupings: those who were self-focused, and those focused on providing a contribution. In considering being an academic as self-focused, a variety of opinions were expressed by the respondents ranging from it being a job that they have always wanted to do, to allowing a space from which the world could be observed without having to take a specific stance. A number of the respondents expressed the view that being an academic was not a job, but rather a part of who they were; a part of their identity (Rosewell & Ashwin, 2018). This has a direct bearing on the way independent contractors at my institution see themselves and the development of their academic identity.

Having framed what it means to be an academic, I will now look at the development of academic identity. Archer (2008b) studied academic identity within the context of managerialism, with a focus on how younger academics found their place in the academic world and how their identity was shaped. In framing her study, Archer (2008a) relied on the work of Colley and James (2005), who had shown how the development of academic identity is not a straightforward step by step process. Colley and James (2005:11) describe a process that is influenced by several personal, as well as professional events that lead to “becoming” an academic. They do, however, warn against what they called “un-directionality”, the idea that once academic status has been achieved it is a permanent state and indicate that “unbecoming” can also happen. Using the approach of Colley and James (2005), Archer (2008b) conducted semi-structured interviews with eight young academics who were starting their careers. Archer (2008b) did not give a breakdown of the number of the interviewees who were contract employees, but, in looking at her study I will specifically focus on the contract employees as my study mirrors this. Archer (2008b) emphasises inauthenticity and links this notion to various aspects of academic life. She indicates that a number of her respondents felt that they were not seen as authentic, or placed themselves in a position of inauthenticity, where they did not seem to belong in academia, which was particularly true for contract workers. One of the aspects that Archer (2008b:391) links this inauthenticity to is performance. She specifically mentions outputs and contextualises output by stating that the output should be the “correct output” – correct being what the institution requires. Archer (2008b) shows how contract academics had their contracts revoked if they did not deliver the right outputs, in this case the required output was research. This resulted in lecturers who were on contract fearing that they may follow the same path even if they did well in all other parts of their work. As mentioned elsewhere, the institution that is the subject of my study does not require research output from independent contractors but just encourages it. In the context of Archer’s (2008b) assertion above, the “correct output” for

the institution in the current study would be the successful delivery of classes and student pass rates. The threat of ending their contract, which Archer (2008b) refers to above, is also a threat of unbecoming an academic. In general, the respondents, in Archer's (2008b) study did not describe success in terms of career objectives or reaching a certain position, they rather approached success in a manner that Clegg (2008:17) describes as a "principled personal project". The respondents in Archer's (2008b) study described success as achieving self-fulfilment, having something to show for your work and being happy. The contract employees lay specific emphasis on security and autonomy as career objectives (Archer, 2008b); at least one respondent in Archer's study makes it clear that working as a lecturer is not about an academic journey but rather about personal stability. In the context of the current study stability may play a role as some of the independent contractors that were respondents to the study only derives an income from lecturing, although the institution still considers them part-time. For those participants in the current study where lecturing is the only income it may well be that stability of income is a bigger consideration than any academic journey.

Archer (2008b) stresses the point that it is a daily struggle for contract employees "becoming" academics, but also fighting the threat of "unbecoming", they therefore struggle to find legitimacy as academics and to develop the identity of an academic. This struggle for identity is also a struggle for academic agency with which many young or new lecturers struggle. Agency and identity are closely related within the academic context (Ursin, Vähäsantanen, McAlpine & Hökkä, 2018). The stronger the sense of academic agency becomes, the more prominent the academic identity becomes. To put it differently, as self-efficacy grows, the sense of belonging, (or becoming, if one prefers Archer's (2008b) term) becomes stronger and this makes you feel you fit into the environment leading to the development of stronger academic identity. Having read Ursin et al. (2018) there is alignment with Archer (2008b) in the sense that as one becomes more experienced and more confident, academic agency develops which in turn leads to a stronger academic identity and becoming an academic, rather than a fear of unbecoming. The link between agency and identity is supported by the work of Briggs (2007) who showed a strong link between agency (and structure) and the development of academic identity. She, Briggs (2007) states that the development of a strong academic identity is in fact dependant on the person having developed a strong sense of agency. A recent study by Matsepe (2021) supports the above work of Archer (2008b), Ursin et al. (2018) and Briggs (2007), in stating that agency and academic identity go hand in hand and for the purposes of his study he

includes subjectivity as the trifecta that ensure the becoming of an academic. Matsepe (2021:20) states that it is the sense of agency that influences the formation of academic identity and the stronger the agency becomes the stronger the academic identity develops.

In a recent study (Hollywood, McCarthy, Spencely & Winstone, 2020) investigated how early career academics experiences their introduction into the academe. They found that early career academics take some time to find their feet but are more satisfied with their jobs once they have. Importantly for the current study, they found that the development of an academic identity plays an important role in settling in and being satisfied (Hollywood et al., 2020). This study was concerned with full-time academics and the question now arises how the transition from professional to academic career takes place.

In a 2016 study, there was a focus on how people that have successful professional careers transition into academia, in this case, occupational therapists (Ennals, Fortune, Williams & D'Cruz, 2016). Thirteen people were selected to participate in the study, they had been in academia for between one and twenty years. The study was conducted by auto-ethnographic writings, focus groups and pre- and post-study blog posts. The study found that some respondents were confused about their identity, this confusion was grounded in the various roles of teacher, researcher and practitioner (Ennals et al., 2016). As mentioned earlier, research is not currently expected of the dependant contractors at the institution and therefore the analysis of this article will focus on teacher and practitioner roles. One respondent articulated the conflict between these roles by indicating that they cannot call themselves an academic as they are still practising (Ennals et al., 2016). This correlates well with the institution that is the subject of this study as almost all of the independent contractors still have their primary occupation. If one takes the view of this respondent of Ennals et al. (2016) then none of these independent contractors could be considered academics and have the related identity. According to Ennals et al. (2016), the viewpoint that you are still practising precludes you being an academic indicates that the “doing” is more important than the “being”, therefore, what you do daily defines you rather than that what you are. Also, Ennals et al. (2016:441) found there was a conflict within the respondents as they suddenly found themselves in the role of novice (teacher) whilst they were in fact and expert (practitioner), this duality in identity creates insecurity, with one respondent, indicating that they preferred to stay in their office wondering why they ever entered academia (Ennals et al., 2016). The study by Ennals et al. (2016) helps us understand the problems that part-time lecturers face. In my study, several people practice a professional career or have

practised to expert level, and many of them may experience the same conflict identified in Ennals et al. (2016) study.

One of the few articles on the academic identity of lecturers that pertains to South Africa is one by Bitzer and De Jager (2016) that investigates the professional identities of accounting lecturers in a research-based university. They used a survey to gather anonymous information from 55 accounting lecturers who were all professionally qualified as chartered accountants (CA). The study was dominated by younger married female lecturers with more than six years of lecturing experience. Bitzer and De Jager (2016:174) use the term “professional identity” to define how a person sees themselves concerning their occupation. In this regard, the term can be seen as equivalent to academic identity as it is used to refer to academics in this study. The lecturers indicated three broad categories of understanding of what professional identity is: it is related to the daily work of a person; it is related to a person’s professional affiliation; and, lastly, it is related to the qualifications that a person has acquired. Bitzer and De Jager (2016) found that although the identity was aligned with being a lecturer, there was a strong affinity for the professional qualifications and this bodes well for the delivery of academic content as the lecturer stays up to date with what is happening in their field. They (Bitzer & De Jager, 2016) found that the registration with a professional body, in this case, the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA), is to the advantage of the lecturer as SAICA expects its members to stay up to date with the developments in the professional field. In the study, it was found that when asked to rate the importance of being a lecturer versus being a CA the respondents choose to be a lecturer every time, in certain cases with a very small margin (Bitzer & De Jager, 2016). This key finding by Bitzer and De Jager is in contrast with much earlier findings of Macfarlane (1998). He finds that economists that not only move into academia but move into related fields, like business management, retain their original identity, at least in part (Macfarlane, 1998). He also found that most of the lecturers would still describe themselves according to their qualification and first careers (in this case sociologist and psychologists, teaching applied respondents such as organisational behaviour and human resource management (Macfarlane, 1998:6)) rather than a lecturer in the subjects they are teaching. The reason for this difference in findings between Macfarlane and, Bitzer and De Jager is not known, but is interesting to note. The current study is a good opportunity to see what holds between these contrasting findings in a heterogeneous sample of professions moving into academia.

2.5 Chapter conclusion

This chapter looked at the literature that exists around academic identity. The theoretical base was first discussed, Goffman's work gave a broad basis of identity and the different stages and roles on which identity is enacted and, secondly, Henkel's work was highlighted. Henkel moves from the general identity to the specific academic identity and describes the key influencers of this. Next, the definition and concept of academic identity were discussed by looking at some studies that have been done in this field. In the third section, the transition from practitioner was investigated by using recent writings on the topic. Various opinions were discovered but seemingly there is a conflict between the academic and professional identity in part-time lecturing staff.

In Chapter 3, the methodological framework that was followed will be discussed. An interpretivist stance is taken as the research aims to understand how the individual experiences the development of their academic identity. The interpretivist stance is applied phenomenological and specifically through the use of interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) and the rationale for data collection and interpretation to answer the research question will be justified.

CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Introduction

In this section, I explain how I conducted the research. Firstly, I frame the paradigmatic lens and then the methodological approach of interpretative phenomenological analyses is motivated. Lastly, an overview of the data collection is given; I divided this part into sections on the sample, the data collection and the analysis of the data.

3.2 Research paradigm

Kuhn, in his 1962 text, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, popularized the idea of a paradigm to describe what researchers believe and what their departure point is for their research. Kuhn's text may, however, be problematic, as Morgan (2007) points out that reviewers found more than 20 different ways in which Kuhn used the term paradigm. Thus, although Kuhn coined the term, he did not clearly define it, and it may therefore be prudent to rely on other sources when discussing paradigm as a concept.

Guba and Lincoln (1994) define a paradigm as the worldview of the researcher and state that, as such, this worldview forms the basis, or departure point, of the researcher's journey of discovery. Mackenzie and Kipe (2006:194) concur with this approach and state that the paradigm sets down "the intent, motivation and expectation" that the researcher has and intends to follow with the research. In the *Dictionary of Qualitative Enquiry*, Schwandt (2001:183) states that a "paradigm is a shared world view that represents the beliefs and values in a discipline and that guides how problems are solved". The paradigm can, therefore, be seen as the lens that allows you to look at an item in detail, and with a specific focus.

In this study, I have used an interpretivist paradigmatic lens as discussed in section 1.4. This then allowed me to understand the thinking of the respondents, as well as understanding how they made and make sense of what they are experiencing. As the research question indicates, I looked at how individuals experienced, and understood, the development of their academic identity. The development of identity in part-time academic staff is a personal journey. I had to understand the way people think, as well as what played a role, consciously or subconsciously, in the formation and experience of their academic identity. By using an interpretive lens, it allowed me to develop an understanding of what the respondents have

gone through thus far and what they are going through in the ongoing development of their academic identity.

3.3 Methodological approach

The methodological approach for the study was phenomenological. Engelland (2020:2) states that “phenomenology is the experience of the experience”. As such phenomenology looks at how a person experienced an event and what they went through on an emotional and cognitive level during that experience. There are different schools of thought in phenomenology with the key protagonists being Husserl (1913) and Heidegger (1927). Their approaches differ in several significant ways, for this study, the most important difference was that Husserl, unlike Heidegger, insists that one “brackets” out one’s own experiences to remain unbiased (Reiners, 2012:3). This idea of bracketing can be related to mathematics where brackets indicate what needs to be dealt with separately (Gunnarson & Karlsson, 2014). In the same way, Husserl (Reiners, 2012) believed that the researcher should bracket their own experience of a phenomenon when analysing the data collected.

Heidegger’s stance is different from Husserl as he believed that the researcher cannot negate their experience and that personal experience is a key part of phenomenological research (Reiners, 2012). The supporters of Heidegger’s approach argue that a person is so entrenched in their world and the happenings in it, that it is impossible to untie oneself from its bonds, whether consciously or unconsciously (Lopez & Willis, 2004). Put differently, the Husserl approach brackets preconceptions to focus on describing the essence of the phenomenon, whilst Heidegger’s approach specifically uses these preconceptions to make sense of the meaning of a phenomenon (Norlyk & Harder, 2010).

Heidegger’s approach was my choice for this study and I used Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), as developed by Smith (Roberts, 2013). This suited me as I started my career in private higher education as an independent contractor. At the start of the study, I believed I would have found it difficult to bracket my own experiences and exclude them from influencing me. I was afraid that the lingering doubt whether the bracketing was effective would, both in my mind and in that of the reader, cast a shadow of doubt on the study. My alignment to Heidegger (1927) approach of using my preconceptions to make sense of the meaning of the phenomenon (the identity of independent contractors) was thus warranted.

IPA differs from other forms of phenomenology in a couple of aspects. The key to this difference is that IPA does not only describe the phenomenon but looks at the meaning of it in the broader context (Willig, 2013). From this viewpoint, IPA tries to make sense of how the respondent experiences the phenomenon given the context in which it takes place. This involves a double hermeneutic where the researcher is trying to understand the person and the person is trying to understand the situation (Smith et al., 2009). Lannan (2015) explains this approach (the double hermeneutic) as both a process of discovery and interpretation, whilst remaining true to the person and the event. Lindegger, (2014) states that there can be no separation between the person and the world they inhabit as the two influence and are influenced by each other. Robson (2011) takes this a step further in stating that a researcher in phenomenology is inseparable from assumptions and preconceptions of their respondent and rather than bracketing these biases, as they help to explain the phenomenon and integrate it into the study. I thus had to look at more than just the independent contractors as persons but also had to consider the environment and how these persons interacted with it.

Larkin, Watts and Clifton (2006) explains the integration, of environment, and the personal interaction with the environment, by describing the two approaches that an IPA researcher must take to their data. Firstly, in the phenomenological part, the researcher needs to describe what their respondents' world is like and how they have experienced the phenomenon. In doing this, the authors (Larkin, Watts and Clifton, 2006) caution that this can never be a complete first-person description. They rather see it as a third-person description of the phenomenon constructed by the researcher and respondent that is as close to the respondent's view as possible. The second interpretative part is making sense of the respondent's experience. The making sense goes beyond mere description by taking an insider view and interpreting what the experience has meant to the respondent (Larkin, Watts & Clifton, 2006). The approach here is what is called "empathic" interpretation, as opposed to "suspicious" interpretation (Willig, 2013:43). In suspicious interpretation, the aim is to uncover a hidden truth, whilst the goal here is to empathetically interpret and get as close to how the respondent has experienced the event as possible. It needs to be noted that this description and interpretation of the experience may go beyond "the respondents' own terminology and conceptualization" (Larkin et al., 2006:114). Smith (2004:46) states that IPA may offer interpretations "which the respondents would be unlikely, unable or unwilling to see or acknowledge themselves". This level of interpretation may not sit well

with researchers who ascribe to a more positivist school of thought. However, consideration should be given that in IPA the aim is not to find a single truth but rather an interpretation of the experience that rings true with the reader (Pringle, McLaffery & Hendry, 2011). To achieve this, intersubjectivity plays a key role. Intersubjectivity is defined by Daanen, Sammut and Horvath (2016) as the ability to take the perspective of another. They argue that if we cannot take another's perspective, how can we understand them? This echoes the idea of Smith et al. (2009) the double hermeneutic mentioned earlier and, consequently, by using, in part, my experience in the position of an independent contractor to achieve this intersubjectivity, I was able to apply IPA effectively in this study.

3.4 Sample and data collection

3.4.1 Sample

The population for this study included all the independent contract lecturers who were in the employ of the organisation across the country, as discussed in section 1.1., whilst the accessible population was those lecturers on the Cape Town campus. Individual lecturers formed the unit of analysis.

To be consistent with IPA data collection guidelines, I selected respondents through a purposive sampling approach. According to Flick (2011), purposive sampling is best used in situations where you want to speak to specific people who are knowledgeable on the topic being investigated. In the present study, it was essential to speak to those people who would give the richest possible information of their experience of the development of their academic identity. A random sampling approach may not have provided access to these persons. As a colleague, I knew most of the possible respondents. I could therefore choose those who I believed would provide me with the richest data. As discussed later (see section 3.6), I was acutely aware of the ethical considerations in selecting respondents and therefore avoided people who worked in my line of supervision as this may have influenced their reactions to my questions and may have skewed the study. Variation is important to get as broad an exposure to the phenomenon as possible. As Norlyk and Harder (2010) state, variation in phenomenological studies should not be seen as the typical demographic, gender or age criteria as is otherwise used in qualitative data collection, but rather as a varying exposure to the phenomenon. I ensured that there was a mix, as much as the sample size would allow, of years of teaching, workload, profession and schools/faculties taught in, as all of these could potentially have influenced the development of an academic

identity (Feather, 2016). In IPA, a small sample is used as there is more interest in the richness of data than in the ability to expand the findings, therefore, the sample was five respondents (Robberts, 2013).

3.4.2 Data collection method

In depth interviews were the preferred data collection method (Smith et al., 2009). Originally the plan was to do face-to-face interviews, but Covid put a halt to that. The duration of the interviews varied the shortest interview was approximately 30 minutes with the longest lasting an hour and a half. The data collection method was discussed in detail in section 1.5.

3.5 Analysing the data

To ensure that I remained within the framework of IPA, Smith et al.'s (2009) suggested six-step analytical framework was used:

Step 1: Reading and re-reading

As a starting point, I read the transcript several times to allow immersion in the data. The first reading was done while listening to the accompanying audio recording and in further readings I tried to “hear” the voice of the respondent. In reading the transcript, I made the respondent the focus of my thinking by purposefully slowing down my reading.

Step 2: Initial noting

This was a continuation of the previous step and as Smith et al. (2009) states that the steps almost “merge”, as you are reading, you almost involuntarily start making notes of important statements. Smith et al. propose various methods, from a complex system using a system of descriptive, linguistic and conceptual notes through to deconstruction of the interview. I decided to follow one of the less complex methods suggested and simply underlined what I believed to be the important statements and made notes in the margin on my reasoning why I considered this important (Smith et al., 2009:91).

Step 3: Development of emergent themes

During this step, a reduction of data took place as I moved from working with the transcript to working with the notes and focusing on the underlined parts from the previous step. These notes were used to break the data into chunks that could be grouped as they addressed a similar topic or theme. Some of the themes naturally fit together, whilst others had to be

arranged with those that they logically fit with (Willig, 2013). In this step one of the crucial differences between Husserl and Heidegger's approaches to phenomenology came to the fore. Here I became part of the phenomenon (Reiners, 2012) as the themes include both what the respondent has said but also my interpretation of it (Smith et al., 2009; Norlyk & Harder, 2010). An extract from my notes is included as Appendix E, here the transcript can be seen in the first column, the second column are my initial notes, and the last column notes any themes that I felt emerged. These themes may or may not have been included in the final themes dependant on the rest of the process described in Step 4- 6 below.

Step 4: Searching for connections across themes

The various themes that had been found were grouped into related themes; part of this process was to discard themes that do not contribute to answering the research question. I looked for a pattern to emerge here showing how the themes relate to each other or how they are independent of each other.

Step 5: Moving to the next interview

I followed the same process with the data of each subsequent respondent. It is important to note that the data from each respondent was treated on its merit and those previous interviews, and their themes, were not allowed to influence the development of individual cases' themes.

Step 6: Looking for patterns across interviews

Smith et al. (2009) advise that whatever method of displaying the themes in Step 4 was used should now all be placed together so that one can find links across interviews. I remained aware of the difference between individual interviews and was vigilant not to let the fact that something was a minor theme in one interview dictate the same stature in another interview, as here it may be a major theme. The final phase was for me to identify the general themes that were cross-cutting as well as the minor themes that had emerged from the study. I discuss these findings and the analysis of them in further chapters.

3.6 Ethical concerns

Stellenbosch University gave ethical clearance (reference number CUR-2020-15131, Appendix B) for this study to continue, also, the institution where the research has been

conducted was approached and provided institutional permission to me to conduct the study. The following three ethical points were considered:

Health and safety

As mentioned earlier the initial plan was to gather data using face-to-face interviews as this would give the richest data. Health prescripts, as well as the conditions of the ethical clearance by Stellenbosch University, prohibited any physical contact between the respondents and me. As a matter of safety and compliance, I conducted the interviews through web-based software.

Data security

All recordings made during these interviews as well as transcriptions will be kept on a password protected electronic device. This will be preserved for 5 years after the completion of the study. I will ensure that this is the only copy of the raw data that is kept.

Respondents' rights

It is important to ensure that the rights of the respondents are protected and that they are informed of their rights. This ensures that they are able to honestly participate without fear that what they say may later be to their detriment. In my invite email (outline attached as Appendix C) I highlighted the rights of the respondent. These rights include voluntary participation, confidentiality and the right to withdraw at any point. I also attached the standard University of Stellenbosch "Letter to participants" (Appendix D) that further expands and explains the respondent's rights. As a final assessment of the willingness to participate I verbally confirmed that the respondent understood their rights and were happy to participate at the start of each interview.

Researcher positionality

As a full-time employee in a managerial position, I hold power over independent contractors who work under me, as I have an almost exclusive say in the amount of work allocated to them. For this reason, the sample excluded all independent contractors who work under my auspices as this may have influenced their answers.

3.7 Chapter conclusion

In this section, I have explained the research paradigm that guided the study and led to the specific methodological approach that was followed. The sample size was explained and justified and the data collection method was referred to. Smith et al.'s (2009) six-step analytical framework was explained, and it was shown how this was applied in the study. Lastly possible ethical concerns were addressed.

After the methods in this chapter were applied to the raw data results were achieved. These results are discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study set out to explore the academic identities of independent contractors within a private higher education institution in South Africa. This chapter provides a brief demographic overview, and each respondent is briefly introduced, and their background stated. The themes that were identified from the data are then discussed. As discussed in my methodology section (see section 3.3) Smith et al. (2009) suggest that a phenomenological analysis requires the joint meaning-making of lived experiences between the respondents and the researcher. I, as the researcher, have attempted to honour the lived experiences of respondents and not let this experience disappear in the inevitable lumping that results from theme development.

4.1 The respondents

As mentioned in my methodology section (see section 3.3), purposive sampling was used to identify those people who I believed could give me the richest possible data. There were several persons who I would have liked to interview, but who either worked in my supervisory line or were not available to interview. Smith et al. (2009) argue that three to six respondents are the ideal number for an interpretative phenomenological analysis, with the default size for a Master's degree being three (Smith et al., 2009). I increased this sample size as my inexperience in this type of study may have led to less rich data. Table 4.1 below gives an overview of the main demographic characteristics of the respondents.

Table 4.1: Respondents' demographic characteristics⁶

Respondent	Age category	Gender	Occupational qualification	Occupational experience	Tertiary teaching experience
Magda	45-50	Female	Lawyer	Highly experienced	Highly experienced
Kabir	25-30	Male	Lawyer	Experienced	Experienced
Joshua	25-30	Male	Computer programmer	Novice	Novice
Pieter	40-45	Male	Computer network analyst	Highly experienced	Highly experienced
Cindy	55-60	Female	Psychologist	Highly experienced	Highly experienced

The following section provides a brief biographic overview of the respondents⁷.

⁶ All respondents were provided with pseudonyms. The demographic data is presented in a manner that does not compromise the confidentiality of the respondents.

⁷ For clarity a vignette on the author is included here: Karel is a married man in his fifties. He followed a career in the public and private sector, mostly in human resources and developed a love for training. He taught additional classes at a public distance university for a for a short while before accepting one class as a part-time independent contractor at the institution where the study was conducted. He developed a passion for teaching and soon became a full-time independent contractor. After about 4 years

Magda is a married middle-aged woman with two children who are both currently completing their tertiary studies at a public university. She has taught for about 10 years within the institution where this study was conducted and only takes on a small number of subjects as an independent contractor as she has a private specialist legal practice. She had been included not only because she has a long history of working for the organisation and could therefore provide rich data in terms of her lived experience, but also as Magda's long service counters Kabir's relatively short experience, although they held similar qualifications.

Kabir is a young man and recently married. His wife also teaches at the institution where this study was conducted but has done so for longer than he has. He followed a career in civil litigation and had to decide between becoming a prosecutor or taking a more senior position with another firm when the opportunity arose to teach. He chose to teach and very soon started exclusively teaching as he feels that he needs "to give a 110%" to be the most effective at lecturing that he can be. He was an anomaly as he teaches full-time⁸ as an independent contractor, meaning that he was not employed by the organisation and only receives remuneration per hour of teaching time, in addition, he is not guaranteed that he will be given classes in the following semester. He was included in the sample as he is professionally qualified, but has seemingly, abandoned his professional career for teaching in a part-time position.

Joshua is an unmarried foreign national who has spent several years in Cape Town. He holds a master's degree in computer science and information systems and, at the time of the study, was working with his supervisor on his PhD proposal. He was the youngest of the respondents and the respondent with the least work experience. He was included in the study as he was the nearest to an academic in the group, as almost all the work he has done has been as a tutor or lecturer, with only short spells in the information technology field. He provided an interesting counterfoil to those in other non-academic professions.

Pieter has more than 10 years of service as an independent at the institution where the study was conducted. He is married and his wife has in the past worked as an independent contractor for the same organisation, although she does not do so currently. He holds a

he applied and was granted, a permanent management position where he supervises permanent and contract lecturers and does some post-graduate teaching and supervision.

⁸ In teaching full-time, he is still bound by the limitations the organisation places on the number of hours that an independent contractor may teach.

master's degree in information technology and is working towards a PhD. He worked as a consultant on various information technology projects and believes strongly in having different income streams. Pieter was included in the sample because he has worked as an independent contractor for a long time, as well as working on information technology-related projects as an independent contractor. As he has worked in industry as an independent contractor and an advisor differentiated him from the other respondents. I also wanted to see the differences between Pieter and Joshua, given that they came from similar backgrounds, but have different levels of experience.

Cindy was the oldest of the respondents. She is a single mother and her son graduated from the same institution a couple of years ago. She was also a long-standing independent contractor having taught on many different programs and at different institutions over the years. She is a practising clinical psychologist in private practice. In addition, she holds a qualification in English and has taught at secondary school level. She was included in the study as she is professionally qualified (registered through the relevant professional board) and she has the potential to earn a lot more money by spending her time in private practice rather than teaching.

I strived to get as broad a representation as possible given the limitation in sample size as well as the limitation of this not being a full master's degree thesis. From the brief demographic overview given above I hope that the reader will concur that I succeeded in getting a diverse group together that both compliments and contrasts each other.

4.2 Themes

Following the analytical process suggested by Smith et al. (2009:79), several themes emerged from the interviews. In naming the themes, I ensured that I used a first-person description, as I did not want the lived experience of the respondents of the study to get lost in the analysis. Super-ordinate themes (Smith et al. 2009:101) were then developed by looking for patterns across individual interviews, leading to five super-ordinate (or main) themes emerging from the data. These themes are discussed below by using direct quotes and the interpretation of what they mean as per the suggestion of Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009:109).

4.2.1 Theme 1: I identify as...

As this study focuses on academic identity, I firstly wanted to establish how people describe themselves and to see how they explain this. The results were a mix between identifying directly with their profession on the one side, and on the other to identify as an academic.

During Magda's interview, she described her background as:

"...and the first job I did was as a public prosecutor, and, and public prosecutors litigate, and we spend, on average five hours a day in court..."⁹

The "we" in this sentence indicates that she strongly affiliated as a legal professional. At a later point of the interview, when she was asked how she would describe herself she immediately said:

"I am an advocate"

None of the other respondents answered so quickly and decisively as Magda, which is indicative of her professional career focus. However, later in the interview she indicated that teaching was important to her and that she enjoyed it, but her dominant identity was rooted within her profession.

Kabir's approach was slightly different, whilst not letting go of his professional identity he included his lecturing work when asked on how he introduces himself:

"....I don't say lecturer, I say law lecturer..."

Here he showed that he was not prepared to let go of his legal background, but at the same time he wanted to be identified as a lecturer. Part of his reluctance to let go of his legal background stems from the fact that he had struggled to earn his qualification. Elsewhere in his interview, he spoke about how difficult the process of earning a law degree was. If one then also considers that he came from a single-parent family and that he was the first person in his extended family to earn a degree, it is understandable that he wanted people to know that he held a law qualification. What is important here is that he included his lecturer status, and elsewhere in the interview he stated that he was proud to be a lecturer.

⁹ All quotations have been given verbatim and have not been edited to correct the language, or grammar, of the respondent.

Joshua was the respondent with the least experience in the professional world, but he took a similar approach to Kabir in stating:

"...I'm an educator, in the IT field..."

His motivation seemed to be different to that of Kabir though. Throughout his interview, he made it clear that he perceived information technology a difficult field of study. He was clear that the concepts are complex, and students regularly struggled to grasp these concepts. He understood this and he tried to help the students as he could see the curriculum from their perspective:

"So, for me, what really drove me into lecturing was the fact that I understand the educational part of it from a student perspective and now I have the more advantage to be able to help students, my new buddies, you know, (to an) IT degree."

Joshua believed he understands why students were struggling and he believed that, as he is still relatively young, he explained these concepts to students in a manner that would have resonated with the students. He also saw his relationship with his student as one of being friends, as he called them "*my new buddies*". The first thought that struck me is if this means his academic identity was influenced? Would he identify more as a student or as a lecturer? He, however, used the term "*educator*" earlier and this showed me that he had a different relationship than just one of friendship, I rather saw him saying that he is a friendly and approachable educator. In the quote above, Joshua stated that he did not lecture "*at*" the students, but rather that there was a collaborative, iterative effort between the students and himself to educate and to come to grasp with what would otherwise be difficult to understand.

When I asked Pieter what he does, he responded:

"The first thing I would probably say, was lecturing but yeah, it's difficult to box things these days. You have to be the person that wears multiple hats. So you're a lecturer, you're an educator, but you're also a software developer."

He has thus encapsulated everything the others have said, but he was the only respondent that captured it all right from the onset. His ability to encapsulate this so well may stem from his work situation where he was used to managing several streams of income from various roles and responsibilities and had thus differentiated these roles and responsibilities at a

meta-cognitive level. He thus seemed aware that he has different identities and he realised that they come to the fore as he played these different roles.

Cindy did not even wait for me to ask her how she sees herself and very early in the interview stated that:

“...my identity is it, you know, if you're asking is more clinical than academic, I would say.”

As a clinical psychologist, she had a much deeper and better understanding of identity than the other respondents. If one looks at the comments she made elsewhere in the interview, she did not see herself as an academic as she did not want to get involved in the administration that she believed was one of the primary roles of an academic. Here she was in fact stating that she was not interested in the administrative burden that has become so prolific in the academe. She did however want to teach as is shown below.

Elsewhere in her interview she mentioned:

“...I don't think I am an academic, and that I'm not interested in, I want to do my job, I want to teach my students.”

and

“...there's also a lot of admin work, which I just did not want to get myself involved in. So no, being an academic would not be my main interest.”

In these statements, she divorced teaching and academia, as her opinion was that academia was mainly concerned with doing administrative tasks¹⁰. Yet she stated that her task at the institution was to teach students. This tells me that she had indeed developed an academic identity but did not realise this at the time. It is interesting that she does not see teaching as being an academic, as this differs with the findings of Rosewell and Ashwin(2018) discussed in section 2.4.

¹⁰ It is important to see this statement in context, as the independent contract lecturers were forced to do a lot more than usual because of the Covid-19 pandemic that took place during the time of this study. In the past, their tasks were to teach the students and to mark the assessments. Under Covid-19 conditions, they had to create links for the students to attend classes, record these classes, download the recordings, and upload these recordings onto an online learning platform, distribute the slides of their sessions to their students, and sometimes create additional recordings. In addition, because the pandemic was developing in unpredictable ways, it was difficult to plan ahead. In many cases, lecturers were told to do one thing, only for that to be changed into something different a week or two later. This created a lot of stress for somebody who just “*want(ed) to teach my students*”. The turmoil Cindy's experienced during Covid-19, she stated later in the interview, had made her decide not to teach at the institution any longer and she duly left at the end of that semester.

The above discussion shows that while most of the respondents had a strong professional affiliation that played out in how they described themselves, they also acknowledged having a teaching identity. These results substantiate the notion that people can simultaneously hold multiple identities as discussed in section 2.3 in the work of Cinoğlu and Arikan (2012:1116). In addition, this aligns well with the work that Henkel (2000) did in showing how discipline influences identity development as discussed in section 2.2. Interestingly this finding differs from the findings of Ennals et al., (2016:440) in that nobody said that they cannot be academics as they were still practising their profession, this was discussed in section 2.4.

The question that arises from these identity delineations offered by the respondents, is what they consider an academic's role and identity to be in comparison to their professional role and how are these identities separated or joined? This aspect is explored in the next thematic section presented below.

4.2.2 Theme 2: My professional career and my academic career

The interplay between respondents' professional and academic identities emerged as most of the respondents explained that there was some form of symbiosis between teaching and their profession. Their professional training is a pre-requisite to be allowed to teach, however, it was somewhat surprising that they perceived their teaching as enhancing their profession in one or the other way. One must question how this duality between profession and teaching influences their identity and how these identities complement each other.

Magda stated that she had left teaching, as she was not being paid enough, but then started teaching again as it was useful for many reasons. On being probed on this aspect, she shared an anecdote of how she had been in Tax Court busy losing a case when the opposing party made a statement that she could refute from Property Law and win the case. She went on to explain that most lawyers specialise in a specific part of the law, and although they are taught all aspects as part of their training, they go on to specialise and are then only experts in their specialised field. In her case, she had to teach Property Law as a subject and hence had to keep up to date with the law, as well as the associated case law. As she put it:

"...it's quite useful to be able to slide between disciplines..."

Magda later showed how the two identities also complement each other:

“So, my first contact is with clients, and I need to teach them the law in order to explain to them what is doable and what isn't. So, I reckon that I probably treated students pretty much like I would clients”

This was particularly interesting as Magda is not only “sliding” between what she calls “disciplines” but is also sliding between identities as she is using her academic identity when she teaches her clients about the law, but at the same time she stated that she uses her professional identity when teaching her students. Here she switches roles to suite the environment and as she moves between environments, or even if the situation in the current environment changes, she accommodates that change by switching between identities.

Kabir, who lectures full-time as an independent contractor added:

“I have not left the legal area at all. At the moment, I'm teaching students how to practice you know, I've just had a moot¹¹ court recently, I teach them how to argue how to conceptualize scenarios, apply things.”

It seems like he is not only using his knowledge of arguing in court to teach the students how to argue and act in a moot court, but also to keep and enhance his own courtroom skills. In addition, he concurred with Magda's thoughts in that his professional knowledge was expanded by teaching:

“I learn all the time, I learn from my colleagues, I learn from textbooks. And most importantly, I learn from my students...”

It seemed evident that continued professional development took place during teaching hence proud professionals were prepared to put their profession aside to teach students. As mentioned in a previous quote, Kabir did not believe he had left the legal profession but was rather playing a different role within the profession. Thus, developing a stronger academic identity may well have led to a stronger professional identity developing.

Joshua also believed teaching made him a stronger candidate in the world of work:

“...education allows more options because I can go to any company, I can tell them like okay, if you want someone who can develop, I can develop give me an assignment, because I know I'm learning each and every day to do what they are

¹¹ The moot court is an inter-university competition for law students where they need to argue for and against a specific case.

doing. So the learning part of it that's why I like also be the teacher because we learn a lot."

Where many may believe that teaching causes stagnation because of a repetitive curriculum he was learning more from teaching, here he was defending his choice not to gain more industry experience but to stick to teaching. He was arguing that he has been learning about what people are expecting in industry every day when he was preparing for classes and the new students he had to teach. His experience was that he was learning as much, if not more by teaching than he would have learned had he been working. In turn the learning of new skills enhanced his professional agency which strengthened his professional identity and, when teaching these new skills to students, his academic identity was enhanced.

Pieter also indicated that your teaching journey helps you in your job as you need to keep updated, especially in information technology:

"But when it comes to specifically IT, you actually signing up for a lifetime of learning. Because technology changes so rapidly. Because there's always new challenges, new ways to automate things, new principles, in, for example, programming and or there's new hardware coming out. So you do sign up for a lifetime of learning..."

While any person in information technology needs to keep abreast of new developments, Pieter was illustrating how his teaching supported his information technology career, as he needed to stay abreast to be able to teach but this also assisted him in keeping his information technology knowledge current. He also believed that the corporate companies liked the fact that he is taught, he saw it as an advantage:

"You always need to be able to speak from a point of authority, the corporates actually like that but you do have a vast academic background as well as ... in IT we typically talk about, can you talk IT or can you do IT?"

Thus, his teaching and being up to date was a competitive advantage when he was speaking to possible future clients, and he believed this allows him to "do IT". There are correlations between the professional and academic identities. Much in the same way that it takes a while for one to develop self-efficacy and agency in the academic world, leading to development of a strong academic identity, Pieter was showing that the same holds true in professional identity. His work as lecturer, and the resultant increase and updating of his

skills, gave him more agency in his professional life and therefore his professional identity is enhanced by it.

Cindy saw a strong link between her work as a clinical psychologist and teaching:

“And it's also, you know; we have to do continued professional development as clinicians. And I found that also preparation for lectures, and also teaching, you know, the discipline, like any discipline, you know, I wasn't trained in, say, Narrative Therapy, but I teach it, but I had to teach myself, I had to go into a lot of extra research and so on.”

Cindy was showing how her professional and her teaching duties supported each other and how she drew from her teaching to enhance her professional knowledge. Her experience was that she herself was learning whilst she was preparing for class. Her exposure to certain parts of her professional calling would have been limited to a single course in her undergraduate degree, having now had to teach that course she had to read much more than just the curriculum and hence has learned more than she knew before.

The above discussion shows how not only dual careers enhance each other but the positive influence this had on the professional and academic identities of respondents. Having alternative identities allows independent contractors to shift between academic and professional identities depending on the situation. This switching between identities was discussed in section 2.3 using the work of Zhu and Xu (2021), as well as the work of Harold et al. (2021). The discussion further showed that the additional knowledge which was gained in remaining up to date with academic developments in their chosen profession enhanced their agency and thereby their professional identity. Developing a stronger professional identity enhanced their suitability to lecture and thus, develop stronger academic identities. This relationship between agency and identity confirms what was discussed in section 2.4 with the help of the work of Briggs (2007), Archer (2008b), Ursin et al. (2018) and Matsepe (2021).

4.2.3 Theme 3: I prepare my students to follow in my professional footsteps

This theme emerged from the respondents talking about what they are doing in class, and here we are not talking about the curriculum delivery, but rather about the preparation for a career and transfer of knowledge, skills and behaviour that are useful in their specific professions. This theme surprised me as I was expecting to see a clear distinction of a

professional and academic identity, however in looking at the responses that made this theme emerge, it was almost as if the two identities were used interchangeably in certain circumstances, this differed from the other themes where they were distinctly different.

Magda stated:

"I am nurturing an entire generation of new young lawyers, and my contribution, it sounds corny, I hate this, but my contribution to practice is bringing in young, young people with integrity."

She was stating her loyalty to her profession, and professional identity, by wanting to protect the integrity of the profession. At the same time displaying her academic identity as she wanted to ensure that the students understood what was required in their qualification and to gain professional status. The words she used, "nurturing", is one that we would expect to be used in a parenting or mentoring situation, rather than in an undergraduate course but it does show that she had a strong desire to ensure that the professional identity the students developed met the requirements of their industry. Here she addressed the graduate attributes that were required in the profession, and, in many cases, this would be addressed in the hidden curriculum, but here she was stating that this has become an explicit part of her teaching practice and her academic identity.

She made a further interesting statement regarding the development of students:

"... two of my students who graduated last year are doing articles at a firm of attorney who instruct me a lot. So, I see them once, twice a week; and you know what the funny thing is, I still haven't stopped teaching them, I'm still teaching them. The only difference now, when I give them work to do, they get paid to do it."

The above statement from her supported the merging of the two identities as she met the ex-student on what Goffman (1959:82) called the outside, hence this was not a situation she would normally address as a lecturer, and using her academic identity, but rather she would be in her professional setting with that identity taking the frontstage. Yet her experience here was that of a teacher, teaching them additional skills. The building of additional skills, and understanding the professional world is the reason qualified law students do articles, but it is unusual for this role to be played by a lecturer. She herself stated that this situation is unusual (she uses the term "funny") yet she persisted in continuing with their education and it is difficult to distinguish whether it was her professional identity, that she saw herself as a

mentor to an article clerk, or, her academic identity, as a lecturer, loyal to her students, that was coming to the fore here. The merging of the identities was clearest with Magda but was observable with most of the respondents. Here we see the effect of discipline on identity development as explained using the work of Henkel (2000) in section 2.2.

Kabir also spoke of preparing his students for their careers when he stated:

“...it's a very difficult process and a law degree is very difficult to get. ... I feel that I am preparing them for a world that they most certainly are not ready for.”

Here he spoke from experience, in his interview, he spoke about starting in legal practice as a junior lawyer and how difficult and volatile the environment was, he described the environment as “stern” and “old school”. Here he brought his own experience in the working world to bear on how he taught his students. Understanding the environment, he was preparing them for, as well as the difficulty of the qualification, he realised that one needed to go further than just being a lecturer.

“...you have to dedicate more of your time to them emotionally and mentally you have to be available to them, because they see you a lot more than any other people... ...I ironically, give more of myself because I know that they do depend on me that the students depend on me not only for lecturing, but also for advice and guidance.”

The way he supported his students reminds of the way Magda spoke about her interaction with her students in their workplace. His approach was however different, he needed to give them the emotional support that he never experienced when he was developing his professional identity. I interpret the emotional support he offered to his student as that what he expected to receive from his mentors, when he entered the profession, but this support never materialised in this “stern” and “old school” world. Once again, I found it difficult to determine which identity was the driving force in giving the emotional support to the students.

Throughout Joshua's interview, he highlighted how he tried to explain things at a level his students would be cognitively comfortable with and how this prepared them for their careers.

“...everyone managed to get a job, everyone understood the material, it was not a matter of them passing. But it's a bit of me installing knowledge, because

students, sometimes they focus on getting marks and not being able to understand the material”

Elsewhere he repeated this sentiment, that preparing people to get a job is why he was there and, if they find a job, he had done a good job as he had taught them to meet the job criteria rather than simply regurgitate the curriculum.

Pieter was even more explicit in saying he needed to contextualise the curriculum, and the textbook is just the theory, but he was preparing them for the real world.

“I don’t read from books I teach. I try to contextualize things to the real world when I’m engaging with students, and I pretty much told them, “Listen, the textbook is yours. Enjoy. I’m here to teach and to transfer my knowledge and my two cents.”

He believed that the students who graduate should be able to function fully in the professional world and if not:

“Otherwise, I don’t want to put my name to it.”

It was very clear to me that this is his professional identity that came to the fore here. He stated elsewhere that the information technology community is small, and his name was associated with the students he thus wanted to ensure that they were fully prepared for the working world and that his image was not tarnished by them. Although it was clear to me that this was his professional identity at work, he addressed this concern from an academic perspective, hence we again had the situation of the two identities almost being indistinguishable in this situation.

Cindy stated that:

“I always say this to the students; that we can learn the theory, but my interest is in how they can actually apply that to their own lives and experience.”

Here again, we saw a lecturer that was encouraging students to go beyond studying the material and simply trying to pass the subject, but rather to apply what they had learned in the real world. Although she did not explicitly say it, it was interpreted by me as a preparation for professional practice. If they could apply the techniques that she was teaching them to their own lives, they could also be able to apply this in practice. Here we also see her moving

from the lecturer to the professional and guiding her students from a professional point of view rather from an academic point of view.

In the discussion above it has been shown how lecturers use their different identities interchangeably to assist students. This seems particularly to happen when they are talking about industry and professional attributes required by industry. The lecturer thus switches from academic identity to professional identity to show how the professional, which the students are aspiring to become, would act in specific circumstances. The switching between various identities fits well with what Goffman (1959) describes in his dramaturgy theory that was discussed in section 2.2. The code-switching shows how the lecturers are trying to integrate themselves in the academic world but still want to distinguish themselves as professionals as discussed using Bamberg's (2010) work (section 2.3). The issues around code-switching was discussed by using the work of Harold, Prock and Groden (2021) in section 2.3. The influence of the profession on the development of academic identity, as discussed by Colley et al. (2007) in section 2.2 should also be considered.

4.2.4 Theme 4: How I became a lecturer

This was one of the themes that I expected would emerge and I had to check my bias here on two counts. It is my own experience that lecturing is a show and one tends to act differently when lecturing than at other times and, secondly, my reading and selection of Goffman's dramaturgical model as part of my theoretical frame. These two factors made it almost inevitable that this theme would emerge, but it was important to let it emerge on its own volition (if ever) and not to force my interpretation to make it emerge. Thankfully, my respondents obliged, and the theme revealed itself.

Magda stated that when she started teaching:

"I walked in, got a textbook and ... a study guide, and I walked into class, and I winged it"

One would expect a legal person to be well prepared as if for a court case. I do however interpret this as being part of the role she was playing, which differs from the role she played in her professional life. She also admitted that, over time, she had grown and had changed. After initially "winging it" she settled into a more formal teaching style:

"I started more conventionally: these are your prescribed cases, this is where you find them, go read them and make me summaries. I don't do that anymore. I go,

this is your starting point, you go find the relevant cases; let's discuss them and see which are relevant and which aren't. So yeah, definitely do that different thing."¹²

It is clear how she changed the role she played as she developed, and how she now played a different role as a lecturer; this relates to her playing a nurturing role as discussed elsewhere. This is likely related to her developing more confidence as a lecturer and she started to use the skills that she used in presenting court arguments in the classroom.

Kabir spoke about academia being a craft and stated that:

"I feel that the craft first and foremost is the art of lecturing, and teaching your students while at the same time bettering your own education as well"

By recognising it as a craft, he was saying that he experienced teaching as a skilful practice and something that he needed to work at to master, so he realised that he had to actively work at becoming a lecturer. This relates to the discussion around the work of Archer (2008b) in section 2.4.

Joshua's key experience in this theme was around how he saw things from a student perspective:

"...bridging the gap between what the lecturer knows and diffusing it to be understood by students that's where the challenge is, because I just observed that even in my career, that the lecturers that were good in what like they knew exactly what we have to do, but then explaining the concept in a way that students will understand, I think it was one of those difficult things that I, you know, encountered."

It will be easy to say that he "dumbs it down" to the student level but it goes deeper than that. His experience was that you need to take the student's perspective and explain the curriculum from that point of view; taking into consideration the background and even the

¹² I contemplated including the second part in Theme 3 as it showed how she was preparing the students for their professional careers, but I preferred to include it here as it illustrated the development that takes place in time. I am aware that co-occurrence (Frieze, Soratto & Pires, 2018:21) is acceptable in qualitative research but I preferred to limit the quotes I use to specific themes and there was enough other material to support Theme 3.

culture of the student to ensure that they understand what you are trying to explain. This belief came from his own experience:

“...one thing that I struggled with was finding someone who can really understand, you know, understand me from my background when I'm transitioning to IT.”

His own experience as a student has formed the approach he was taking to teaching and he was using what he underwent as a student to try to put himself in the student's position and then taught from that perspective.

For Pieter, it was important to be engaging in the classroom and he readily admitted this required some changes from his daily way of doing things:

“... there is something you need to change; you need to change your outlook and or your posture and or your persona, when you enter a classroom.”

From this statement Pieter experienced students not engaging when he was acting as he normally does, hence he adapted the way he acts and assume a different persona, and identity, to counter the resistance he experienced from students. This links directly to Goffman (1959) and his views on how people change depending on where they are and who their audience is as discussed in section 2.2. In Pieter's case he later states that some of these changes have led to permanent changes in his personality:

“For myself, I would say that started mashing, let's put it that way, into my personality.”

He explained that he considered himself to be an introvert. His experience with students has shown him that he can reach better interpersonal results by changing the way he interacts with people, hence he as adapted, what he calls, his personality to achieve these results. This adaptation of identity once again echoes the work of Goffman (1959), as Goffman (1959) describes how we are actors, that assume a specific role for a performance. Thus in Goffman's (1959) terms, Pieter assumes a role when he is in front of an audience, which is a different role than his natural, introverted, identity. Interestingly, none of the other respondents indicated such a permanent change.

Cindy describes her lecturing practice mostly in terms of her classroom atmosphere:

“In the classroom, the well-being of the students is so you create, hopefully, an environment, which invites a sense of trust, and invites also, you know, students to engage, interact, and one provides regard, you know, respect, and also an empathic engagement with one’s students”

This description of how she created her classroom atmosphere makes sense if one considers that she is a psychologist and she likely created the same type of atmosphere in her practice. She used her practical experience, as well as what she experienced daily in her professional work to make her classroom a welcoming place, she was trying to keep her identities as a professional and as an academic as close together as possible. By doing this, she was also, in part, enacting the hidden curriculum (Glathorn, 2000), to train future psychologists. Later in the interview, she defined her classroom even more:

“it has to be a dynamic space that is safe, that is empathic, that is supportive”

Here she was using her professional knowledge to inform the role she was playing as a lecturer in front of the class. This professional knowledge gave her insight into what conditions in the classroom would be most conducive to learning.

This section looked at how academics develop into the role and how, as they develop they become more settled in their roles, this is aligned with the findings of Hollywood et al. (2020:1004) discussed earlier in section 2.4. Further how the roles that are played develop over time and particularly how the frontstage role of Goffman (1959) is used was considered. These different roles, the development thereof and the conflict that they sometimes present was discussed in sections 2.2 and 2.4 with the use of Goffman (1959) and Archer (2008a and 2008b). In addition, the way in which people see themselves and their social location was discussed with the help of Brubaker and Cooper (2000) in section 2.4. From this section of the study, it is clear that the development of an academic identity is something that takes time and is an ongoing process rather than an achievement (Degn, 2015; Flecknoe et al., 2017; Henkel, 2005; McNaughton & Billot, 2016; Trautwein, 2018), as discussed in section 2.3. From the respondents in this study, it seems that many are not even aware that this identity exists as some of the respondents do not believe that they are academics.

4.3 Chapter conclusion

In this chapter, I have presented the analysis of the data and have shown what themes have emerged. Each theme has been discussed by looking at each respondent individually and how they contributed to making this theme emerge. Their contribution is analysed in their context. In the next chapter, the conclusions will be drawn from the discussion and analysis and further avenues of research will be suggested.

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Conclusions

This chapter reflects on the various topics covered in the preceding chapters and shows how they interconnect in providing an answer to the research question posed. In this chapter summary of the research will be provided as an overview. The findings are discussed and implications for current practice is noted, in addition, possible future research is suggested. Finally, the limitations of the study will be discussed.

The main purpose of the study was to determine how independent contract lecturers describe the development of their academic identity. The question (*How do part-time lecturers at a private higher education institute in South Africa describe the development of their academic identity?*) was pertinent as these independent contractors are typically professionally qualified and/or hold full-time jobs outside of the academe. In addition, the study took place in a private higher education institution where the context is quite different to that of a public institution; a key difference is that there is a lack of focus on research.

The theoretical foundation used was Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical approach, which uses a theatrical performance as an analogy for how people act in different settings. This is backed by Henkel's (2000) early work in defining academic identity and its development.

The review of literature showed a paucity in literature particularly when it came to the South African private higher education field. The review was split into two main parts. The first part dealt with defining identity and specifically academic identity. The second part of the literature review dealt becoming a lecturer and the resultant development of academic identity.

The population for the current study included all the independent contract lecturers employed by the brand across the country. From the accessible population at the Cape Town campus a purposive sample of five lecturers were drawn. A phenomenological approach was used, and specifically interpretative phenomenological analysis was applied to the study. This approach, that was developed by Smith (Robberts, 2013:216), and codified by Smith, Flowers and Larkin (Smith et al., 2009), was influenced by the work of Heidegger (1927). Semi-structured interviews were conducted with each of the respondents and the recordings of these interviews were then transcribed. The data analyses was done in accordance with Smith et al. (2009) suggested six step process (see section 3.4.2).

Four main themes were derived from the analysis:

The first theme was concerned with how respondents identified themselves. It became clear that the respondents identified strongly with their profession, but also an academic identity was present. This echoed the work of Goffman (1959) that stated that people change their identity, depending on the roles that they are expected to play at that time. The idea of multiple identities was further supported by Cinoğlu and Arikan (2012) who stated in section 2.3 that people can have multiple identities. These findings did, however, contradict the findings of Ennals et al. (2016:440) whose respondents did not see themselves as academics as they were still in professional practice.

The second theme explored these multiple identities and how the professional identity and career influence the academic identity and career. In each of the respondents' answers there was evidence of how the professional identity and the academic identity enhanced each other. The results showed that the different identities influenced each other and created a stronger sense of agency, both in the professional and academic milieu. This confirmed the work done by Briggs (2007), Archer (2008b), Ursin et al. (2018) and Matsepe (2021) where, in section 2.4, the important relationship between agency and identity formation, specifically in the academic context, was shown.

The next theme revolved around the usage of identities in helping the students. It became clear that both the academic and professional identities were deployed by the respondents in assisting their students and the professional identity was especially deployed in preparing students for the world of work. Integration, differentiation and code-switching was discussed by using the work of Bamberg (2010) and Harold, Prock and Groden (2021).

The last theme related directly to Goffman (1959) and the way in which the role of lecturer was played. The development of academic identity was particularly scrutinised and how this influenced the independent contractors conduct on Goffman's frontstage was discussed. In addition to Goffman the work of Archer (2008a & 2008b) was pertinent, this was discussed in section 4.2.2.

In the section 1.3 the research question that was formulated asked:

How do part-time lecturers at a private higher education institute in South Africa describe the development of their academic identity?

The way in which this question has been answered is discussed in the conclusions drawn below.

5.1.1 Identity of the respondents

The independent contractors that were part of the study all displayed an academic identity. It was not a given at the outset of the study that I would be able to come to this conclusion as there was so little research work done on the identities of part-time academics in private higher education, and more especially those institutions in South Africa. Although some statements made by the respondents completely denied being an academic, it was clear from other, predominant, statements that the respondents did exhibit academic identities, within the limits of the private higher education institute that was used in the study. In addition, the respondents also described their professional identities, and it was clear that the two identity types could co-exist and complement each other as dual identities.

5.1.2 The dual identity as advantage to the organisation

The duality of identity could be seen as problematic for the different roles that a person needs to play in their professional and academic worlds. This would mean a different role would have to be played depending on the frontstage that the person was on. Code switching seems to take place comfortably by all participants both in the academic setting and in the professional setting. This switching is to the advantage of the organisation and shows that the value proposition mentioned in the introductory section holds true. In the case of these five lecturers the organisation is thus able sustain its promise to students that they will get exposure to practical explanations and examples through their lecturers.

5.1.3 The development of academic identity

From the interviews with the independent contractors, it became clear that they had to work at becoming lecturers, and, as one respondent put it, had to master the craft of lecturing. Others spoke about how they had initially taught in one manner but had found, in time, that another teaching style was more appropriate. Another spoke about having to make sure that you pitch your input at a level appropriate to your students. Thus, a lecturer identity did not manifest immediately and was something that developed over time. In a similar manner the academic identity would not have been there from the beginning and would be something that developed with experience and will continue to develop going forward.

From the points highlighted in sections 5.2.1-5.2.3 the research question can be answered in saying that the academic identities develop over a period of time and develop more as experience increases. This is related to the development of agency that increases with experience. The academic identity further develops as an offshoot, but also in support of,

the professional identity. The two enhance each other and, at times, are used interchangeably.

Caution should, however, be practised as this was a limited study of five respondents. No inferences should be drawn for the broader population as the nature of the study limits the findings and conclusions only to the participants. It is important to note that due to the fluidity of identity and its constantly changing nature, any finding and conclusion made would have held true when making the finding or conclusion but have changed by the time of reading.

5.2 Implications

There are a number of implications from the study. The organisation would have to recognise that the academic division between the independent contractors and the full-time staff is not as large as assumed. There sometimes also seems to be the idea that these part-time lecturers are simply teaching as a means to a financial end, when in fact, they have showed themselves to be passionate educators that want nothing more than to teach and guide their students to success.

The positive findings around the mutual influence that the professional and academic identities have on each other should be noted. The organisation should be cautious in changing the independent contractor model to have more full-time staff. There is a clear benefit to having people who are in professional practice teaching in the class and passing on their professional experience to the next generation.

On the surface a reaction from the organisation may be to try to enhance the already existing academic identities by interventions such as training or calling for research participation from the independent contractors. I would caution against this. In statements around not being an academic, a common theme was the administrative and managerial burden that is placed on the full-time academics, interventions contemplated above may in fact have the opposite effect.

5.3 Limitations of the study

Research by its nature has limitations and a small in-depth study such as the current one is more prone than most. As mentioned above the findings are limited to the five respondents and cannot be expanded to the broader population.

The study was conducted at only one of 9 campuses of the brand. There could well be differences at other campuses in management styles or approaches that could cause different results in the academic identities of the independent contractors. An argument could be built that a campus where there is unity in the treatment of independent contractors and full-time staff would result in a difference in academic identity development to a campus where there is strong segregation. Similarly, differences may be found across brands due to the nature of the courses and the focus of the various brands. A brand that presents more creative courses would attract a distinctly different type of lecturer than a brand that has a different disciplinary focus.

My own experience as a lecturer is limited to this institution (except for a past restricted hours part-time position at a public university). As mentioned briefly section 3.3, I started my career as an independent contractor part-time lecturer and advanced to full-time independent contractor, and eventually permanent employee. Although the various roles I have played give me some insight, my lack in geographic exposure, as well as my lack in exposure to diverse organisations would limit my worldview and hence could limit my interpretation of the data. To counter these limitations, I tried to be strictly guided by the suggestion of Smith et al. (2009) in their seminal text *Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis*. Other actions taken to ensure the quality of the research were discussed in section 1.7.

5.4 Possible future research

The most obvious possible future research would be to do a much broader study across campuses and maybe even across brands to gather more data. The findings made in this study could then be triangulated with the broader study to see how well they hold up under broader scrutiny. A study of that nature would need to use a different method of data gathering, such as an online survey. It may also be better suited, as will be a much larger study to use quantitative methods in the analysis of the data. Interesting insights may be found, as brands target different audiences and, in many cases, different courses are presented the development of identity may vary according to these differences. The level of courses may also have an influence on the development of identity of part-time lecturers, for example, would a person that only presents diploma and certificate courses develop as strong an academic identity as a person who only teaches on post graduate courses, or

even only supervises research-based qualifications? These questions may be answered if a cross-brand study were to be conducted.

A second possible avenue to explore would be to compare the private tertiary institutions with the public ones in terms of part-time academics. It is suggested that a single study is done with participants from both entities to see if there is a difference in their academic identities and if there is, what the differences are and possible reasons for these differences. Would the part-time lecturers at a traditional university develop a stronger identity or would it be similar?

5.5 Final comments

This journey has been an arduous one for me, with uncertainty being my constant companion. I have come to new insights and respect for Goffman's (1959) work, of which I had no exposure before this study. I found comfort in the regular echoes I could hear from my respondents as they spoke of the role they played, and I could immediately place it on a Goffmanesque stage or see how it reflected in dramaturgy. Using interpretative phenomenological analysis was a challenge and I was learning to the end. I believe a second or third study using interpretative phenomenological analysis would be more successful than one's first attempt.

In closing, I am very pleased to have been able to show that forms of academic identity exist within the respondents/independent contractors and more especially to have discovered how the professional and academic identities in these five respondents enhance and support the development of the other.

In closing, this work provides insight into the academic identity development that independent contractors experience and will allow for a better understanding of how they function in the private higher education environment. This information may be used to assist in the appointment, training, ongoing development and management of independent contractors within the institution in future.

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Appendix A: Aide memoir for interviews

Aide memoir for semi structured interview

1. Tell me about yourself and your background. PROBE: Working career as well as lecturing background

2. How would you describe your current career? PROBE: If professional is given, probe why not academic; if academic is given, probe why not professional. Explore the overlaps and exclusions

3. What attracted you to becoming a lecturer?

4. How did you have to change to become a lecturer? PROBE: How did you manage this. Who was involved? Was it easy or difficult?

5. What do you still have to learn to do (better) OR what do you still need to do?

4. What do you see as the role of an academic. PROBE: How does this role differ from your professional role??

5. What is the difference between yourself and the fulltime academics? PROBE: Can you see yourself as a full time academic. Why/Not?

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Appendix B: USB ethical approval



NOTICE OF APPROVAL

REC: Social, Behavioural and Education Research (SBER) - Initial Application Form

27 June 2020

Project number: 15131

Project Title: An interpretative phenomenological analysis of academic identity development in part-time lecturers at a private higher education institution in South Africa

Dear Mr Karel Marais

Your REC: Social, Behavioural and Education Research (SBER) - Initial Application Form submitted on 23 April 2020 was reviewed and approved by the REC: Social, Behavioural and Education Research (REC: SBE).

Please note below expiration date of this approved submission:

Ethics approval period:

Protocol approval date (Humanities)	Protocol expiration date (Humanities)
26 June 2020	25 June 2023

SUSPENSION OF PHYSICAL CONTACT RESEARCH DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and resulting lockdown measures, all research activities requiring physical contact or being in undue physical proximity to human participants has been suspended by Stellenbosch University. Please refer to a [formal statement](#) issued by the REC: SBE on 20 March for more information on this.

This suspension will remain in force until such time as the social distancing requirements are relaxed by the national authorities to such an extent that in-person data collection from participants will be allowed. This will be confirmed by a new statement from the REC: SBE on the university's dedicated [Covid-19 webpage](#).

Until such time online or virtual data collection activities, individual or group interviews conducted via online meeting or web conferencing tools, such as Skype or Microsoft Teams are strongly encouraged in all SU research environments.

If you are required to amend your research methods due to this suspension, please submit an amendment to the REC: SBE as soon as possible. The instructions on how to submit an amendment to the REC can be found on this webpage: [\[instructions\]](#), or you can contact the REC Helpdesk for instructions on how to submit an amendment: applyethics@sun.ac.za.

GENERAL REC COMMENTS PERTAINING TO THIS PROJECT:

INVESTIGATOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Please take note of the General Investigator Responsibilities attached to this letter. You may commence with your research after complying fully with these guidelines.

If the researcher deviates in any way from the proposal approved by the REC: SBE, the researcher must notify the REC of these changes.

Please use your SU project number (15131) on any documents or correspondence with the REC concerning your project.

Please note that the REC has the prerogative and authority to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modifications, or monitor the conduct of your research and the consent process.

CONTINUATION OF PROJECTS AFTER REC APPROVAL PERIOD

You are required to submit a progress report to the REC: SBE before the approval period has expired if a continuation of ethics approval is required. The Committee will then consider the continuation of the project for a further year (if necessary).

Once you have completed your research, you are required to submit a final report to the REC: SBE for review.

Included Documents:

Document Type	File Name	Date	Version
Informed Consent Form	SU Ethics letters to participants	17/04/2020	1.2
Proof of permission	15420 Maria's Permission Letter 2020	17/04/2020	1
Data collection tool	Background doc request	22/04/2020	1
Data collection tool	Aide memoir for interview	22/04/2020	2.1
Research Protocol/Proposal	Final Proposal 4.1	22/04/2020	4.1

If you have any questions or need further help, please contact the REC office at cgraham@sun.ac.za.

Sincerely,

Clarissa Graham

REC Coordinator: Research Ethics Committee: Social, Behavioral and Education Research

National Health Research Ethics Committee (NHREC) registration number: REC-050411-032.

The Research Ethics Committee: Social, Behavioural and Education Research complies with the SA National Health Act No.61 2003 as it pertains to health research. In addition, this committee abides by the ethical norms and principles for research established by the Declaration of Helsinki (2013) and the Department of Health's Guidelines for Ethical Research: Principles Structures and Processes (2nd Ed.) 2015. Annually a number of projects may be selected randomly for an external audit.

Principal Investigator Responsibilities

Protection of Human Research Participants

As soon as Research Ethics Committee approval is confirmed by the REC, the principal investigator (PI) is responsible for the following:

Conducting the Research: The PI is responsible for making sure that the research is conducted according to the REC-approved research protocol. The PI is jointly responsible for the conduct of co-investigators and any research staff involved with this research. The PI must ensure that the research is conducted according to the recognised standards of their research field/discipline and according to the principles and standards of ethical research and responsible research conduct.

Participant Enrolment: The PI may not recruit or enrol participants unless the protocol for recruitment is approved by the REC. Recruitment and data collection activities must cease after the expiration date of REC approval. All recruitment materials must be approved by the REC prior to their use.

Informed Consent: The PI is responsible for obtaining and documenting affirmative informed consent using **only** the REC-approved consent documents/process, and for ensuring that no participants are involved in research prior to obtaining their affirmative informed consent. The PI must give all participants copies of the signed informed consent documents, where required. The PI must keep the originals in a secured, REC-approved location for at least five (5) years after the research is complete.

Continuing Review: The REC must review and approve all REC-approved research proposals at intervals appropriate to the degree of risk but not less than once per year. There is **no grace period**. Prior to the date on which the REC approval of the research expires, it is the PI's responsibility to submit the progress report in a timely fashion to ensure a lapse in REC approval does not occur. Once REC approval of your research lapses, all research activities must cease, and contact must be made with the REC immediately.

Amendments and Changes: Any planned changes to any aspect of the research (such as research design, procedures, participant population, informed consent document, instruments, surveys or recruiting material, etc.), must be submitted to the REC for review and approval before implementation. Amendments may not be initiated without first obtaining written REC approval. The **only exception** is when it is necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to participants and the REC should be immediately informed of this necessity.

Adverse or Unanticipated Events: Any serious adverse events, participant complaints, and all unanticipated problems that involve risks to participants or others, as well as any research-related injuries, occurring at this institution or at other performance sites must be reported to the REC within **five (5) days** of discovery of the incident. The PI must also report any instances of serious or continuing problems, or non-compliance with the RECs requirements for protecting human research participants.

Research Record Keeping: The PI must keep the following research-related records, at a minimum, in a secure location for a minimum of five years: the REC approved research proposal and all amendments; all informed consent documents; recruiting materials; continuing review reports; adverse or unanticipated events; and all correspondence and approvals from the REC.

Provision of Counselling or emergency support: When a dedicated counsellor or a psychologist provides support to a participant without prior REC review and approval, to the extent permitted by law, such activities will not be recognised as research nor the data used in support of research. Such cases should be indicated in the progress report or final report.

Final reports: When the research is completed (no further participant enrolment, interactions or interventions), the PI must submit a Final Report to the REC to close the study.

On-Site Evaluations, Inspections, or Audits: If the researcher is notified that the research will be reviewed or audited by the sponsor or any other external agency or any internal group, the PI must inform the REC immediately of the impending audit/evaluation.

Appendix C: Invitation to respondents

Dear

I am currently busy with a research project in partial completion of my MPhil in Higher Education at Stellenbosch University. The title of my study is "*An interpretative phenomenological analysis of academic identity development in part-time lecturers at a private higher education institution in South Africa*". This study has been approved by Stellenbosch University's ethical committee and the IIE has given me institutional permission to proceed with the study.

As data gathering tool, I am using a semi-structured interview and would like to request you to give permission for me to interview you. Your participation is completely voluntarily, and your contribution will be kept confidential, meaning that only I will know what you said, and you may at any stage withdraw from the study. Whether you participate or not will also not have any influence on your further employment with Varsity College.

The interview will be approximately 45- 60 mins and will be done on an online platform, I will record the interview to enable me to have an accurate reflection of our discussion. If you are happy to participate, please let me know when you will be available for an interview, a couple of dates and times may help to make sure that I can schedule it when convenient for you.

Please feel free to ask any questions if you need clarification on any issue.

Thanks for your time and looking forward to your participation.

Cheers,

Karel Marais

0799000XXX

Appendix D: USB letter to respondents



UNIVERSITEIT • STELLENBOSCH • UNIVERSITY
jou kennisvennoot • your knowledge partner

STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

You are invited to take part in a study conducted by Karel Marais a student in the MPhil (Higher Education) from the Faculty of Education at Stellenbosch University. You were approached as a possible participant because you are an independent contract (IC) lecturer at a private higher education institute.

1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The study aims to look at the academic identity of IC's, and specifically, if, and how, their academic identity develops during their teaching careers. This is of particular interest as many IC's have a full-time career where they have a professional identity that may differ from their academic identity.

2. WHAT WILL BE ASKED OF ME?

If you agree to take part in this study, you will be asked to provide a written record of your journey in academia to date, a CV or teaching portfolio is fine. You will be asked to participate in an interview that will be held via video link and at a time that suites you. The interview will last about an hour and will be semi-structured, a number of basic question regarding how you see yourself in relations to the academic world will be asked. The idea is to have a discussion rather than an interview. The interview will be recorded.

3. POSSIBLE RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

No risks or discomforts are foreseen. The interview and research are separate from your position as an IC and will have no influence on your career. You will be guaranteed confidentiality and the information you give in the interview will not be linked back to you in any publication or discussion.

4. POSSIBLE BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO THE SOCIETY

The only possible benefit to the participant is that they may have better clarity of where they find themselves in terms of academic identity and their own development. The study will be to the benefit of the academic society as it will clarify how IC's develop their academic identity and how they see themselves. This may help to develop future training programmes for IC lecturers.

5. PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION

There is no payment of any kind for participation.

6. PROTECTION OF YOUR INFORMATION, CONFIDENTIALITY AND IDENTITY

Any information you share with me during this study and that could possibly identify you as a participant will be protected. This will be done by not using your name in any published documents. The interview recordings will not be shared with anybody and the transcripts will not contain your name. The recordings will be kept securely for 5 years as a requirement of the research and the university.

The organisation where you teach will also not be named in any publication or report.

If the research results in articles being published your name will not be mentioned but an alias may be used.

7. PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

You can choose whether to be in this study or not. If you agree to take part in this study, you may withdraw at any time without any consequence. You may also refuse to answer any questions you don't want to answer and still remain in the study. The researcher may withdraw you from this study if the information you share does not contribute to the furtherance of the objectives of the study.

8. RESEARCHERS' CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please feel free to contact Karel Marais at 021-021 685 5021 or kareimarais@gmail.com and/or the supervisor Prof L. Frick at 021-808 2277 or BLF@sun.ac.za.

9. RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact Ms Maléne Fouché [mifouche@sun.ac.za; 021 808 4622] at the Division for Research Development.

--oOo--

Please complete the declaration on the next page

DECLARATION OF CONSENT BY THE PARTICIPANT
--

As the participant I confirm that:

- I have read the above information and it is written in a language that I am comfortable with.
- I have had a chance to ask questions and all my questions have been answered.
- All issues related to privacy, and the confidentiality and use of the information I provide, have been explained.

By signing below, I _____ (name of participant) agree to take part in this research study, as conducted by Karel Marais

Signature of Participant

Date

DECLARATION BY THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR
--

As the **principal investigator**, I hereby declare that the information contained in this document has been thoroughly explained to the participant. I also declare that the participant has been encouraged (and has been given ample time) to ask any questions. In addition, I would like to select the following option:



	The conversation with the participant was conducted in a language in which the participant is fluent.
	The conversation with the participant was conducted with the assistance of a translator (who has signed a non-disclosure agreement), and this "Consent Form" is available to the participant in a language in which the participant is fluent.

☐

Signature of Principal Investigator

Date

Appendix E: Extract from analysis

<p>HOD I think it was called back then. And she was looking for a lecturer in criminal law and evidence. And, and so I took that up and I've been lecturing since, there was a break at some point when I was so busy in my practice that I didn't have time. Because I get paid quite a bit more in my practice than I do lecturing. So yeah, but then I picked it up again, because it is useful for many different reasons. But I am fairly busy practice doing lots of court work because that's what I do, and I lecture part-time.</p>	<p>Paid more in practice, sees lecturing as part-time but useful in many different ways. Picked it up again as soon as there was the opportunity.</p> <p>Court work is what I do</p>	<p>Symbiotic careers I work cheaply as a lecturer</p> <p>I live my profession Part-time lecturer</p>
<p>KM 4:15: Yeah. If you if you say it's handy, or it's helpful to, to lecture, in which way? <i>(brief interaction on volume that is to low)</i></p>		
<p>Resp 4:36: Why is it useful? It's useful because <u>uhm</u>.. it kind of forces me to stay up to date with those areas of the law that I don't handle in practice every single day. And sometimes it comes in useful. I was telling my students</p>	<p>Forces her to know other parts of law: "Useful to slide between disciplines". Issue to keep in mind: Does symbiotic jobs indicate Symbiotic identities? In the same way it is useful for her to slide between Law and lecturing where each is off benefit to the other.</p>	<p>Symbiotic careers</p>