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*The auditioning academic from industry to academic professional: Stories of the journey.*

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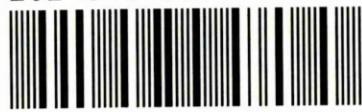
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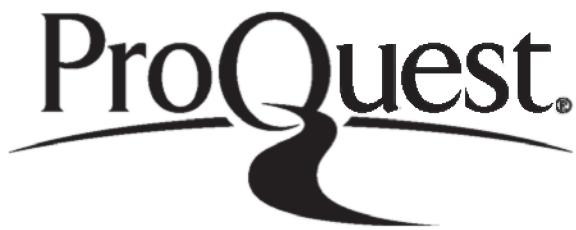
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# **The Auditioning Academic**

***From Industry to Academic Professional:  
Stories of the Journey***

**John Perry**

**A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of  
the requirements of Sheffield Hallam University  
for the Doctorate of Education**

**September 2012**

## **Abstract**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the professional journey from industry practitioner to higher education academic. The research 'mapped' ten new academics' engagement within the institutional and subject team community throughout their first full teaching year within a higher education institute.

A comprehensive literature review was undertaken which initially drew on several theoretical perspectives, such as transitions and socialisation, communities of practice and identity formation. These theoretical positions originated from a mini-focus group. The coding from this initial study together with the reflective thoughts of my own first year in academia led me to read certain topic areas. The literature was further developed throughout the course of the study with the data challenging some of the notions that arose from the initial literature sources. Subsequently new literature was identified which supported the data analysis and emergent themes.

The study focussed on the lived experiences of new academics through the use of a narrative methodology which acknowledged that lived experiences are socially constructed. Ten new academics were interviewed at four key stages throughout their first full teaching year. The interviews were transcribed and coded, which led to the development of emergent themes. The key themes were scrutinised through writing narrative chronologies for each of the academics. The narrative chronologies laid the foundation for the development of the conceptual model and research findings.

From the research findings a new academic progresses through what can be described as three key overlapping phases (The Reciprocal Phase; The Fragile Phase and The Engaged Phase) within the academic milieu. Within these phases the new academic is seeking to establish identity and legitimacy within the boundaries of the academic communities to which they initially belong. Fundamental throughout these phases is the relationship the new academic has with established academics, who act as gatekeepers to academic practice and communities. The research also finds that institutional policies and practices for new academic entry are found to be inadequate and in light of these key findings a number of changes in professional practice are proposed.

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## **Acknowledgments and author's declaration**

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Finally, I send love to my wife, Lyn and my wonderful young children Holly and Philip. I realise that I have been 'absent' for many long evenings and weekends whilst I worked on this dissertation and I thank you for your support, encouragement and most importantly your patience and love.

### **Dedication**

I wish to dedicate this dissertation to the loving memory of my parents, Tom and Joan. They would have been so proud.

### **Author's Declaration**

I confirm that this thesis is the sole work of the author.

## Prologue

"What's past is prologue" (Shakespeare: 1610, Act 2, Scene 1). Through this metaphor Shakespeare was referring to the fact that what has previously happened sets the scene for the future. In reference to this study the prologue provides the background to some of the changes in the higher education setting which have resulted in an increase in demand for more academics with previous industry experience. The prologue also establishes some of the consequences of such a change and as such situates the overall scene for the future study.

The work of Becher and Trowler (2001:5) makes a case that: "there has been an increasing emphasis in government policy and rhetoric on the vocational functions of higher education, in terms of its role in supplying qualified students for the professions, industry and commerce" and as a result a growing number of 'new' universities are seeking to employ academic staff with industry experience (Garrison, 2005). This is a reflection of the landscape of higher education that is undergoing a series of multifaceted changes which are affecting its organisational structure, practices and professional identity leading to higher education institutions becoming more structurally and culturally aligned to industry practices (Nixon et al, 2001). Stromquist (2007) offers some support to the view of Becher and Trowler (2001) claiming that in today's entrepreneurial university, educational offerings are designed around fields for which there is a vocational (industry) demand. Perkin would concur: "today even the newest of occupations, from computing to public relations, has its university discipline" (2002:2). This shift in academic disciplines, together with government policies of deregulation (1980/90's) with agendas such as widening participation, led to a significant rise in student enrolments. In the UK there was an increase in student enrolments of 30 per cent between 1997/8 to 2006/07 (Ramsden, 2008). Subsequently the engagement of new academic staff within higher education institutions rose by 20% between 1995 and 2005 (Hefce: ONS, 2006).

The growth of new academics with industry experience could have a number of consequences in relation to established practices, particularly as new recruits appear: "as the 'baby boom' generation of academics retire" (Knight and Trowler, 1999: 23). For some, the influx of more vocationally based 'trainers' is further evidence of de-professionalisation within academia, perhaps reflecting current market forces at the

expense of what may have been considered more ‘mainstream’ subject areas such as social sciences. For Becher and Trowler:

this has meant the de-emphasizing of its other roles, those concerned with the general development of individuals’ minds and capabilities, contributing culturally to the community and enhancing knowledge and understanding for their own sakes rather than for utilitarian ends.

(Becher and Trowler, 2001:5).

Within this context Henkel recommends that academics seek: “alternative positive identities” (2000:136) and acquire new roles to avoid ‘vulnerability’ within the new setting. It is contended that new academics could help to ‘reinterpret’ an academic profession and identity that is more aligned to the modern, fluid institutional structures and cultures that Nixon, et al (2001) refer to, although it is possible that ‘re-interpretation’ could retain some residual ‘traditional’ academic values, such as autonomy and the utilitarian ethos that Becher and Trowler (2001) suggest.

Whilst it is accepted that established academics and new academics are not homogeneous groups, Garrison (2005) makes a case that new academics enter higher education institutions with a certain corporatist new managerial perspective. For Pollitt (1990) new managerialism is: “based upon strict financial controls, the efficient use of resources, the discipline of the market, the extensive use of performance criteria, the assertion of managerial control and the manager’s right to manage” (cited in Briggs, 2004:587). This formal rationality can be at odds with the substantive rationality of established academic practices that values altruism, autonomy and the wider human interest (Ritzer, 2001).

This prologue shows that there has been a marked increase in student enrolments within higher educational institutions. Due to this new academics have been employed to satisfy this need. It has been suggested that many of the new academics have been recruited with industry backgrounds in order to satisfy the demand for more vocationally-led courses. A view has been stated that the influx of these new academics is not only challenging established practices but is also confronting the traditional and recognised perceptions of academic identity. Therefore, it places the new academic on a potential collision course with the established academic and academic practice.

## **Research Aims**

The aim of this study is to gain new knowledge and a greater understanding of the journey from industry practitioner to higher education professional. The study explores the experiences of ten new academics throughout their first full teaching year at a higher education institution as they potentially change professional identity in order to seek acceptance within a new setting. In doing this, I examine two key areas that impact on this construction: the initial institutional policies and processes and also the structures and engagement within academic communities of practice.

## **Objectives**

1. To explore the role of communities of practice and the influence of institutional/subject team processes (induction, mentoring and training) on a new academic's acceptance within the higher educational setting.
2. To explore the influence of the new academic's personal attributes and their former industry role on the establishment or rejection of new practices.
3. To explore the relationship of the new academic to the existing academic community and a new academic's influence on changing established practice.
4. To identify good practice and changes in professional practice to facilitate new staff entry to academic communities.

## The Plot: Dissertation Structure

I have chosen a slightly unusual structure for this dissertation – that of a play. The Plot within dramatic construction is the literary aspect that illustrates the structure and shows the causal composition of events and actions within a story. This section of the dissertation reveals the dramatic structure of the work and provides the rationale for adopting such an approach.

Butin recognises that the dissertation journey can be an “exciting and gruelling adventure” (2010:7) and my own journey would concur with this view. Indeed, these somewhat contrasting sentiments offer some background to the approach I undertook to structure of this dissertation. Having performed well within the taught phase of the EdD I started the dissertation with vigour, enthusiasm and excitement. Indeed, this remained with me during the majority of the work, particularly when carrying out the more practical elements of the dissertation, such as: the pilot study; the literature search and undertaking the primary interviews. However, for a short period of time, I became de-motivated at the point when I started to write the dissertation. I began by trying to write in a more traditional sense, driven primarily by the course documentation and guidance from peers. I found the writing to be laborious, tedious and gruelling. I recognise that these feelings are part of many people’s dissertation journey. However, my de-motivation was impacting on the quality of my work and the amount of time I was spending on it. Davis and Parker (1997:28), when reviewing the doctoral journey, suggest that: “mental energy is not fixed in quantity; it can be expanded significantly by motivation or reduced by de-motivating events or processes.” For me it was about the writing process and the constraints of the traditional method of dissertation structure, I found it uninspiring and uninteresting, which subsequently induced a lack of engagement. The pivotal moment in my motivational transition was when I acknowledged that the research was essentially the study of stories from the ten new academics. It became clear that my own story was fully embedded within the bounds of the respondent’s stories. Therefore, by offering the reflective thoughts of my first year in academia and presenting the overall work as a fusion of traditional and artistic structure, the dissertation, for me, started to come to life. Butin (2010:7) further states that: “stumbles, scraped knees and diversions are just par for course, a seemingly enjoyable and necessary part of the trip.” On reflection I would agree that they are a necessary part of the dissertation journey but would not necessarily agree that they are enjoyable.

Denzin and Lincoln (2003a) contend that all research is interpretive and guided by a set of beliefs and feelings influenced by the researcher's history and culture. To make possible the integration between the respondent's positions and my own, the layout of the dissertation is in keeping with the traditions of my former role, as an arts manager, and designed around some aspects of Freytag's (1863) dramatic pyramid structure, building scene on scene, thought on thought. This 'artistic licence' is to facilitate the assimilation of the respondents' (the characters) and my (the narrator) 'voices' (narratives) within the dissertation (the script). Gabriel (1999, cited in Churchman and King, 2009) offers some support for this approach, describing it as:

A highly effective way of analyzing how identities are continuously constructed, how they become fragmented, and how they are reconstructed is through the study of stories in which individuals encode their identity... Stories do not present facts-as-information, but facts-as-experience, laden with symbolism and meaning, in which the storyteller expresses opinions, makes connections, displays feelings and casts him/herself as a character in a meaningful narrative.

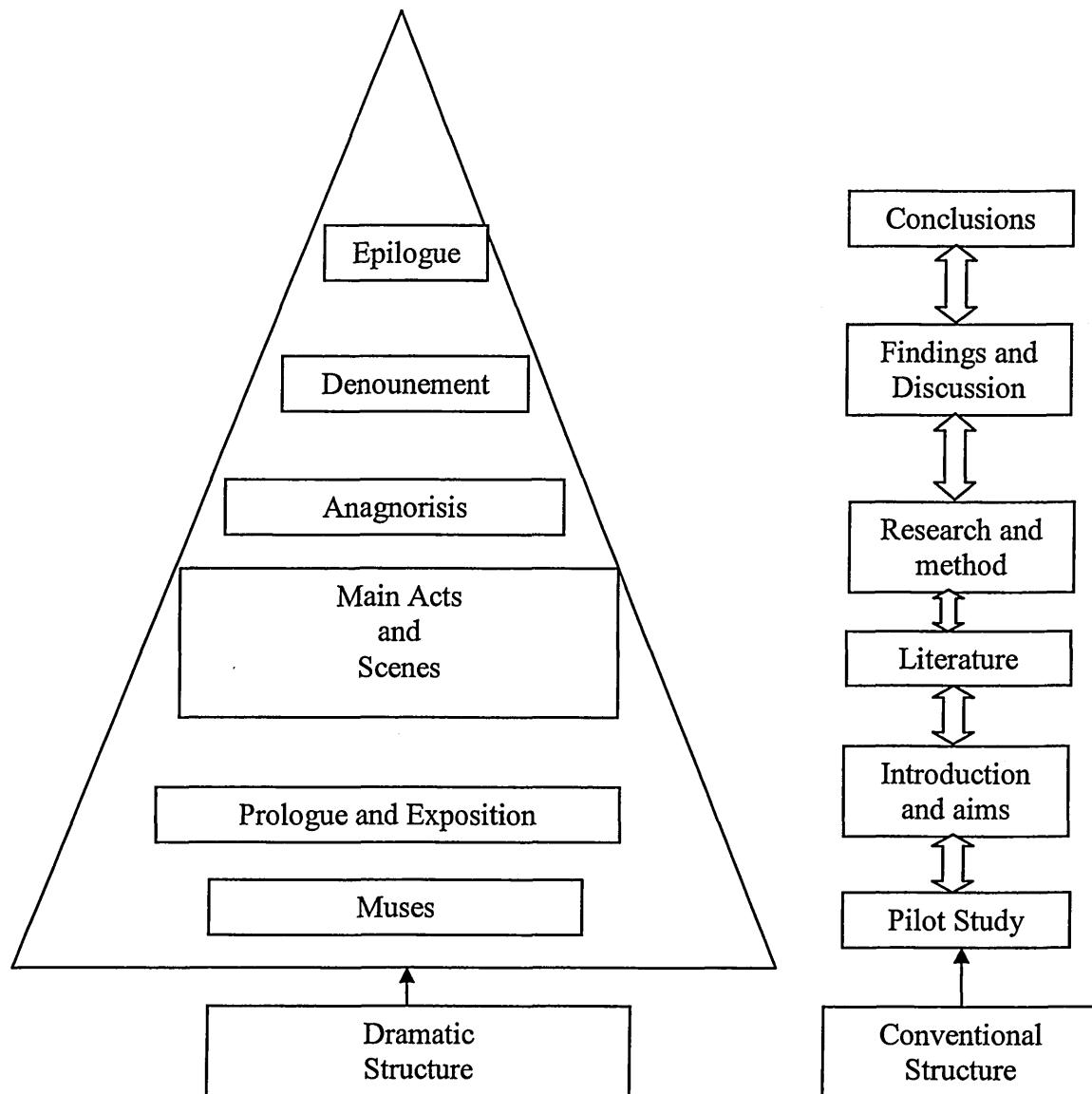
(Gabriel,1999:191)

Adopting a dramatic structure to the dissertation released me from the constraints of convention (adopting a standard dissertation structure) and encouraged creativity within the design and writing of the dissertation. Thinking of the dissertation as a script I used theatrical terms as headings for the various sections. Like many of my future respondents I referenced back to my former role for stability and inspiration. I was re-motivated.

- The Prologue introduces the backdrop and aims
- The Exposition establishes the setting and gives context
- The Main Acts provide the detail and depth of the study and the literature and methodology.
- The Anagnorisis is the discovery
- The Denouement concludes the work.
- The Epilogue reveals the 'fate' of the narrator, me.

In keeping with Freytag's Pyramid Structure Model 1 demonstrates the links to a conventional dissertation structure.

## Model 1: Dissertation Structure



I support this approach by claiming that the context of the dissertation has some resonance with Goffman's version of interactionism. For example, Goffman (1971) "uses drama as the source of the metaphors employed as a basis for the analysis of social interaction" (Ashworth, 2000:183). This is further exemplified by his statement:

Within the walls of a social establishment we find a team of performers who cooperate to present to an audience a given definition of the situation.

(Goffman, 1971:231)

The 'performance' is viewed as a presentation of self where the 'character': "puts on his show for the benefit of other people" (Goffman, 1971:28) to establish interpersonal

validation within the social setting. Putting on a ‘show’ implies ‘auditioning, rehearsing and acting’, so the interaction is a representation of self and the ‘audience’ interact with what is before them. Therefore, in this context, if self is to be regarded as a social presentation then the interaction constructs a reality that can either be accepted or rejected within the social setting. It is accepted that Goffman’s work influenced the overall approach to this dissertation and as such his work and its links to the structure of this dissertation are explored further in Act Two: Methodological Approach.

The narrative methodology adopted within this research also offers support for the dramatic structure in that: “the dramatist creates a representation of events, experiences and emotions” (Riessman, 2008:4). These representations are recounted, chronicled and narrated through the dramatic structure of the dissertation to help understanding of the stories. “The data collected in a narrative study need to be analysed for the stories they have to tell, a chronicle of unfolding events, and turning points or epiphanies” (Creswell, 2007:155). The remaining part of this Prologue summarises the dissertation on a ‘chapter’ by ‘chapter’ basis using the logical and sequential structure as set out in Model 1 above.

The Exposition establishes the purpose of the dissertation within the framework of the research; it introduces the respondents (characters) and sets the themes for the study. The exposition starts by situating me, as the narrator, within the dissertation. The research location is a post-1992 university and the exposition discusses this background within the changing higher education environment. The characters, their selection and brief biographies are then introduced. Key definitions of what I consider to be ‘new academics’ and ‘established academics’ are determined and finally the originations of the opening themes for the literature review are exposed and justified.

The next chapter (Act One) is a review of the literature. As previously stated, the themes for the literature review were sourced by re-examining the pilot study. Three concepts were initially identified (Institution and Academic Community: Transitional Assimilation and Academic Capacity for Management) with several topics contained within them. The literature surrounding the concepts and topics was both diverse and voluminous and as such some focussing down was required. It became clear, through the literature, that whilst the initial concepts were relevant and acceptable, within the context of the dissertation, the topics were too generalised and needed convergence into sub sections. The process finally established three primary themes and their

principal sub-sections for the literature review. In keeping with the dramatic structure of this work each of the themes within the literature review were classified as scenes.

The first scene (Academic Management and Professionalism) of the review opens with my position on how I initially viewed the management practices at my host institution. My statement implied that higher educational institutions should adopt a new-managerial agenda, in order to maintain a competitive stance within the market place. The literature suggests that new managerialism has indeed permeated UK universities. However, there is evidence that acceptance of its practice is meeting with some resistance, by established academics, due to the implied performance culture and loss of academic autonomy. Central to academic professionalism, for many established academics, is the concept of autonomy. The literature makes a case that new constructs in academic professionalism challenge this notion with the view that established academics need to accept the new backdrop and 'managed professionalism' otherwise they become loosely coupled to the organisation and vulnerable. In this context new academics from industry are more willing to accept new managerialism and therefore question existing practice, as I did in my opening statement. It is claimed that this has the potential to set the new academic on a collision course with the established academic and academic practice. The final section within this scene explores the relationships between the new managerial agenda and the manager-academic (Subject Team Leaders). It is proposed that the manager-academic is central to the transition of new academics as they act as gatekeepers to academic communities and practice.

Scene Two (The Working Milieu) firstly introduces the notion of Communities of Practice as places of situated learning and knowledge building. The literature makes the case that a new academic seeks meaning and understanding of social systems and role structures via shared repertoire and mutual engagement within communities of practice. Fundamental to what is termed an inbound trajectory to full membership is the relationship between the new academic and the dominant members of the community to which they seek entry. It is argued that some communities of practice are reproductive and seek only to assimilate new members into established practice. It is claimed that it could prove difficult for new academic to 'break into' a community of practice, particularly if they are opposed to the established practice, as recognised in the previous Scene. This leads onto a discussion regarding the power and control within the setting of communities of practice with some literature claiming that established academics use their power as the principle means of directing and

controlling community goals, activities and acceptance. The concept of Communities of Practice dominates much of the literature surrounding new academic entry. However, some of the more up to date sources question the value and acceptance of Communities of Practice within Higher Education settings. The final part of this Scene focuses on the institutional processes within the working milieu. The literature makes a link between new staff attrition and weak induction, training and appraisal with recommendations for establishing formal mentoring programmes.

The third scene (Transitions, Socialisation and Identity) concentrates on the concept of academic identity and the development of an academic identity within the boundaries of the changing Higher Education setting and within communities of practice. The scene also establishes some of the theoretical underpinning that forms the foundation for the three phases. The literature suggests that it is through transition and socialisation that a new academic becomes a member of the institution by internalising the behaviours, norms, rules and values of the organisation (Jablin, 2001; Archer, 2008). It is recognised that the period of transition varies between each new academic as some retain residual values and norms from their previous roles, primarily as a form of 'safety blanket' during the initial transitional phase. The literature makes a case that it is only when the new academic starts to modify their own attitudes and behaviour to become more consistent with the expectations of the organisation that they ultimately identify themselves, and be identified as, a fully fledged member of the community.

Act Two is a detailed examination of the research methodology and is broken down into four distinct scenes.

Scene one acknowledges that the methodology adopted the use of an interpreted approach, which recognises that lived experiences are socially constructed. Therefore, the research methodology resonates with the tenet of symbolic interactionism and this is discussed with particular reference to the work of Goffman, which has influenced the structure of this dissertation. Within this research I consider myself to be one of the participants and I follow Goffman's (1959) lead in giving 'self' a prominent place within the writing. This co-constructed research process required an understanding and commitment to reflexivity and this is explored further in this scene. The scene concludes with a discussion of narrative as the preferred research strategy.

Scene Two follows the research process that was undertaken. The scene begins with a detailed examination of the pilot study, paying particular attention to the data analysis

and the development of the initial themes that were explored within the literature and discussion. The scene continues with an overview on the process of respondent selection and the schedule for collecting the data.

Scene Three details the process of data analysis and interpretation with a discussion on the use of transcription, coding and the merits of using computer software as a technique for analysis. An overview of the application of narrative chronologies is given which culminates in how the narrative chronologies shaped the conceptual model.

Scene Four provides a general discussion on research ethics and validity. The scene examines the role of the researcher within the research and my own ‘insiderness’. Finally the concept of validity within narrative research is examined.

The research findings are presented within the Anagnorisis. This chapter is presented in three sections which represent the three phases the new academic progresses through during their transition. The Reciprocal Phase; The Fragile Phase and The Engaged Phase.

The Denouement puts forward the concept of the ‘Auditioning Academic’ as I draw together the opening acts, the findings from the anagnorisis and my own narrative. Finally I propose various recommendations for professional practice and provide a statement on how this dissertation contributes to knowledge and practice.

The dissertation concludes with an epilogue which is a personal reflection of my own journey and how doing this research has shaped my own transition and future in academia.

# **Exposition**

Narrative researchers often “describe in detail the setting or context in which the participant experiences the central phenomenon” (Creswell, 2008:522).

## **Preface**

The purpose of this section is to establish the purpose of the dissertation within the framework of the research. The exposition clarifies the key terms and definitions that are used and introduces the characters and the higher educational setting in which the dissertation is situated. Finally, the exposition clarifies how the opening themes for the dissertation were determined.

## **The Narrator**

A key element of this dissertation is the inclusion of the reflective thoughts of my own transition. The justification for adopting this approach is covered within Act Two: Research Methodology. However, this first section provides the details of how my ‘voice’ has been incorporated and applied within the dissertation.

The exposition starts with the narrator, me. As Freytag suggests:

Whoever makes an exposition of a section of past time, must set in order his mass of material from an established point of view, must sift out the unessential, must make prominent the most essential.

(Freytag, 1863:15)

In adopting Freytag’s notion as narrator, I will tender the reflective thoughts of my own first year’s transition throughout this work (in bold and italic) now looking back as an established academic. In order to offer context to these thoughts, I cite the month in which they took place. The narration will also provide the appropriate signposting throughout the work. The personal content of my narratives have been based and adapted from excerpts taken from my diaries. I would agree that it was, at the time, my established point of view which was based on my preconceptions on entering Higher Education (HE) and also shaped by the colleagues I initially came into contact with

(primarily in my subject team and on the teaching course, the Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE)). However, the reader must accept the “excited mind of the narrator” (Freytag, 1863:15) and also recognise that my initial thinking was evolutional and at times ambiguous, contradictory and, on reflection, contentious. It is acknowledged that my own thoughts and concepts were being repositioned as the study and my own academic transition progressed. Therefore, some discussions will be recursive throughout the script as I seek to establish clarity (the unessential and essential) through the lens of the other characters in this study.

*I worked for over fifteen years at a local authority as a senior arts and cultural manager, responsible for a significant budget and staff base. I became disillusioned with the local politics within the role and also the work-life balance and began looking for alternative ‘less stressful’ employment. Academia was not necessarily the first choice, although seeing the advertisement I thought ‘why not?’ After all they were after an industry practitioner and I also needed some interview experience. I was somewhat bewildered and anxious upon being appointed as senior lecturer. My only experience within a higher educational setting was as a part time Masters Degree student thirteen years earlier (I have no first degree) with the location of the teaching being at distance from the main HE institutional setting. My initial thoughts on entering the HE setting were ones of excitement as I embarked on a new career path, uncertainty as I crossed the threshold into unknown territory and fear as I contemplated my new ‘junior’ status within the institution.*

*(Narrator: month one)*

## **The Setting**

This setting for the research is within a ‘new university’, that is, a former polytechnic that was given university status following The Further and Higher Education Act 1992. The purpose of this section is to provide some initial background to the wider environment within which the ‘new university’ sits and provide the context for the discussion of what I term new and established academics. The wider higher educational environment and its impact on new and established academics is explored in greater detail throughout the forthcoming literature review.

## The Changing Higher Education and Academic Territory

There have been substantial changes within the higher education environment since the late 1970's. Randle and Brady (1997, cited in Briggs, 2004) claim that one such change has been the development of a more accountable and entrepreneurial university environment that has subsequently led to managerialism at the expense of collegial practice. They assert that:

A paradigm shift occurred from a professional system based on primacy of student learning, concern for academic standards, a collegial community of practice and professional autonomy, to a managerial one based upon primacy of student throughput and income generation, concern for efficiency and effectiveness and control by managers.

(Randle and Brady, 2004:587)

Pick (2004) would concur, asserting that his examination of the changes within the Australian higher education system portrays an “erosion of academic freedom, independence and collegiality” (p109) manifesting itself in the “perception that academic professionalism is being threatened by entrepreneurial activities... and the pressure to become more like corporate professionals” (p111). Beckmann and Cooper (2005) claim that the stimulus for these changes has been led by central government neo-liberal policies with Thrupp and Wilmott (2003) acknowledging that successive governments responded to the boundaries of a global market system with the concomitant restructuring of institutional practice geared towards global economic and technical imperatives. This ‘journey’ for the UK could be traced back to the latter stages of the Callaghan government in 1976 when the then Prime Minister stated that universities could no longer continue with their “institutional inefficiencies” with the suggestion that universities adopt a more rational approach to their “business” (Ball. 2008:73). The Thatcher government in 1979 took the baton and implemented funding cuts with a view to introducing efficiencies and the concept of value for money (Slaughter and Leslie 1997). Future government policies continued this drive, supported by subsequent legislation and initiatives such as: The Education Reform Act 1988 and the removal of local government control; The Further and Higher Education Act 1992 with the abolition of the binary divide and degree awarding powers given to polytechnics (Bines et al, 1992) and the creation of The Quality Assurance Agency in 1997.

There are critics of this new paradigm who remain sceptical and challenge the managerialistic agenda within the higher education environment. The suggestion being that universities who behave more like entrepreneurial organisations lead to professionalism within higher education becoming de-professionalised (Prigge, 2005). After all, the concepts of managerialism and professionalism could be viewed as oppositional cultures (Lumby and Tomlinson, 2000). This implies that replacing bureaucratic - professional regimes with managerial – entrepreneurial regimes leads to a formal rationality within working practices (Ball, 1999) and this creates uncertainty as the professional is: “caught between an economy of performance and an ecology of practice” (Stronach, 2002:109). The drive to improve efficiency at the expense of effectiveness, such as quality, is at the heart of established academic resistance to the imposition of neo-liberal ideology (Kenny, 2009). It could be argued that academics who retain residual notions of ‘professional elitism’ (traditionalism) have not kept pace with the changes in the higher education territory, or adapted their professional working practices in the institutional setting with its core activities in teaching and research. Therefore, they have been instrumental in their own de-professionalisation. However, with the implementation of initiatives such as the Research Assessment Exercise set up in 1996, and the Quality Assurance Agency (1997) the suggested outcome is an improvement in the quality of teaching and research. The mapping of these ‘improvements’ via university league tables and the National Student Survey creates a drive to improve quality within institutions, departments and subject groups and as such satisfy one of the core agendas for the established academic: quality of provision, so why resist it?

## The Characters

The purpose of this section is to firstly introduce the respondents (characters) to the reader, by providing some biographical detail. This discloses an insight into their former roles and circumstances, which the reader can then take forward when evaluating the characters responses within the research data. Finally the key definitions of what I consider to be ‘new academics’ and ‘established academics’ are established.

The characters influence the structure and texture of the action and require careful selection. There are two main character groups within this script. Firstly, there are the ‘new academics’ which are the ten academics selected for the primary research and

secondly, there are the ‘established academics’, these are the existing academic staff with which the new academic mainly comes into contact, following Freytag’s view that

The characters must correspond to such a meaning of the action, in order that the play may produce noble effect

(Freytag, 1863:61)

## **Character selection**

Information from the institution’s Human Resources Department stated that 35 academics commenced employment during the six months prior to the commencement of the study (April, 2008 – October 2008). The respondents for the research were selected from this cohort via an open invitation. It was accepted that there were many variables within the sample population, although two key areas were identified as the primary characteristics required: industry background and about to commence their first full year of teaching. It is recognised that the strategy was selective and not representative of the whole population. Consequently the results of the research could not be generalised. I would agree with the reference that the contextual nature of the interpretivist position makes generalisation difficult to achieve. However, I would argue that the focus of this study is on process and uniqueness with the intention to reach a rich and deep description as opposed to illustrating a wider perspective of all new academics as referred to by Punch (2005) and Denzin and Lincoln (2003).

## **Character biographies**

This section introduces the characters. Their names and former employment details have been changed to protect anonymity.

### **Paul, Heather and Chris**

For the pilot study three respondents were chosen. All had industry backgrounds from the private sector. Segments from their transcripts are used in the Anagnorisis.

### **Mary**

Mary’s employment background was in the service sector industries where she spent the last twelve years managing teams of staff across several service disciplines. Mary became interested in teaching when as part of her industry role, she became a guest

lecturer within a HE setting. Following this, Mary set herself a target to join the institution as an academic, as they had a “really strong strand of inter-professional working” (October, 2008). Mary is studying at Masters Level.

### **Petra**

Petra’s former employment background was as a manager within a local education authority. Petra considers herself to be a practitioner and “didn’t want to be a paper pusher” (October, 2008). Working within staff development and human resources within the education sector gave Petra an insight into teacher education and subsequently sought a move to academia to reposition her career. Petra is educated to Masters level.

### **Lucy**

Lucy’s former role was as a manager within a global corporation. Lucy had just completed an overseas Masters Degree and was advised by one of her supervisors that she should consider doctoral study and a possible career within academia. The timing of this intervention was opportune as Lucy was becoming “tired of the corporate work-life balance” (October, 2008).

### **Mike**

Mike’s employment background was working as a manager for an environmental services organisation. Due to funding constraints and a lack of capital projects Mike became increasingly unhappy with his work and felt that he was not being professionally developed. Furthermore, due to financial cuts, his position was becoming vulnerable. Whilst working, Mike gained two postgraduate qualifications and cites this interaction as one of the reasons he chose a second career in academia, he says, “I enjoyed the atmosphere” (October, 2008).

### **Kate**

Kate’s prior role was as an Early Years manager within a private organisation. Kate completed her first degree and enjoyed the experience subsequently taking a strategic view to join academia later in her career. Intervention from one of her tutors created an immediate opening to apply for a lecturer’s post and Kate took the opportunity. Kate terms her appointment as ‘accidental and surprising’ (October, 2008). Kate is educated to Bachelors level.

**Angela**

Angela's industry background is in the creative industries. Some members of Angela's family have a history of working within academia. Angela "resisted the pressure to conform" (October, 2008) and join academia, although the insecurities of work/income within industry and changes in personal circumstances (children) led to Angela changing her stance. Angela is educated to Bachelors level.

**Jenny**

Jenny has entered academia from a background in business management, latterly being self employed running her own consultancy business. Whilst Jenny enjoyed the entrepreneurial nature of the work, the insecurity of work patterns and income streams created too much uncertainty. Jenny had previously given talks within university settings and enjoyed "facilitating peoples' learning" (October, 2008): these positive experiences created an opportunity for Jenny to change career paths. Jenny is currently studying at Masters level.

**Charlie**

Charlie's previous role was working as an environmental officer for a multi-national organisation. Repeated travel commitments and work demands led to Charlie questioning his career path. Charlie completed his Masters Degree four years earlier and when an opportunity arose to teach at the same institution he contacted his former tutors and received a positive response.

**Sally**

Sally was employed as a manager for a large national organisation. Whilst working Sally continued her studies, initially in short courses, finally leading to the completion of her Masters Degree. Sally's relationship with her tutors was crucial to her decision to leave industry and start a new career path.

**Claire**

Claire was formerly a training manager for a local authority organisation. Her responsibilities included acting as project manager for university partnerships. This interaction and primarily the student interface, became the point at which Claire's thoughts turned to academia, particularly as she began to question her "direction of travel" (October, 2008). Claire is educated to Masters level.

## New Academics

Within the context of this work Garrison's (2005) definition of a new academic is used in describing the characters:

The focus of this study is on faculty who did not begin their employment in the classroom. These faculty members had careers in full time industry or government before transitioning into the academic environment.

(Garrison, 2005:414)

Knight and Trowler (1999:24) recognised that the academic professions would no longer be: "dominated by people from the baby boom generation" and that there will be an increase in demand for new academics as the UK government sets an agenda of widening student participation and increasing vocational studies. Garrison provides evidence that much of the demand will be 'filled' by: "recruiting new faculty from industry and government" (2005: 415). Churchman and King (2009:509) contend that recruitment of new academic staff may be hindered by: "the declining attraction of the profession" citing reduced pay, increased stress and low levels of autonomy as key challenges to new appointments. However, LaRocco and Bruns (2006:626) claim that there is a 'increasing trend' in the number of experienced industry professionals choosing a second career in academia with Garrison's (2005) research suggesting that those who make the transition accept lower starting positions and salary.

Whilst experienced industry professionals may bring to academia a wealth of practical expertise and competence, they may have limited comprehension about many aspects of academia such as: the teaching, the culture, the language and the formal knowledge base (Fogg, 2002). LaRocco and Bruns (2006) study found that new academics from industry felt inadequately 'schooled' in the politics and culture of the academic institutions. It is argued that much of the transitional support for new academics is focussed on induction and support systems that offer access to tangible resources with modes of disseminating rules and processes rather than addressing some of the more fundamental issues facing transitional industry practitioners, such as the loss of a previously established career identity. New academics as former managers in industry, who often operate at senior levels, enter their new working environment in a more junior position and as such there is a need for the change in status to be reconciled (Blenkinsopp and Stalker, 2004). Crane et al (2009) makes a case that many of the identity challenges for new academics from industry go unnoticed. Therefore, support

systems require an awareness and sensitivity of identity change, although it is accepted that it may be difficult to simplify a concept of transition that encompasses all facets of new academics' entry into a rational form of best practices (Bandow et al, 2007).

It maybe that the support systems for new academics are inadequate, although I propose that a new academic's management experience overrides the lack of academic knowledge (teaching and research responsibilities) during the initial transitional stage. That is, a new academic will bring with them not only career skills, such as interpersonal and communication competencies, but also a sense of confidence based on their previous industry successes. In some circumstances this could manifest itself into the new academics embracing and energising their new working environment, leading perhaps to an early acceptance of management or fiduciary responsibilities. The knowledge, acumen and professional insights built from a successful career in industry could confer on some new academics a gravitas beyond their title. Nevertheless, this is not to say that the new academic fears being unsuccessful in their new position or is as widely accepted by existing academics (Crane et al, 2009).

## **The Established Academics**

Discourses are social in character, created at societal and institutional levels and developed within localised settings. New academics become immediately immersed within the discourse of the local academic community and this discourse frames life in a particular way. How the community think and interact is shaped by the underlying values of the community (Wenger, 1998) which are determined by the communities' histories and sustained by the dominant members within the community: the established academics, who will be a frame of reference for the evolving identity of the new academic (Blenkinsopp and Stalker, 2004). Therefore, there is also a power dimension to consider, in that established academics also have a hold on new academics, as tenure is often at the discretion of tenured colleagues (Crane et al, 2009) and as such new academics become less willing to challenge the dominant discourses. Churchman and Stehlík (2007:264) offer a somewhat traditional view of academic communities: "Academic communities are sited in long and well-known historical contexts with plurality, autonomy and community as their cornerstones." As previously suggested, recent policies and developments, such as the adoption of a

corporatised management ideology which values financial performance and management control are challenging this position. Tierney (2001:14) claims that universities are finding it difficult to: "ensure that the organisation's culture remains true to the basic academic ideals" that Churchman and Stehlík advocate. Whilst Kolsaker (2008:515) contends that: "elements of collegiality survive even where universities reform structures, systems and culture". The question is whether it is sustainable within the neo liberal setting and the new managerialistic agenda that it manifests. Furthermore, will established academics respond to the challenge of: "adopting the corporate management paradigm... and the intensification of academic work" (Kenny, 2009:632) or challenge this concept to ultimately be cast as obsolete?

Established academics are not a homogeneous group and within the context of this script I include the following definitions that have been based on my view of the type of established academics that I initially came into contact with. The definitions below are not mutually exclusive:

1. Manager-academics: academics with management responsibilities, such as subject team leaders (middle management).
2. Principal academics: academics with a degree of autonomy and a reputable teaching and research history.
3. Recognised academics: academics that have longevity in post that have neither assumed nor secured management responsibility or promotion yet have a certain amount of 'presence' within the community.

## **The Research Questions and Themes**

The purpose of this final segment of the exposition is to firstly discuss the development of the research questions, as stated in the opening of the dissertation. Secondly, how the original themes were determined and their link to the core topics that were discussed in the subsequent literature review are clarified. Finally, the section maps how the literature relates to the themes explored later in the dissertation.

### **The Research Questions**

As previously stated, the aim of this research was to gain new knowledge and a greater understanding of the journey from industry practitioner to Higher Education professional. Denzin and Lincoln (2003) suggest that all research is interpretive and guided by a set of beliefs and feelings influenced by the researcher's history and culture. My own biography presents justification as to why this topic was chosen, as, at the start of the dissertation process, I contemplated whether any of my new colleagues were facing the same challenges, conflicts and contradictions as I did. Summarising these challenges, conflicts and contradictions led to my initial thinking when considering the research questions for this dissertation. For example: the challenge of transition to new working practices; the conflict within resistance to community entry and the contradictions of the management and autonomy dichotomy. Indeed, the primary objective of the pilot study was to validate my initial thinking by examining the challenges, conflicts and contradictions of new academics.

At the start of the research process I acknowledged that my methodological approach would adopt an interpretive paradigm. For Gadamer (1996) the process of interpretation is a synthesis of one's own horizon with the horizon of the text. Therefore, when setting the research questions I was conscious that matters of partiality, prejudice and bias should be considered, as I take account of myself and my effect on what is being researched. This is discussed further within the research methodology chapter. However, "each interpretative paradigm makes particular demands on the researcher; including the questions he or she asks and the interpretations the researcher brings to them" (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003:33). Therefore, the first 'demand' was to ensure rigour within the origination of the initial research questions. Liamputpong and Ezzy state that "an account has interpretive

rigour if it accurately represents the understanding of events and actions within a framework and worldview of the people engaged in them" (2005:39). It was at this point that I decided to let the research questions evolve from the 'worldview' of the respondents and I undertook the unstructured focus group, as part of the pilot study, to establish the basis for the dissertation research questions. Again, this is discussed further within the research methodology chapter.

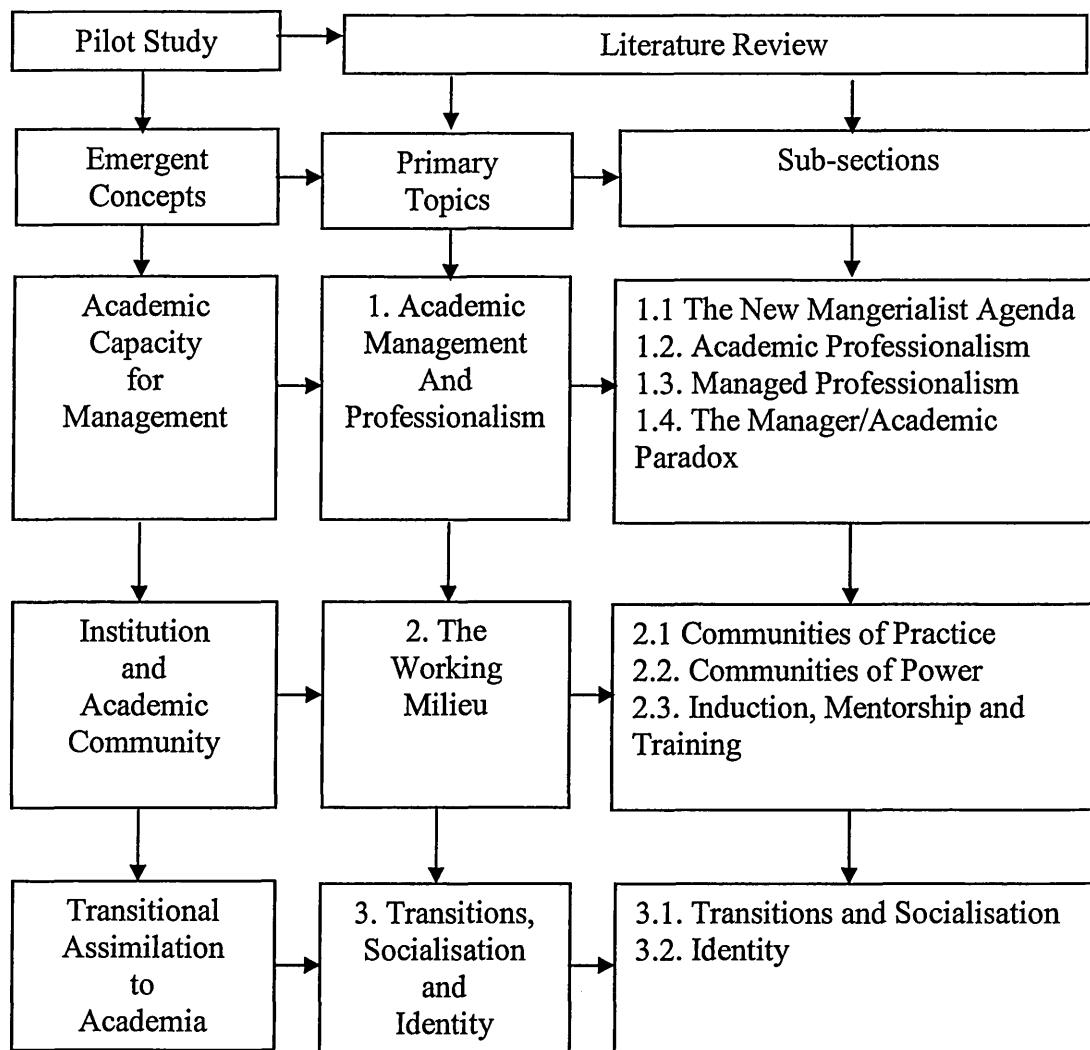
I accept that research questions, within a qualitative framework, could be subject to change throughout the research phase. However, throughout this dissertation the research questions remained constant from the tendered research proposal up until the final submission. I suggest that this consistency was as a result of the rigour of the pilot study methodology and the thoroughness of the subsequent data analysis. This led to a clear direction for the dissertation. Having said this, while the research questions remained stable throughout the dissertation process, my own interpretation of them was constantly evolving, particularly as I became more knowledgeable through the literature. It was this comprehension of the relevant literature, the findings from the pilot study and my own experiences which gave me confidence that the research questions were fit for purpose. However, whilst the research questions remained fixed, the underlying themes did develop over the period of the dissertation. Examples of the pilot study coding and how the data analysis shaped the establishment of the themes can be found in pages 28 to 30.

### **The Themes**

The strategy for establishing the primary themes for the dissertation began with a focus group and respondent interviews that were completed as part of the pilot study. The data and its analysis from the pilot study instigated emergent concepts for the literature review. These concepts were then investigated iteratively throughout the dissertation with new subject matter emerging and developed as the research progressed.

Whilst the pilot study was a small piece of empirical research it is argued that through a rigorous systematic process of analysis three emergent concepts were identified and interrogated. The conclusions reached were the genesis for this dissertation. As such three primary topics emerged and were taken forward for further examination through the substantive literature review. Model 2 below provides an overview.

Model 2: Literature Review Mapping and Outline



# **Act One: Literature Review**

## **Preface**

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the literature around the primary topics that were established following the pilot study and subsequent reading. This is to provide the relevant background knowledge so that the reader can apply the context of new academic entry to the institutional and community settings.

Reflecting the mapping (Model 2 above) the literature review is broken down into three key scenes.

**Scene One: Academic Management and Professionalism.** The interaction and transitions of both the established and new academic, within the changing higher education setting, as previewed within the Prologue, is examined in greater detail.

**Scene Two: The Working Milieu.** The concept of communities of practice is explored with a focus on the interactions and development of relationships between within the various communities that the new academic comes into contact with. Also within this scene the influence of induction and mentoring towards acceptance within communities of practice is considered.

**Scene Three: Transitions, Socialisation and Identity.** The final scene concentrates on the concept of academic identity and the development of an academic identity within the boundaries of the changing higher educational setting and the interactions within the communities of practice.

As stated earlier, the literature review positions the literature and my thinking to a stage prior to the substantive research. Therefore, at the end of each scene I offer a critique, as I take a more sceptical view of the literature. This appraisal is based on my current views and opinion, speaking now as an established academic. It is intended that these accounts demonstrate the development of my thinking during my own journey from industry to academic professional and position my current stance and outlook.

## **Scene One: Academic Management and Professionalism**

The purpose of this scene is to seek clarity on the wider managerial milieu within higher education and its bearing on management practice and professionalism within the local setting (the subject team community). The type of managerial practice and professionalism the new academic comes into contact with may be in opposition to their previous experiences and own management philosophy and therefore has a bearing on their transition.

Working in industry as an arts and cultural manager for a local authority I became only too aware of the need to modify my management practices in line with the global/political environment in which I worked. Managing within a local authority setting was for me a process of operating within a licensed autonomy: licensed from the centre (Chief Executive), where, within agreed boundaries, power remained with me, the individual arts manager. The influx of managerialistic practices where attention was focussed on outputs and performance, such as financial returns, rather than inputs, such as societal benefit, did create challenges and conflicts for me within this licensed autonomy, although I agreed with the general principles of the managerialistic agenda. I now acknowledge that my initial view of the higher education environment was a little impetuous, however, within weeks of entering my new work environment I judged that higher education was also set within the boundaries of a global market system with the concomitant restructuring of institutional practice geared towards economic and technical imperatives (Thrussell and Wilmott, 2003). Having said this, I also recognised that there were critics of this new paradigm who would remain sceptical and contest the transformationalist account of globalisation, its neo-liberal thesis and new managerialism (Held, et al, 1999). This aside, I still firmly held the view, at this time, that:

*If the university adopt a more rational approach to their business, and its strategies, they are paving the way to institutional success in an ever increasingly competitive and international market, possibly ensuring its survival. So, why are some sections of academia so negative and reactionary against this enterprising model and can this university and its established academics accept the competitive stimulus of market forces, embrace new managerialism and modify their identity within the professional continuum?*

*(Narrator: month two)*

It is implied that by replacing bureaucratic-professional regimes with managerial-entrepreneurial regimes leads to a formal rationality within working practices (Ball, 1999) and a dichotomy between the production of culture and the culture of production. I argue that this is at the root of the issues governing management practices and the culture of production within higher education.

### **The new - managerialist agenda and academic professionalism**

Direct and assertive management techniques with attention to outputs and performance rather than inputs are a characteristic of new managerialism. Kolsaker (2008) acknowledges that: "in recent decades higher education has gradually been appropriated by managerialist ideology originating outside the sector" (p513). New managerialism with controlling managerial-entrepreneurial regimes (Ball, 1999) is seen as replacing the organisational logic and practice of the professional bureaucracy with which traditional academia has a long association (Mintzberg, 1983). What needs to be established is to what extent established academics are convinced by the ideology, values and practice of new managerialist and how far they accept it as essential to the future of higher education and their collective senses of professionalism. A study by Deem (2001) on behalf of the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) between 1998 and 2000 addressed some of these issues. One of the conclusions reached was that of institutional variation, primarily in organisational culture rather than structure. Lomas (2005) claims that within 'modern universities' there has been an acceptance and growth of the managerialist perspective, although this is not homogeneous as the culture of production is fluid and needs to take into account local factors, such as history, size and academic discipline. Within the context of this work the 'new university' has adopted the new-managerialist agenda, although it is debatable whether it is as widely accepted throughout all departments as acquiescence could be discipline based. For example, a management department with its 'culture of production' established within the mangerialist paradigm adopt a 'new' vocational curriculum whereas a humanities department could have a 'production of culture' that maintains a more 'traditional' academic curriculum. (This view is based on my interaction with colleagues on the new staff course: Narrator). It is accepted that within both there would be pockets of resistance to either approach: this would depend upon the characteristics of the established academics and the dominance of the principal academics within this group.

*I and other new academics attending the staff course discussed what we perceived to be the differences in management practices between faculties. I concluded that some subject areas openly operate outside of the institutional managerial framework. So why don't senior management act on this?*

*Why do they call the academic managers 'leaders' (subject team leaders or programme leaders): do they effectively lead or are they managers? The staff are doing what they like! Whilst the academic managers may have excellent academic credentials does this make them good managers or leaders? I could do better... how were they appointed?*

*(Narrator; month three)*

The quote above is another example of my initial managerialist perspective. The evidence from the ESRC study indicates: "that new managerialism as a general ideology is believed by both manager-academics, other academics and support staff to have permeated UK universities" (Deem and Brehony, 2005:225), although not all accept the ideological consequences of such action and this has led to a divided profession within higher education. It is these regimes that are having significant impacts upon the culture of production within academia, primarily as established academics view this departure as giving rise to organisational and cultural change, which results in a managerial discipline that seeks compliance and control through continual monitoring and evaluation. Performance culture for principal academics threatens their standing within the local academic community as they become vulnerable to new institutional 'targets' that fall outside their control and area of expertise (O'Brien & Down, 2002). It is possible that manager-academics view the managerial agenda as an opportunity for career enhancement, although this would depend upon the manager-academic's aptitude to function within this context. Furthermore, the influx of practising managers from industry, as new academics, confront the dynamics within the community of discourse and offer a challenge to the status quo and subsequently contest the credibility of manager-academics with new and contemporary perspectives on management practices which they consider to be better. For Hargreaves (2000) there are two possible outcomes within academia. Firstly, from a transformationalist perspective with academic partnerships working effectively "in a broad social movement that protects and advances the professionalism" (p175) and secondly, the academic becoming overwhelmed with the intensified work demands and de-motivated by the discourse of derision. This outlook is the paradoxical challenge for the established academics as they contemplate

resistance or acceptance of the new managerial age of professionalism within academia.

## Managed Professionalism

*I accept that as a new academic I grasped the values of my former role as I struggled to understand the structures and working practices of my new surroundings... does my new setting have formal structures? Not letting go created tensions as I began to question and contest my new environment. Why were the established academics, especially the principal academics, so sensitive to challenges to their autonomy? Furthermore, what is wrong with them being managed, after all they are paid professionals working within what I consider to be a business setting? Perhaps this is the problem, like me they are retaining their old values and don't see themselves operating within a model of business enterprise.*

*(Narrator: month two)*

Kolsaker (2008) indicates that the concept of professionalism is under-researched and lacks a solid theoretical foundation implying that: "it is inherently difficult to pinpoint the constitution and characteristics of professionalism" (p516). Nevertheless, educational expertise, a level of autonomy and the generation and application of knowledge are central to academic professionalism, together with the promotion of shared values, altruistic behaviour and personal integrity (Jarvis, 1983; Milana and Skrypnyk, 2009; Friedson, 1994).

I recognise that describing academics as "managed professionals" could in purely definitional terms be contradictory, as there is acceptance of Larson's (1977) notion that autonomy is fundamental in the distinction between professional and proletarian work. It is also contested whether the concept of academic autonomy is sustainable within the boundaries of new managerialism. It is proposed, as in my former role as an arts manager, that academics operate primarily within 'licensed' autonomy, that is, autonomy at the discretion of the Centre: be it central government to VC's/ boards of management or manager-academics to academics and in increasing cases administrative managers to manager-academics. For principal academics the notion of working as a managed professional with 'licensed' autonomy is seen as abhorrent. Bryson (2004, cited in Kolsaker, 2008) claims that the transfer of academic autonomy

to managerial prerogative leads to an academic's loss of ideological control within their work and as such it becomes degraded. As an example, established academics view the notion of education's contribution to broader societal needs as part of their professionalism and this gives them legitimacy. New constructs in academic professionalism challenge this discourse. Avis (2003) implies that the Centre treats academics "more like trusted servants rather than as empowered professionals" (cited in Gleeson and Knights, 2006:280), although Kolsaker (2008) would dispute this stating that academics are 'free-willed beings'. In spite of this, academic professionals are accountable for their actions even when operating within the boundaries of policy they do not fully support (Clark, 2005). Therefore, established academics who by choice remain within academia, need to recognise that they are faced with a bringing together of diverse individuals and institutions in complex and sometimes paradoxical relationships (Pick, 2004). The question remains whether established academics can accept the change to the new managerialist agenda and become managed professionals.

Kolsaker (2008) recognises the need for academic professionals to self reflect and change with Kenny (2009) arguing that without 'change' the established academic would become: "loosely coupled to their organisation... disengaged from the decision making process... and, as stakeholders in a corporate environment... vulnerable" (2009:631). This 'vulnerability' becomes increasingly evident as new academics appointed to educational institutions since incorporation are willing to accept new managerialism, question practice and challenge the cultures of the "Golden Age" (Briggs, 2004:588). Archer concurs, claiming that new academics expressed frustration with proponents of the 'Golden Age' [principal academics] discourse and that "younger academics [new academics] align themselves with the present by virtue of their capacity for adaptation and matching the demands of modern academic life" (2008:271). Whist I accept that new academics, as former managed professionals, are more able to adapt to a new managerialist agenda, this does not make them any less vulnerable than the established academics within this setting.

## The Manager – Academic Paradox

*I sense my manager's unease and anxiety during team meetings as he attempts to deliver the 'messages' and enact the instructions from the wider institution. The established academics are confrontational and sometimes uncompromising in positing their views, occasionally refusing to perform the manager's instructions. I cannot believe that my manager does not seek measures to ensure compliance and I begin to question his ability. Although a little unobtrusive I do, however, offer my opinion and realise that it is not necessarily only his ability that is in question but also his conviction in the 'messages' and instructions that he has been given. His outlook contradicts the organisation's position; for him it is paradoxical. How can he then manage in this environment? Is he a manager or an academic? Can you be both?*

*(Narrator: month five)*

Staniforth and Harland (2006) claim that the most pivotal relationship for the new academic is the one with their departmental head (in the setting of this research I use the term manager-academics or subject team leader). Davidson and Goldberg (2005) claim that through negotiated collaboration, middle managers (manager-academics) are the 'nodes' in organisations, although they also admit that the power manager-academics have is circumscribed and that they can be viewed as: "gate-keeping obstructionists by faculty colleagues" (p1). Trowler and Knight would argue that one of the objectives of the manager-academic is to assimilate new entrants into an: "undifferentiated mass, abstracted from their specific contexts, backgrounds and histories" (1999:183). I agree that manager-academics are gatekeepers to new academic entry and hold positions of power, which are enacted through managerialistic processes, although I would contend that this currency reduces over time as the new academic becomes integrated within academic communities. Kallenberg (2007) proposes that: "academic middle managers are at a crucial position within the organisation" (p19) and that they are: "caught between several positions, processes and interests" (p22). Furthermore, as previously discussed it does not necessarily follow that the manager-academic accepts the managerialistic agenda, although Briggs (2005) argues that: "being a manager is seen in terms of taking the king's shilling" (p42). It is acknowledged that the manager-academic operates dichotomously as they work within a 'contested' environment where professional autonomy and accountability are continually challenged. Indeed research by Whitchurch (2008) indicates that higher

education institutions seek ‘blended’ managers who: “could perform, on a dedicated basis, roles that crossed between professional and academic domains” (2008:3). The above discussion leads onto challenging the manager-academic capabilities to operate duplicitously whilst effectively managing principal, recognised and new academics within the setting of a new managerial regime and further questions whether this is a workable dualism.

Ramsden (1998) argued that it would be a ‘disaster’ if academic work was to be restricted by managerial control, although Kenny (2009) contends that due to the: “widespread adoption of the corporate management paradigm... over time there has been a gradual silencing of the academic voice” (p632). Considering that the majority of manager-academics who hold senior positions are former principal academics one would assume that the ‘academic voice’ would be secure. However, managing within higher education involves accepting, developing and disseminating the ideologies and values of new managerialism (Deem and Brehony, 2005) and this embeds the manager-academic role and increases opportunities for career progression to senior management positions. For Deem (2001) this creates a growing gap between senior management and academic staff as autonomy and collegial relations decline. Briggs understands that this would compel the manager-academic to adopt the ‘liaison’ role, “a bridge between senior management and the departmental team” (2005:32). Furthermore, this would require the manager-academics not only to understand the systems and communication routes (vertical or lateral) but also have the skills in negotiation throughout the transactions that may take place. This not only calls into question the manager-academics’ ability to reconcile professional and managerial demands but also their expertise and skill in shaping their role (Briggs, 2005). In addition, this casts doubt on selection processes and the training of middle managers.

### **Scene Critique**

This scene has three key assertions. Firstly, the scene argues that a new-managerial agenda has become evident within higher educational institutions. Secondly, the scene claims that established academics resist the move towards a new-managerialist agenda as it is contrary to what they consider to be traditional academic practice and professionalism, whereas new academics embrace this ethos and are more readily able to adapt to the challenges of the new culture. Finally, the scene contends that manager-academics, whilst operating within the parameters of a new-managerial

setting, do not necessarily agree with the philosophy. Therefore, this reservation impacts on their ability to manage established academics and integrate new academics into the academic milieu; although it is claimed that manager-academics lack the managerial expertise to manage this effectively.

I would agree with the literature that new managerialism has indeed permeated UK universities, although I would question whether the practice was challenged quite as much as first thought or as the literature suggests. My initial observation (cited in the literature review) that resistance was more widespread, was based on my first six months in post and it could be argued that I held a somewhat narrow view, as I was only engaged within the 'local' context (subject team community) and not the wider university setting. Indeed the literature does suggest that there is variation on acceptance of new managerialism between subject disciplines and I argue that resistance is less evident within the more vocational subject areas, as these are more open to industry practices. My initial experiences working within such a faculty would contest this stance. It was apparent that the dominant members of the local community were strongly opposed to the new managerialist agenda and were openly confrontational to changes imposed from the 'centre' and I acknowledge that these influential members swayed my view. However, it became evident as I integrated more with my colleagues that not all members within the local community agreed with their position. This created tensions within the subject group between established academics and the growing number of new academics being appointed in post.

The literature suggests that, for the established academic, the fundamental challenge working within the new managerial agenda is based around the diminishing notion of academic professionalism and reduced autonomy. The literature discussed the notion of managed professionalism with a view that established academics need to accept change and become managed professionals or become isolated from their organisation. I agree that academics are employees of the university and as such need to align their practices to the central agenda, although in contrast to the literature I contend that allowing a level of professional autonomy creates opportunities to drive the central agenda and that this should be encouraged. This is dependent upon established academics accepting a central cultural philosophy that allows a certain level of, what I termed, 'licensed autonomy' within the local subject team context, yet also contained within the overarching new managerialist agenda. Furthermore, the relationship between the established academic and the central agenda is also reliant

upon the competencies of the manager-academic to operate and manage effectively within this paradox.

Sections of the literature review questioned the capacity of manager-academics to operate dichotomously and cast doubt on their conviction of the managerial agenda. The literature supported the view that manager-academics are caught between several positions, such as managing central systems and processes whilst leading an academic team that, perhaps, 'operate' outside of this agenda. I would disagree that there has been a silencing of the academic voice and that managing within higher education requires an acceptance of new managerialism. I would now contend that some manager-academics are quite proficient in allowing the academic voice to be heard, in situations that they can effectively manage, to create a sense of autonomy and a perception of engagement. Furthermore, whilst manager-academics may not necessarily agree with the overarching new managerialist agenda they are able to display levels of professionalism in outwardly demonstrating acceptance whilst working within the system to seek benefits for the local subject team. They also act as a barrier to central influences that may hinder the development of the subject discipline. I would still argue that the universities need to embrace the concepts, in principle, of new managerialism, although I am less swayed by some of the arguments. In addition, I also now accept that I was overcritical of manager-academics and their ability to operate within this setting.

## **Scene Two: The Working Milieu**

"Newcomers are no fools: once they have access to the practice, they soon find out what counts" (Wenger, 1998:156).

### **Preface**

The purpose of this scene is to introduce the notion of communities of practice as places of situated learning and knowledge building with which the new academic seeks membership. Central to the critique of communities of practice is the relationship between new entrants and the dominant members of the community and whether new academics simply assimilate established practice to become accepted or challenge the practice and become isolated. The purpose of this scene is to explore this duality for the new academic as they negotiate academic entry. Finally, the scene looks at the wider working milieu and considers the influence of formal induction processes on new academic retention.

### **Communities of Practice**

The purpose of this section is to introduce the key concepts of communities of practice and their application within the context of this research.

*Within my new work community there is such a diverse assortment of colleagues with an eclectic range of interests, working practices and experience. I will be able to learn so much from them all.*

*(Narrator: month one)*

*I feel academically out of my depth in their company (established academics) and why are some so demeaning of my subject area and academic credibility... why won't they let me learn from them, why are they so insular and protective? I need to understand how this community works and am faced with barriers!*

*(Narrator: month three)*

Kincheloe and McLaren claim that: "the quest for understanding is a fundamental feature of human existence, as encounter with the unfamiliar always demands the attempt to make meaning, to make sense" (2003:443). In the context of this work the new academic is constantly seeking meaning in new and unfamiliar role structures and social systems. Brown and Duguid suggest that: "what is learned is profoundly connected to the conditions in which it is learned" (1991:48). They identify that these conditions could include the constructing of understanding within the social and physical environment and the histories and social relations of the individuals involved. Lave and Wenger reinforce this view by emphasizing the importance of moving "analytical focus from the individual as learner to learning as participation in the social world, and from the concept of cognitive process to the more-encompassing view of social practice" (1991:43). Hara (2009) agrees that learning occurs in social contexts with the suggestion that people share and construct their knowledge through communities of practice.

Hargreaves and Shirley (2009) argue that the 'art' of adapting to change when entering new settings is as much about building new social relationships as it is absorbing new knowledge. The concept of communities of practice is embedded in situated cognition and the framework of Vygotsky's social-cultural theory with the argument that learning can be, amongst others, a social activity. Communities of practice are a form of: "situated learning and knowledge building activity where members negotiate identity, learning and purpose in collaboration" (Nagy and Birch, 2009:227). This section explores the context of communities of practice, the application within a new academic environment and finally the criticisms of such an approach. The literature on 'communities of practice' explores Wenger's notion defined by the following features:

- mutual engagement connecting participants in a variety of ways and defining membership
- participation in a joint enterprise, a negotiated way of working together to achieve something
- a shared repertoire of routines, words, tools, ways of doing things... which become part of its practice

(Wenger, 1998:73)

The early work of Tonnies (1887) identified the concepts of community and association; what he called 'gemeinschaft' and 'gesellschaft' respectively. It is argued that

'gemeinschaft' is based on human interrelations, mutual exchange and development of skills for communal benefit, whereas 'gesellschaft' is characterised by organisation: structure, impersonal relationships and instrumentality, primarily motivated by money (Jackson and Carter, 2007). Within the context of this work I would argue that contemporary academia is characterised by the notion of 'gesellschaft' which prohibits 'gemeinschaft'. This is not to say that new academics within the setting of academic communities are primarily motivated by economicistic, rationalistic and materialistic drivers and that the desire for 'gemeinschaft' is not apparent within these organisational settings. After all, communities of practice can be informal, self selecting and set their own agenda, perhaps in opposition to the hierarchical structure as organisational requirements of social learning systems often run counter to management agendas (Wenger and Snyder, 2000).

*It is clear that there are several 'sub-communities' within the subject team, primarily shaped by longevity of service and perceived hierarchical position. The new academics are trying to break into the existing academic community whilst they are also trying to break into the academic community populated by the established academics. On the other hand, the manager-academics are operating outside all of the communities within this subject milieu and are isolated. I presume they have their own community? Each community is setting its own agenda with little consideration for management objectives or other groups. I need to understand the social and power dynamics within the application of these communities in order to break in.*

*(Narrator: month four)*

The application of communities of practice has evolved since being conceived by Lave and Wenger (1991), although Wenger recognises that: "since the beginning of history, human beings have formed communities that share cultural practices reflecting their collective learning" (Wenger, 2000:229). Eraut (2002) would agree and contends whether the concept is 'novel'; indeed he questions the importance and significance of communities of practice and makes a case that Lave and Wenger 'appropriated' the term rather than conceiving it. Additions by Wenger (1998) and further collaboration with McDermott and Snyder (2002) establish the principles for developing and sustaining communities of practice. For Lave (1991) sustaining the community of practice works in cycles

by which newcomers become old-timers, who thereby become the community of practice for the next newcomers, transforming their understanding as they transform their identities.

(Lave cited in Resnick et al, 1991: 82)

Based on my own experience, cited above, I question whether this is the case as dominant members within the communities act as 'protectors' of established practice and restrict access. Bathmaker and Avis (2005) would agree and argue that communities of practice do not allow for the impact of 'new work' on existing communities. This is supported by Eraut (2002) who claims that Lave and Wenger focus too much on the reproductive characteristic of communities rather than the diversity within the communities and this makes them difficult to break into for new academics. Lave and Wenger (1991) recognise this and argue for the mutual engagement of participants, joint enterprise and shared repertoire.

Therefore, the prime structural elements of Lave and Wenger's model are based on social relations with a focus on domain (shared interest), community (social fabric of group) and practice (shared repertoire and development). Whitchurch (2006) makes a case that whilst communities have been defined traditionally via structured formal and substantive domains, an emergent project domain has developed leading to an increasingly multi-professional grouping of staff. The nature of the relationship between on the one hand, the organisational context, such as cultural and structural characteristics and on the other hand the individual and group hermeneutics and practices need to be understood. For example, the university may set the structural context for academic work: the rules, resources, guidelines and division of labour whereas the substantive community of practice develops the day-to-day practices and these are often in conflict with one another. However, it could be that as practice becomes established, new academics are assimilated within the structural context. In contrast to Lave and Wenger's notion of a journey that involves successive forms of identity via a trajectory from the boundary (peripheral) to the core of the communities, it is suggested that a balance between core and boundary processes is required so that the individual can identify and belong to a dynamic set of central and peripheral communities. This could involve the new academic having 'liquidity' within the organisational setting (Bauman, 2000). That is, having fluidity between the various communities that they come into contact with and using this interconnectivity (liquidity) to help set their future trajectories, which is discussed below:

You confront people with different opinions, guided by different kinds of preferences, sometimes even different kinds of values. Under these conditions you need to reflect, to emancipate, and to take personal responsibility.

(Bauman, 2004:7)

Lave and Wenger claim that: "learning takes place within a participation framework, not in an individual mind" (1991:15) although it is suggested that they are both mutually compatible and that learning is distributed amongst co-members. Thus, a new academic needs to balance the different perspectives and characteristics of the 'old-timers' and the various domains, community and practice that they come into contact with. Furthermore, the organisation also requires this balance as it seeks to work within the complexity of a more distributed, diversified and broader macro and micro environment.

In the context of new academics, Lave and Wenger (1991) would define the preliminary learning stage where new members are incorporated into communities of practice as legitimate peripheral participation before acceptance as full members. Subsequently Wenger (1998) suggests that new members go through a successive form of participation that develops identity trajectories both within and across communities of practice, for example:

- inbound trajectories – where new academics are on course for full membership
- peripheral trajectories – participation does not necessarily lead to full membership
- boundary trajectories – participation involves maintaining membership across several boundaries.

(Wenger, 1998. p154)

*Some months into my tenure I am a member of several groups [communities of practice] and each one is very different in 'make up'. What I have realised is that the principal and manager academics have such power in shaping these communities. Many of the ones I belong within (primarily ones with a learning, teaching and assessment agenda) are 'led' by collaborative and forward thinking principal academics. Whereas, the ones that are 'managed' by manager-academics tend to be dictatorial and non-inclusive with an air of*

***distrust, self interest and Machiavellian practices. As an academic you need to be 'fluid' between communities and have chameleon characteristics. I am starting to question my former stance that principal academics need to be managed in order to be productive. Also, my view regarding the unconvincing aptitude of manager-academics is being confirmed: is gemeinschaft really better than gesellschaft?***

***(Narrator: month six)***

Several communities of practice may be present alongside each other (Jawitz, 2007) with James (2007) suggesting that can interfere and hinder each other. It is suggested that the new academic may be simultaneously present in many of them, some chosen voluntarily (community, social) whilst others are perhaps selected by mentors or line managers (task orientated groups). Wenger (1998) goes further and identifies a fourth route, 'insider trajectory', suggesting that the formation of an identity does not end with full membership but evolves as practice and participation continue and as such create occasions for renegotiating one's identity in line with personal, organisational and/or community changes. Whilst new academics may not concentrate on the pragmatic purpose of organisational procedures they reflexively re-invent themselves in response to changes within themselves, the communities of practice and the organisation (Quicke 2000). Therefore, I suggest, new academics continually contemplate their own identity within the professional setting, which also has everyday fluidity. Bauman (2004) offers a caveat to the notion of personal liquidity within a boundary and insider trajectory, implying that not all communities are as they seem and are in themselves fluid. This offers a warning to a new academic to: "act under the condition of shifting trust. A common trend which was trustworthy today may become condemned and rejected tomorrow" (Bauman, 2004:8).

Nagy and Burch (2009) contend that higher education institutions have yet to understand the merit of communities of practice and show "slow progress of this form of collaborative mechanism" (2009:228) even though communities of practice have their value to organisations, such as when they transfer best practice, develop professional skills and help companies recruit and retain talent (Lave and Wenger, 1991). In contrast Eraut (2002) claims that communities of practice offer no added value to organisations. Furthermore, based on my experience, it is suggested that not all academics want to participate within the communities, or do so under duress and, as such, become obstructive and evasive. Buchanan and Huczynski (2004) maintain

that academics radically galvanise knowledge sharing, learning and change. This is supported by Brooks who states that communities of practice: "share their learning, experience and knowledge in free-flowing ways that foster and encourage new approaches to problems and transfer this learning from one part of the organisation to the other" (2006:87).

However, this encourages the view that communities of practice are rational, pragmatic groupings that are tied to the traditional structures and boundaries of an organisation, whereas Wenger and Synder would claim that this is not the case, stating that: "a community of practice can exist entirely within a business unit or stretch across divisional boundaries. A community can even thrive with members from different companies" (2000:141) and with the explosion of knowledge and technology a proliferation of collaborative communities has emerged, such as research and knowledge communities. It could be stated that today's economy runs on knowledge and that communities of practice foster this expansion with sharing experience and knowledge and that fosters creativity in approaching problems. This view of collaborative and holistic working is in opposition to most traditional business models and results in the main criticism of communities of practice, as: "the organic, spontaneous and informal nature of communities of practice makes them resistant to supervision and interference" (Wenger and Synder, 2000:140).

The community of practice approach is not without its limitations and critics. Indeed even Wenger et al (2002) acknowledge the negatives of communities of practice as:

the very qualities that make a community an ideal structure for learning – a shared perspective on domain, trust, a communal identity, long standing relationships, an established practice – are the same qualities that can hold it hostage to its history and its achievements.

(Wenger et al, 2002:141)

Challenges to communities of practice could include: power, trust, predispositions, size and spatial reach and also the accelerated business environment (Roberts, 2006). Contu and Wilmott (2003) claim that Lave and Wenger 'downplay' any consideration of the power embedded within communities of practice with Hara (2009) calling for a more: "holistic view of learning, which incorporates a consideration of history, language and power within organisations" (p16). Roberts (2006) would agree, as illustrated below:

An understanding of the power dynamics of communities of practice is essential to the development of a full understanding of knowledge creation and dissemination. Power is the ability or capacity to achieve something, whether by influence, force or control. While meaning may be negotiated within communities of practice, it is vital to recognise the role of power in this process.

(Roberts, 2006:626)

## Communities of Power

The purpose of this section is to acknowledge the power domains that exist within communities of practice and discuss their influences on the process for new academic transition.

*What I have come to recognise is the differences in the use of power by the established academics. Principal academics tend to be more persuasive and coercive with a disguised power, whereas the manager-academics tend to be more overt. In my former role the use of power would have been more linked to what I now consider to be the manager-academic approach and one that I would have previously advocated. However, within the academic setting I am beginning to question my stance.*

*(Narrator: month eight)*

James (2007) suggests that the influence of power and control within the setting of communities of practice are often overlooked. The traditional approach to power may suggest that whenever people come together in an organisation, their activities must be directed and controlled, so that they work together to achieve common aims and objectives and that power is the ability of one person or group to cause another person or group to do something they otherwise might not have done. Power is the principle means of directing and controlling organisational goals and activities (George and Jones, 2010). Wenger (1998) does not deny the significance of power in terms of political, economic or institutional systems, yet focuses on power in terms of negotiation of meaning and the formation of identities. In later works (Wenger, 2000, Wenger et al, 2002), there is recognition that the original notion of communities of practice as spontaneous, self organising and fluid processes (Lave and Wenger, 1991) can be applied to a wide variety of organisational contexts and also be amenable to

manipulation by organisational designers (Roberts, 2006). Indeed, Wenger and Synder suggest that they benefit from what could be considered structural cultivation:

Like gardens, they respond to attention that respects their nature. You can't tug on a cornstalk to make it grow faster or taller, and you shouldn't yank out a marigold out of the ground to see if it has roots. You can however, till the soil, pull out the weeds, add the water during dry spells, and ensure that your plants have the proper nutrients.

(Wenger and Synder, 2000:143)

I suggest that in order for a community of practice to develop it needs to be cultivated, this cultivation is primarily directed by the dominant members within the group and therefore 'cultivation' is power. In addition, within the domain of the organisational setting, without structural 'cultivation' communities of practice as functional goal attaining networks would disappoint. Furthermore, the social/cultural community of practice requires less organisational 'cultivation' yet perhaps more member 'cultivation' and therefore power in this context rests within the centre of the community, as suggested by Roberts:

New community members move from the periphery to a position of full participation as they develop their knowledge and learn from skilled practitioners. Those members who have full participation will have a greater role and therefore are likely to wield more power.

(Roberts, 2006:627)

Wenger (1998) argues that: "a social concept of identity entails a social concept of power" (p190). As one example, Wenger (1998:195) discusses: "identification through alignment... because the power, individual or collective, to generate alignment extends our identity to the energy of those who align themselves". Collectively, new academics will identify with the actions of their senior colleagues creating "the power to belong, to be a certain person, to claim a place with the legitimacy of membership" (Wenger, 1998:207). Viskovic (2006) introduces the notion of gaining 'expertise' within the social context of the community in order for legitimacy of membership to take place. For Viskovic (2006) expertise is relational to the workplace setting, is embedded in social practice, requires competence in the community discourse and is reciprocal as people "shape and are shaped by the community of practice" (p325). For Lave and Wenger (1991) the need for access is inherent in communities of practice. However, access is liable to manipulation and in some cases denied, with newcomers being prevented from peripheral participation. The sequestering of newcomers could be stimulated by

the experts who seek to control their domain through the retention of knowledge. Lave and Wenger cite the following example: "the master butchers confined their apprentices to jobs that were removed from activities rather than peripheral to them" (1991:104).

***Why am I teaching on all the generic year one modules? Why aren't they using my subject expertise at a higher level? Is it to lead me slowly into the role or is it to protect the established academics positions? It makes me feel on the periphery of the community and is a cause of embarrassment for me. Do they not trust me, are they questioning my ability? Do they prefer to teach 'established' students?***

***(Narrator: month three)***

Could the same be said for all new academics, in that established experts deny productive access to activity in the community of practice? Developing expertise within a new domain takes time, and as previously discussed, traditional mentoring can provide explicit support for the role of workplace learning that incorporates the guidance of existing experts, what Lave and Wenger (1991) would call 'old-timers'. These 'old-timers', within a more localised community of practice, can provide a framework for mutual engagement, joint enterprise and the development of repertoire, styles and discourses (Wenger 1998). However, the efficacy of this framework could be limited by, amongst others, a lack of expertise or the acceptance of collegiality and reciprocity by the old-timers. Gourlay (2011a: 68) questions the acceptance of the communities of practice model within a higher education setting. Her research cites that "the features of shared repertoire, mutual endeavour and expert-novice interactions were not evident in the accounts" of new lecturers from industry practice . Roberts (2006) notes that trust is required if members of a community of practice are to share knowledge, although: "power shapes social interaction and perceptions concerning its use will influence the degree of trust among those engaged within knowledge transfer" (2006:628). Furthermore, not all old-timers are proactive within the continuity and development of practice, and perhaps view newcomers with a degree of mistrust.

Castells (1997), whilst recognising the duality of power and the emerging shift from external to internal concepts, continues to claim that: "power still rules society; it still shapes, and dominates us" (p359), suggesting that power is control and that the 'system' imposes itself on the individual. For James (2007:140-1) the "power and

control" within organisational structures establish "the reformation and existence of its communities of practice, their nature and their boundaries". Whilst power is not exclusively interpreted in terms of conflict or control, within the context of this work the potentially distorting effects of institutional power need consideration. Fuller et al (2005) maintain that power is inherent within the community: "the power to set and relocate boundaries which extend or deny learning opportunities is unevenly distributed throughout the membership" (p54). The stratification of this power structure is likely to be influenced not only by the external climate (socio-economic, political) but primarily by the prevailing organisational culture. Roberts implies that: "An organisation's overall power structure may be reflected in the power relations within its communities of practice" (2006:628). This position identifies with the forthcoming discussion on mentoring, with the view that the notion of mentoring is conceptualised as a rational, structural and hierachal process with emphasis on efficiency and the subsequent conserving and recycling of the power base, the system. However, Roberts (2006:628) also acknowledges that "communities of practice have the potential to provide a place free from the power construct evident in the formal organisational structure, offering a space for experimentation and creativity". This more autonomous environment differs from the traditional industry setting where communities of practice can be viewed as an extension to existing structured departments with a functionalist agenda. Viskovic (2006) holds the view that higher educational institutional settings such as departments are not necessarily communities of practice, although they come to be viewed as such by their members and that this needs consideration within the academic environment.

Nagy and Burch contend that: "in the academic context individual academic loyalty tends to be more closely aligned with disciplines rather than departments" (2009:237) and this sets the scene for tensions between the corporate and localised agenda. Trowler and Knight (2000) identify that the powerhouse of a university's cultural and organisational configuration derives from small units. It has already been established that several communities of practice may exist alongside each other and that the experience of new academics is fundamentally shaped by their interaction and fluidity within these separate communities of practice (Jawitz, 2007). Monaghan and Columbaro (2009:421) claim that: "superficial differences and power struggles will be equalized by embracing a diverse participant base in a community of practice structure". Whilst the new academic will be initially positioned within his/her subject team, it is debatable as to whether new academics have choice of community of practice in which to participate or to influence its membership criteria. Trowler and Knight (2000) would suggest that most new academics: "report being forced to operate

in the academic community without a clear understanding of its key features and its norms of interaction" (p200). Gravet and Peterson (2007) maintain that newcomers enter academia: "expecting openness, collegiality, connectedness, and co-operation" (p199) although there is a case that this expectation is contrary to reality where new academics are often isolated and drawn into power conflicts within several social, organisational and corporate settings. Lucas and Murray (2002) support this stance and claim that these experiences lead to new academics questioning their career paths.

***Have I been naïve in accepting the 'outside' view that academia is collegial and cooperative or was my judgement 'clouded' by the persuasive external discourse espoused from academics that are in reality competitive and individualistic?***

***(Narrator: month four)***

Therefore, new academics face several challenges, contradictions and conflicts as they move between several communities of practice. Bathmaker and Avis (2007) would suggest that new academics navigate between their own initial perception of academic professional identity (perhaps based on their histories, such as former academic relationships and societal influence) and the identities which they feel under pressure to assume as they engage in the various communities of practice. The dominant constructivist theory contained within this work would suggest that the new academics reflect upon this concrete experience in order to construct meaning, interpreting, categorising and continually transforming conceptual structures as they form and reform their professional identities within new social, organisational and corporate settings.

## **Induction, mentorship and training**

The purpose of this section is to recognise that whilst communities of practice may have value in supporting new academic entry, the more formal institutional processes such as induction, mentoring and training also play their part. The section discusses the role of these formal processes and evaluates their merits.

***What sort of induction was that? A thirty minute meeting with my manager to inform me of the 'systems' (how I get paid!). I have so many unanswered***

*questions. He has also stated that he will act as my mentor. Will I get the right support I need and will I be able to be honest with him, after all he has a ‘power relationship’ with me? At least I will have the teacher training on the PGCE course that will, I hope, give me an extra dimension.*

**(Narrator: month one)**

Lucas (2007) suggests that there is a role for communities of practice to support entry to an organisation not just in learning by doing but by providing supportive, practice based training. I recognise that I was appointed on the basis of my knowledge rather than my teaching qualifications and after my initial experiences (as cited below) I would agree with Watters and Diezmann (2005) that formal teacher education and qualification should be an essential aspect of academic staff development.

*I can’t believe it, I have only been here two weeks and already I am lecturing to two hundred students and conducting seminar sessions, albeit at first year level. I have had no training and am unsure whether I am doing it right. It is making me very nervous and uncomfortable. Where is the support? I can’t ask my manager as I don’t want to come across as incompetent, particularly when I am still under probation. No one is checking to make sure I am delivering the right material. Does anyone care? I am not sure that I have made the right decision joining academia.*

**(Narrator: month one)**

Finkelstein et al, (1998) state that historically four percent of faculty annually leave higher education employment primarily due to age distribution. Therefore, the anticipated retirements and increase in student enrolments have created a demand for new academics (Kelley, 2004), and this need is further compounded by new academic attrition (Parker et al, 2009). Research carried out in 2002 for Universities UK, found that a fifth of all universities and higher education colleges experienced difficulties when recruiting academic staff, although further research conducted by Metcalfe et al (2005) did not identify severe recruitment and retention issues within the higher education sector. However, they did discover a link between weak appraisal, training and staff development to increases in academic attrition. Ingersoll and Smith (2004) also note that new entrants cite weak induction programmes and lack of mentoring as key areas of concern. Bamber (2002) would agree and makes a case for the review of new lecturer training that takes account of the changes to the role and culture of the

profession. Warwick (2003), whilst focussing on academic pay, also calls for departments to increase support and development for new academics. Therefore, educational institutions have recognised the importance of new entrant retention as part of their successor planning and overall business strategy and have subsequently implemented induction programmes as one method of assisting the transition and retention to the profession (Parker et al, 2009).

Therefore, the new academic requires, amongst others, an understanding of how they fit into the institution, what their responsibilities are and academic practice. Such support often includes formal induction programmes, planned mentoring schemes, employee manuals, formal training such as the PGCE and appraisals. Whilst these formal approaches can sit alongside cultural socialisation of the new academic, the application is hegemonic and serves to further the corporatist agenda and reinforces the power base of the established communities of practice. Furthermore, the question arises as to whether the formal imposition of norms is possible, as consent is required and also whether the objective is an acceptance of procedures at the expense of values. The following section explores the role of induction, discusses mentoring relationships and finally assesses the value of new entrants undertaking formal training.

## **Induction**

Trowler and Knight (1999:23) define induction as: "professional practices designed to facilitate the entry of new recruits to an organisation and equip them to operate effectively within it". Staniforth and Harland (2006:186) offer support in that induction: "seeks to support an academic's entry into their organisation and enable them to become a productive and long standing member of their department and university". Furthermore, Bartell (2005) suggests that teachers' perceptions of their work are shaped by the context in which they find themselves and maintains that effective induction programmes assist in such contexts. Historically structured induction programmes, apprenticeships and initiation processes have been associated mainly with 'white collar' occupations and corporate professions (Ingersoll and Smith, 2004) with academic induction taking place primarily in the guise of informal community mentorship and collegial reciprocity (Gravett and Petersen, 2007). However, these virtues are being challenged within higher education settings where institutional interests of efficiency, accountability and effectiveness have overtaken individual

interests. Therefore, induction processes have, in some cases, become more institution-wide programmes that reflect the objectives of the centre and serve to assimilate new entrants.

Sinkinson (1997) requests an 'agenda of change' to the way that new educators are inducted. Sinkinson's view is that standard institutional induction processes need to be more coherent and adapted to the specific needs of the new entrant. Subsequent research by Murray (2005a) suggests that despite Sinkinson's request and further initiatives stemming from the 1997 Dearing Report and the 2003 White Paper (Department for Education and Skills) that induction support for new academics does not fully meet the requirements of new teacher educators, such as cultural socialisation. They identified that:

Most teacher educators found themselves dependent on learning through practice in ways which were often unstructured, solitary and dependent upon individual endeavour.

(Murray, 2005a:69)

This view is reinforced by both Martinez who found that some respondents reported "feeling de-skilled, anxious, vulnerable, powerless and insecure" (2008:37) and also by a participant in the research by Hodkinson and Taylor (2002) who reported that:

induction is a huge part for any new member of staff... you don't leave them on their own at all basically to find their own feet or their way around, you just don't do that. Yes, I found it very difficult.

(Hodkinson and Taylor, 2002:258)

It is not suggested that these issues are universal or that formal induction processes would prevent these feelings. However, I would agree with Knight and Trowler (1999) that:

the quality of the induction into the role of a professional academic is important for the future of the individual; can affect their feelings as they cope with the uncertainties and dilemmas of the new role; and can empower them.

(Knight and Trowler, 1999:26)

Commonly there are two approaches to induction, one valuing the routines and corporate framework of the institution, via orientation sessions and short courses, with another majoring on: "peer relations, collegiality and a critical approach to routines and habits" (Hodkinson and Taylor, 2002:256). Murray (2005b) would make the case that the former is the most common induction activity that is governed by human resource procedures against a backdrop of target setting and a probationary requirement. The objection to these 'orientation' sessions and short courses is that they do not satisfy new academics' "situated learning needs" (Knight and Trowler; 1999:26). Martinez (2008) would agree with this stance and recommends a more integrated process that reflects the new academics' 'lived experience' and the challenges/demands of the new role. Furthermore, Rippon and Martin (2003) acknowledge the importance of personal interactions to the success of induction schemes and argue that: "the induction process has to become person-centred as well as procedural in its operation" (p221) and they argue for the inclusion of mentoring initiatives within induction programmes. These mentoring initiatives must emphasise the importance of relationships and their survey identifies three emerging themes: procedural relationships; personal relationships and power relationships (discussed below). I support the notion that new academics require avenues to entry which are less "alienating, confusing and more congenial" (Trowler and Knight, 2000:201) and posit that whilst mentorship cannot be detached from institutional structures, the culture of departments and their hierarchical hegemonic membership, mentorship can be complementary and mutually beneficial (Bullough and Draper, 2004). This is reinforced by Henrich and Attebury (2010:1) who make a case for mentoring that supports "both the career-enhancing functions as well as the psychological functions".

## Mentoring

*I just want to talk to someone who will offer me the right subject based advice! I feel lonely and insecure. The established academics seem uncooperative and detached from the level of work I am undertaking and my 'mentor' is my manager who is unapproachable, judgmental, and has some control over my future career; I can't ask him! Some of my colleagues on the PGCE are enjoying mutually collaborative mentoring relationships with colleagues. I am missing out*

*on this and feel that my progress is being hampered. What is the point of this mentorship?*

*(Narrator: month three)*

The Committee of Vice Chancellors and Principals Handbook on Induction (1999) recommends the establishment of formal mentorship programmes (Knight and Trowler, 1999). Research by Boice in 1992 (cited in Darwin and Palmer, 2009) implies that mentoring was only offered to approximately one-third of new entrants in higher education faculties, with Darwin and Palmer (2009) revealing that: "more recent research suggests there has been little change in this area" (p125). However, Murray's (2008) study of thirty five higher education institutions established that 86% of induction provision at department level did provide mentors for new entrants, although she accepts that the term mentor is "open to very different interpretations" (2008:124).

Within the historical context of mutually beneficial relationships between the experienced mentor and a new entrant, Bullough and Draper (2004) portray mentoring as an unqualified good. Mentoring in this more traditional form is based on unidirectional and asymmetrical relationships (Angelique, et al 2002). It could be argued that traditional (formal) mentoring is an intervention framed within a functionalist perspective which does not address the issues within the 'changing territory' of higher educational institutions, which I have previously alluded to. In opposition to this notion, Provident (2005) offers a somewhat utopian view with the concept that collaborative mentoring has emerged within academia and that this has replaced the traditional hierarchical model. Collaborative mentoring is described as:

a practice that creates a creative, democratic relationship which promotes the development of insights and understandings between peers... and is practitioner centred, reflective and empowering.

(Provident, 2005:2)

Angelique et al (2002) contend that peer mentoring is another new variant within higher education settings and that peer mentoring moves from a functionalist perspective to a more radical-humanistic approach, for example:

In peer mentoring, faculty of mutual interest and stature forms dyads or triads to share job related information and carer strategies and to

provide each other with emotional support.

(Angelique et al, 2002:196)

Gravett and Petersen (2007:203) agree with an approach to mentoring that challenges power relations and suggest a lateral mentoring method that “offers mutually supportive and challenging co-learning partnerships of co-equals and group mentoring”.

### **Mentoring and the institution**

Whilst there may be examples of more informal collaborative, lateral and peer mentoring initiatives within higher educational settings, it cannot be suggested that these are a panacea for all mentoring practices, as ‘no one size fits all’. As Ingersoll and Smith state: “the particulars in regard to character and content of these programs [sic] [mentoring practices] themselves widely vary” (2004:30). Furthermore, the mentorship programme must adopt institutional objectives, such as assessing the suitability of new entrants to the workplace environment with a view to rejecting poor performance, perhaps through non extension of probationary periods. Barkham (2005:331) suggests that: “the process of mentoring is viewed as an investment in staff and the constantly evolving institution” (Barkham, 2005:331) and therefore it is right that the institution adopts a functionalist approach. After all, due to the ‘changing territory’ in which higher educational institutions operate they do work within a competitive business environment. Henrich and Attebury (2010) would sympathise with this view recognising that traditional mentoring legitimises the formal aspect of the induction programme. Martinez (2008: 47) supports the view of institutional control, as: “the conflation of mentoring and appraisal roles in some institutions”. Mentoring programmes are also constrained by resource issues within the host institution, such as the number, the availability, the training and the quality of the mentors. Many institutions have confronted the challenges by implementing both formal and informal mentoring initiatives within induction programmes. However, whilst there is a call for a common focus on the specific needs of new entrants to the profession, the current mentor systems are fragmented, locally based and offer limited transference of best practice (Jones, 2009). Therefore, despite widespread adoption, mentoring programmes vary in focus, infrastructure and outcomes (Parker et al 2009).

## Mentoring relationships (personal, procedural and power)

The success of mentoring initiatives is partially governed by the personal aptitude and the proficiency between the participants. Rippon and Martin (2003) would describe this as 'personal relationships', partnerships based on "professional and interpersonal collaboration" (p215). They argue that:

The views of our sample provide evidence to suggest that the quality of interactions between mentor and the probationer teacher are paramount in providing a good induction experience.

(Rippon and Martin, 2003:211)

However, these relationships bring risk for the participants. Gravett and Petersen (2007) suggest that academia has a history of patriarchal relations and imply that mentoring practices reinforce the status quo and reproduce the existing disparate dominant power structures. Barnett (2008) recognises this risk and recommends setting boundaries to maximise the relationships, whilst minimising participant risk. Furthermore, such boundaries need to be navigated to help ensure that the mentors: "objectivity and judgement are not impaired and that protégés are not exploited or harmed" (Barnett, 2008:3). Establishing boundaries add structure and safety to mentorships and assist a mentor's fiduciary responsibility to the mentee, although it has to be recognised that whilst such boundaries are beneficial, such rigidity may be impractical and hinder the development of the relationship. Rippon and Martin (2003) would propose this as 'procedural relationships' in which the affiliation is mechanistic and unresponsive to the needs of the mentee and driven by the induction process itself.

It is possible that some mentors, perhaps through lack of mentoring experience or training, may eschew boundary crossing due to the perceived risk to their fiduciary responsibility and miss the opportunity to enhance and augment their mentoring relationship, assuming that this is what they desire. Rippon and Martin (2003:223) continue with their submission that the mentor/mentee relationships are: "determined by the interplay of personal intelligences and the skills of the participants" and assert that this understanding should not be left to chance; they cite the selection procedure as pivotal to the process. Parker et al (2009:330) propose: that "mentoring programs can accelerate induction where new teachers are paired with carefully selected mentors". Mullen (2008) notes that most formal mentoring programmes have standards

and structures that establish the desirable characteristics within the selection criteria for mentors and mentees. Data from Knight and Trowler (1999) suggest that mentors are not chosen for displaying such characteristics, have not received the appropriate training, and in many circumstances are appointed as mentors to the people they supervise/manage. Hansman (2001) likens the assignment of mentors to arranged or planned marriages, in that there is no choice in partnerships and that control and power remains with the deciding party. This leads to the final emerging theme from Rippon and Martin (2003): 'power relationships' and the issue of control.

The very nature of a mentor/mentee relationship implies a power relationship, particularly in instances where the mentor is charged with carrying out formal assessments. Under these circumstances the mentor becomes a gatekeeper to tenure decisions and departmental acceptance. One respondent in Rippon and Martin's research refers to their mentor as having some of the traits of a probation officer: "someone who would be out to control the behaviours and practices of the probationer" (2003: 219). Barkham (2005) implies that the mentoring process is an opportunity for management to control the process of acculturation. Furthermore, mentoring could promote replication of institutional values and hegemonic culture by a new generation of academics, particularly as the mentor may be chosen because they best represent the corporate culture and dominant cultural values (Hansman, 2001). As previously suggested, within some mentoring programmes the supervisors may be appointed as mentors to the people they oversee. Bensimon et al (2000, cited in Staniforth and Harland, 2006) go a stage further and suggest that Heads of Departments should consider mentoring as part of their role. However, the conflict between the Head of Department hierarchical role and the possible boundary crossing/ violations must be recognised within this setting.

Megginson et al (2006) suggest that management is more for immediate results whereas the mentoring relationship takes a wider view. They found that managers who successfully acted as mentors had the ability to separate between the two functions. However, I would question whether the mentee could easily distinguish the boundaries within this multiple relationship and argue that this unequal position of power makes it difficult, if not impossible, to ensure an open and mutually beneficial relationship. The central question in all mentoring activity is 'who should benefit'. Mullins (2005) takes a more managerial, functionalist stance: "the prime beneficiary is the organisation but the individual also benefits" (p418) and this would confirm the opinion that the interest of the manager is being aided at the expense of employee interest. Nevertheless, whilst

there may be concerns within this multiple relationship it is possible that a mentoring relationship with a line manager can help a mentee: "become more visible to influential others and is a useful tool for protégés to build a network with powerful individuals" (Young and Perrewe, 2004:19). Furthermore, it gives the mentee greater access to their manager to establish a stronger rapport that could be manipulated by the mentee to obtain more powerful positions, thus aiding career ambitions, perhaps at the expense of other new entrants. It is recognised that boundary crossing/violations are not just one way (mentor to mentee). For Barkham (2005) mentor power is derived from their professional experience and institutional standing and it is partially the responsibility of the mentee to develop the relationship through negotiation and reciprocity with the mentor. The mentee is not a passive receiver of the mentoring process.

### **Scene Critique**

This scene introduces the notion that learning is connected to the conditions in which it is learned, such as social contexts. The Pilot Study clearly indicated that a new academic seeks meaning and understanding of social systems and role structures via shared practice and mutual association within the academic communities to which they are initially located. Therefore, communities of practice as a widely applied and accepted model of transition were explored within this scene. In addition the scene examined the links between new staff attrition and the provision and acceptance of formal processes, such as induction, mentoring and training.

The concept of communities of practice dominates much of the literature surrounding new academic entry and the scene firstly introduces the concept of communities of practice by linking the current literature to the original model developed by Lave and Wenger (1991). However, my narration throughout this scene illustrates that, throughout my initial experiences, the key characteristics of communities of practice as identified by Lave and Wenger (1991) were not fully evident throughout my own transition. I agree with the literature that several communities of practice may be present alongside each other and that the new academic is fluid between them, although I would contend that they impede each other, as the practices contained within them can be contradictory and confusing for the new academic.

The scene accepts the position that communities of practice already exist and that they are open to new academic entry although I would argue that this is not always the case. Whilst academic departments/subject teams may exist and have staff bases, I would not necessarily agree that they are acting communities of practice, as defined within this scene. For example, some subject group communities are fragmented, insular and operate in isolation to the wider collaborative agenda. Furthermore, the members of these subject group communities are not receptive to challenges to their established positions and therefore view new academics with unease. Fundamental to what is termed an inbound trajectory to full membership is the relationship between the new academic and the dominant members of the community to which they seek entry. It is argued that some communities of practice are re-productive and seek only to assimilate new members into established practice. It is claimed that it could prove difficult for a new academic to 'break into' a community of practice, particularly if they were opposed to the established practice, and this was acknowledged in the previous scene. This led onto a discussion regarding the power and control of established academics within the setting of communities of practice. Wenger (1998) does not deny the significance of power within communities of practice, yet it was often overlooked in much of the literature. Collectively new academics identify with the actions of their senior colleagues who are at the centre of the community. I contend that established academics use this centrality as the principle means of directing and controlling community goals, activities and the ultimate acceptance of new academic entry.

As stated, the concept of communities of practice dominates much of the literature surrounding new academic entry and as such it required examination. Some of the more up to date literature sources questioned the value and acceptance of communities of practice within Higher Education settings. With the knowledge of this research and my own experiences I would agree that the notion of communities of practice, within higher education, as places of mutual engagement, joint enterprise and shared repertoire is somewhat erroneous.

As my narration stated, I found the communities that I 'belonged' to be ineffectual in fulfilling my immediate transitional needs, therefore I focussed my attention on the more formal institutional processes within the working milieu, such as, induction, mentoring and training. However, with the exception of the teaching qualification (PGCHE) I also found the induction process and the mentoring regime to be inadequate, which would support some sections of the literature. The literature corroborates the position stated in the Exposition, that universities have concerns

regarding recruitment and academic attrition. Some of the literature relates new academic attrition to weak induction programmes and lack of mentoring practice. Whilst I would have some sympathy with this view, I do not believe that this should be viewed in isolation to the other topics that have already been discussed as part of this literature review, as they are all coterminous. Having said this, I would question whether formal induction programmes and mentoring practices can be successfully applied within Higher Education.

Induction is a process that supports entry of new academics to an institution and prepares them to function effectively within it. The literature makes the point that a new academics perception of their work and the working milieu is fundamentally shaped by their induction and I would agree with this position. I accept that there is no universal induction process that is delivered across all Higher Educational settings and that a new academic's induction would be unique to them, dependent upon several variables, such as timing of induction, personnel involved and content. Having said this, the literature identified two types of induction processes, one that focuses primarily on the corporate systems of the institution and its practices and one that concentrates on peer relations and collegiality. I would contest that it is at this point of entry that the new academic becomes aware of the dysfunctional nature of the institution. This is as a result of them being subjected to two inductions, one from the centre and one from within the subject team, both of which, at times, can be opposing and contradictory in content and intent. I would agree with the literature that a more integrated approach is required, although I would question whether this is feasible, given the previous discussions on the acceptance of the central agenda by established academics.

The evidence would suggest that mentoring is not always readily available and when offered is somewhat fragmented. The literature makes a case for the inclusion of mentoring initiatives to become part of the formal induction process. I would claim that mentorship would always face a challenge to its value by being part of the formal process, as it would be viewed as functionalist and hegemonic in outcome. I would encourage a mentorship programme that has some separation from the central process, perhaps led and managed from within the subject teams. I would disagree with the notion, undertaken by some institutions, of implementing both formal and informal mentoring programmes, as this would create further fragmentation and opposing and contradictory messages for the new academic, in addition to the ones cited in the paragraph above.

# **Scene Three: Transitions, Socialisation and Identity**

## **Preface**

The purpose of this Scene is to establish some of the theoretical underpinning that form the foundation for the three phases within the conceptual model that maps the transitions and socialisation of the new academic. The scene also concentrates on the concept of academic identity and the development of a personal academic identity within the boundaries of the changing higher educational setting and the interactions within the communities of practice.

***Although I cannot get used to the autonomy and lack of management control over my work I am finding the transition to the system of working is going well, I also enjoy the teaching and student interaction. What I am finding difficult is making sense of who I am in the workplace and where I fit into the community. I was once a confident and assertive person at work, now I'm less self-assured. I hope that I will eventually assimilate into this environment as I am enjoying the work and can see a future. I am full of contradictions and uncertainties. Who am I and where am I going?***

**(Narrator: month five)**

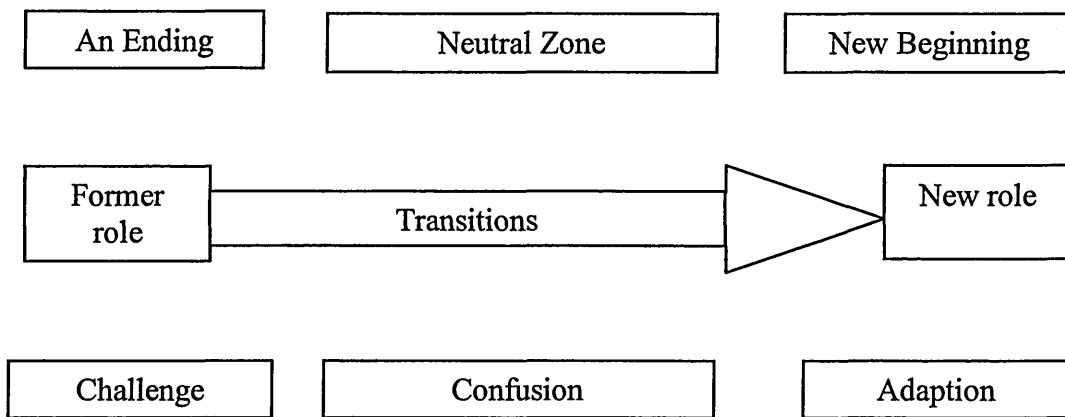
## **Transitions and Socialisation**

The purpose of this section is to identify the key theories of transition and socialisation that informed the development of the conceptual model (Model 15).

Bridges (1991) states that in making occupational moves people do not have any problems with the situational change itself, such as the physical move, but with the transitions which are more psychological. Broome (1997) would concur; she considers change as observed and planned, whereas within transition, the 'shock and detachment' of letting go of former roles is a more psychological process. Bridges (1991) identifies three stages of transition that people go through as they internalise and come to terms with their new situation. Hill and Macgregor (1998) offer three alternatives, shown in brackets.

1. An Ending: letting go of the former role and your place within it (Challenges)
2. The Neutral Zone: the old is gone but the new is not fully operational (Confusion)
3. A New Beginning: The discovery of a new sense of purpose (Adaption)

**Figure One: Transitions and Socialisation**



New academics may accept the ending of their former role yet they retain some residual values and take them into what Bridges (1991) describes as the loneliness and insecurities of the 'neutral zone', where the new academic seeks comfort within the rules and procedures to make sense of their new environment. Archer (2008) would argue that this desire for formal rationality gradually becomes subdued as the new academic moves towards the substantive rationality, the norms, values, and the ethic of practice of the established academic. Archer also recognised that new academics identify with core values of academia, such as professionalism and "constructed academic identities ... akin to those identified by older academics" (2008:270). As previously stated, the influence of the established academic in relation to the transition and identity of the new academic can be instrumental and it is possible that the new academic eventually assimilates within the existing institutional structures and traditional cultures as they succumb to hegemonic practices.

As stated above, it is through transition and socialisation that new academics become members of the institution by internalising the behaviours, norms, rules and values of their organisations (Jablin, 2001; Archer, 2008). Berger and Luckmann (1966 cited in

Calhoun et al, 2007) state that institutions: “control human conduct by setting up predefined patterns of conduct which channel it in one direction” (p44). The “process by which an organisation attempts to influence and change individuals to meet its need,” is viewed by Kramer as socialisation (2010:3). Berger and Luckmann(1966) identify two development stages of socialisation: primary and secondary socialisation, where:

Primary socialisation is the first socialisation an individual undergoes in childhood, through which he becomes a member of society. Secondary socialisation is any subsequent process that inducts an already socialised individual into sectors of the objective world of his society.

(Berger and Luckmann, (1966:130)

This research is concerned with secondary socialisation, as agents of this process include the workplace, institutions and peer groups. Jablin (2001) developed a linear model of organisational socialisation that involved three phases:

- Anticipatory Socialisation: (Vocational and Organisational)
- Encounter period
- Metamorphosis period

Anticipatory socialisation is the period prior to joining an organisation where new entrants ‘rehearse’ their entry to the organisation, visualize their position within that organisation and research the organisation to understand the social norms and values within the setting. For Jablin (2001) there are two forms of anticipatory socialisation: vocational and organisational. Vocational socialisation refers to the process where people acquire the necessary skill set (values, attitudes, knowledge) to become members of the culture they seek, this primarily takes place from childhood where sources such as: peer groups, family and education hold significant influence. Organisational socialisation is the outlook that the individual cultivates from the process of applying for the position within the organisation. These expectations are sourced from the job adverts, organisational literature and the job interview. It is at this stage where the organisational assimilation of new members begins.

The next two stages are linked to what Jablin terms ‘organisational assimilation’. This is “thought of as the process by which individuals become integrated within the culture of an organisation” (Jablin, 2001:755). This process is divided into two reciprocal subsections. The first is categorised as the Encounter period or what Jablin calls the

"breaking in" (2001:758) stage. At this moment socialisation is the process by which the employee acquires a functional level of organisational understanding, learns the requirements of their role and begins to accept the established patterns of behaviour and thinking within the organisation. During the metamorphosis stage the newcomer starts to become accepted within the organisation and is modifying attitudes and behaviours to become consistent with the expectations and culture of the organisation. It is recognised that the period of transition varies, although eventually the newcomer may become immersed in the organisational culture and functional processes and ultimately identify themselves, and be identified as, a fully fledged member of the community.

## **Identity**

The purpose of this section is to develop the concept of academic identity within the boundaries of the changing higher educational setting and the context of communities of practice that new academics come into contact with.

*I keep on being referred to as an 'academic'. I cannot agree, as I don't fully understand the term, even though I believe that established academics are indeed 'academic'. It is confusing. I consider myself an industry professional that teaches, although I feel that my professional identity is changing. I am uncertain where it will lead, as I currently would not want to be identified as an academic, based on the attitudes of some of my colleagues and my current perception of them.*

*(Narrator: month five)*

Quigley (2011) would understand my confusion as: "academic identity lacks precision in terms of description... is complex and is composed of many competing influences" (p21). Having said this, I accept the position taken by Henkel (2005), in that social theories of identity are influenced by a communitarian perspective and symbolic interactionism where: "individuals are both distinctive and socially embedded" (p154). Therefore academic identity is a function of community membership, with new academics creating accounts of their experiences and opportunities for agency within these social contexts. Furthermore, whilst an individual is unique and dynamic they are

contained within the same culture, language and structures as others (Bron, 2002): it is the interpretation and interaction that makes us unique. However, it could be said that the culture and language within which we are contained is ‘contaminated’ by influences outside of our management and influence and as such our interpretation and interaction have elements of structural and external control.

In her earlier work Henkel (2004) claimed that the concept of identity had been of: “central symbolic and instrumental significance in the lives of individual academics and in the workings of the academic profession” (p167). Pick (2004) makes the case that such academic identity is under threat as the modernisation of universities is: “characterised by the emergence of more self governing, more fragile, more leader dependent and less self-producing institutions, resulting in the potential loss of their identity” (p113). Winter (2009) agrees, contending that “the perceived need to align all academics around corporate values and goals has given rise to academic identity schisms in higher education” (p121). However, Billot and Smith (2008) argue that it is not so much a loss of academic identity but a re-shaping as academics modify their role to the changing academic environment. Clegg (2008) offers support: “academic identities being shaped and developed in response to the changes in university structures (p340)... [and] “rather than being under threat, it appears that identities in academia are expanding and proliferating” (p343). I accept Clegg’s view and would also agree with Henkel that: “identities are shaped and reinforced in and by strong and stable communities and the social processes generated within them” (2005:157) and that multiple dynamic cultures exist. Nevertheless, there are residual concerns in the loss of plurality as academic institutions lean towards a homogenised culture (Churchman and King, 2009).

The stability of higher education institutions that Henkel (2005) suggests is questionable. Furthermore, is the boundary between academic activity, communities and institutions becoming blurred? Whitchurch (2007) takes the view that traditional concepts, cultures, structures and management within academic institutions is now more fluid and would suggest that academic identities have been: “influenced primarily by the structures in which they found themselves... characterised as the knowledge domain, the institutional domain and the sector domain” (2007:163). The knowledge domain is representative of the administrative and regulatory structure and has application such as informational knowledge, for example, market intelligence or sector developments. These: “create new bases of knowledge and understanding that will inform the evolution of institutional identities” (2007:164). The institutional domain links

the organisational and academic agendas and multi-professional identities are created as the polarisation of administrational work and academic work breaks down and the academic and organisational agendas merge (2007). However, this is dependent upon the institution. As Whitchurch (2007) states:

the opportunity to exercise personal agency and the adoption of cross boundary roles would appear to depend on the institution in which an individual is located and on their position within its structure, as well as on personal aspirations and abilities.

(Whitchurch, 2007:165)

The sector domain links the individual to sector affiliations, such as internal subject specialist and external accrediting bodies. These groupings therefore provide communities to which people can belong, where shared experiences and professional exchange can take place outside of the normal boundary of their 'office'. Wenger states that individuals must: "align their activities and their interpretations of events with structures, forces and purposes beyond their community of practice" (1998:173). Then again, membership of the sector domain offers belonging and collective identity, perhaps in conflict with the institutional domain. Wenger (1998) identifies three distinct modes of belonging:

Engagement –	active involvement in mutual processes of negotiation of meaning
Alignment –	coordinating our energy and activities in order to fit within broader structures and contribute to broader enterprises.
Imagination –	creating images of the world and seeing connections through time and space by extrapolating from our own experience

(Wenger, 1998:174)

Within the context of this work the adapting and linking of Wenger's 'modes' and the Whitchurch (2009) 'domains' offers further insight into a new academic's identity development. Engagement is the initial formal process of relationship interactions, practices and negotiated learning within the knowledge domain. Alignment suggests the substantive connection of the new academic to the community through the compliance and assimilation of coordinated enterprises and practices within the sector domain. Imagination is a creative process where the new academic is an active agent

within their development, generating a new identity and relationships, based on images of the past and future within the institutional domain. Clegg holds the view that the concept of identity is a “multiple and shifting term” and should not be viewed “as a fixed property” (2008:329). Therefore, the new academic is fluid between the modes and domains cited above, as they do not move in a linear fashion between them.

Whilst the three domains discussed above are representative of established structures, it is proposed that academics within the contemporary university setting have assumed greater personal agency and a broadening of their professional identities outside of regulatory and business processes as they build on their knowledge by working across functional boundaries (modes and domains). Whitchurch's (2009) fourth 'project domain' represents this multi-professionalism and argues that as new academics move across established boundaries and into fresh territories they are able to negotiate structure and practice to influence the structures and in doing so construct and renew their identities on a continual basis. Not everyone would agree with this concept. Nixon et al (2001) question whether academics have shared values and expectations and suggest that the profession is divided against itself as the fragmentation in practice creates a crisis of academic and organisational identity.

As a consequence of the new educational landscapes outlined above it could be suggested that established concepts of academia have been superimposed by more fluid and permeable institutional structures, cultures and subject specialisms (Whitchurch, 2006) with perhaps competing structures within the same institution. Nixon et al (2001) also argue that the academic workforce includes a plurality of occupational groups (communities) that can be divided by task, influence and seniority within the institution, with Henkel (2004) implying that academic identities are associated with membership of these communities within the institution, the cultures and the discipline or subject to which that academic belongs. Jawitz (2009) recognises that the institution plays a significant role in the development of academic identity yet cites the discipline (subject area) as the “central organising vehicle” (p242). Kogan (2000) agrees and claims that it is the place where “a sense of academic identity flourishes” (p209). This possibly leads to competing notions of academic identity between the new and established academic as the new academic perceives the established academic to be out of touch with the industry (discipline) practice.

Giddens uses the term ‘fateful moments’ in describing the transition points where an individual recognises that: “she has to sit up and take notice of new demands as well

as new possibilities" (1991:142). For Giddens these reflexive encounters help to reconstitute the self. Therefore, it is not only the new academic who uses personal agency to construct and reconstruct identities within the new institutional and cultural settings, but also the established academics, as the institutional boundaries have become more blurred, fragmented and permeable. Furthermore, the tension for the new academic is working within the fluidity between their actual (factual, present assertions) and designated (future, potential) identities but also their socialisation within existing communities of practice that may be in opposition to the changing institutional setting with perhaps what Duke (2003) would argue as superficial compliance to diversification and cultural change. As previously stated, Nixon et al (2001) would suggest that there is a crisis of academic identity with the 'community' as it attempts to reconcile alternative values and aspirations. It could be argued that new academics within this institutional setting can help the conflict between continuity and displacement (Lave and Wenger, 1991) by bringing new ideas and concepts to the communities. After all, the identity of the community is shaped by the identity of the individuals contained within it. As previously suggested the construction of identity is understood as a career long project with the implication that identity is fluid, transitional and shaped by not only the retention of existing identities but the formulation of new identities that may vary over time (Giddens 1999). Furthermore, as intimated in the previous discussion regarding Whitchurch's (2007) project domain, I acknowledge that new academics as past industry professionals are more at ease within the new managerial setting and therefore ably equipped to transform within the changing institutional environment and indeed use this experience to assist established academics in the development of their own institutional identity. Bathmaker and Avis (2007) state that whilst new academics are expected to: "assimilate into the existing practice, there may be a more dialogic relationship, which allows newcomers to act as agents of change" (p514). This leads to a duality of identity for the new academic, one being contained within the institutional setting where understanding and potential influence is far greater than within the actual practical setting (teaching/assessment) where knowledge and understanding require input from senior members within the community. Therefore, I would say that academic identity is transitional and duplicitous as academics are not finished products with fixed identities. Academics construct and reconstruct, make and remake identities through interactions, language and the adjustment and readjustment to cultures, sub-cultures and their symbols.

## **Scene Critique**

The scene takes the view that it is through transition and socialisation that new academics become members of the institution. The scene initially explores the view held by Bridges (1991) that it is not the situational change, such as physical move, that people making occupational changes have problems with, it is with the transitional issues that are more psychological that create more noticeable concern for them. I would agree with this statement, although I also recognise that a situational change can significantly impact upon a person's psychological position and as such the two cannot be detached. For example, Bridges (1991) identifies 'An Ending' as the first stage of his transitional model and states that it is at this juncture that people let go of their former role and their place within it. I would argue that it is at this point where the physical move has a higher psychological impact on transition, as new work-life balances (working from home) and working environments (office sharing) are considered alongside the internalising of the institutions behaviours, norms, values and rules. Whilst the models of Bridges (1991) and Hill and McGregor (1998) have a function in relation to this research I suggest that they lack some application to situational change.

The literature focused on organisational socialisation and explored Jablin's (2001) three stage model. Applying this model would suggest that a new academic begins their socialisation prior to actual entry to the academic milieu. Jablin (2001) suggests that new entrants 'rehearse' their entry by visualising their position and status within the organisation. I would agree that most people would naturally develop this practice but would argue that the outcome could differ significantly. This potential variance would depend on the prior institutional and sector experience and knowledge attained by the new entrant. Jablin (2001) would claim that this is primarily achieved through the job advert, organisational literature and job interview. I would contend that a new entrant's visualisation progression pre dates the job advert. A new academic's perception of the higher education sector and its application to the institution will also be based on prior interactions and observations of the sector and possibly the institute. I would argue that it is at this point where expectations are established and socialisation begins. However, I also claim that it is at this stage where barriers to socialisation arise as preconceptions and the reality advance towards conflict.

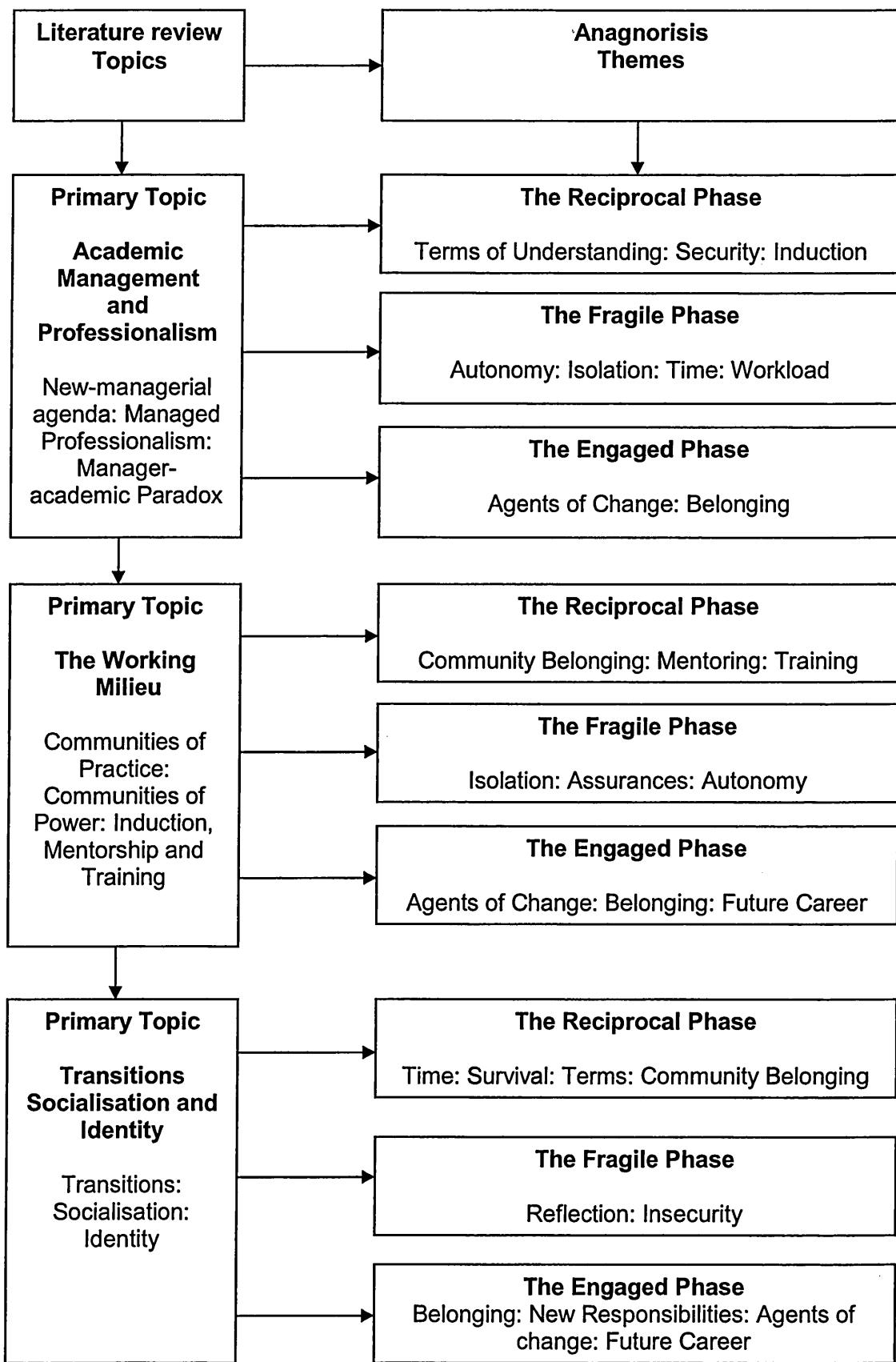
The literature makes a case that identity is a function of community membership and that we are contained within the same culture, language and structure as others within

that community. If this is the case then the notion of one overarching academic identity cannot be substantiated, as communities, their membership and the interactions within would differ across institutions and subject areas. It is suggested that, for a new academic, establishing an identity is an iterative process in which modifications are made in response to internal and external factors. Indeed, as Whitchurch (2009) suggests, a certain amount of fluidity is necessary as transition through various community 'domains' will have different and possibly competing influences. I would agree that the community within which the new academic is situated is fundamental in shaping their academic identity, although this creates some concerns and I draw the reader to the prior discussion on the value and effectiveness of communities of practice to clarify this point.

The literature asserts that academic identity has a central significance to academics, although I contend that academic identity and what it means to be an academic lacks a precision in terms. Nevertheless, much of the literature expressed concerns, from established academics, that traditional values of academic identity, such as, autonomy, professionalism, plurality, altruism and community are being eroded as part of the changes to Higher Education environment (Act One, Scene One). I would agree that there is a generalised perception of academic identity that is based on these pre-conceptions although I would disagree that an erosion of these traits would lead to a loss of academic identity. I suggest that it is more about academic lifestyle rather than identity and it is this that the established academics challenge. New managerialism and the process may change the academic lifestyle although the residual notions of academic identity remodel and primarily remain.

As stated earlier the topics and theories discussed within the substantive literature review were tested and re-examined as the dissertation progressed, with some of the topics being explored later in the dissertation, particularly within the Anagnorisis. It is accepted that not all of the literature related to the subsequent topics that were investigated. However, I argue that it was necessary to include them as they were instrumental to my thinking and therefore the development of the dissertation. Model 3 below is a demonstration of how the reviewed literature relates to the subject matter discussed within the Anagnorisis.

Model 3: Literature Review theme and Anagnorisis mapping.



# **Act Two: Research Methodology**

## **Preface**

The purpose of this Act is to offer a detailed examination of the research methodology that was applied as part of this research and justification for its adoption. The Act is broken down into four distinct scenes.

Scene One: clarifies the methodology within narrative inquiry and explores the way in which the work of Goffman (1959, 1971, 1974, and 1983) influenced the overall approach to the dissertation.

Scene Two: classifies the research design and investigates the methods employed.

Scene Three: specifies and justifies the process of data analysis and interpretation

Scene Four: considers the research ethics and validity within the context of this dissertation.

## **Scene One: Methodological Approach**

The purpose of this scene is to clarify the methodological approach adopted within this dissertation. The Scene acknowledges that the methodology embraced the use of an interpreted approach that adopted a constructivist paradigm that assumes relativist ontology, a subjectivist epistemology and a naturalistic set of methodological procedures (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003c). The research methodology resonates with the tenet of symbolic interactionism and this is discussed with particular reference to the work of Goffman (1971), as his work influenced my approach to this dissertation. Within this research I consider myself to be one of the participants and I follow Goffman's lead in giving 'self' a prominent place within the writing. This co-constructed research process adopts a narrative approach which requires an hermeneutic understanding and commitment to reflexivity and this is explored further in the scene.

*My research journey began at a staff meeting that took place in the first month of my tenure. At the meeting I was challenged by an established academic who asked me, directly, and in what I considered a confrontational manner, what my*

*ontological and epistemological positions were. I admitted to having little idea as to what he was talking about and left the meeting feeling embarrassed, humiliated and exposed. Whilst my initial objective, during my first year, was to establish and develop my teaching practice, this experience made me realise that I needed to expand my knowledge base. (I would not feel vulnerable again and so my research journey commenced as I enrolled on the EdD Programme).*

*(Narrator: month one)*

The presentation of this dissertation is based on a metaphor of theatre that explores social life (Myers and Newman, 2007) and this design lends itself to a narrative methodology that seeks out emic meaning held by the characters (Stake 2003 cited in Denzin and Lincoln, 2003b). Riessman (2008:4) views narrative research historically and states that it began with: "Aristotle's examination of the Greek Tragedy... the dramatist creates a representation of events, experiences and emotions". The narrative not only portrays the subject's biographies but also places the researcher's own experience within the text (Tedlock, 2003) and I actively sought to accomplish this. The Exposition (introduction) positioned my own biography. Furthermore, throughout the main scenes within Act One (the literature review) I gave accounts of my own experiences and emotions as a new academic from industry.

The purpose of this research is to focus on the lived experiences of new academics, in order to 'cultivate' (Wenger and Synder, 2000) 'thick descriptions' (Geertz, 1973). I approach the research not with the intention of seeking objectivity or generalisation but "in search of meaning" (Geertz, 1973:5) and "illumination" (Usher et al, 1997:176) within the lived experiences of the new academics through the use of an interpretive approach which acknowledges that lived experiences are socially constructed and intersubjective (Adams, 2008; Herrmann, 2008). The interpretive paradigm: "in contrast to its normative counterpart is characterised by a concern for the individual" (Cohen, et al, 2007: 21) with narratives: "providing access to peoples identity and personality" (Lieblich, et al, 1998:7). Bruner suggests that:

It is through our own narratives we principally construct a version of ourselves in the world, and it is through narrative that a culture provides models of identity and agency to its members.

(Bruner, 1996: xiv)

For Pelias: "culture is not static; it is an ongoing process of social construction, ever changing, always in negotiation" (2004:110). These negotiations are navigated through communicative social practices. Communicative practices create and promote social realities contributing to the formation of identities with language being the most useful tool within which humans interact in these settings (Rorty, 1999). Identities can therefore be seen as socially created, sustained and modified through individuals and cultural groups (Sundin and Johannisson, 2005). This aligns with my view that: "social and cognitive structures are created and situated in interactions among people [and] reality is created through a process of social exchange" (Au and Carroll, in Speece and Keogh, 1996: 20).

This research methodology resonates with the tenet of symbolic interactionism, as derived by Mead (1934) in that: "mind arises through communication... in a social process or context of experience – not communication through mind" (p 50) and that the self "is essentially a social structure and arises in social experience" (p 140). For symbolic interactionists humans inhabit two worlds: the natural world and the social world. In the social world there is the existence of symbols, like language which enables humans to give meaning to objects and therefore there is a focus on: "subjective meanings and the symbols by which they are produced and represented" (Cohen, et al, 2007: 24). Societies are made up of social actors who translate and label each other's actions and base their understanding and lived experiences on the meaning of such actions (Mead, 1934). The 'lived experience' as it is understood by social actors is central to constructivism and this is the focus of the research, the 'lived experiences' of new academics "mediated by the use of symbols, by interpretation, or by ascertaining the meaning of one another's actions" (Blumer, 1962:180). Goffman is generally considered to be a symbolic interactionist although he occasionally objected to that label (Charon, 1992) and later in life distance himself from the characterization (Manning, 1992). However, Goffman dealt with many of the same themes as symbolic interactionists and derived much of his inspiration from Mead (1934). Goffman (1983) focused on face- to- face interaction, what he called 'the interaction order' of analysis and viewed action as socially situated and socially meaningful.

Within every action a communication is to be accomplished, the person is a presenter of meaningful action. Action in order to be socially meaningful must be bound by certain rules; otherwise it is understandable neither to the actor nor to the audience.

(Ashworth, 2000:184)

Three themes form the foundation of Goffman's perspective – drama, self and ritual. The self is a collaborative construction within social interaction, a product of the drama within the interaction and an object of interpersonal rituals. It is not the purpose of the scene to discuss, in depth, Goffman's (1971) conceptual framework but to lend the reader some understanding of how his work influenced my approach to this dissertation.

### The influence of Goffman

When an individual appears before others, he knowingly and unwittingly projects a definition of the situation, of which a conception of himself is an important part. When an event occurs which is expressively incompatible with this fostered impression, significant consequences are simultaneously felt.

(Goffman, 1971:235)

Many observers would describe Goffman as a 'dramaturgist' and it was certainly his use of drama, as a source of metaphors to broaden symbolic interaction theory toward the performative, which first caught my attention. Within the context of this dissertation understanding the term 'dramaturgical' with reference to Shakespeare's play 'As you like it' made sense of Goffman's theory.

All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players. They have their exits and their entrances; and one man plays many parts, his acts being seven ages.

(Shakespeare, Act II, 1623)

In the context of this dissertation the new academics were generating symbols of themselves, casting a classification of who they were and making declarations about themselves which they test and negotiate with others. For Goffman this is about performance, presenting a character to the audience.

What talkers undertake to do is not to provide information to a recipient but to present dramas to an audience... in giving shows.

(Goffman, 1974:508)

Goffman's dramatic process of social interaction is most evident within his seminal 1959 book 'Presentation of Self in Everyday Life'. It was within this text that I began to see connectivity between Goffman's concepts in relation to the interactions of the respondents in this study and also my own experience.

One example would be Goffman's notion of 'impression management'. New academics attempt to direct the impressions that they purposely give to others in order to appear proficient and of reputable character. Goffman (1959) calls this a "personal front" (p34) where through appearance (including clothing, posture, and body gestures) and "performance" (p28) we manage others impressions of us and influence their portrayal of a situation and induce their conduct (Charon, 1992). Smith (2006) recognises that there may be threats to the performance, such as, discrepant roles taken by people and derogatory communication by audience members. Goffman's (1959:222) concept of self would claim that people enact "protective practices" to defend their proficiency and character under such conditions of duress.

The discussion on 'impression management' directed me to start thinking about my experiences at the staff meeting, which was disclosed at the start of this scene.

There seems to be no agent more effective than another person in bringing the world for oneself alive or, by a glance, a gesture, or a remark, shriveling up the reality in which it is lodged.

(Goffman, 1972:38)

An encounter constructs a reality which is easily ruined and requires well thought-out consideration to uphold (Ashworth, 2000). For me, the established academics were uniquely placed to threaten the 'definition of the situation' and I lacked the knowledge to enact protective practices. Goffman (1972) would suggest that incidents like this do occur with the interaction together with the people performing within it thrown into disorder resulting in embarrassment (Ashworth, 2000).

Whatever else, embarrassment has to do with the figure the individual cuts... the crucial concern is the impression one makes on others.

(Goffman, 1972:98)

Embarrassment is encountered when the impression one is presenting is discredited, although it is both an "individual and collective corrective practice that in a sense denies the reality" (Brown, 2003:295). This resonates with my reflection of the interaction at the staff meeting.

The above discussion is one illustration of how Goffman's work influenced the understanding of my own experiences as a new academic and that of the respondents. Throughout my exploration of Goffman's work it also became clear that I was centrally

positioned within the research and it was Goffman's dramatic metaphor that inspired me to think about 'presenting myself' within the text of the dissertation, as the narrator. Individuals impress on others what they wish them to see by displaying a "personal front" (Goffman, 1959:36) which can be divided into appearance and manner. In order for the individual to maintain a convincing personal front there must be some consistency within, and appreciation of, the setting. In addition, in order to be valued the individual must impress on others what he/she wishes them to see and Goffman (1959) argues that this can be difficult as it would depend on how much of the performance is visible to others. I viewed the role of the narrator as a mechanism in ensuring that the setting was suitably positioned and that the respondents 'presentation of self' was transparent and equitable. Smith (2006:113) proposes that for Goffman studying social life is to..."cause others to see what they hadn't seen or connect what they hadn't put together" and for me this was the pivotal role of the narrator.

There are many criticisms of Goffman's theory, such as: the lack of concern for large scale society (Ashworth, 2000); negativity towards the nature of humans and society (Williams, 1986); a lack of concern for personal motivation (Giddens, 1988) and claims that Goffman portrays a Machiavellian management of human interaction (Collins, 1986). Denzin (2002:108) even suggests that: "perhaps it is time to bury dramaturgy and its pre-occupations with reality and illusion... the scaffolding of dramaturgy should never have been constructed". It is not the intention of this dissertation to offer counter arguments to these claims, even though within his later work 'Frame Analysis' (1974) Goffman himself criticised some aspects of 'The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life'. Within the context of this dissertation I view the: "self as an aspect of social and cultural arrangements" (Scheff, 2006:16) that is constructed between fluid and fragmented boundaries within the academic setting. It is through Goffman's metaphorical account of how people construct and maintain that performance and the fact that Goffman took into account the role of emotions within social and cultural interactions that connects with this dissertation (Manning, 1992). Like Goffman I accept the limitations within the dramaturgical metaphor and am happy to position myself within it.

### **Hermeneutic Understanding**

When discussing social constructivism Creswell (2007) claims that the aim of the research is to: "rely as much as possible on the participant's views of the situation" (p20). However, Denzin and Lincoln (2003a) maintain that all research is interpretive

and guided by a set of beliefs and feelings influenced by the researcher's history and culture, not just the participants. The socially located character of interpretive research calls for the researcher to consider the effects of his or her own personal prejudice, bias, values, and expectations on the research process. I have already alluded to my own position within this research and I must take account of myself and my effect on what is being researched, after all I consider myself to be one of the participants. Therefore, if, as suggested, interpretive methods characterise the researcher and participant relationship as a collaborative social encounter, where individuals get to know each other and share experiences, this co-constructed research process requires an hermeneutic understanding and commitment to reflexivity by the researcher.

Hermeneutics and interactionism accept the same conjecture that social life is characteristically represented through shared understanding of its participants and that shared understandings are the basis of all social relations. Therefore Goffman's interactionism can be deemed to be a form of hermeneutics (King, 2004). Considering that hermeneutics represents the study of understanding, interpretation and meaning the literature 'encircling' the topic is, ironically, confusing and conflicted with Bruns suggesting that "hermeneutics is a loose and baggy monster" (1992:17). The hermeneutic paradigm includes several positions and it is not the function of this dissertation to explore each perspective. However, for the purpose of this dissertation I would define hermeneutics as a 'contemporary art of interpretation' (Gadamer, 1996) as I did not follow a set of fixed guidelines or procedures but allowed an uninhibited creative process that clarified the interpretive conditions in which understanding took place (Gadamer, 1996).

Hermeneutics is at times criticised for being theoretically blurred, although there are a number of core principles that underpin the approach, such as: The concept of the hermeneutic circle: "the meaning of a part can only be understood if it is related to the whole" (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2009:92) and that there are objective and subjective aspects to this understanding (McAuley, 2004). Within the context of this dissertation and in support of my conceptualisation of hermeneutics I will consider some of these characteristics of a hermeneutic approach.

Jardine states: "hermeneutic inquiry has as its goal to educe understanding" (1992: 116 cited in Hultgren, 1994). Understanding is attained within a 'fusion of horizons' which includes giving consideration to the prejudices that individuals bring to interpretive occurrences (Mootz and Taylor, 2011). As Gadamer states:

The horizon of the present is continually in the process of being formed because we are continually having to test all our prejudices... Hence the horizon of the present cannot be formed without the past.

(Gadamer, 1996:306)

Therefore, the meaning of something is not isolated, but bound up within a network of implications and references (Heidegger, 1962) where understanding becomes an iterative process. It is through these networks where new knowledge and understanding is attained. For Heidegger and Gadamer the circularity of interpretation is a crucial aspect of all knowledge and understanding and as such all interpretation relies on other interpretations (Schwandt, 2001). The cycle of interpretation involves engagement with an entity on the basis of a fore-understanding, the interpretation then elucidates the initial understanding (Ashworth, 2000). Consequently, within the context of this research my own horizon did not remain static; it was constantly in the process of formation as I worked through the hermeneutic circle. I accepted my own prejudices and positioned them as part of the network and hence within the hermeneutic circle. My own fore-understanding was based on my own comprehension on what it was like to be a new academic from industry. The interpretation of this fore-understanding, stimulated by the continuous flow of augmented information, became contested as prior intuitive insights were challenged.

Hermeneutics accepts that all interpretation is situated with an active role played by the 'knower'. In the context of this dissertation, as the 'knower' (narrator), I was connected to all parts within the hermeneutic circle and able to offer interpretive perspectives and ways of constructing meaning from a unique vantage point. Being 'connected' and acting as narrator linked the interpretation of understanding to empathy within the situatedness of the respondents. Alvesson and Skoldberg suggest that: "empathy is complemented by the interpreter's broader or at least different stock of knowledge" (2009:93). Furthermore, by positioning myself as the narrator I was able to take advantage of the centrality of my location and create a dialogue between the data and the interpretation from both an objective and subjective stance. Within the context of a hermeneutic approach that facilitates both a descriptive and creative value an understanding is neither subjective nor objective as they are refractions of each other (Gardner, 2009).

In conclusion, the evolving nature of a hermeneutic approach accepts openness to the data, the intuition of the researcher and the augmentation of conceptual frameworks.

For McAuley:

If this openness is undertaken in good faith then the product of the research is an account that is on the one hand truthful (authentic) to the data but is, on the other hand, not only the truth (authentic account) that could be produced.

(McAuley, 2004:201)

I accept that no one has an absolute vision and that every perspective is always partial. I am also comfortable with the ambiguity within adopting a hermeneutic approach and embrace the view that the reader will consider this work through the historical and culturally situated lens of my own (the narrators) perception and experience yet apply to themselves and, perhaps, interpret and understand this text in a different way. After all: “interpretation has to adapt itself to the hermeneutical situation to which it belongs” (Gadamer, 1975:358).

## Reflexivity

The concept of reflexivity acknowledges that the orientations of researchers will be shaped by their socio-historical locations, including the values and interests that these locations confer upon them.

(Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007:15)

Donati (2011) offers three strands of reflexivity: personal; social and system. Personal reflexivity is more than just a simple reflection on subjective opinions and judgments during the research process. For this research I have consciously opened up my own emotions, explored my behaviour and assessed my responses in order to enquire into the respondent's. My reflective diaries assisted in this process. Creswell (2007) suggests that it is no longer acceptable for qualitative researchers to be the “omniscient distanced qualitative writer” (p178). I accept this position and believe that I have been open and transparent about my “biases, values and experiences” (p242) within the research. Cohen et al (2007:171) offer support, stating that researchers: “bring their own biographies to the research situation... reflexivity suggests that researchers should acknowledge and disclose their own selves in the research”. Having said this, it is necessary to make clear my perspective and integrate subjective analysis within the research findings without redirecting the interest away from the respondents and the subject matter (Elliott, 2005). If reflexive analysis moves the attention away from the researched onto the researcher then the value of the outcome is questionable as a co-construct (Finley and Gough, 2003). Social reflexivity concentrates on the dynamics of the researcher-researched relationship. As previously stated, I hold the view that

research takes place within a social context and that the subjectivity of the researcher together with those being studied becomes part of the research process (Flick, 2009), although I contend that the researcher's interpretation and assumptions hold the central position in the construction of knowledge. This takes a social constructivist stance in that the researcher is looking at the domain of interaction, discourse and shared meanings as a co-constituted account. In terms of this research I share an experience, culture and language with the respondents which allow me to understand their meanings (Finlay and Gough, 2003). System reflexivity is concerned about the researcher being conscious of their influence throughout all stages of the data gathering and analysis. Throughout this research I have recognised that it is impossible to detach myself from the research process and have taken opportunities to highlight, rather than eliminate, researcher effects.

## **Scene Two: The Research Process**

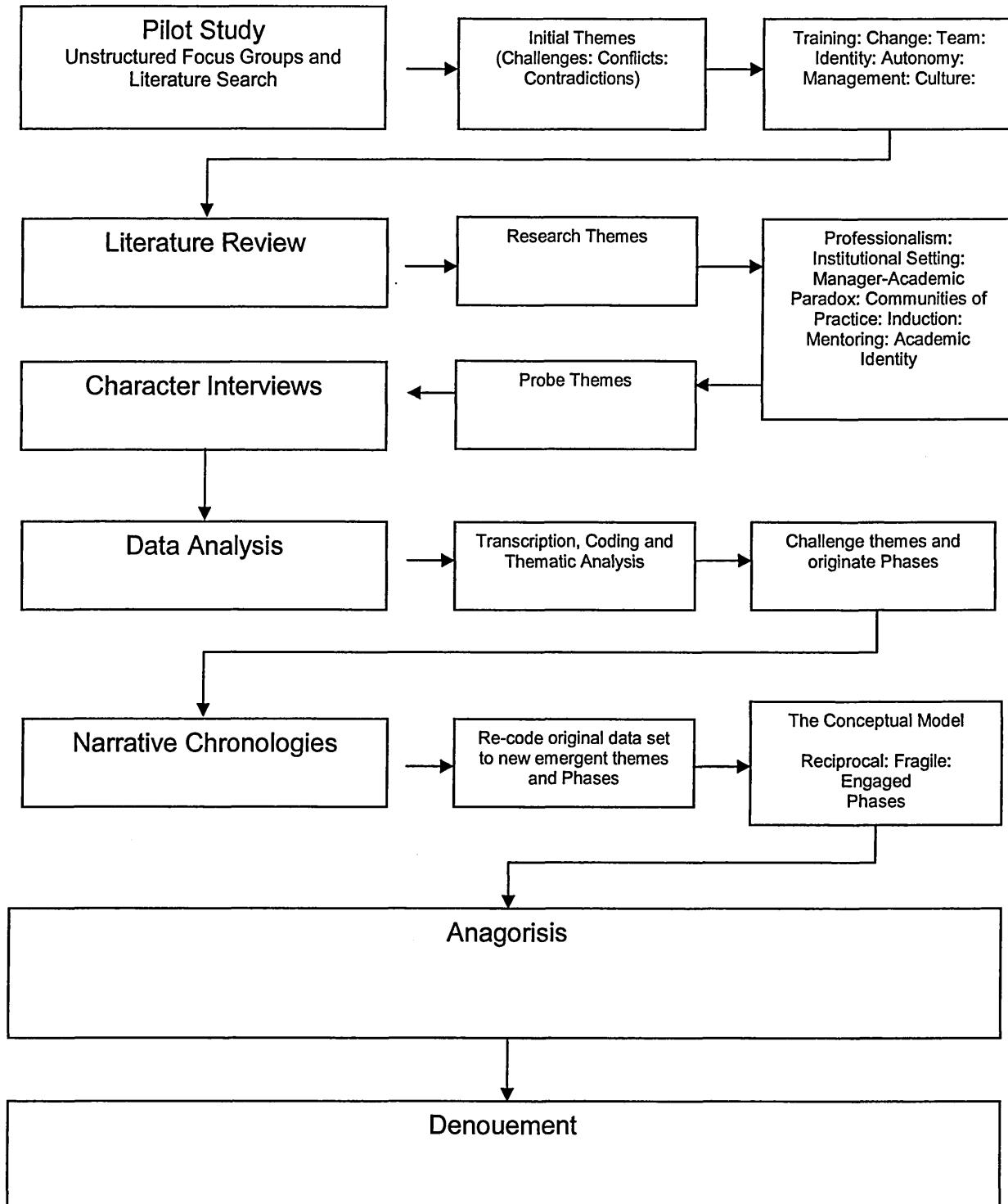
The purpose of this scene is to probe the research design and analyse the methods employed in undertaking the research. The scene begins with a detailed examination of the pilot study, paying particular attention to the data analysis (coding) and the development of the initial themes that were explored within the literature. The scene continues with an overview of the research methods adopted.

The design is the logical sequence that connects the empirical data to a studies initial research questions and, ultimately, to its conclusions.

(Yin, 2003:20)

Leavy claims that: "researchers regardless of their specific methodology can gain trustworthiness by making their research purpose transparent" (2009:33) and then set the "appropriate context for storying the data." (Clandinin and Connelly 1989:17). With this in mind it is not my intention to construct life histories, as proposed by Cohen et al (2007): "the narrative [by] using the interplay between interviewer and interviewee to actively construct life histories" (p198). My intention is to explore the first teaching year of ten new academics, using interviews for data collection, then analysing the data as stories, using them for comparison between the respondents in order to develop themes and models through narrative within a chronological approach (Creswell, 2007). Rowley (2002) holds a view that articulating the research design as a defined action plan gives a clear view of what is examined within the study. Conversely, using an action plan within the context of a narrative inquiry seems somewhat at odds with the view that each narrative inquiry "has its own rhythms and sequences" (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000:97), is a "voyage of discovery" (Josselson and Lieblich, 2002:260) and is fluid. However, it is accepted that a framework is helpful as an overview. A full representation of the research design can be seen in Figure Two, below. The next two scenes within this act, research methods and research analysis, flow chronologically to what was undertaken.

**Figure Two: The Research Design**



## The Pilot Study

The Pilot Study focused on three industry professionals and their transition to new roles as academics within a higher education setting. The purpose of the pilot study was not only to confirm the feasibility of my future research and develop possible techniques, but also to identify themes and concepts that could be taken forward to the final dissertation. The method of data collection engaged with the spoken word via what I called 'unstructured focus groups' (discussed later in the scene) to generate understandings and insights, followed by interview data as the means for illustrating findings and supporting the developed theory (Goulding, 2002). The data analysis was computer assisted through the use of Nvivo.

Punch (2005) suggests that within research areas such as professional practice, empirical research via qualitative methods is required and a grounded theory approach is preferable to a theory verification method. Glaser (1992, cited in Denzin and Lincoln 2003b) advocates collecting data without forcing either preconceived questions or frameworks and this was one of the main objectives of the pilot, to identify themes and concepts not verify them. It became apparent that there is a contestation within the territory of grounded theory, illustrated by the fractious debate between Glaser and Strauss (1967), Strauss and Corbin (1990) and Charmaz (2003). Influenced by Charmaz (2003) I subsequently identified constructivist grounded theory as the instrument and procedure for the pilot study. Constructivist grounded theory is situated within an interpretive approach to qualitative research with a focus on theory development that depends on the researcher's view. It places an emphasis on the values, beliefs and feelings of individuals rather than on the methods and does not minimise the role of the researcher in the process. However, during the pilot study I found myself more attuned to the procedural nature of Strauss and Corbin (1998) within the process of the collection, analysis and coding of the data, whereas during the interpretation and writing I preferred the more flexible and exploratory nature of the original Glaser and Strauss (1967) position.

Based on the experience of conducting the pilot study I did consider grounded theory as a possible route for the final dissertation. However, I would agree with Silverman (2006) in that grounded theory fails to acknowledge implicit theories at an early stage of research. For the main dissertation I was going to 'test' the themes and concepts attained from the pilot study as the starting point for the final research and not commence with the data in order to generate a theory. Having said this, some

elements of the grounded theory approach were adopted within the final research, such as the process of coding and memoing (within a constructivist grounded theory framework).

## **Unstructured Focus Groups**

The pilot study adopted what I termed ‘unstructured focus groups’. The adopted methodology for the pilot study enabled me to apply an open ended and grounded theory approach to the focus groups, therefore opting for less standardisation and control in order for the participants to shape the topics that were meaningful to them (Hesse-Biber and Leavy 2006). Cohen et al (2007:377) proposes that: “focus groups require skilful facilitation and management by the researcher” with a more directive approach, whilst others (Marshall and Rossman, 2006; Hesse-Biber and Leavy, 2006; Drew et al, 2006) would advocate lower levels of moderation. It was clear that the pilot study was a ‘journey of discovery’ rather than verification and to avoid bias and power influences I opted to isolate myself from the focus group process and hold what I have termed ‘unstructured focus groups’. I posed two questions to the participants at the start of the session and then left them alone to discuss the topic as they deemed appropriate. The sessions lasted 45 minutes and were recorded. It is accepted that this was a risky strategy as one of the prime purposes of facilitation is to ensure that the group ‘stay on topic’. For me, however, I did not want to influence that topic, although it could be said that the initial question itself was leading. The opening questions in any interview sets the tone for the entire process; the right opening questions will prompt and guide the participants to pre-determined directions. The questions posed were:

How have you as a former industry professional adapted to your new role as a professional academic in higher education?

What have been the challenges, conflicts and contradictions?

I accept that within these questions there were some assumptions that could have been made by the participants, with perhaps an unpacking of terms being required in order to lend context and clarity to their debate. However, the data from the unstructured focus group and its interpretation created a number of exploratory themes which were subsequently the starting point for the final research.

## Pilot Study Coding

Charmaz (2003) states that: "coding starts the chain of theory development" (p258) with analysis beginning at the coding stage of the emerging data. The analysis of the pilot study data was computer assisted through the use of Nvivo. The transcripts totalled 31,380 words of which 232 free nodes (open codes) were identified and linked to several memos which Bazeley (2007) describes as "journaling as a way of keeping an audit trail of reflections on the project" (p55). Table One gives an example of the process of early coding in this research.

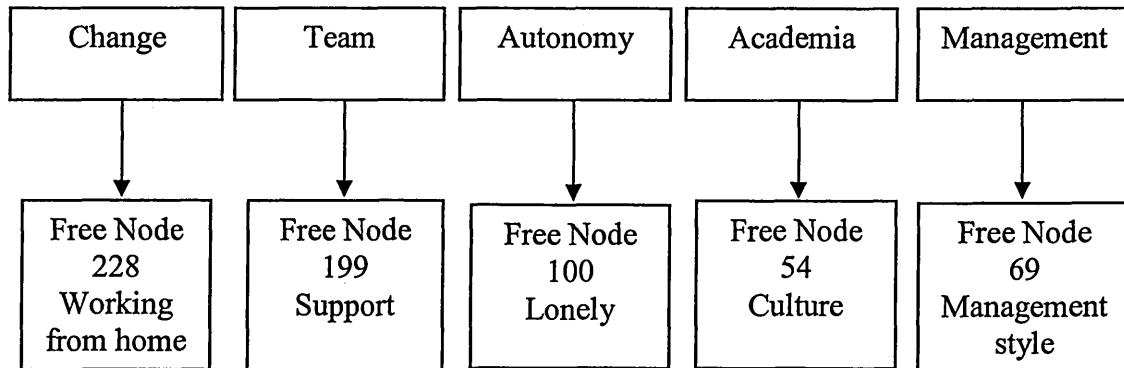
Table One: Early Coding

Interview Text	Respondent	Open (Free) code	Node
The working from home, I do appreciate it having come from commercial industry. How valuable is it!	1	Working from home	228
I think it's about eyes on, hands off, isn't it?	2	Management Style	69
I feel that the longer the staff have been here, the more disillusioned they are. The more pissed off they are about the way it works. That is not a good culture to be living or working in.	3	Culture	54
I don't get that feeling here, so yes, that's where a sense of loneliness comes from, definitely.	3	Lonely	100
Yeah, and I think that in terms of challenges I think that there's a lack of support and direction.	1	Support	199
I think its different from industry in the sense that you don't have regular monthly reviews or you don't have a support session with your manager or you're not having regular team meetings.	1	Comparisons	42

The open codes were then analysed within the context of the text (the preceding/continuing paragraphs) its author and the memos written during the initial

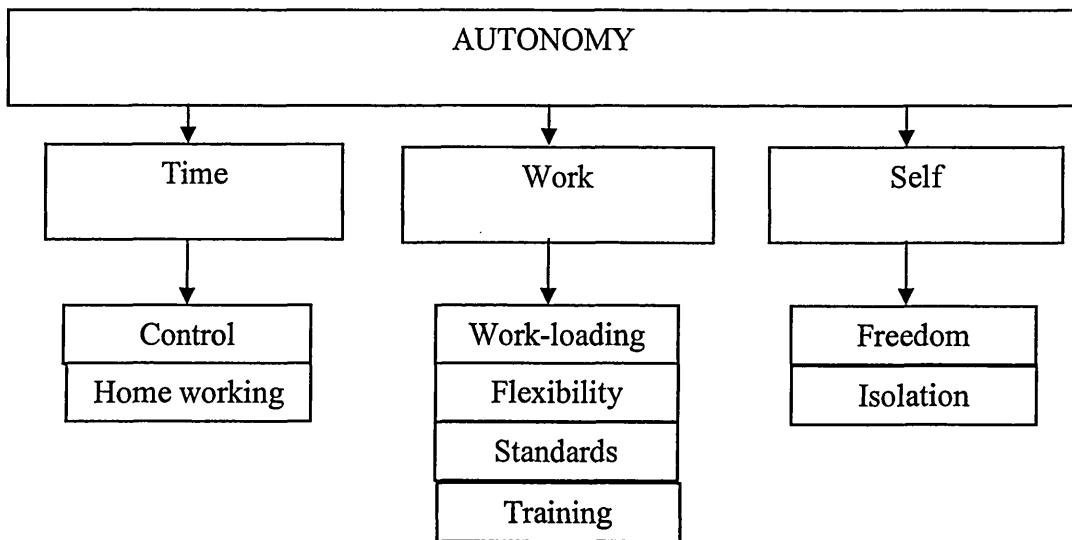
analysis. Five concepts emerged and were headed as tree nodes. Figure Three below identifies the emerging concepts with an example of application using the content from Table One above.

Figure Three: Tree nodes



Nvivo software facilitated the creation of tree nodes, with their relationships highlighted by a 'parent' and 'child' hierarchy to be positioned within the emerging concepts. For ease of analysis and to avoid over-complication Johnson (2006) recommends that only three parent/child sub-categories are used under each key concept. It is recognised that during the process of continual analysis new free nodes were identified and added to the appropriate concept. The example below (Model 4) represents a picture of the tree nodes and their parent/child hierarchy within the emerging concept of Autonomy. Further examples of the emerging concepts and their tree node hierarchy are in Appendix 1. Model 4 also gives an insight into the coding practice used and the analysis undertaken. The Free Nodes highlighted are examples and as such the list of Free Nodes is not exhaustive. It is noted that the overall process led to 312 nodes within the tree hierarchy. Nevertheless, the example below gives the reader an insight into how the initial themes (as explored within Act One) were determined and evidence of the analysis to substantiate this.

## Model Four: Autonomy (Emerging hierarchy)



Theme	Text	Free Node	Respondent
Time	I've just been left to get on with it and things like being able to mark at home or not tell anyone where you are, or just get on and prep and no one check your lectures, I am just like... you can tell them anything!	221 (time management)	1
Work	My project is to teach on this module and ultimately that is down to my individual ability to do it and I very much enjoy that and I think it gives me an opportunity to manage my own workload, which I feel and I very capable to do so.	228 (workload)	2
Self	The management and academics should be motivating and they should be enthusing. So there's a sense of loneliness and isolation.	101 (lonely)	3

### Establishing themes

Using elements of the Autonomy Hierarchy (Model 4) as an example, it is possible to connect each of the nodes to a theme for further examination. For instance, linking the text from nodes within the tree classifications (some examples given in Table 4 below) it could be interpreted that the respondents enjoy the freedom of a self managed workload yet still seek management guidance and accept peer influence. Furthermore, they feel that the lack of direction creates a sense of isolation. It is suggested that, in the context of this dissertation, this analysis leads towards a need to explore academic management and personal academic identity.

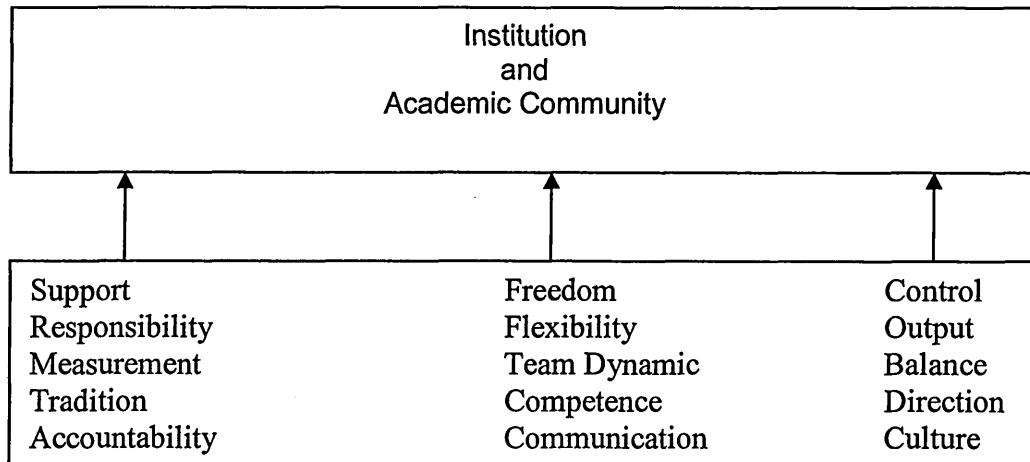
Figure Four: Tree Nodes (Autonomy)

Node	Text	Respondent
185	It is weird for me to be in a management situation where someone is not continually trying to micro-manage me. There is some support from my colleagues, when I ask for it.	1
31	I am loving the autonomy	1
100	Because it was all a bit ad hoc and I felt lost, very lost actually in the first couple of months.	3
107	It is contradicting as in a sense you want to be managed yet also want the freedom as well.	3
185	Much more individual and I hardly see any of my colleagues; you are left to do your own thing and I want their advice and support.	2

Table 2 below is an illustrative representation of some of the key sub-themes that were identified within the emergent concept 'Institution and Academic Community'. Using this as an example, the analysis within this emergent concept revealed that the inductive process given to new academics had a clear pathway to their adjustment and retention within academia. For example, Respondents 2 and 3, when asked whether they saw a long term future in academia responded negatively with some

unenthusiastic comments about system, organisation and colleagues. Further analysis suggests that whilst both respondents were given institutional induction (process and systems) they were not given induction on role expectation, team culture and new work life, unlike Respondent 1. Indeed lack of mentorship, little management direction and instant autonomy led to respondent apathy towards academia.

Table Two: Emergent Concept One (Institution and Academic Community)



The pilot study also established two further emergent concepts, Table 3 and 4 below.

Table Three: Emergent Concept Two (Transitional assimilation to academia)

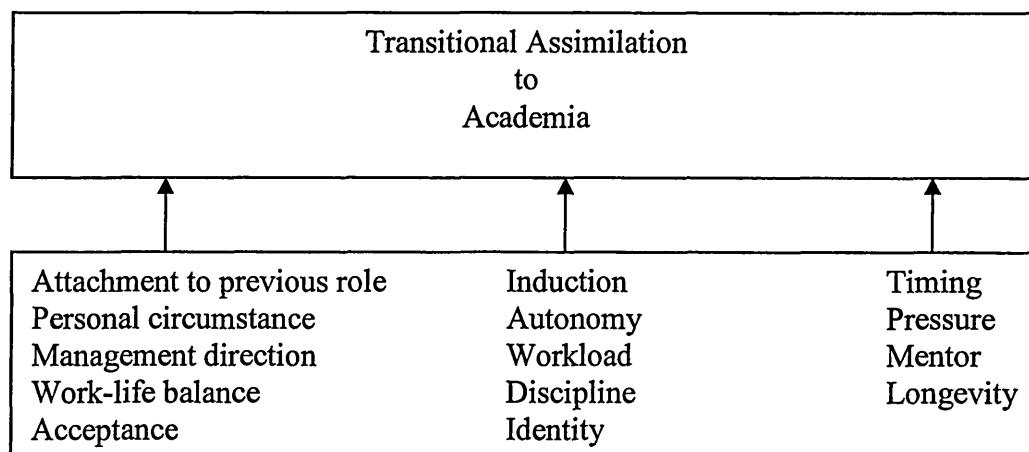
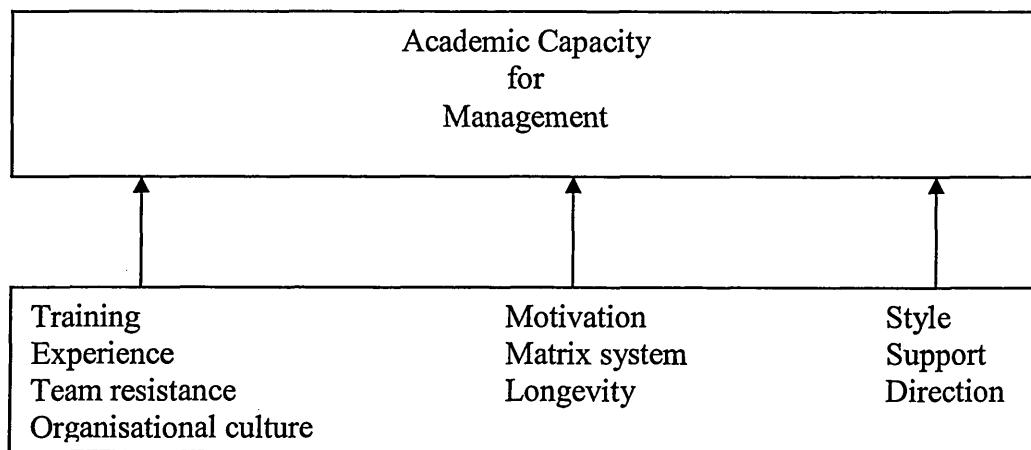


Table Four: Emergent Concept Three (Academic capacity for management)



## The Main Study

### Respondent selection

Creswell (2007:55) suggests that the focus of narrative research is: "best for capturing the detailed stories... of a small number of individuals". For the pilot study I asked three colleagues from within my department to participate in the research. Using colleagues did present me with some ethical issues regarding 'insiderness'. What emerged throughout the pilot study were the personal effects on me as the researcher. For example, what was unexpected was my own interpretation of the data and subsequent interaction with the participants within the normal working environment following the research and my new found knowledge. It was as though we had formed a secret society, our own community of practice. This unexpected outcome was as a result of open and candid responses from the participants, particularly the negative expression of views concerning senior management within the faculty. Having this knowledge made me a little uneasy in subsequent management meetings. This raised several ethical concerns for my main research as I contemplated my future relationships with participants. Initially, I had wanted to conduct the dissertation by interviewing colleagues within my faculty. This strategy was designed to enable me to produce 'articles and papers' for publication within my subject specialism. On the basis of the outcomes from the pilot study this strategy was revised. Furthermore, the colleagues who engaged with the pilot study did not participate further in the research.

For the dissertation the sampling strategy was dependent upon defining the population on which the research would focus and accessing those who matched closely the characteristics being sought. The core participants for this study were new members of academic staff entering the institution from industry. However, there were many variables within the sample population, although three key participant profile characteristics were identified as the primary attributes required within the sample group. The heterogeneous disposition within the potential research population also presented issues with sample size, access and representativeness.

General participant profile:

- New to working within academia
- From an industry background
- About to commence their first full year's teaching.

Possible variables:

- Male/female
- Previous industry background (for example: private/public/voluntary sector)
- Age
- Appointment level (for example: senior/principal lecturer)
- Previous academic qualifications (for example: Bachelors; Masters; PhD)
- Faculty/department
- Subject area
- Time in post
- Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE).

Based on information received from the Human Resource Department (HRD) at the institution I was informed that thirty five academics had commenced employment during the six months prior to the beginning of the research. It was accepted that many of these would not match the research participant profile, although it was expected that the target of a minimum number of eight participants would be sourced from this cohort. Indeed ten participants were finally recruited. As stated above there were many variables within the possible research participant profile, and whilst they may create some rich sources for comparative data analysis, they also raised issues of whether full representativeness could be obtained within the selected sample size.

There was a potential source of difficulty in accessing the participants. For example, new academics starting their first full year's teaching may wish to concentrate on their teaching and feel that they will not have the time to participate in the research. Furthermore, initial contact with potential participants was restricted by the HRD as they acted as the liaison between me and each new academic's subject team leader. There was the possibility that subject team leaders would act as gatekeepers to the participants. The risk with this strategy was the potential lack of interest and therefore additional approaches were required to encourage participation. After discussion and approval by the PGCE Programme Leader, access was given to the cohort of the 'new staff programme'. Access also included the presentation of my research topic at a PGCE module seminar session, at which point I was able to personally invite participation. To justify this approach it is proposed that the PGCE programme is an element of the institutional (induction and mentoring) process that some of the new academics would be required to fulfill. The PGCE is also a further community of practice for the new academic to engage within, therefore satisfying the research agenda.

Eleven new academics responded to the invitation to participate in the research. As part of the ethics agenda a meeting was held with each of the potential respondents after which one member declined to take part. Each of the respondents came directly from the PGCE course with less than half having heard about the research via their subject team leader. Each of the respondents had been appointed within six months prior to the commencement of the research.

## Schedule and Process

The research study is a longitudinal study of new academics' transition during their first full teaching year. This led to constraints regarding the timing of the interviews. The academic calendar at the institution starts in September and is generally based (although not for every faculty/subject area) around a two semester teaching year, September to December and January to May. The period May to September is associated with marking and preparation activities and responses from the pilot study identified this as a key point in time for new academics as they had time for reflection. Based on the fixed calendar, and the emergent themes from the pilot study, it was decided to conduct four interviews with each of the participants during the course of the year.

The intended schedule met with some difficulties, primarily respondent availability. Initially it was intended to hold the first interview in September 2008. However, this proved difficult as respondents reported being 'overwhelmed' with teaching commitments and as such the first interviews were held in October 2008. The February and June dates proved less difficult and apart from a couple of respondents the majority of interviews were held within the time period. Based on the experience in September 2008 the following September proposal was subsequently changed to October 2009.

Interview One:	October 2008
Interview Two:	February 2009
Interview Three:	June 2009
Interview Four:	October 2009

Each participant was asked to allocate one hour of their time to the process, to allow for introductions and what I termed 'mirroring conversations', that is, building rapport with the participant. It was intended that each interview would last no longer than forty minutes. I arranged for all the interviews to take place away from the participant's main place of work, to maintain anonymity, and booked appropriate rooms to ensure there were no disturbances. Each interview was recorded, with the permission of each participant, and transcribed.

## **Interviews**

Interviews are central in social science research (Elliott, 2005). Drew et al (2006:28) claim that: "the majority of qualitative research conducted in the social sciences has to some degree drawn upon data generated through interviews". In the context of narrative projects Riessman (2008:23) would agree that: "most narrative projects... are based on interviews of some kind". Czarniawska (1998:29) claims that narrative interviews become a: "natural development in serial interviewing, which usually starts with a thematically focussed interview". Following the unstructured focus groups each participant in the pilot study was interviewed based on the themes extracted. This continued within the final dissertation by what Czarniawska in her later work calls "eliciting stories" through semi structured interviews (2004:55).

Cohen, et al (2007:199) maintains that central to the researcher's success within data collection is the capacity to "use a variety of interview techniques". Kvale (1996:5) offers two metaphors which portray interview practice, "the miner and the traveller". From a positivist perspective 'the miner' attempts to uncover hidden facts and experiences without contamination of the subject with an objective of the collection (mining) of data for validation, a more structured approach. The constructivist approach allows for a different style that reflects 'the traveller' metaphor with a more conversational, less structured technique. The structured interview is primarily designed to obtain factual information whereas the semi structured interview is constructed to draw out views and accounts (Wooffitt and Widdicombe, 2006).

Four semi-structured interviews were held with each of the participants (except Lucy, Angela and Claire) in order to probe in more detail the themes that arose from the pilot study and the information attained from the literature review. Also, by conducting four empathetic interviews throughout the year enabled me to reflect on each participant's responses and adapt the following interviews to either gain greater detail on the emergent concepts or seek new themes for questioning. Furthermore, this process also enabled each participant to reflect on their own responses (they each received the transcripts) and offer supplementary information at the next interview. It is argued that each interview along the cycle offered greater depth. Table 5 (below) represents an audit of the interviews.

**Table Five: Data Audit**

Respondent	Interviews	Int Time (mins)	Int time average	Interview Transcript word count	Narrative chronologies word count
Sally	4	149	37	22,020	5,317
Lucy	3	94	31	15,879	7,132
Angela	3	102	34	17,428	5,198
Kate	4	127	31	17,254	7,344
Mike	4	147	37	18,953	5,627
Petra	4	143	36	23,081	7,501
Claire	3	149	49	22,128	4,089
Mary	4	142	35	26,059	9,568
Jenny	4	130	32	20,492	7,834
Charlie	4	139	35	21,366	8,535
Pilot	3			31,380	
Total	40	1322 (22hrs)	35.7	236,040	68,145

## **Scene Three: Analysis and Interpretation**

The purpose of this scene is to specify the process of data analysis and interpretation. The scene scrutinises the use of the various techniques employed and provide overview of the application of narrative chronologies, which culminates in how the narrative chronologies shaped the conceptual model.

### **Data Analysis and Transcription**

Narrative researchers move between the collection of evidence and the interpretation often choosing further paths for evidence gathering derived from such analysis Polkinghorne (2007). I have already stated that the data analysis for the final dissertation initially mirrored that of the pilot study, that is, the process of coding all participants' responses within a constructivist grounded theory framework. This was to arrive at themes for further analysis with "detailed personal accounts [that] can be interrogated thematically" (Cohen et al, 2007:200) and linked to other respondents within the research group. Following the thematic analysis a narrative chronology was undertaken which includes a "display of the events identified as meaningful" (Haupert, 1991 cited in Flick, 2009:346).

Flick suggests that it is: "reasonable to transcribe only as much and only as exactly as is required by the research question" (2009:300). However, narrative researchers "cannot know at the outset what they will find" (Josselson and Lieblich, 2002:260) and full transcription is therefore necessary. Riessman cited in Huberman and Miles (2002) claims that: "taping and transcribing are absolutely essential to narrative analysis" (p249) and that: "analysis cannot be easily distinguished from transcription" (p253). This gave me a dilemma. I wanted to complete the transcription myself, in order to elicit understanding during the process, although this creates 'bottlenecks' (Lee and Fielding, 2009). For example, Flick (2009:300) concedes that: "transcription of data absorbs time and energy" of which I had little and I therefore opted to use a transcription service for the first set of dissertation interviews. The response from the service was swift and of an acceptable standard, although it was financially expensive. I was still left with the sense that I was missing an opportunity to gain a: "perspective about relations between meaning and speech" (Reissman, 2008:28) and for the second set of interviews I opted to complete the transcripts myself, with the help of voice recognition software (Dragon Naturally Speaking). Following this experience I would

disagree with Ryan and Bernard (cited in Denzin and Lincoln, 2003c:259) that “voice-recognition software will make light work of transcribing”. For the subsequent interviews I re-engaged the transcription service.

I would concur with Reissman that: “constructing a transcript from a translated interview involves difficult interpretive decisions” (2008: 42) and accept that the decision to re-engage the transcription service could be seen to be in contradiction to the premise of my research methodology. However, Elliott recognises that: “it is all but impossible to produce a transcription of a research interview... which completely captures all of the meaning” (2005: 51) with Reissman even accepting that: “transcriptions are by definition incomplete, partial, and selective - constructed by the investigator, who may or not also be the transcriber” (2008:50). Langdridge and Hagger-Johnson (2009) whilst stressing the importance of self transcription suggest that it needs to be viewed in context. They admit, that they, like many researchers, employ transcription services for the reasons I myself have highlighted above. Therefore:

academics have found it necessary to employ strategies to maximize their output and getting others to transcribe their data has increasingly become a necessary strategy.

(Langdridge and Hagger-Johnson, 2009: 378)

Lee and Fielding (2009) suggests that some researchers ‘bypass’ the transcription altogether by using digitised audio or video. In order to maximize my output I chose a strategy of engaging a transcription service together with listening through the tapes of selected key ‘moments’ to capture the “fluid and dynamic movement of words” (Reisman, 2008:29).

## Nvivo Analysis

Strauss and Corbin (1998) state that: “analysis is the interplay between the researcher and the data” (p13). The quality of analysis is dependent upon the quality of the data records and the researcher’s skills in the discovery and exploration of ideas from the data (Richards, 2005). Fielding and Lee (1998) suggest that this can be compounded by voluminous data that is “unstructured, context specific and recalcitrant” (p57). Indeed, the transcripts for this research alone came to 236,040 (Reference: Table 4) words and one of the “consequences of volume is that there is a good deal of

redundancy in the data" (p56). Data management and analysis can be enhanced by the use of computer software packages and for this research all coding was undertaken using Nvivo qualitative analysis software. Glaser and Strauss (1998) admitted that: "neither of us are expert on the use of computers in research" (p276) yet the computer's positive application within the field of grounded theory is undeniable, particularly considering the "line by line" (p57) systematic style of analysis. Whilst the technology may assist in certain efficiencies, such as data storage and retrieval it does not decrease the "time needed to read, conceptualise and analyse the data" (Bringer et al, 2004: 250). Furthermore, the researcher must still ask the questions, interpret the data, decide what to code, and use the computer program to maximise efficiency in these processes" (2004:248). In addition the process is also constrained by the software design. Indeed it could be conceived that the theory emerging from the data, via the software, is moulded by the computer package as codes are sourced and themed more intrinsically. The advantage for the constructivist grounded theorist is the ability of Nvivo to transform the way in which the data is viewed from a static to a dynamic setting which visualises the relationships between categories.

## Coding and Developing Themes

As previously stated, the coding of the transcripts from the research followed the same process undertaken within the pilot study by adopting elements of a grounded theory approach to coding. Moghaddam (2006) suggests that grounded theory coding is a kind of content analysis to find and conceptualise core issues from within the raft of data compiled, although Cohen et al (2007) would state that: "it is more inductive than content analysis, as the theories emerge from, rather than exist before the data" (p491). According to Strauss and Corbin coding is defined as: "analytical processes through which data are fractured, conceptualised and integrated to form theory" (1998:3). Charmaz claims that the conceptual level of coding and the development of categories are likely to differ between objectivist and constructivist grounded theory and she suggests that objectivists "stick close to their depiction of overt data" (2003:275). Charmaz advocates a more fluid and subjectivist approach to coding with a constant reviewing of the data, questioning the emerging concepts, recoding and developing new ideas in an attempt to balance "theoretical interpretation with evocative aesthetic" (2003: 278). In relation to the coding, this work combined procedural coding practice with constructivist interpretation. The fracturing of the data into concepts and categories developed the categories and their sub-categories into emergent themes

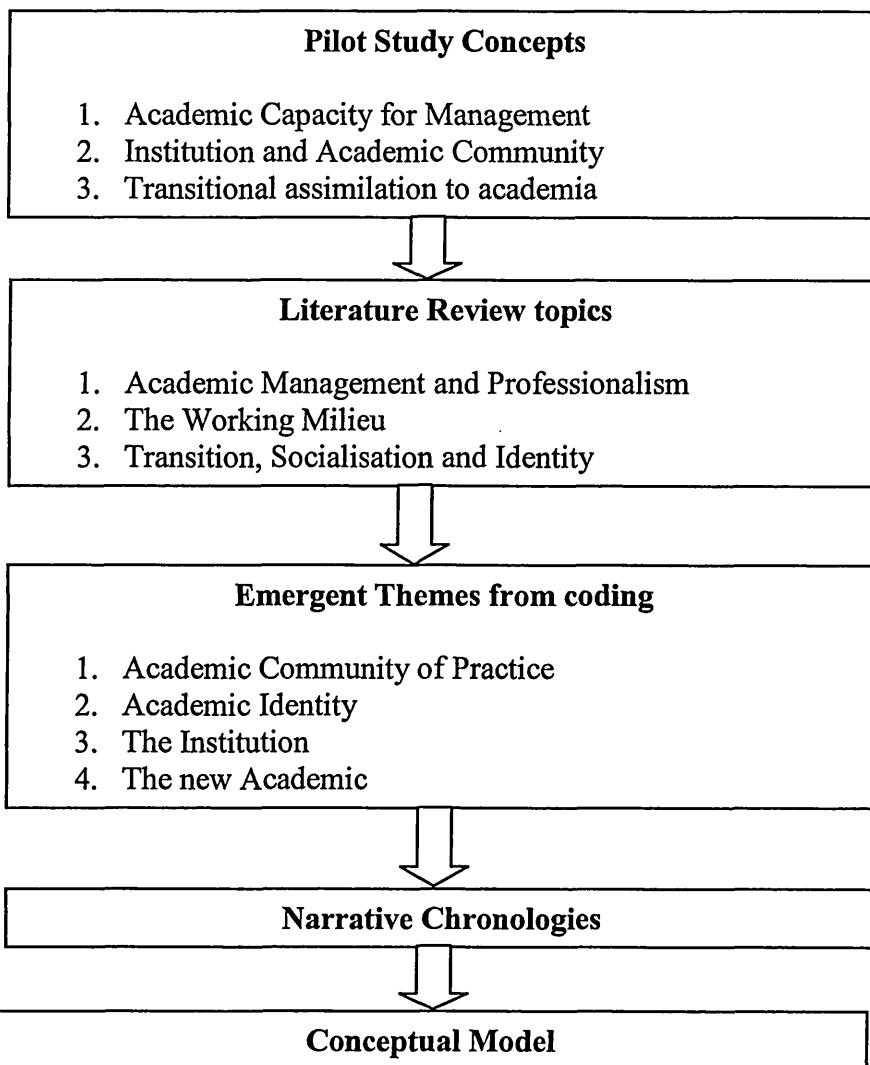
with the appreciation of these concepts and categories in terms of their dynamic interrelationships.

Reissman (2008:73) claims that thematic analysis “generates significant findings”. The pilot study, the literature review and my prior experiences were resources that enabled the identification of themes, although, “more often than not researchers induce themes from the text itself” (Ryan and Bernard 2003 cited in Denzin and Lincoln, 2003c:275). The development of themes derived from within the data is central to grounded theory and I clearly adopted this approach at the early stage of my analysis, for example, within the coding and the fracturing of the data to generate initial themes. However, I also adopted Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis that is: “identifying themes in the respondent’s discourse, and then ordering these items to reveal higher level systems of meaning which provide insight” (Drew et al, 2006:39). Finally, my method also included thematic narrative analysis in that it historicised narrative accounts and through the narrative chronology attempted to keep the ‘story’ intact. Therefore, the eliciting of themes for this research incorporated several methods within a linear approach.

### Coding

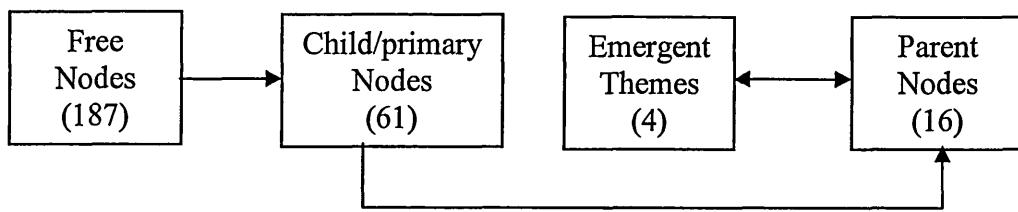
The coding process followed a similar method as the pilot study. Three emergent concepts were identified from the pilot study (Institution and Academic Community; Transitional Assimilation to Academia; and Academic Capacity for Management). These were interrogated through the literature review, at which point three topics were established (Academic Management and Professionalism; The Working Milieu; Transition, Socialisation and Identity). The literature review topics and awareness of their origination provided the foundation for the initial coding (free nodes) of the data from the primary research. Model 5 below maps the development of the conceptual model.

## Model Five: Conceptual Model Development



The developmental nature of this research and the increased understanding of the subject matter are evident in the reduced number of free nodes from the pilot study transcripts (31,380 words/232 free nodes) to the primary research, of which a reduced number of free nodes (187) were established from a total of 236,040 words. This is evidence of a rigorous process to establish concise themes for further exploration through the narrative chronologies. The following provides a sample of how the initial coding process contributed to the development of the three part conceptual model.

## Model Six: Initial Coding process for emergent themes



From the original 187 free nodes 61 primary codes (child nodes) were established as sub headings. The free nodes could be located within multiple primary codes. The table below demonstrates some of these connections. Following interpretation of the data set (discussed below) 4 emergent themes were ascertained with 16 sub themes (parent nodes) determined. Data from the primary codes linked to the parent nodes would be used as the principal sources for analysis of the emergent themes.

Table Six: Free Node and Primary Code Connections

Interview Text	Character	Free Node/Primary Code Categories
If I have a few hours to spare I don't feel guilty or something working on my own project. I am so desperate not to lose that and not to become, only you know, a lecturer, I suppose.	Angela	Free Node (Industry Link)  Primary Codes (Industry: Career: Autonomy: Identity: Time)
Sometimes I would feel accountable because I would ring up the reception desk and say "I'm working from home tomorrow". But initially I felt quite guilty working from home.	Mary	Free Node (Working from home)  Primary Codes (Change: Autonomy: Time: Workload: Isolation: Peer Contact: Culture)
I feel really confident doing what I'm doing and sometimes I feel less confident, but you haven't got to let that creep in or show,	Jenny	Free Node (Challenge)  Primary Codes

have you?		(Competence: Knowledge: Measurement: Perception: Challenge: Insecurity)
I don't feel I fully understand or have the structures of the university of how it works and things.	Jenny	Free Node (Frustration)  Primary Codes (Insecurity: Induction: Mentorship: Rules and Procedures: Structures: Detached: Challenge)
I've got my timetable , the bits I am finding difficult is the bits that you get asked to do as like field trips are in addition... its because I am new, people can lean on you... you don't want to let people down... if I had said no then 'oh she's not a member of the team'.	Sally	Free Node (Advantage of)  Primary Codes (Hierarchy: Resistance: Valued: Culture: Insecurity: Put upon: Workload: Time:
Learning to actually be able to use someone as a reflective mirror. Coming in here we are teaching this to our students, but we're not actually applying those principles within the subject group.	Mary	Free Node (Communications)  Primary Codes (Support: Subject Team: Autonomy: Insecurity: Peer Contact: Mentorship: Appraisals: Self Reflection:

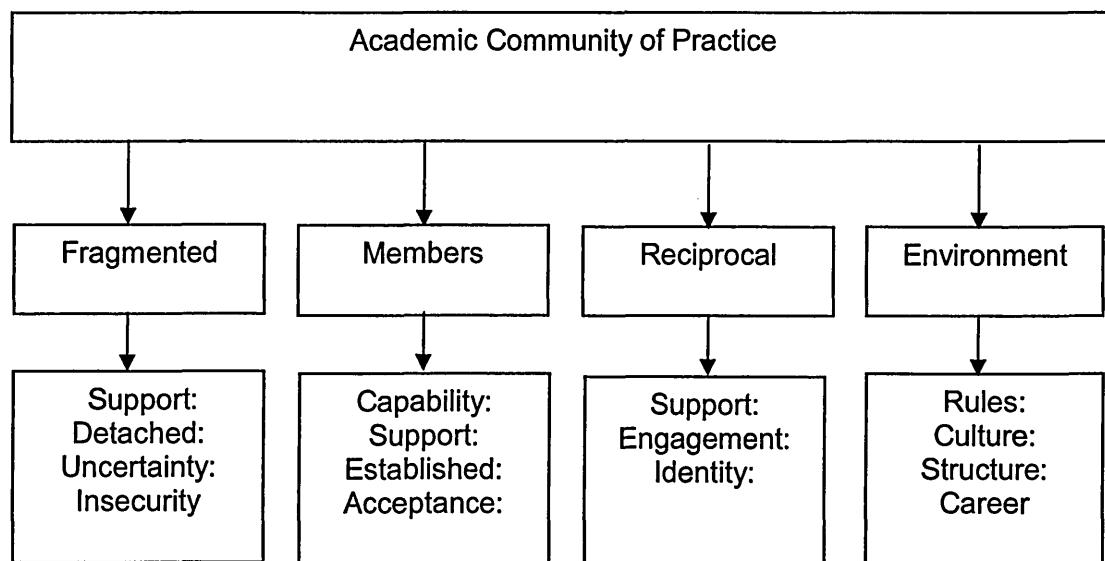
As implied above, the analysis and interpretation of the pilot study data and the knowledge generated from the literature review assisted in the origination of the free nodes. Once the free nodes and primary codes were established they were firstly analysed within the context of the character and the preceding/continuing paragraphs within the transcript. My initial observations (written as memos) during the interviews, the listening of the recordings and reading the transcripts were considered. Finally, the relationships to the responses from the other characters, within the same nodes, were

accounted for. From this analysis emergent themes became apparent and four tree nodes and their 'parent' and 'child' hierarchies were established.

- Academic Community of Practice
- Academic Identity
- Institution
- New Academic

Below are illustrations of the emergent themes together with their evolving 'parent' and 'child' hierarchies. Included are some examples of how the data set from the transcripts were interpreted to cultivate the hierarchies. This initial coding process identified what I termed 61 primary codes (child nodes) contained within the four emergent themes. Appendix 2 lists the primary codes and maps to the timeline.

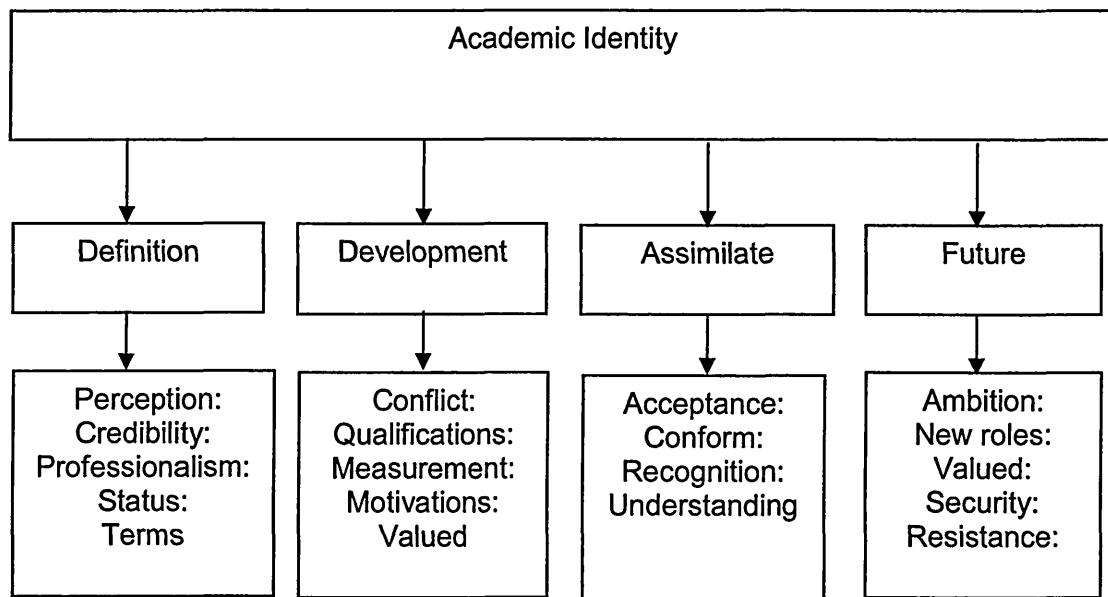
#### Model Seven: Emergent Theme One: Academic Community of Practice



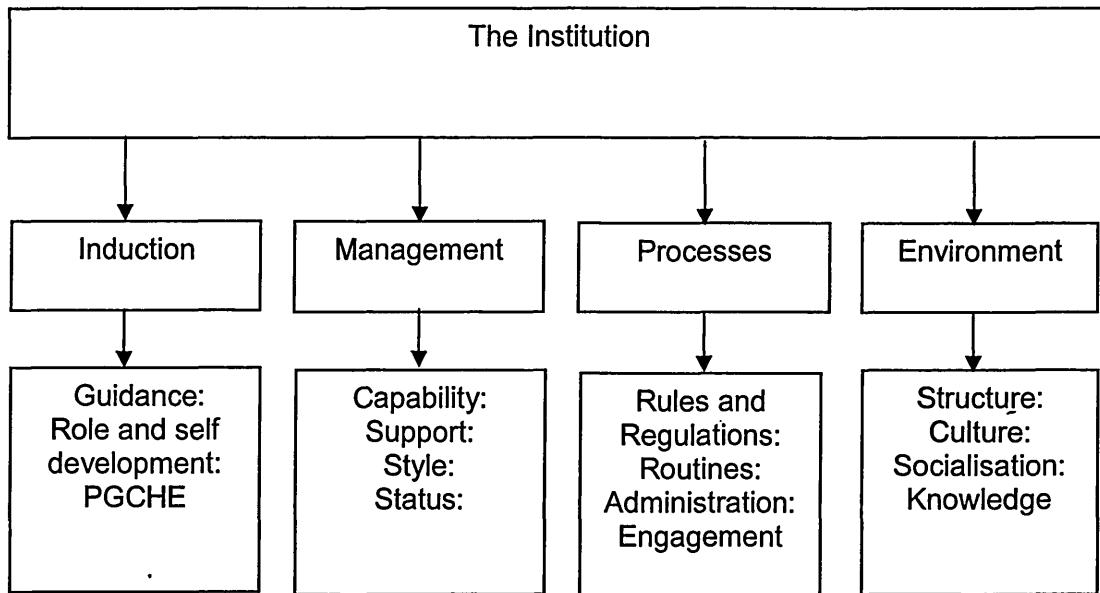
Parent (Child/Primary) code	Transcript	Free node	Character
Fragmented (Support)	I was handed over the role of assessment officer; I didn't know what it was... I've not a clue and nobody told me so I sat down with	157	Claire

	the admin person who said what would be expected... but that did not happen from my colleagues or my manager.		
Members (Capability)	I think some are very open and welcoming in some areas and some are quite defensive in some of those areas because we are questioning some of the old practices and so on, perhaps not everyone is positive towards that.	173	Mary
Reciprocal (Mentorship)	If there's something I don't know about a procedure or who I should talk to about something or how would I go about something then there's not one person that would not give advice or help in a generous way.	153	Jenny
Environment (Structure)	Our line manager has been promoted to Department Leader or something, I don't know. There seems to be lots of different managers and different jobs.	71	Angela

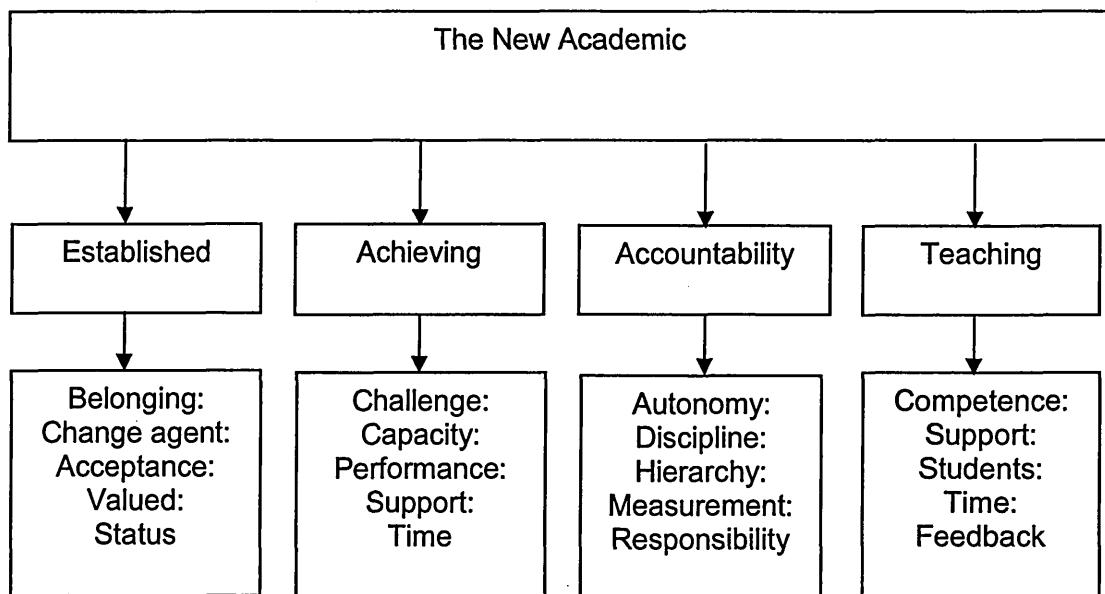
#### Model Eight: Emergent Theme Two: Academic Identity



Model Nine: Emergent Theme Three: The Institution



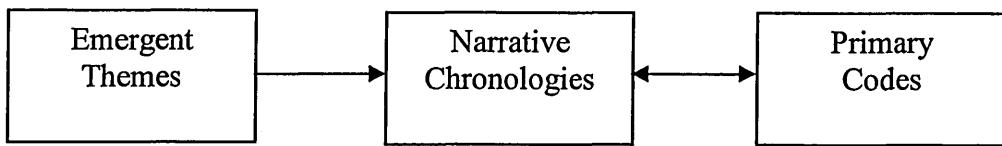
Model Ten: Emergent Theme Four: The New Academic



## Coding and Developing Themes: An Overview.

Available at the end of this process the 61 primary codes were connected to the four emergent themes. On the software all of the relevant transcript quotes were appended to the primary codes and were readily available. Therefore, once the themes were identified and the data categorised and recorded I then used this knowledge as a starting point to undertake a biographical approach to writing a narrative chronology for each of the characters' first year's journey within academia. The process of coding and the development of the emergent themes gave me the necessarily insight to write the narrative chronologies. The emergent themes were used to structure the narrative chronologies and the primary codes were then used to analyse the data contained within them.

### Model Eleven: Emergent Themes to Narrative Chronology



### Narrative Chronologies

Information communicated and the way in which it is communicated can aid exploration of the subject and its interpretation (Riessman, 2008). Knowledge from the emergent themes was used to explore in depth each of the characters initial year's journey within academia. To achieve this I adopted what I termed a narrative chronology. My interpretation of a narrative chronology is based on: "a form of biographical writing in which the researcher reports an extensive record of a person's life" (Creswell, 2007:234) in which the 'life' is temporal and influenced by personal, institutional and social histories (Cole and Knowles, 2001). Although I interviewed the ten new academics over a period of one year and it is accepted that this does not constitute 'life'. However, each new academic has been "retelling their experiences" and in doing so chronicling their year's 'life history' in a "series of events, happenings, influences and decisions" (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996:68). I would agree with White (1987:42) that: "a chronicle is not a narrative, even if they contain the same facts," although I

make a case that the narrative chronology in this research, or perhaps a chronology as narration, has used events as they have happened to further the interpretation of the themes and gain greater depth within their analysis.

I provide the narrative chronology for Lucy in Appendix 5 as an example. It is accepted that this one example cannot confer a full representation of all characters. However, the illustration does provide a valuable insight into the experiences of a new academic's journey. Much of Lucy's experiences were comparable to my own and as such it seemed appropriate to use her as the example, rather than using the other characters. Whilst the other narrative chronologies offered the right depth, Lucy's journey put forward a certain intensity and profundity that resonated with my own journey. It was felt that this would offer the reader of this work a greater understanding of the relationship between the author and the context of this research. Having said this, I also accept that by using Lucy as the example could lead to criticism that the themes chosen within the chronology and their interpretation are contained within my own experience (although I would argue that all of the chronologies do this) and not built upon other themes that may have been identified within the literature. The purpose of the narrative chronologies was to capture greater depth within the understanding of each character's first year's journey within a higher education setting and as such the chronologies are intentionally descriptive and episodic in nature.

The ten narrative chronologies generated 68,145 words and once completed I coded the characters responses to the conventions as set out above, using the established primary codes. I also interpreted the shared patterns of beliefs and behaviours of the group of new academics as I began to establish the genesis of the conceptual model. Below is an example, from each of the emergent themes, of how the data from the narrative chronologies was coded. It is accepted that the listing is not exhaustive and that primary codes from other emergent themes were also valid and applied within the final coding. It must also be noted that, within the overall interpretation, the narratives were analysed as whole entities and as such each of the codes were set within an overarching context that cannot be fully represented in the tables below. Please refer to Lucy's narrative for an example of this context (Appendix 5).

Table Seven: Academic Community of Practice

Character	Text from Narrative Chronology	Primary Codes
Kate	Whilst Kate feels part of the subject team community of practice she does not yet consider herself to be fully integrated, nor does she sense that she is ready to do so. <i>"You know, I feel included and we've had evenings out, and, you know, things like that... I'm as involved in the team as I'm ready to be at the moment... It's just that I know what I am ready for and what I'm not ready for".</i>	Support Acceptance Engagement Subject Team Belonging
Claire	However, over time Claire became frustrated in being part of " <i>such a disparate organisation</i> " (February 09) that she became more isolated, critical of the subject team practice and questioning of her position. <i>"I mean it's a terrible thing to say, but I can genuinely say I don't respect any of the practices I've seen and I just think 'well, you can't work in that environment and not be tainted by it' and that really worries me... So that's why I'm thinking I need to move on".</i>	Detached Uncertainty Insecurity Capability Identity Culture Career
Mary	Mary states that her strengths and that of colleagues were not being exploited within the team and she attributes some of this to the way in which the team was managed and structured. <i>"The subject group that I'm part of has a very linear management structure. So we've got a subject group leader and then we have three principal lecturers, but the three principal lecturers don't necessarily have a management hat on per se. They have strands that they take a lead on... So, honest opinion, no, I do not think that we are being managed to identify our qualities and strengths that we can bring to the subject group".</i>	Support Structure Culture Engagement Capability Career Management Style

Table Eight: Academic Identity

Character	Text from Narrative Chronology	Primary Codes
Charlie	Charlie views an academic as a composite figure between teaching and research. Charlie does not currently view himself as an academic although there is an aspiration to be one. <i>"There is definitely the teaching part which is essential and it's probably the reason why I thought about becoming an academic... But I see the research role almost as important as the teaching role... I think that the fact that I have a lot of experience in industry in a way can improve my academic work".</i>	Perception Status Qualifications Understanding Ambition
Jenny	In February Jenny is still unsure of her definition of an academic and her position within it, although there is recognition of some movement towards being academic, which again she offers some resistance to. <i>"Well I think that you can have an academic job title, you know if you are a lecturer or a senior lecturer whatever it might be that people will say that you're an academic because that is what your job role and I guess my perspective of an academic is someone who has spent most of their working life in academia. I think I still don't feel like I will ever fit completely in the environment".</i>	Perception Status Conform Resistance
Lucy	Knowledge transfer is one of the criteria within Lucy's definition of an academic <i>"You're an academic you pass on knowledge. If you've got knowledge you pass on knowledge, participate in the academic, for example, writing – so publishing any work you're doing – and passing [those] to students... Not yet [an academic] because I don't have enough expertise in academia and enough experience as an academic. Maybe after my PhD in 6 years I'll consider myself academic, but at this point, I don't consider myself as being at that level... I just teach.</i>	Perception Qualifications Credibility Measurement Acceptance Ambition

Table Nine: The Institution

Character	Text from Narrative Chronology	Primary Codes
Claire	Claire became more frustrated with poor management and how this was affecting her progression. Even from an early stage Claire began to question the qualification of her managers to manage. " <i>It is because they employ managers that aren't really managers, they promote people who are good academics and make them a manager and yet the two are quite distinct; it's a problem within this organisation.</i> "	Structure Culture Capability Style Status
Charlie	Charlie felt that the lack of knowledge of the university structures and working practices held back his progression. Charlie was not formally inducted. " <i>That's one thing I've been asking for... I haven't been trained on what academics need to know... I asked them if I could have a bit more induction. For example, I don't know anything about the structure of the faculty, who does what, what are the levels, the position, who I need to talk to, I don't know</i> ".	Induction Role and Self Support Rules and Regs Knowledge
Jenny	Jenny is not engaging in the wider university setting and is primarily concentrating on the teaching role, initially getting this right. " <i>Not the whole hierarchy of the organization because I don't see it and haven't involved myself in it and I'm deliberately not doing because I'm trying to concentrate on my job... I think it will come in a year or two that it will be something that I am more interested in</i> ".	Role and Self Development Capability Engagement Knowledge
Petra	Leaving the security of her former environment presented issues for Petra. " <i>Systems, the fact that this is a massive institution. I've spent 19 years knowing a system inside and out... to being the baby and knowing nothing</i> ".	Guidance Knowledge Status Rules and Regs

Table Ten: The New Academic

Character	Text from Narrative Chronology	Primary Codes
Mary	For Mary the lack of team working is a negative aspect of the new role as is the autonomy given to academics. Within her new role Mary has found the freedom and lack of regulation over staff slightly disconcerting. <i>"For me personally it was quite difficult because I like to have certain parameters to work within".</i> Mary initially ensured that she informed colleagues of what she was doing and found it astonishing that this was not standard practice. <i>"But initially I felt quite guilty working from home. Yeah, I did initially and now I don't because that's just the culture".</i>	Acceptance Challenge Time Discipline Responsibility Measurement
Petra	Petra recognises that whilst she is gaining confidence there is still some anxiety, particularly her lack of subject specialism compared to some colleagues. <i>"But the subject knowledge and competence, I haven't got a PhD in that area".</i> However, the more teaching she does the less anxious she becomes. "Every time I've done a session its gone okay and the students have been very positive. It's that realisation that you know more than you realise".	Acceptance Status Challenge Performance Students Feedback
Jenny	Delivering some of the teaching was a challenge for Jenny, particularly as she felt that she did not have the time to complete the job to the standards which she places on herself. <i>"Well, it's always difficult, isn't it? It's always challenging and sometimes I feel really confident doing what I'm doing and sometime less confident... I don't seem to have enough time. I am regularly working until 1 or 2 in the morning".</i>	Challenge Time Autonomy Performance

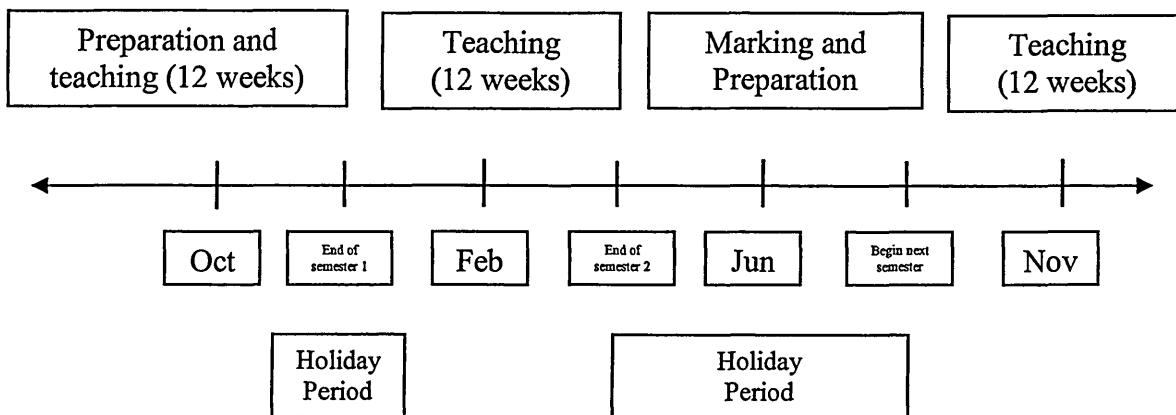
Once the narrative chronologies were completed for each of the characters I possessed a vast resource of data that was coded, connected to the emergent themes, and readily accessible via the Nivivo software. More importantly, I had acquired a unique insight of each of the characters' journeys. The knowledge that emerged from all ten narrative chronologies linked to the data set and situated within the context of my own journey led to the conceptual model.

## The Conceptual Model

A conceptual model helps to clarify and integrate the themes and various definitional strands that appear within the research data (Carroll, 1979). Creswell (2007:192) suggests that the model (framework) is normally presented at the end of the study as a visual form that "represents the culminating theory". However, for my research I used the Conceptual Model as the foundation for the Anagnorisis. That is, the themes that are identified within the narrative chronology have emerged from the preliminary knowledge attained from the original data analysis; they have then been reinterpreted and contextualized within a framework. The following section substantiates the basis of the three categories used within the conceptual model. Data from a number of the characters is provided to evidence and support the claims made.

The origination of the conceptual model was derived from the title of the dissertation 'Stories of the Journey'. The characters were interviewed on four occasions (October/February/June/November) throughout their journey. It became clear that the academic year was composed of what the characters considered to be key periods, as shown in Model 12 below. These were primarily based around their teaching commitments and holiday interludes.

## Model Twelve: The Academic Year



The data suggested that time was a key factor for all of the characters, with many devising a timeline that took account of what they perceived to be their own pivotal transitional points. The timeline was a significant indicator to the success, or otherwise, of their transition to academia. The characters were also reflective and questioned their position and future trajectory at certain points along the timeline.

The following are some 'nuggets' from Charlie's narrative chronology which make evident my thinking in devising the timeline for the conceptual model. The 'nuggets' also demonstrate one of the connections from data to conceptual model. It is acknowledged that the value of each primary code, within the text, were variable within the overall analysis.

Table Eleven: Narrative Chronology Coding (Charlie)

Date	Text	Primary Codes
Oct 08	Charlie viewed 'surviving' the first semester as essential to his continuation as a new lecturer, although he thought it could take several years. " <i>At least the semester needs to be over, at least, but I see it as a long process. I see it going on for a few years at least before I feel fully confident about what I'm doing</i> ".	Survival Challenge Competence Timeline
Oct 08	Time for full reflection is not something that Charlie	Aspiration

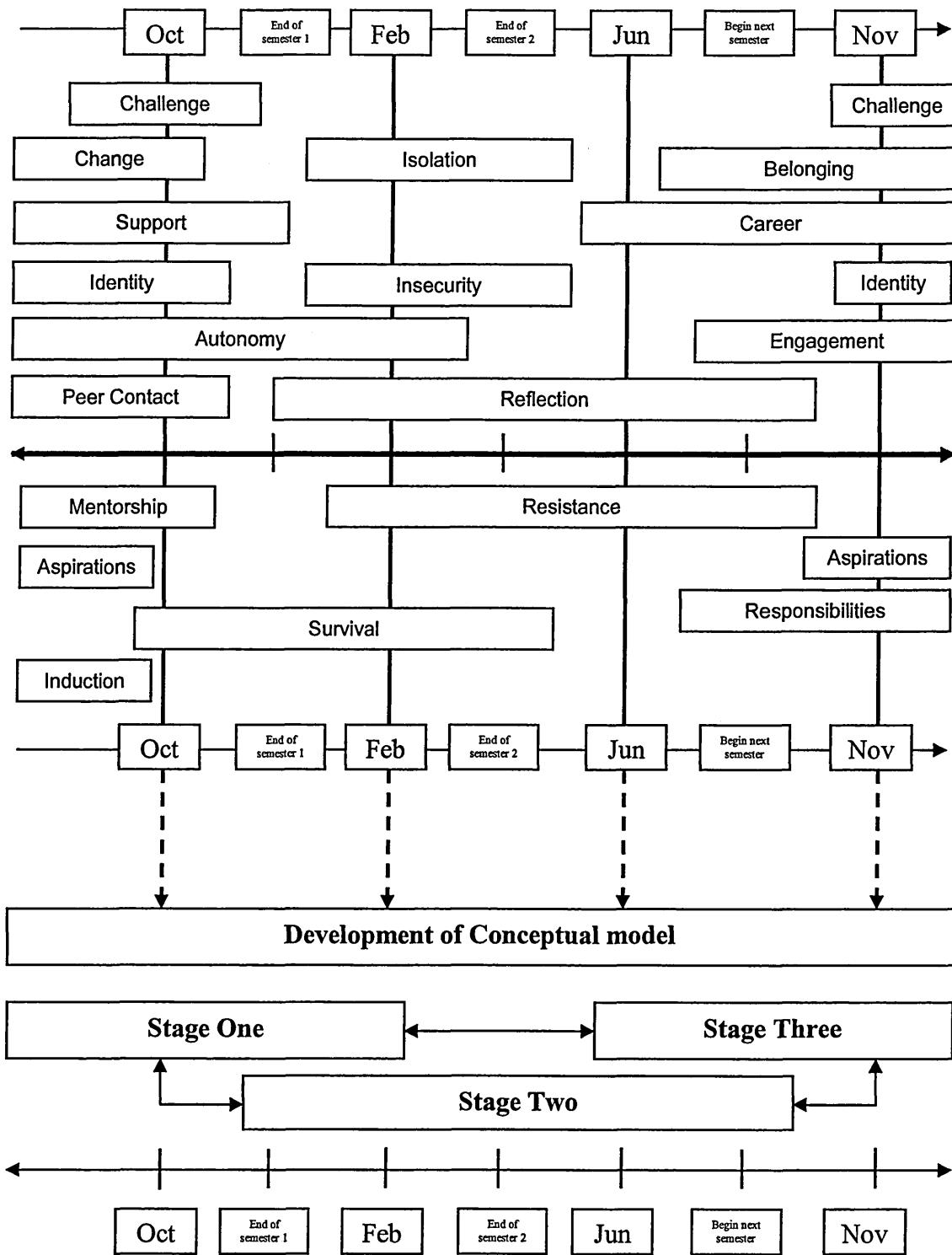
	currently feels that he has and views this as hindering his progression. "Eventually when I start reflecting on what I'm doing I can start building something".	Development Timeline
Oct 08	The demands of the new teaching role placed significant pressure on Charlie, leading him to question his career choice. "So at the moment I'm really struggling in making sense out of what I'm doing. I'm questioning the choice of coming to work here."	Workload Support Teaching Motivations Insecurity Career
Feb 09	By the time of the second interviews in February Charlie felt that he was coming to terms with his new work role and the environment. " <i>It has been a crazy first semester, now the second semester is much better. I struggled at the beginning to find my way around and to cope with the work-load; it took me a while to get adjusted to the working system. I am managing my time much better... I am more confident.</i> "	Time Achieving Competence Workload
Feb 09	Charlie accepted that he was not happy with his output during the first semester. However, Charlie felt a change in his attitude towards the work between semesters. " <i>It's more a change in attitude than any action because the amount of work is the same, or even busier, but it is the way in which I approach it. I know that I am doing my best, I know it is the maximum I can do at this stage. I know it's not perfect but it is improving.</i> "	Change Achieving Capability Development Motivations Reflection
Feb 09	Charlie does believe that he will 'survive' the transition and plans around his timeframe. For example, he is looking ahead to Easter and the end of class contact time and the end of the teaching course which will give him the opportunity to think more strategically. " <i>I'm seeing the end of the first year of teaching is making a bit of a long term plan because right now I am living on my own</i>	Timeline Reflection Career PGCE Teaching Survival Support

	<i>timeframe... but right now it is really about basic survival."</i>	
June 09	<p>By the time of the third interview Charlie had seen significant progress in his transition. "So, since February I've survived the second semester, which was definitely easier. No, I wouldn't say easier, but I was less worried most of the time about what was going on. I felt more relaxed and a bit more in control. I also had a better understanding of what's going on in the office as well... So it worked out better and it depended on my attitude mainly because I don't think that anything actually changed in the outside world. It was my approach that was changing." This sense of confidence and belonging led to Charlie reevaluating his 'survival strategy'. "I need another year I think now. Before it was like survive the next week, survive the next month and now I can start planning one year ahead, more or less.</p>	Survival Belonging Capability Change Competence Knowledge Timeline Career Structures
Nov 09	<p>At the final meeting in November, 2009 Charlie notes that the summer holidays came at the right moment for him as he was tired and needed to use the time to start preparing for next academic semester starting in October. "I had a long break for holidays, which I really needed... I finished teaching and it was a big relief. Everything completed and everything went well, so that's out of the way."</p>	Timeline Teaching Reflection Knowledge Motivation Autonomy
Nov 09	<p>Charlie now feels that he is accepted and integrated within the team. "Compared to last year it's an incredible difference. I feel more at ease. I feel I've been accepted in a way. The change is evident in the language that Charlie is using, 'we' instead of 'I'. "Compared to last year where I was really just focused on surviving, now that's the change between last year and this year. This year I'm really working within the team and committed to bring forward all</p>	Acceptance Subject Team Conform Established Recognition Support Valued Wider participation

	<i>the ideas that we have."</i>	
Nov 09	However, Charlie does accept that he still faces challenges. <i>"I need to consolidate because I'm still almost in my first year. I'm starting the Masters in Research next semester. I need to start from little blocks and I thought that one could be a good one. So that's my development for the next two to three years."</i>	Challenges Qualifications Development Career Credibility Status Wider participation

As suggested the characters conceived a timeline that took account of what they perceived to be their own pivotal transitional points. By analysing and chronicling the recurring primary codes at these transitional points enabled the mapping of the 'journey' across all characters. Below in Model 13 is an example of how some of the more consistent primary codes have been mapped to the timeline and then linked to the beginnings of the conceptual model. The chronicling of the primary codes to the interview points can be found in Appendix 2

### Model Thirteen: Primary Code mapping

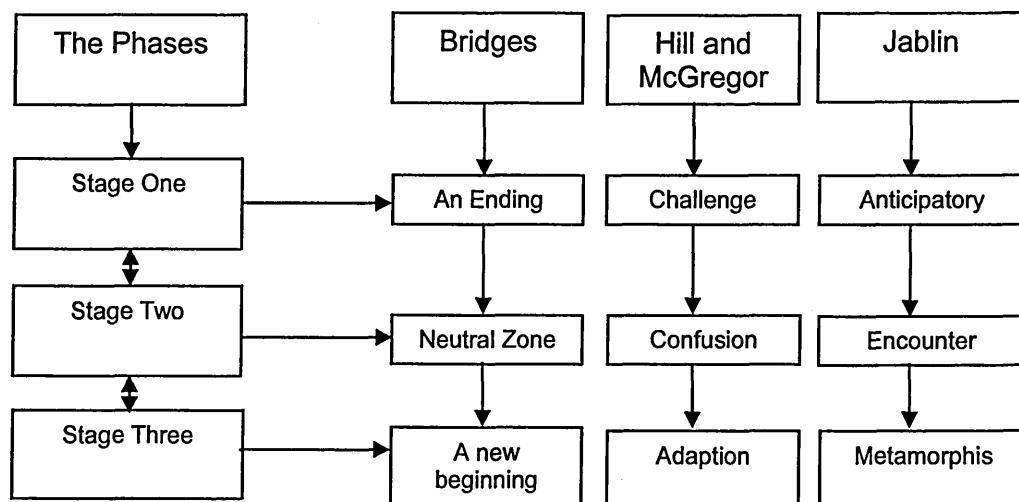


The chronicling and mapping of the primary codes revealed that the characters moved between three connected stages throughout their transition. The linking of these stages to the literature topics of transitions and socialisation developed the three phases used within the conceptual model. The section below draws on some of the data from the research to substantiate the basis for the chosen categories.

## Developing the Phases

The data collected and the narrative chronologies from all ten characters revealed that they entered what I considered to be three distinct yet interconnected stages at various points throughout their transition, although the process is not linear. These stages can also be linked to the numerous periods of transition and socialisation as identified within the literature by Bridges (1991); Hill and McGregor (1998) and Jablin (2001). Model 14 below recalls these links.

### Model Fourteen: The Phases



To substantiate the design of the conceptual model the following section demonstrates the connection from the research data and the narrative chronologies to the three stages of transition and socialisation as identified above. Each heading offers one example from the primary codes mapped, supported by selected illustrations from character responses. It is recognised that the range of examples given below provide only a snapshot, although it is accepted that in the overall analysis and interpretation a fuller picture was attained.

## **Stage One: Anticipatory and Support (Reciprocal Phase)**

The interpretation, analysis and mapping of the data revealed that the following terms were prevalent within the first stage of transition.

- Challenge
- Support
- Peer Contact
- Mentorship
- Aspirations
- Induction

Each of these key primary codes links to the notion of reciprocity. For example, the characters recognised that they were at an ending of their former role (although some retained residual contact and values) and that they were facing challenges in adapting to and engaging with their new setting. The evidence suggests that support mechanisms, both formal and informal, were pivotal to the characters success, or otherwise, in negotiating their initial entry. The mapping of the primary codes indicates that support mechanisms included: peer contact within subject group communities; Mentorship; PGCE and Induction. The characters who had early reciprocal relationships with peers acknowledged that they were more able and willing to accept an 'ending' of their former role. Not all of the characters were allocated mentors, received induction or enrolled on the PGCE course. This lack of standard support mechanisms for new staff was at odds to the characters former industry experience and also contradictory to their expectations of entering a higher academic environment.

Anticipatory socialisation is the period prior to joining the institution where the characters envisaged their entry into the new organisation. To a great extent the characters expectations were either established by their prior understanding and experience of the higher academic setting or based on pre-conceived notions. For example, Mike had gained some qualifications at the institute itself and as such already had a form of relationship with some of his new colleagues and was expecting to enter a supportive environment.

I'd got colleagues here that I'd known for a long time... so there were a few people around who could show me what needed doing... there is always someone to ask for advice and support.

(Mike: October, 2008)

Jenny, on the other hand, entered academia with the perception: "you know what people said to me about working in academia, that you are fairly autonomous and you are responsible for the stuff that you do" and as such was not expecting to enter such a supportive setting. Working in a collaborative environment was a shock to Jenny and it took her some time to become accustomed to being offered help and assistance so readily. Furthermore, it was contradictory to her former setting.

In industry if you have to continually ask for help and ask to be shown how to do something then its seen as a sign of weakness... whereas here in this environment if you don't ask for help and try and do it yourself it's like that's the wrong thing to do.

(Jenny: October, 2008)

The initial few weeks for Petra were not as daunting as she anticipated, primarily due to the levels of support she received.

Lots of support certainly from the subject base... I think its because we are such a small group, but it really does feel now after a few weeks like it's a far more kind of mutual approach to what we are doing.

(Petra: October, 2008)

Whilst the support received was welcomed it was not necessarily seen as one way. For example, some of the characters viewed themselves as being able to provide up to date industry knowledge to enhance the subject specialism. As Charlie states,

Although I don't have any teaching experience I always knew that I would be good at it. I think the fact that I have a lot of experience with industry in a way can improve my academic work

(Charlie: October, 2008).

This was followed by Charlie using former industry contact to secure student placements.

I'm actually meeting one of my [former] colleagues in a couple of days in London I'm actually trying to send a placement student to them so when I left one of the things that we found is that we were maintaining contact between myself and in my previous employers because it is exactly the type

of skills and knowledge that I got from them that makes me of value for the University.

(Charlie: February, 2009)

Therefore, many of the characters were appreciative of the support received from colleagues, particularly in the initial stages of transition. However, as they progressed the characters began to view their role as reciprocal, in that their input was shaping the future of the setting in which they were placed and colleagues within it. This notion of reciprocity placed some of the characters on a collision course with peers who were less appreciative of this mutual endeavor. Resistance to reciprocity by established academics created a sense of isolation for many of the characters.

### **Stage Two: Encounter and Isolation (Fragile Phase)**

The interpretation, analysis and mapping of the data revealed that the following terms were prevalent within the second stage of transition.

- Isolation
- Insecurity
- Reflection
- Resistance
- Survival

Each of these key primary codes links to the notion of fragility. For example, many characters, had ended their association with their former position, were beginning to reflect on their current situation and were also concentrating on their new roles, as Mike states,

I'm fully committed to what I am doing I don't wish I was back in my other role... I don't think back to what was I would be doing now or anything like that I am focused on where I am going.

(Mike: February, 2009)

However, not all were this committed; for example, Angela was retaining contact with her former role by working on an outside project. Her motivation for this was that she felt tenuous within her new environment and sought to retain her old role a safety net. By working on this project she retained her knowledge and her contacts.

I'm just doing it myself, you know. So if I have a few hours spare, I don't feel guilty working on my own project. So I don't know if it is the teaching hours that allow me or what I am so desperate not to lose contacts.

(Angela: February, 2009)

For Jablin (2001) the encounter stage is where the newcomer confronts the reality of his or her situation. For Angela the reality was that the established academics were increasingly resistant to her proposals for change and she became isolated and fragile within the community setting.

Some of them are still quite aggressively fighting for their old things and I don't find that particularly easy to deal with.

(Angela: June, 2009)

This confrontation was fundamental to Angela's decision to leave academia. Similarly Claire also found her peers opposed to change, although it was the work that Claire was given that led her to feel fragile within her subject team community. Claire recognises that her strong characteristics and personality may have threatened some of the existing members and that this may have impacted on the job roles that she was given.

I know that I am a very able person and I come across very, I don't know, whether it would be assertive or, but I know my worth and I think it can come across sometimes as someone who can be challenging... Sometimes I have to say that I am bored, there is not enough to keep me occupied. So the tasks I have been given have been fairly monotonous... So disengagement is there.

(Claire: June, 2009)

Conversely other characters were being given increased responsibilities and whilst they were happy to accept the new tasks they found them to be challenging and on occasions this led to feelings of insecurity. Petra was not expecting to be involved in the academic community so heavily early in her career and admits to being a little "scared".

Given roles... and mine is to be in charge of the professional year, which is kind of scary, but at least it shows that the team have confidence in me.

(Petra: June, 2009)

Lack of confidence in ability and a view that they did not want to seem incompetent in front of peers was cited on a number of occasions by the characters, reflected by Charlie, "I was so worried about not reaching a certain standard" (November, 2009). Not all of the characters were as concerned at this stage of their transition, with Sally stating that she was confident in delivering the tasks she was asked to do and also being more at ease within her setting.

I think I've progressed a lot. I'm much happier fitting in. I feel that I've been here for a long time. I can feel at ease.... So you feel more confident.

(Sally: June, 2009)

Sally, it is suggested, reached the engaged stage of the transition earlier than the majority of the other characters.

### **Stage Three: Adaption and Belonging (Engaged)**

The interpretation, analysis and mapping of the data revealed that the following terms were prevalent within the second stage of transition.

- Belonging
- Career
- Engagement
- Aspirations
- Responsibilities
- Challenge

Each of these key primary codes links to the notion of engagement. For example, as stated above, Sally felt that she belonged within her new environment. For the majority of the characters a sense of belonging surfaced when they began to consider themselves as academic. The characters understood what the term 'academic' meant to them and how it was applied within their own community.

I'm more comfortable in the role now. I mean I've probably learned a lot over the last year or so, a lot more than I realised. I just feel I've got a better feel for what goes on at the university.

(Kate: November, 2009)

Acceptance from the established academics also created a sense of belonging for the characters.

Compared to last year it's an incredible difference. I feel more at ease. I feel I've also been accepted in a way... I really belong to the Faculty and I'm very proud in a way also.

(Charlie: November, 2009)

Considering the view of academia articulated by Charlie earlier in this research, leading to him "questioning the choice of coming to work here" (October, 2008), the adaptation to 'being academic' was a significant shift in his thinking and overall engagement within academia, "here for the next ten years for sure and then..." (November, 2009).

Gaining recognition from established academics was viewed by some of the characters as central to their sense of belonging and engagement, even for Lucy who had a somewhat 'turbulent' relationship with her peers, particularly at the early stages of her transition.

I think that I'm integrated better than I was at the beginning... as I said, each time I've got something new or I would like to share with them, I do it and they take it on board and they come back to you and want to learn and they want to see how you're doing it. So we are really integrated.

(Lucy: November, 2009)

Sally like Lucy initially had a negative experience with the established academics within her subject group and admits to being intimidated by them. Sally subsequently adopted a strategy of accepting small tasks that were often declined by more established academics. This enabled Sally to associate with the wider subject team setting and the established academics. Sally used this insight to further her relationships and engagement within the subject community.

I look at it as that they can rely on me to do it and do whatever they want and do it well and in the long run I think I'll benefit from that... I've had to go and speak to probably other Principal Lecturers and other staff to gain information and to work with them. So I've got to know them better. So I feel more integrated and willing to put my ideas across.

(Sally: November, 2009)

Sally justifies this strategy by citing the experience of some of the other new academics who started before her.

I think they're slightly out of it and because they do as much they're less likely to get recognised for doing anything... so I don't think they're as integrated, no.

(Sally: November, 2009)

Within the Fragile Phase it was stated that new responsibilities created tensions for the characters. However, the acceptance of new responsibilities at this stage of transition was welcomed by many and created more of a sense of belonging.

I'm involved with a group looking at the admissions procedure and things and that's nice... your actually part of a group that are changing things. I like that.

(Petra: November, 2009)

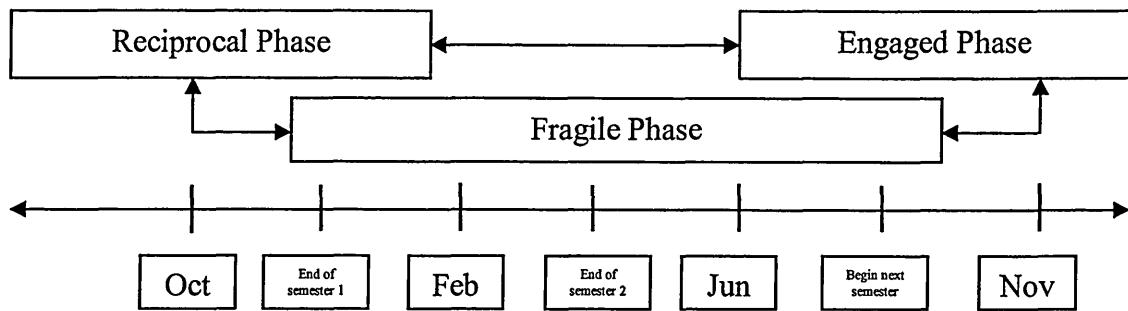
The characters that were able to integrate within the academic milieu were no longer novices; they gained confidence in their ability and were able to give value back. For the majority of characters this engagement led to thoughts of long term careers as academics. Mary is a good example of this adaptation. In the first interview Mary admitted that it was difficult to let go of her former role. Whereas at the final interview she states,

I think I would position myself much more in the academic field rather than to the industry element. I don't miss the industry at all. I wont go back to my former role.

(Mary: November, 2009)

In depth analysis of each of the three stages led to the development of the conceptual model.

## Model Fifteen: The Conceptual Model



### Scene Four: Ethics and Validity

The purpose of this scene is to examine the ethical implications of my own 'insiderness' within the research process for this dissertation. Finally the concept of validity within narrative research is examined.

#### Ethics: the researcher within the research

The role of the researcher in the research process is what Labaree (2002, cited in Mercer, 2007) calls the: "hidden ethical and methodological dilemmas of insiderness" (p109). Mercer, (2007) claims that the proliferation of EdD programmes has resulted in the 'college' becoming the research site. Hockey (1993) would suggest that this presents advantages such as: lack of culture shock; enhanced rapport and communication; the ability to gauge honesty and accuracy of response and finally the likelihood that participants will reveal more detail to someone considered empathetic. These views are juxtaposed with the acknowledgment of insider research breeding over-familiarity, taken for granted assumptions and power dominance. Undoubtedly researching as an insider had many advantages. For example, I had a better understanding of the social setting, I knew who to target as the right participants, I was familiar with the organisational culture, I was able to facilitate rooms and technical equipment for the interviews and participant familiarity did lead to thicker description or as has been suggested perhaps greater verisimilitude (Mercer, 2007). For Smetherham (1978) the strength is that: "complete participation on the part of the researcher anchors him within the particular realities of the school" (p97).

Veal (1997) suggests that the principles underling ethics in research are universal: they concern honesty and respect and as such have explicit codes and practices to which members adhere and which are often enforced in some circumstances by ethics committees. As such there are many guidelines and rules governing ethics in research, although I agree with Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006) that one cannot achieve ethical research by following a set of pre-established procedures, codes or rules, no code of practice can predict or resolve all encounters. Indeed, Cohen et al (2007) claim that researchers: "construct a set of rational principles appropriate to their own circumstances and based on personal, professional and societal values". They further suggest that researchers: "fashion a personal code of ethical practice" (p75). Whilst we may consider ourselves to be ethical, in social research ethical considerations are not always apparent (Babbie, 2007). Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias (1992, cited in Cohen et al, 2007), would suggest that there is a: "conflict between two rights: the rights to conduct research in order to gain knowledge versus the rights of participants to self-determination, privacy and dignity" (p63) and this is the fundamental ethical dilemma facing researchers, the costs/benefits ratio. As Flick (2006) would suggest a code of ethics is not an answer to all questions.

Quinton and Smallbone (2006) argue that other forms of research are not as intrusive as research in medicine. Nevertheless, there are many ethical dilemmas facing the social researcher, primarily because they delve into people's lives. Kvale (1996) outlines five key areas for contemplation: beneficial consequences; informed consent; confidentiality; consequence of study and finally the role of the researcher in the research process. Each of these areas was considered before the research commenced (Table Three, below).

**Table Twelve: Ethical Considerations**

Topic	Issue	Resolution
Beneficial consequences	Can the study enhance the situation of the participants, and/or of the group they represent? (Brinkman and Kvale, 2008).	The research process has offered the respondents the opportunity to reflect on their transition to SHU

		and assess their future career paths. All respondents were able to use the transcripts of their interviews as research towards their final PGCE submissions.
Informed consent	Provision of appropriate information to enable people to make informed decisions about participation (Wiles et al, 2005).	Permission was sought from all respondents with clear information given in advance concerning the subject and purpose of the research. All respondents were given the opportunity to withdraw from the research at anytime during the process.
Confidentiality	Respondents are entitled to expect that they cannot be identified as the source of any particular information (de Vaus, 2001) and they permit only a stochastic link between respondents identification and response (Boruch, 1972).	Considering the respondents work within the institution where the research has taken place privacy is essential. I have used pseudonyms to protect the identities of the respondents. In addition, I have changed the respondent's previous industry role title and their new role title, if cited.
Consequence of study	Assess potential harm against	Considering the

	<p>possible benefits and judge whether the publication of the research findings would have a positive or negative effect on the respondents (Kvale, 1996).</p>	<p>confidential nature of the study it is suggested that no harm will arise. Indeed, it is claimed that the research has facilitated conscious awareness of the respondents' career development within higher education. Furthermore, it is intended that the research will offer new insights for the university in the development of their new staff induction processes.</p>
Role of the researcher in the process	<p>The implication of accepting the inevitable role of the researcher in the research process is that it should be highlighted and revealed (Henwood and Pidgeon, 1993).</p>	Discussed above

## Validity

For Polkinghorne, (2007) the concept of validity within narrative research is concerned with: "the believability of a statement or knowledge claim" (p4). Verification of knowledge is commonly discussed in the social sciences in relation to the notions of generalisability, reliability and validity although I would argue that the legitimacy of narrative research cannot be addressed through these concepts, as knowledge claims cannot be determined with absolute certainty (Kvale, 1998). Bryman (1988:88) has an: "enduring concern of generalisation" (p37) "beyond the "confines of the particular case" with Lincoln and Guba (1995) stating that: "the trouble with generalizations is that they don't apply to particulars" (p110). They would argue that the nature of qualitative

research renders generalisation unnecessary with Usher et al contending that: "there are few, if any, predictive generalisations that have emerged from educational research" (1997:169). I would dispute O'Dea's (1994:161) claim that narrative researchers devalue the notion of truth by substituting the: "yardsticks of reliability, validity and generalization" although I would agree that: "narratives need to be epistemically respectable" (Phillips, 1993:10). Therefore, within this act, scene one provided reasoned justification for the choice of approach with scene two offering rigorous methodological procedures that would be deemed useful by other researchers.

A further key principle in testing the knowledge claim of narrative research is through the honesty, depth and richness of the data (Cohen et al, 2007). For Polkinghorne (2007: 13) the validity of the story is: "attested to by its rich detail and revealing descriptions". Therefore, there is a need for the researcher to substantiate and defend their interpretations of the data (Andrews et al, 2008). Verhesschen claims that: "narrative researchers are researchers and not writers of fiction" (1999:7) and as such narrative researchers have a responsibility to tell the truth. Riessman (2008:184) accepts this although she favours the term 'trustworthiness'. Critics of narrative research, such as Carter (1993) and Phillips (1993 and 1997), would suggest that: "it is difficult to decide, beyond all doubt, whether or not many narratives are true" (Phillips, 1997:108) "trustworthy or deserving of a central place in educational research (Phillips, 1993:10). However, a narrative approach that: "advocates pluralism, relativism and subjectivity" adopts the notion that there is not a "single or absolute truth in human reality and as such no one correct interpretation of a text" (Lieblich et al, 1998:2) with Rosaldo suggesting that: "all interpretations are provisional" (1989:8). By accepting this view, Polkinghorne (2007) makes a case that: "validating knowledge claims is not a mechanical process but, instead, is an argumentative practice" (p6). Therefore, narrative researchers need to search for emerging patterns from within the texts to reach a professional understanding from within them to acquire sufficient and relevant evidence in order to offer a credible and convincing argument. For Polkinghorne (2007): "the confidence a reader grants to a narrative knowledge claim is a function of the cogency and soundness of the evidence-based arguments presented by the narrative researcher" (p14) with O'Dea (1994) citing that the reader has to: "trust the integrity of the scholar" (p166). I make the case that the data collection, analysis and interpretation within this narrative research have been both appropriate for the context of the study and rigorous within its application. On the basis of this position, I contend that this research has been successful in doing justice to the research situation and the

characters. For Verhesschen if narrative researchers: "succeed in being authentic researchers, their research stories can have epistemic respectability and be accepted as truth" (1999:11).

# Anagnorisis: The Research Findings

## Preface

The final stages of Act Two, Scene Three provided evidence of the process undertaken in the development and construction of the conceptual model. The conceptual model identifies three key phases of transition. The purpose of this chapter is to explore the three phases in greater detail by applying the research findings and linking them to the theories and concepts acknowledged within the literature review and also by offering, in support, new literature sources that were subsequently identified during the iterative process of this dissertation. This chapter is presented in three sections which represent the three phases the new academic progresses through during their transition. The Reciprocal Phase, The Fragile Phase and The Engaged Phase.

Kennedy (2009) suggests that Anagnorisis is essential in all narratives, in that it provides recognition, discovery or disclosure. The Anagnorisis within this work discusses the key stages or events that have taken place throughout the study to provide such recognition, discovery or disclosure. Denzin (2001) may understand these as: "interactional moments that leave a positive or negative mark on people's lives" (p143) and identifies four types:

1. The major event that: "touches every part of the fabric of a person's life... with immediate and long term effects" (p145)
2. The cumulative events that: "occur as the result of a series of events that have built up" (p37)
3. The illuminative epiphany that reveals: "underlying tensions and problems in a situation or relationship" (p37)
4. The relived epiphany in that the: "individual relives, or goes through again, a major turning point in his or her life" (p37)

Denzin's 'interactional moments' are useful for the Anagnorisis although in the context of the design of this research document, I also adopt the notion of 'emplotment' as interpreted by Czarniawka (2004), that is, a method of creating structure to the interactional moments identified by linking the responses to the context of the literature.

The Anagnorisis continues with an analytical discussion of the three environments with the various contexts and themes linked back to the literature review. As narrator my reflections have shaped the conceptual model and I now purposely exclude any explicit reference to my experiences (as the narrator) as I now seek critical analysis from only the characters' 'voices'. My reflections are implicit within this analysis.

## **The Reciprocal Phase**

The Reciprocal Phase is where the new academic is exposed to new knowledge of the institution, subject community and teaching practice yet also where the new academic transfers their up-to-date industry experience back into the institution, subject community and teaching practice. Within this environment the new academic collaborates and interacts (auditions) with peers in order to establish an identity within the subject team community, engages with the wider institution, whilst retaining contact with their former industry role and colleagues. Within the reciprocal phase the new academic considers their entry into the institution, their interpretation of the setting, their understanding of the nature of academic identity and their initial interactions within the local community. At this stage of transition four distinct yet interconnected communities of practice were identified: the subject team, members from their PGCE course, the student body and finally the wider institutional community with the formal process of induction and mentorship.

### **Terms of Understanding and Identity - research and teaching**

One of the prerequisites for joining the higher education setting, as a member of academic staff, is to have attained a minimum of a first degree. Indeed all the ten characters satisfied this criterion. Henkel (2000) contends that it is at this stage where new academics begin to build their perception of academic identity. The literature review supports Quigley's view that: "academic identity is complex and is composed of many competing influences... a constantly shifting target, which differs for each individual academic" (2011:21). The numerous and diverse character responses within this research would reinforce this notion. However, a sense of identity is a key influence on a new academic's sense of purpose, self efficacy, motivation and effectiveness (Clegg, 2007; Churchman, 2006), although as previously stated the new academics in this research entered higher education with a narrow view of academic

identity. Henkel (2000) also claims that the undertaking of post graduate education is where current academics embark upon their academic careers. Six of the characters had already achieved their Masters Degree, with a further two in the process of Masters Degree completion. It is also worth noting that three of the characters received offers of academic employment as a direct result of their Masters studies from within the same institution that they are now employed. Therefore, it could be assumed that each of the characters would have some comprehension of the terms and structures associated within academia. Central to this is an understanding of the term 'academic' after all this is now what they are defined as, within the workplace: "I have an academic job title, but I don't think that I am an academic" (Jenny, October, 2008). Indeed, the majority were not confident in defining the term academic: "God, I don't know" (Petra, October, 2008), "It's a bit confusing" (Lucy, October, 2008). Charlie thought it be "a difficult question, I'll maybe be able to answer you in a few months" (Charlie, October, 2008). Claire also had a similar response:

Oh, I don't know...I remember Ralph on the teaching course saying "oh, you know, you're academic," and I was thinking I wonder what that means?"

(Claire: October, 2008)

Having said this, all of the characters, when further questioned, were able to link the subject teaching to the development of the subject area through research:

My definition of an academic is somebody that teaches academic theory to others, but also develops academic theory I suppose. So it's kind of both sides of it, isn't it? It's developing and passing on.

(Jenny: October, 2008)

Barnett (2003) holds the view that teaching and research compete as 'pernicious ideologies'. Whilst I believe that this is an extreme outlook, some of the characters did recognise the distinction between teaching and research as a clear division between themselves and the established academics. The characters primarily viewed academics as staff that undertook limited teaching with a concentration on research. Mooney (1992) would suggest that undertaking research holds the greater prestige within a higher education setting. It is perhaps this perception of status, held by the new academic, which reinforces their stance that they are not yet 'academic'. Enders suggests that the "majority of teaching is done by junior or senior lecturers" (2001: 296). Nevertheless, all of the characters within the reciprocal environment did

contemplate that an academic should be a more composite figure between research and teaching, although all bar Mary concluded that they considered themselves not yet to be academic as they 'just taught':

Maybe after my PhD in 6 years I'll consider myself academic, but at this point, I don't consider myself as being at that level... I just teach."

(Lucy: October, 2008)

I'm a researcher, I participate in students learning and development and I'm taking a lead within our subject group on a [topic]. So I think that complements really those three skills [as cited above].

(Mary: October, 2008)

The way in which higher education institutions structure their teaching schedules and research agendas perpetuates the idea that established academics, with a research portfolio, have a greater status within the local community. For example, established academics are often rewarded with a reduced teaching load, increases in salary and other benefits for undertaking research (Clegg, 2007). Grogono would agree: "Academic policies link tenure and promotion decisions to research productivity" (1994:37). Therefore, moving to a position where teaching and research receive 'equal billing' would possibly encounter resistance from some within established academic communities, as they seek to 'protect' their territory and academic identities. However, a number of institutions, particularly post 1992 universities, are refocusing their policies and strategies away from research with an increased concentration toward teaching and vocationally orientated professional service provision. This could lend an advantage to new entrants from industry as they are more readily able to adapt (Becher and Trowler, 2001; Grogono, 1994) assuming that the new entrants are able to establish good teaching practice. For established academics this: "has resulted in a tremendous problem of work satisfaction and professional identity" (Enders, 2001: 128) and could place them in possible confrontation with their new colleagues as the "values and structures within which academic identities have hitherto been sustained" (Henkel, 2000:21) become challenged and open to reinterpretation, perhaps leading to false distinctions about what it means to be an academic.

Whilst the majority of the characters were uncertain of the term academic or what it represented, it was nevertheless something that they aspired to:

I feel odd when I am called academic. I don't feel it yet. I don't wear

that mantle and I don't suppose I will for a number of years. I'm a practitioner with some research under my belt. I don't know whether I'll ever get to the stage where I think of myself as an academic. I don't know what the descriptors would be. In my mind yet I haven't come up with that list. I know what it means when I ascribe it to other people, you know.

(Claire: October, 2008)

An aspiring one... I'm not sure I'm academic yet, but I'm quite intrigued by that... I think I've got a long way to go, but it's something that I'm enjoying.

(Petra: October, 2008)

For eight of the characters there were reservations to becoming academic, perhaps based around their pre-conceptions of academics operating within a so called traditional Humboldtian model:

I think probably any reservations I've got about the word academic come from people I've met where you think "Oh god, they're an academic," and it has negative connotations.

(Petra: October, 2008)

For Jenny these 'negative connotations' manifested themselves within her stereotypical views of an academic, such as: "I don't want to start wearing patches on my elbows" (Jenny, October, 2008) and also her opinion that academics were out of touch with industry practice. Claire and Angela offer some support to this stance.

There are some people I would suggest need to do more practice when they are writing something for practice and I would see them as the dusty professors.

(Claire: October, 2008)

Kind of a notion, I suppose, that if you go too far into that world of academia you may lose sight of reality.

(Angela: October, 2008)

As previously discussed, it is accepted that a singular academic identity is not shared by all academic staff and it is therefore somewhat erroneous to label established academics as the characters allude to above. It is suggested that academic identity is

an iterative process in which many members of the academic community modify their position in response to extrinsic and intrinsic factors (De Simone, 2001). Policy change, such as the ones discussed within the literature, are not inertly received and accepted by the established academic community, indeed it is interpreted, "decoded and contested" (Ball, 1994:16) and responded to, not always negatively, I believe. However, if, as previously suggested, some of the new policies require teaching practice to become applied to industry standards, are established academics able to modify their custom as De Simone (2001) suggests and Angela and Claire recommend? Henkel (2000:166) recognises that: "older academics saw their younger colleagues as more professionalised and better adapted to the world in which they found themselves". Thrush and Hooper (2006) would agree, claiming that: "theorists may find it difficult to keep their technical skills and knowledge of the workplace up to date" (p308) with Trowler (1998) acknowledging that many established academics: "tend to be worried about epistemic drift and the dilution of their discipline by transferrable skills" (1998:67). I would agree with both McMillin that: "the next generation [of new academics] will share much with the current generation" (2004:44) and also Viskovic that: "encounters by newcomers and old-timers bring together different perspectives that contribute to the community's ongoing learning." (2006:326). Therefore, through legitimate peripheral participation (Lave and Wenger 1991) new academics and the established academics should accept reciprocal roles in creating pedagogic practice that is geared towards the skill set required for a graduate entering industry, thus increasing the longevity of the academic profession by ensuring that it is industry receptive. For academics the maintaining of industry knowledge and practice are fundamental to this objective. This position was also accepted by many of the characters, particularly as they viewed it as necessary to their teaching practice and in some cases their professional status within the student community:

I don't think that I want to be considered a full time academic because I think that it's relevant to students that you're perceived to be an industry person.

(Jenny: October, 2008)

Like Jenny, Charlie also believed that: "experience with industry in a way can improve academic practice" although he also acknowledges Chan's (2009) position that knowledge transmission is reciprocal:

What I will try and do in the long run, as an academic, is have an impact on the way the job market accepts the role of the business and

finance graduate.

(Charlie: October, 2008)

Research by Hill, et al (2003) would support the view of the new academics in that a student's experience is shaped by the tutor's industry expertise as they: "wanted knowledgeable and enthusiastic individuals who cared" (2003:19).

To some extent the discussion above implies that new academics are seeking to maintain strong affiliations with their former industry profession. Research by Chan (2009) would support this view: "there is a clear impression expressed by many participants towards the retention of their vocational identity as this provides them with credibility as subject matter experts" (p25). For Bridges (1991) it may be that some new academics have not fully accepted an ending to their former role, as they retain some residual values when moving towards entering, what Bridges terms to be: 'The Neutral Zone.' For Kate the preserving of former industry contacts, knowledge and skills acts as a 'security blanket'.

I knew that if it did not work out I could always go back to what I was doing before... a kind of safety net.

(Kate: October, 2008)

Chan (2009) claims that teaching staff from industry have a genuine desire to use their expertise in order to pass on their skills and knowledge to future generations entering their industry. Henkel also suggests new academics express "strong commitment to their subjects and to passing on their enthusiasm" (2000:265). It may be that the characters were exploiting their industry standing and using their subject 'expertise' within the classroom, in order to establish credibility as they sought approval of their colleagues. Having said this, there was also evidence that new academics were given subjects to teach of which they had little experience or expertise. As such, some of the characters were lacking confidence in their ability and were still unsure of any changes to their identity and their status within the academic setting.

The majority of characters believed that their identity had remained constant during the opening months of their entry into academia and had recognised no significant difference. However, how they were perceived outside of the institution was changing as was how they were viewed by their new colleagues:

There was one morning I walked through our admin area and one of the chaps said, "Oh, one of the academics is in," or something and I thought afterwards "Oh, he must mean me," because there was nobody else around.

(Mike: October, 2008)

Well I don't feel any different... but the way my colleagues from my former role perceive me is having made this jump.

(Petra: October, 2008)

The perceived increase in status was common for many characters:

Some of my other colleagues outside of academia, they perceive me differently – that, you know, you don't work for industry any more. So it's more university led. So it's more of a status that you get from some of the colleagues that you're at the university now so, you know... Perhaps the view of more specialism – that, you know, you're delivering teaching and participating in the learning of other professionals that will go out to actually work in the same sector; that they feel that you might be more knowledgeable on certain areas of a specific field that you might work in.

(Mary: October, 2008)

The view that they were now regarded as more specialized within their subject area was a concern for a number of new academics. It is possible that this was, for some, the focal point of their reservations to become academic, perhaps hinting at a perceived lack of confidence in their capability. Henkel (2000) would suggest that the ability to make new connections depends on: "the self confidence to persuade others of the contribution they could make" (p173).

I don't know if you have this, but you know if you feel that somebody is more academic than you? Certain people I start talking to – 'Peter' (an established academic in Jenny's subject group) or someone like that – then I feel far less academic because of my level of qualification or my experience.

(Jenny: October, 2008)

It was evident that several characters were afraid of being "not up to scratch" (Charlie, October: 2009) and were anxious about exposing themselves as not sufficiently expert:

I didn't know what people expected. I was probably a little bit afraid to say something in case it was totally wrong and you couldn't do that and it'd look a bit bad on me if you like.

(Sally: November, 2009)

I feel less confident, but you haven't got to let that creep in or show, have you, you know?

(Jenny: October, 2008)

Recognising that there were potential issues of confidence and ability within their new working environment all of the characters managed their initial entry and career path through the use of a set timeline. Within this timeline the characters were able to reflect, monitor and control their transitions. The next section expands on this control mechanism.

### **Time, survival and security**

Time was a key factor for all of the characters. Henkel claims that new academic recruits are: "perceived as being more focused and efficient in the allocation of time" (2000:265). The characters accepted that they were entering a new environment that would require time to adjust to and a role that would need time to gain confidence and competence in delivery. With this in mind, all of the characters, as previously suggested, formulated and planned a specific timeline and personal action plan to gain these attributes. By creating a timeline and personal action plan the characters were managing expectations in the movement from one level to another signifying an ending of a neutral zone then a new beginning (Bridges, 1991) or as Hill and MacGregor (1998) propose a three phase transition of challenge, confusion and adaptation (Reference Figure 6 page 104):

"I thought that it is quite different from what I was doing before, so I set myself 12 months and it's going to take quite a long time to adjust into it."

(Sally: October, 2008).

The timeline, for the majority, was a key indicator to their success, or otherwise, in the transition to academia. Some characters indicated that a judgment would be made at the end of the year as to whether their academic journey continued:

I didn't know whether I could stand to be out of practice. I really didn't know that. I thought "well, I'll give it a year if I can. I'll return to it."

(Claire: October, 2008)

Each character shaped their timeline differently although there was some consistency in defining central time periods, such as Christmas and the semester start and end periods:

At least the semester needs to be over – at least – but I see it as a long process. I see it going on for a few years at least before I feel fully confident about what I'm doing.

(Charlie: October, 2008)

Whilst the setting of a twelve month timeline was common amongst the characters, six were also visualising themselves beyond this defining stage. These images portrayed a career path for the characters with a five year plan being common:

I've got plans. I need to finish my PhD. I'm starting it this year or next year around January, but I'm not sure and maybe I'll postpone it to September because of the work load. So once I've started my PhD, in 5 years I want to see myself finishing my PhD – if I can within 5 years and maybe being course leader and trying to build new courses, be more active in my role, rather than general teaching.

(Lucy: October, 2008)

I'm completing my second Masters at the end of next year and then starting my PhD at the end of September. Opportunities for going abroad to a [xxxx] scholarship or fellowship that I've applied for, so I hope to take this forward to develop the lead strand in the faculty. So yes, definitely for the next 5 years and I would like to be like the Head of Programme for this Faculty or for a similar higher education institution.

(Mary: October, 2008)

However, whilst the characters did have clear career paths, their focus was on the present and this was primarily their teaching and gaining more confidence. For this a two year transitional period was common with the characters:

I'm just getting on with my job and I think that it'll come and in a year or two that it'll be something that I'll probably be more interested in, but I'm looking at it really subjectively just getting what I do right.

(Jenny: October, 2008)

I've chosen to do it as a career change and as a professional, then I always try to do my best in everything and that's what I'll probably do, as I say, for the next couple of years until it becomes slightly easier and manageable.

(Mike: October, 2008)

I'm guessing it'll probably be in another year when I've really settled in when I know all the university systems... and just knowing all the subject areas; and again confidence, standing up, just being able to relax in front of the students.

(Sally: October, 2008)

All of the characters, bar two, focused on survival during the initial timeframe:

I think the last semester it was just about surviving, doing the minimum what I could... well, not the minimum, but just getting things done.

(Sally: June, 2009)

In this specific period in this specific year, compared to last year where I was really just focusing on surviving, now that's the change between last year and this year. This year I'm really working within the team and committed to bringing forward all the ideas that we have.

(Charlie: November, 2009)

For Finkin (1996) the academic profession provides sufficient job security to make the transition attractive and for some of the characters there was more security and stability working within an established institution. This was mainly due to their work background prior to coming into academia. For example, Angela was working freelance and as such she found security via regular income payments and the fact that she was operating with colleagues in a community of practice. However, for Angela there were concerns that she may become too settled:

There's lots of nice things about the job, there's the income that support seeing the same people every day is really nice and there's something about routine that's really appealing... I like that structuring and it feels quite safe, quite cozy but I would feel, would feel very sad I think if I settle down into that too much.

(Angela: February, 2009)

For Jenny there were similar concerns regarding the duality of her new work environment:

Being self-employed pretty much to being managed and being employed are two different things and there's pros and cons to that in terms of paid holidays. What's all that about? You know, I've never had paid holidays before. But being managed quite strongly as well is another interesting thing.

(Jenny: October, 2008)

Whilst Angela and Jenny may have considered academia to have more job security than their previous roles it was not necessarily the case for all, particularly considering the changing employment trends within higher education. For example, one of the reasons why Mike entered academia was due to the insecurity of his former role:

I couldn't see the job going any further, so it was time to get out. The other thing was, I think, the writing was on the wall in terms of employment, they were letting people go... teaching was always something I fancied... I thought it more secure.

(Mike: October, 2008)

Dickson (1988) links changing employment trends, within higher education, back to the Thatcher government (1978-1990) which led to, amongst others, the twin concepts of job security and free speech not being part of most employment packages within higher education. Bryson (2004) in assessing what he calls the "profound changes that have taken place in the higher education sector on academic staff in the UK" (p 38) found that the staff on permanent contracts "alluded to the threat of redundancy or forced early retirement from rationalisation and restructuring" (p 49). Therefore, for Mike the security that he was seeking, having come from an insecure work environment, may not be as credible as he first thought.

## Community Belonging

Within the context of community integration the Reciprocal Phase looks at how the characters engage within their new communities: the various levels of mutual support offered and their sense of belonging.

When I came I felt very much on the periphery both socially wise and academically wise, if you like, and then slowly but surely you start to integrate yourself.

(Kate: October, 2008)

Henkel (2005:172) states that: "academic identity is a function of community membership" with James (2007) recognising that identities are both constructed and cultivated within a range of communities that involve multiple forms of membership. I would agree with Archer (2008) that new academics negotiate their membership, position and identity within these communities in order to ultimately situate themselves as 'authentic' and 'successful' academics, although it has to be recognised that: "academic identity is not only determined by the individual, but also by the communities of practice to which professionals belong" (Quigley, 2011:24). The literature review put forward Bauman's (2000) notion of 'liquidity', that is, the new academic having fluidity between the various communities that they come into contact with. Evidence from this research suggests that the characters applied this interconnectivity (liquidity) within 'bounded trajectories' (Wenger, 1998) to become what Henkel (2000) would term 'embedded', that is, "working within and making individual contribution to communities (p16), although in terms of 'full membership' across these communities not all characters achieved a successful outcome.

Baumeister and Leary (1995) state that: "human beings are fundamentally and pervasively motivated by a need to belong" (p522). Previously the question of characters making comparisons to their former place of work was discussed. During the reciprocal stage of transition characters defaulted to their previous role, as a form of reassurance, as they have not yet ended their association, contact and emotional ties to their former community or created a sense of belonging or relatedness to the new one.

It was quite a difficult transition in the sense that we felt quite isolated here... you were left to your own devices to develop and just get to know

things; and then you still had the other organisation which you knew quite well, so it gave you that bit of a comfort blanket to just reflect back.

(Mary: October, 2008)

The characters were therefore motivated to seek the formation of interpersonal interactions and attachments in order to create a sense of relatedness within the communities they viewed as essential to their progression. For Maslow (1970) 'affiliation' and 'acceptance' would be crucial to this progression. Baumeister and Leary (1995) tender a warning by recognising that if 'affiliation' and 'acceptance' are not satisfied then new staff have no sense of community or belonging and therefore might experience negative outcomes.

### **The Subject Team Community: established members and management**

Trowler (1998) makes a case that new academics find it challenging to navigate institutional settings with their implicit and explicit rules of engagement. Buckley and Du Toit (2010) would agree, proposing that the sharing of tacit knowledge is essential for the access of new members to communities. The access to communities requires such knowledge transfer and ultimately acceptance from the existing members, although this can be liable to manipulation with access sometimes denied. Archer (2008) adds support to this view: "the 'authentic' and 'successful' academic is a desired yet refused identity for many younger academics" (p.385). I would contend that within the subject team community the characters experienced varied responses to collaboration, support and acceptance, with some of the established academics acting as 'gatekeepers' to knowledge transference as they had the power to choose whether to disseminate such knowledge. For example, Charlie felt that the members within the subject team were not willing to help him and as such he found it difficult to establish his position within the group:

I feel that I'm continuously bothering people because I ask for information and I don't like it because I see that the reaction is like "Oh, leave me alone. Find it out in another way," or "Work it out yourself." So I'm trying to work, as much as possible, stuff out myself, but there are things that I really need to ask. So sometimes I realise that people are like reacting a bit; and I got a couple of answers also from people saying like "Oh, I worked it out myself in my time." So, unfortunately, sometimes I feel that I'm still like developing this relationship with the group.

(Charlie: October, 2008)

Similarly Lucy felt that the support was for her to ask for and was not readily given or part of a structured or formalised practice, suggesting that the process is reactive rather than proactive leading to possible isolation from the community:

They tell you in the beginning “People are friendly. You just need to go and ask people,” ... but if you don’t have that enthusiasm to ask people you will be lost. I’ve got some people that are lost now... They kind of go and approach people and ask them and you just feel alone if you don’t approach people.

(Lucy: October, 2008)

The reciprocal relationship with the established academics was a topic on which all of the characters held a view. Eight of the characters expressed opinions that the minority of established academics were supportive and open to change whilst the majority were less supportive, less responsive and protective of their direct working environment. Having said this, it is accepted that the established academics are not a homogeneous group, as Mary expresses below:

I think some are very open and welcoming in some areas and some are quite defensive in some of those areas because we are questioning some of the old practices and so on and perhaps not everyone is positive towards that.

(Mary: February, 2009)

Furthermore, Barlow and Antoniou (2007) state that before the significant changes to the higher education setting: “life was less pressured and staff had more time to talk to each other, integrating new staff into the culture and language of academic life was probably easier” (p68). I would make a case that it is in the interest of the established academic to ensure that new entrants are fully integrated into their communities, a point not lost on Austin (2011, cited in Hermanowicz, 2011) who asserts that new entrants need to be adequately socialised to ensure the retention and continuation of the profession’s values, norms and integrity within academia.

This research supports the view given within the literature (Manager-Academic Paradox) which identified that the relationship with the subject team leader is instrumental in shaping the new academic’s understanding of the organisational culture

and future integration within the community (Staniforth and Harland, 2006). Research by Green and Myatt (2011) concurs; although they conclude that many department managers (subject team leaders) fail to respond to the needs of new academic staff as a result of their limited management capability. Knight and Trowler (2000:81) support this view calling for: "improved leadership and management training for department heads". Having said this three of the characters initially viewed their subject team leaders to be collaborative and supportive.

Mike suggested that the positive reciprocal working relationships within his team were driven by the subject team leader:

She's very proactive in encouraging thought and consideration as to how we can improve.

(Mike: February, 2009)

Sally also holds the view that her subject team leader was supportive of reciprocal working within the team, although Sally perceives this as more of a management strategy to effect change rather than an approach to ease her transition within the team:

I mean that it has been suggested by my line manager, because there are kind of issues around people of being in a job too long and have sort of, what's the word, possibly outdated ideas... I think my line manager listens to me, I think that they brought in new staff and that is part of the reason... he asks my opinion and he tells me that he likes my opinion and the changes that I have suggested he has agreed ... he has done what I suggested.

(Angela: February, 2009)

Angela on the other hand is strategising her own relationship with her manager. Angela accepts that she does not yet 'know it all' and perceives that being open with her subject team leader could, in fact, hinder her acceptance within the team:

I'm really happy as I do bring in ideas [to her manager] and I got a very good idea as to how it could change... I really don't want to rock anybody's boat... I'm not completely convinced that his right to kind of come in all guns blazing going this is how it should be, because I think, you know, I'm not sure I know that yet... I think they're probably suspicious.

(Angela: February, 2008)

Not all of the characters viewed their subject team leader as promoting collaboration or strategizing change. In fact several viewed their subject team leader as having limited managerial experience to facilitate such dynamic reciprocal relationships. A view supported within the literature review by LaRocco and Bruns (2006) whose research implied that the managers of new academics were 'unhelpful'. Their respondents also indicated that there was potential for future conflict.

No, I'm not managed in the workplace. Yeah, I don't have enough contact with my team or the subject leader.

(Lucy: October, 2008)

It is because they employ managers that aren't really managers, they promote people who are good academics and make them a manager and yet the two are quite distinct, it's a problem within this organisation.

(Claire: October, 2008)

I would contest that many of the characters are basing their opinions on how they themselves managed within industry and that this comparison is incongruent with academia. Industry and academia are quite distinct and therefore need to be managed differently, something which, at this stage of their transitions, the characters are not fully perceptive of. With this in mind, seven of the characters viewed the management structure, within their subject team, as inhibiting and one that creates tension within the team:

We have a very linear management structure. We've got a subject group leader and then we have principal lecturers, but the principal lecturers don't necessarily have a management hat on per se. The principal lecturers have got certain sections, specialism. There is not common sense between them after who's taking what role so you can see that conflict between the principal lecturers in team meetings, then the course leader seems to be a subgroup of that, but don't have any line management responsibility over the staff and then the year tutors are a separate entity, different tiers of management.

(Mary: February, 2009)

## **Post Graduate Certificate in Higher Education and the Student Body**

It has previously been stated that new academics need a “licence to operate” (Hodkinson and Talyor, 2002:256) with a claim that attaining a PGCE was such a mechanism as new lecturers are not confident in their aptitude in undertaking teaching and learning activities (Dunkin, 1990). All of the characters in this research undertook the PGCE although many viewed the learning of teaching skills as a secondary outcome of the ‘licence’ to the value of belonging within the PGCE cohort community of practice.

Charlie was confident working on his own (although he did have support from academic friends outside of the subject group), whereas others were less independent and subsequently established support networks via the PGCE community:

We do the PGCE course, so we are learning from each other in that sense. We do talk to each other on a regular basis; it's been great, I think the fact that you are certainly on a course and you're meeting people in a similar position, so you get that immediate impact, intuitive moral support and you are all in the same boat, so you feel as if you are not isolated and you are not getting through this process alone.

(Mike: February, 2009)

The PGCE course also provided valuable knowledge and training to assist the new academic with their student engagement. The student community was an important element of a new academic’s transition. The teaching provided a focus to the role and the feedback from the student community was instant and often was the only source of response the new academic received regarding their performance:

Because at the start it was very good and then I started to have some issues with students and some were much worse...now, in a sense getting on with the students getting from them the teaching and being creative with teaching material also with the PGCE that helped us a lot doing different teaching techniques... the positive responses from the students and students interacting and attending... it makes me feel happy, in one sense happy that they can understand my teaching and they get involved and engaged in the sessions they are motivated sometimes I feel motivated.

(Lucy: February, 2009)

Research by Dunkin (1990) supports this view with approximately 90% of the respondents indicating that they found student evaluation of their teaching to be 'very helpful'.

The teaching, for the majority of the characters, was the most fearful element of the new role. Whilst this did create some anxieties (as previously discussed) the reciprocal relationships with the students proved to be the most gratifying experience for the characters:

Well I love just getting in the classroom with the students and just talking to them, seeing where they want to go, trying to help them.

(Mike: October, 2008)

I think positive evaluation from students on modules that I have picked up when I first started here... to see some of the changes that you have implemented... and teaching that was a high for me

(Mary: February, 2009)

I like the students. I like hearing their kind of ideas.

(Angela: October, 2008)

## **Induction and Mentorship**

Viskovic (2006) offers a distinction between the local community (learning relationships with colleagues/students) and the institutional community of practice that has a more formal and functional framework of processes, coupled with a responsibility to resource and cultivate an environment of mutual collaboration. Research by Dunkin (1990) claims that: "the most common criticism [of respondents] was lack of information about the administration of the university" (p 55). It has been suggested that some established academics assume that the new academic has pre-existing subject knowledge. In many circumstances this is also the case within the wider institutional context, that is, there is an incorrect assumption that the new academic understands the higher educational setting and institutional procedures. This research supports the view held by LaRocco and Bruns (2006) that new academics from industry feel insufficiently schooled in the culture of academic institutions, primarily due to inadequate induction:

I asked them if I could have a bit more induction. For example, I don't know anything about the structure of the Faculty, who does what, what are the levels, the position, who I need to talk to in case I need, I don't know...

(Charlie: October, 2008)

The level of induction given to each of the characters varied significantly. The institution does provide induction lectures to new staff, although the timing of these led to all but one of the respondents missing the session. Therefore induction activities were facilitated primarily within the subject community rather than via the institution itself:

My subject group leader he pointed me in the right direction. "This is Blackboard," this is this, this is that. "These are the units of the modules that you'll be involved with,"... I went on one of the induction lectures that the university provided and that was basically it and other than that it was straight in.

(Mike: October, 2008)

For eight of the characters this was a weakness as the quality of the induction was dependent upon the characteristics of the subject team leader and as previously discussed not all were collaborative. As such, the majority of the characters had limited induction, which resulted in a more fragmented transition and a lack of direction:

I didn't have the brief of what I'm supposed to do. So it's just 'this is your role and deal with it' in a sense; that you have to do it and I don't have any support in that sense and I have to go around trying to find the right people. They don't give you a pack saying "This is your role. You'll be doing this". So there are no criteria or no protocols for it and you need to understand the different protocols within the university, which I'm not used to and I don't know anything. So I did struggle in that sense.

(Lucy: November, 2009)

As previously suggested many of the new academics did not fully appreciate that subject team leaders were working within institutional constraints, some of which may have affected their induction. Research by Boyd recognises this and identifies the: "tension between the need to provide time for academic induction activity and the pressure on the department in terms of covering the teaching work" (2010:158). For four of the characters this was a benefit as they also wanted to concentrate on their

teaching rather than the broader institutional setting.

Not the whole hierarchy of the organisation because I don't see it and I haven't involved myself in it and I'm deliberately not doing because I'm trying to concentrate on my job, teaching.

(Jenny: October, 2008)

Having said this, Williams, et al (2001:264) would argue that induction makes a: "significant contribution to the improvement of practice" and is critical to supporting new academics as they move towards the realities of teaching (Cooper and Stewart, 2009):

For a seven of the characters direction was provided by a mentor, although there were variations in provision. There was no formal mentorship programme offered by the institution and any provided was made available via the subject teams, although some characters needed to formally request a mentor ("I have a mentor, which I asked for". Mary, February: 2008). Therefore, not all of the characters received mentorship although some new academics sought unofficial mentorship from peers within their group:

Luckily, I have personal friends [within the institution] that support me.  
I am using other people.

(Charlie: October, 2008)

This would agree with the research by Marable and Raimondi who found that when a formal mentoring programme was not on offer, or the mentorship relationship was not working then: "teachers reported seeking out any other person to provide the much needed support" (2007:35).

There were several examples of how receiving mentorship benefitted the new academics, particularly their retention:

I have been given a mentor, I am quite fortunate in that apparently not many people get a mentor so I feel quite privilege. I like the fact that I have been given a mentor, if I hadn't had a mentor I would have probably quit by now.

(Chris: pilot, 2007)

Research by Hudson et al (2009) concluded that induction and mentorship can assist

transition and increase retention rates with Doherty and Deegan (2009) recognising the potential of mentorship to be a transformative agent that creates a framework for collaboration within the community, if the selection and motivation of the appointed mentor is appropriate to the setting and mentee. Mathias (2005) would add that the mentor role also needs to be formalised to give status to the mentor to ensure its credibility within the department setting.

The characters that were allocated mentors had differing experiences, with some citing the fact that the mentor assigned to them lacked the time to dedicate to the role, or the necessary experience:

The person that had been assigned to us, you could clearly see just didn't have the time in the day and was really unclear about their role because they had never done it before.

(Claire: October, 2008)

It was not unusual for the subject team leader to appoint a mentor even though those assigned held little experience in that position within an academic setting, thus supporting Knight and Trowler (1999) who claim that many mentors have insufficient training:

I was given a mentor, he was new too. He started the year before me "well I don't know how I'm your mentor. I started a year before you." So I wanted someone like a principal lecturer who has been here for years and years to give you more support.

(Lucy: November, 2009)

However, other characters viewed the appointment of mentors that were also 'new in post' to be of benefit:

Well, she was fairly new as well. She'd probably been here less than a year, so she understood. I suppose she understood.

(Kate: October, 2008)

This view could also have some resonance with the implied power associations connected within mentorship affiliations. For example, five of the characters, as former industry managers, demonstrated some resistance to the newly imposed authoritative

structures. Being appointed a more 'senior' mentor would perpetuate this, perhaps leading to confrontation with a mentor that could become the 'gatekeeper to the profession' (Jones et al, 2005). Five of the characters did form solid and reciprocal relationships with their mentors, with two of these leading to joint ventures outside of the formal mentor relationship:

I know that my mentor feels the same that the two of us are quite interested in perhaps getting involved in other projects (Feb, 2008). It's not continuing formally, but we work really closely together, we're doing things in tandem, which is good.

(Petra: November, 2009)

Interestingly Kate is now mentoring a new member of the academic team.

Well, I'm mentoring a new member of staff at the minute. We have day to day discussions, whereas when I was mentored I was two floors above my mentor, so kind of dialogue wasn't continuous.

(Kate: November, 2009)

## The Fragile Phase

The Fragile Phase is where the new academic becomes reflective on their practice and situation. They also grow to be less reliant on their peers and start to question established practice. They begin trialing (rehearsing) their own approach within their teaching and also begin testing interactions and relationships within the subject team community. This leads to a certain amount of fragility as they become insecure with their actions and question their ability. Furthermore, during this period they have less contact with the members of their support network (PGCE community) and they become more isolated from their former role/colleagues.

### Isolation and Insecurity

Within the reciprocal phase it was claimed that the characters sought to maintain contact with their former industry role. Whereas, within the fragile phase the new academic starts to accept that they have left their former role behind and begins to appreciate that they have entered what Bridges (1980) would term ‘the neutral zone’. That is, they are in an in-between state that is: “full of uncertainty and confusion... and is uncomfortable” (Bridges and Bridges, 2000:33). For Bridges this can be both a “frightening time” (1980:12) yet also a period where “creativity and energy of transition are found”. (Bridges and Bridges, 2000:33) For the characters the timing of this phase was at the end of the first teaching semester (December, 2008). By looking at change as a process, Lewin’s (1951) keystone model would place the characters within the ‘unfreeze’ status of preparing for change, although he adds that motivation for change must be generated before change can occur.

Mary was motivated to ‘let go’ of her former role as she often sensed that she was defaulting back to her past responsibilities:

I had to let go of my previous role in the work that I still had to do here and I think that sometimes it gets blurred.

(Mary: February, 2009)

Whereas Claire believed that she had let go of her former role and was now expanding within her new one:

I had a very clear ending in my old role... and continuing here? Starting maybe, maybe in the early stages I would say of developing who and what I am here.

(Claire: February, 2009)

Similarly Mike stated that he did not look back at his former industry position:

I'm fully committed to what I am doing; I don't wish I was back in my other role, I'm quite happy have committed myself to this job and I'm quite happy in the role. You get you hit the ground running really. I don't think back to what I would be doing now or anything like that I am focused on where I am going.

(Mike: February, 2009)

It is interesting to note that both Claire and Mike had both previously stated that they were unhappy in their previous industry environment:

I enjoyed the job I was doing less and less, so wanted to do something that I could focus on.

(Claire: October, 2008)

The last job I was in really was becoming unsatisfactory or unrewarding. I was busy going nowhere and I was stagnating.

(Mike: October, 2008)

It is suggested that this enabled Claire and Mike to concentrate immediately on their new roles and direct their energies on the transition to academia. In contrast, Angela reluctantly joined academia and as such she was constantly finding ways to maintain links to her former role:

If I have a few hours spare I don't feel guilty or something working on my own project. I am so desperate not to lose that and not to become only, you know, a lecturer, I suppose.

(Angela: February, 2009)

Whilst joining academia was, for Mary, part of her set career path she also found it difficult to separate herself from her former role and cites the feeling of isolation as one of the contributors to this:

It was quite a difficult transition in the sense that I felt quite isolated here, you were left to your own devices to develop and just get to know things; and then you still had the other organisation which you knew quite well, so it gave you that bit of a comfort blanket to just reflect back. It was quite difficult in letting go.

(Mary: October, 2008)

For Kate the sense of isolation was more acute:

More people seem to work from home so there are days on end when you hardly see anybody. I come from a really strong team, really strong, it's got a collaborative method otherwise it does not work. It has kind of hit home how much I miss my old job.

(Kate: February, 2009)

## Autonomy

Working within a more autonomous working environment created further isolation for eight of the characters, leading to some challenging this custom and practice, such as working from home:

I think that they [established academics] need some monitoring and control. I can give you an example. One of the members who is in our office, she never attended or subject meetings and she was never in the office, her desk is empty and then last week we had a seminar and she just came in to run the seminar and she taught it the way she ran it last year.

(Lucy: October, 2008)

The questioning of academic autonomy is a potential source of confrontation with the established members of the community as: "academic autonomy is a resource of legitimization in the power and authority of intellectuals. Also intellectuals use academic autonomy for protection of their social positions." (Sotsiologicheskiy, 2010:107). Newson and Polster (2001) state that the academic community is 'alarmed' by the challenges to autonomy going so far as to claim that: "these infringements threaten the survival of the profession" (2001:55) citing managerialism as one of the causes. It is accepted that academic autonomy is more than the ability for academics to work from home and having the freedom to control and influence their academic interests. Nevertheless, it is a concept that some of the characters, particularly the ones that had

former managerial responsibilities, initially struggle to come to terms with. For Cownie (2004) the freedom to work from home was one of the advantages to being academic, although she does recognise it as a two edged sword, with some academics placing themselves under too much pressure that leads to a ‘deleterious’ effect on their work life balance:

Sometimes I feel accountable because I would ring up the reception desk and say “I’m working from home tomorrow”. But initially I felt quite guilty in working from home.

(Mary: February, 2009)

Hodkinson and Taylor (2002) found that some new lecturers viewed independence as necessary to learning. Mary was beginning to resolve some of her issues with the autonomous working practices. In fact Mary viewed the February interview as the catalyst for reflection and change:

I think I’ve got my head around that this [autonomy] is the working culture. I think I am still undergoing that change. The main elements would be the time that you interviewed me; I think it was a catalyst to reflect.

(Mary: February, 2009)

For characters such as Mike and Charlie who had previously worked in autonomous environments this transition was relatively easy:

I had a good deal of autonomy in the job prior to coming here, so really there is very little difference in that sense, the move across has been relatively seamless. In terms of autonomy I’m not hassled in any way, I’m not told to be here or told to be there. I have got my timetables and I just get on with things.

(Mike, February: 2009)

Charlie liked the fact that autonomy symbolised trust in his ability, although Charlie was in also seeking affirmation, from his colleagues, regarding his work aptitude, in order to mitigate his anxieties. Working autonomously did not provide this for him:

Well, thank God in my previous job I was very, very independent and I was fully responsible for my projects and this is something that is helping me now because I feel that I’m left quite alone; but in a positive way – that I’m responsible for my job, which I really like to be honest. So the fact of feeling that I am trusted and that nobody actually ever came to ask me “How was the class?” (Charlie: October, 2008)

Claire recognised that even though you may be working autonomously there is still a need for guidelines and accountability:

It is all about autonomy about you saying okay where is my responsibility... when you're working autonomously you need a checklist don't you? You need to touch base of what your organisational needs are, what your colleagues needs are, somebody has to hold that, don't they?

(Claire: February, 2009)

For Mary the need for accountability was clearer cut:

I think it is that acceptance that this is very much more an autonomous working environment which supports creative working. I think people should know where I am from the supervisory aspect, someone needs to be accountable for what I do.

(Mary: February, 2009)

With Jenny and Angela previously being formerly self-employed, it was anticipated that the transition to autonomous working would have been easier. However, for Jenny this was not the case. Indeed she felt that she was over managed, although she does accept that any form of 'man management' would have been deemed to be excessive. The management of the characters is covered in greater depth within the next section:

I have been self-employed for the last twenty odd years, so I haven't really, you know it's about customers and clients really I haven't been particularly in this kind of managed scenario before. I assumed from what people said to me about working in academia is that you are fairly autonomous and you are responsible for the stuff that you do and then I was surprised at how heavily we were managed and particularly me being new at it was conflicting because there was a definite instruction not to be autonomous. There were a couple of cases where I was made to feel eight years old and it made me feel like walking out.

(Jenny: February, 2009)

For others the cultural shift was unsettling, particularly for Kate who had come from what she considered to be a strong team focused environment:

Around Christmas time and the marking time and, well everybody marks from home so you don't see anybody for ages. I think it's just it's just the way the institution operates. I'm not saying that it's not a collaborative effort but it's more sort of lots of individuals doing tasks that happen to be coordinated as opposed to everybody getting together and

right this is an issue, how are we going to solve this. I think probably the hardest thing to adjust to is not having the team there. There are hours on end when you don't speak, I think that you know having opportunities to talk things over is really important and that's what I do miss a lot, I have really got to get used to this.

(Kate: February, 2009)

However, for Charlie the fact that he was able to work on his own and still succeed increased his confidence that was initially lacking from working autonomously:

The high point on the other hand was when I worked out a system by myself and from that moment on I feel much more confident because I am more independent, I don't have to wait for people to tell me what I'm supposed to have, I got my plan and I know that I just go and do it.

(Charlie: February, 2009)

The level of autonomy within academia was a surprise for all of the characters, with all bar two having difficulty in re-modelling their working practices to the freedom granted. Seven of the characters felt the need to prove themselves to their line manager and subject group community. An initial need to portray competence was common amongst all the characters. However, it was generally felt that the capacity to demonstrate competence was restricted within subject groups as they were operating too autonomously, with limited management control and too few opportunities to demonstrate and share good practice.

### **Assurances and competence**

Act One, the literature review, discussed Lave and Wenger's (1991) concept of legitimate peripheral participation, identifying it as the preliminary learning stage where new members seek to become full members of the community. In the context of this section the characters were seeking entry into their community by establishing their work as legitimate, part of the: "shared repertoire of routines... way of doing things... which become part of its practice" (Wenger, 1998:73). By the time of the second interviews in February the majority of the characters accepted that their practices and relationships within the subject teams were changing. The characters were not in as much contact with former colleagues and also becoming less reflective and reliant on former custom. They were now beginning to concentrate more on establishing their teaching practice and position within the subject team community. However, this

presented a challenge. The characters began to develop and trial their skills, whilst simultaneously seeking assurances from the established subject team community that they were performing well. The characters were afraid of getting it wrong and looking incompetent as they sought acceptance in the community. This would support research by Trowler and Bamber (2005) who found that new lecturers feel pressured to fit in with the established community practice:

It's always challenging and sometimes I feel really confident doing what I'm doing and sometimes I feel less confident, but you haven't got to let that creep in or show, have you, you know?

(Jenny: February, 2009)

Charlie sensed that he had to instantly prove himself, as he felt that the institution was taking a risk appointing him as an inexperienced academic: "I was so worried about not reaching a certain standard in my teaching" (February: 2009). This added to his anxiety and fragility within the subject team community:

A bet, like taking a chance, because I didn't have any academic experience. Okay, I was coming from industry. There were probably other people that were as good as or even better than me, so I guess I needed to prove myself. In other jobs I had been recruited as an experienced person, so I felt in a way that I was already contributing with my previous experience. In this case I was starting from scratch again, so I had to be up to standard and performing quite quickly.

(Charlie: November, 2009)

Sally reflected on the post semester one period, the time she commenced teaching in her own style. It was during this period that Sally became concerned about doing things differently to her more established colleagues within the subject team community:

I'm not too bothered if other lecturers see what I'm doing isn't right, where I would have been probably a year ago. I'd have been worried that I was doing it wrong just because I'd do it slightly different to how they do it

(Sally: November, 2009)

Mary adopted a strategy of initially remaining at the periphery of the team, primarily observing and learning. Mary was waiting to have the knowledge to confidently act in order to establish credibility and become valued within the team:

In the team I'm not one that would have the loudest mouth because I think part of my learning style is I take information on board and I store it and then I internally assess and categorise it and then I'll try and be proactive. So sometimes in a team meeting I'll say one or two things which I think might be relevant to the topic and that's it.

(Mary: October, 2008)

## Time and Workload

Research by Slootman (1991 cited in Enders, 2001) finds that actual working time of academic staff by far exceeds the formal working hours that academics are contracted (36-38hrs per week) with Tight (2010) claiming that its actual working time averages 55hrs per week. Vardi (2009) claims that managerialism within universities is the key driver for increases in academic working hours with Finkelstein et al (1998) showing that there was a "deep concern [by academics] about mounting pressure to increase faculty workload" (p95).

With the exception of Angela all of the characters believed that they were working more hours than they had previously in industry:

I think my working hours have increased significantly where before I could say I started at half past seven or eight and I'd leave at 6 or 7.

(Mary: October, 2008)

Winefield, et al (2008) contend that: "the level of academic workload was an important predictor of academic's strain" (p70) with Vardi (2009) commenting that faculties have been concerned about staff wellbeing and have begun to accept that motivation and work performance are linked to suitable work loading of academic staff. Gonzalez and Bernard (2006) support a more equitable approach to academic workload distribution although research by Fry (1981) found that there were considerable differences in the work loading between university staff members and that the disparity was according to rank, with the more senior staff having less of a teaching load. This is understandable as the characters would not yet have any managerial or administrative duties and as such their primary function is teaching.

The most commonly cited explanation for the increase in working hours was the time it was taking for the characters to prepare their teaching. It has been previously stated

that the teaching was the primary focus for the new academic and as such it is no surprise that they were concentrating on getting this right:

I think it is just my style I take too long to do things quite often I think that I'm doing lots of research around things to make it as good as possible.

(Jenny: October, 2008)

Like Jenny other characters thought that they were spending too much time on this process:

"I am over preparing". (Lucy: October, 2008)

I'm probably putting far too much preparation into everything just because I'm new. It's probably a confidence thing.

(Kate: October, 2008)

Well, the lectures that I've been given to do I have to write them and it takes me three days to write a lecture, so that's full-on.

(Angela: October, 2008)

The desire to be confident in teaching delivery leading to the subsequent over-preparation of sessions created instances where five of the characters were working excessive hours:

Well, I don't seem to have enough time. I'm regularly working till 1 or 2 in the morning.

(Jenny: October, 2008)

For these characters the intensity of the working hours and the commitment was creating issue of fragility:

Oh, I can't sleep at night because I'm continuously questioning myself. I mean I know it's going to get better.

(Charlie: October, 2008)

Mike, like Charlie does view the concentrated work loading as temporary. Whereas others like Heather could not focus beyond the teaching:

At the moment, with it being first year, it is extremely hectic and I'm really having to be quite acute with time management in trying to fit everything in and preparation. Well, at the moment it seems to be non-stop.

(Mike: October, 2008)

I have just got my timetable back and I looked at it and I thought Jesus Christ how I am going to do anything other than just teach!

(Heather: Pilot, 2007)

What is clear is that receiving a full teaching workload without a time allowance for preparation creates anxiety for the new academic and leads to fragility within the institution. It was not only the teaching load that created tensions for the characters but additionally the fact that they were also taking time to become accustomed to new working practices as a consequence of the teaching:

I take too long to do things, to make it as good as possible, to bring in innovative and update every session is just taking me perhaps longer than it would do. I find it takes me ages replying to e-mails and keeping up with students. I was answering e-mails last night at 12:45am which I shouldn't do. I feel quite often that I don't have time to do my job properly. At the moment I am really just existing to get these things done.

(Jenny: February, 2009)

I am trying to juggle everything at the moment and I am finding that quite difficult. I am having to work at night and at weekends to try and catch up with myself. It's stressful but I am never late with anything, I always get it done.

(Sally: February, 2009)

It is evident from the interviews that as the characters became accustomed to the delivery of the teaching content and the secondary requirements, such as student contact, that they were able to allocate their time schedules more appropriately. For example, Claire began to enjoy the increase in free time, within work, as compared to her former industry role, giving her the "ability to read and develop materials and think" (Claire, October: 2008). Petra was having a similar experience, calling it a 'novelty'.

You know, being able to put what you want to do in there and manage your own time is an enormous novelty. It's having that deeper understanding. It's making sure that you've got it and having the luxury of the time to do that, it's not free time. It's just time I can spend on

different things.

(Petra: October, 2008)

Kate viewed the fact that she was no longer managing people as the catalyst, giving her the freedom to work more autonomously:

I think I probably neglected managing myself in my last job because I suppose if you're responsible for other people you put them first, whereas I think that's probably partly what's quite invigorating about this job – I've actually got time to work on managing myself, if that makes sense.

(Kate: October, 2008)

For Enders (2001) academic staff are autonomous in the allocation of their time distribution between tasks and for the characters the development of a more structured and self selected work schedule was the start for many of them in coming to terms with the management of their academic workload. Whilst Kate was also having difficulties she felt that she was starting to develop the necessary skills to work within her new environment:

I think in this job I'm really developing my skills in self manage time and organisation. It is because it's so different to anything else I have done before. My husband says that I frown a lot more. I suppose and I think I have always been quite independent anyway, but I have to be more independent than before, be your own manager really.

(Kate: February, 2009)

The admission by Kate that you have to be independent and your own manager is a view that resonated with the majority of the characters within the context of the Fragile phaset. Petra is such an example:

I have got much more time to think, so the pace is very different and I'm not as exhausted. I think I've got the energy to do the things that you always wished you could have done. I am enjoying it I am quite organised anyway so that's not a challenge, I am finding it quite liberating, it's nice being able to plan the week and think what I'm going to do and why I'm going to do it.

(Petra: February, 2009)

## Reflection

A reflection in a mirror is an exact replica of what is in front of it.  
Reflection in professional practice, however, gives back not what it is, but  
what might be, an improvement on the original. (Biggs, 1999:6)

It is accepted that the characters were reflective throughout all of their first year within academia. Having said this, the majority of reflection took place at the point when the student teaching ended and the characters had time to reflect on their performance and position within the subject team and wider institution setting:

Using the break in teaching to reflect. I just need to wrap up what I am doing and then get a really long break which I hope will help bring it into some perspective.

(Charlie: February, 2009)

Throughout the teaching period all of the characters were planning the time to reflect:

When the summer comes, July and August I have got a lot planned to give myself a break and I will probably reflect on the past year and think and hopefully things will fall into place and will be the clearer about my life.

(Kate: February, 2009)

Moon (1999) suggests that a commonly agreed definition of reflection does not exist. However, from the social constructivist approach taken within this research I adopt the Vygotskian view that social relations within both the process itself and also the learning on how to engage within the reflective process are of central importance. This would support the view held by Lave and Wenger (1991) that reflection concerns not only individual development but is also part of: "an ongoing organizing process within a social collectivity or community of practice" (Boud et al, 2006:149). The Higher Education Academy (1995) also recognised the importance of reflection within a social setting in suggesting that a positive social climate encourages dialogue between community stakeholders in order to evaluate practice and the subsequent shaping of good practice. For seven of the characters the community was not openly collaborative and as such opportunities for joint reflection were limited:

As I've said before, I think it would be good if we did get together a bit more to kind of reflect together

(Kate: June, 2009)

Frost and Taylor (1996) advocate academic communities legitimising shared reflection as a tool to enhance practice and group belonging. Within her subject group Mary felt that her position within the community was a little tenuous as she was unable to share practice and receive the reflective feedback from her peers that she desired. Indeed Mary felt that her subject group does not practice what they teach:

Sharing your experience and being a reflective practitioner and just off-load – you know, when you have made a mistake or you're learning to actually be able to use someone as a reflective mirror. Coming in here we are teaching this to our students, but we're not actually applying those same principles within the subject group.

(Mary: February, 2009)

According to Schon (1995) reflection can be seen in two contexts. Firstly, there is 'reflection on action' in which reflection takes place before and after an action. Secondly, there is 'reflection in action' in which a person reflects during the situation in which they are engaged. For all of the characters 'reflection on action' was the stage when most reflection took place. However, I acknowledge that 'reflection in action' was continually taking place throughout the characters teaching practice and during their interactions and communications with colleagues:

I was wasting time by worrying instead of being proactive, so I decided that worrying does not bring any results, I might as well do the job and then I reflect on the problems and mistakes and make it better the next time.

(Charlie: June, 2009)

It is not only professional practices that the new academic reflects upon but also their overall position within the external environment to the workplace. For Boud and Walker (1998) reflection is not just an intellectual cognitive exercise but also one that involves emotions:

I feel confident enough that I'm going to stay long enough for my investment at least to pay off and that started another chain of reflection about the fact that I never had this feeling in like the three

past jobs that I had. Again it's a combination of personal and professional issues and it's crazy enough, but I feel at home here more than any of the other place I've been in the last ten years.

(Charlie: June, 2009)

Reflection is an assessment of what we perceive, what we think and what we feel. (Mezirow, 1990) with Dewey (1933) suggesting that reflection is deliberation in relation to this knowledge or belief. Based on this reflective thinking the characters considered their future career options together with their perception of longevity within the wider environment and it is noted that, for some of the characters (Angela and Claire), the outcome of their reflection brought a conclusion to their academic transition. For others it was the stimulus to further engagement within the setting.

## The Engaged Phase

The Engaged Phase is where the new academic is more established (acting) within their subject team community of practice and comfortable with their teaching delivery. Within this environment the new academic was instigating change and had been given increased responsibilities, leading to a sense of belonging and the shaping of their future career paths. However, within the engaged phase the new academic also becomes disengaged from some of their former support mechanisms, such as mentors.

### **Belonging**

Quigley (2011:21) suggests that: "academic identity lacks precision in terms of description" and certainly within the Reciprocal and Fragile Phases the majority of new academics were confused about the term 'academic', did not consider themselves to be one and were uncertain of what was expected of them as they navigated the institutional setting with its implicit and explicit rules of engagement (Trowler, 1998). On entering the Engaged Phase the research finds that the seven of the characters had begun to, what Jablin (2001:758) termed, "break in" that is, an understanding of the academic milieu, a sense of belonging and a recognition that they were becoming academic. They were no longer novices:

I think that I am finally making sense, I'm starting to see the bigger picture and starting to see how the whole big system works. I am starting to feel part of a proper staff member of the University.

(Charlie: November, 2009)

The characters were discovering a new sense of purpose and a new beginning (Bridges, 1991) as they entered what was identified by Jablin (2001) as the metamorphosis stage. The characters were modifying their attitudes and behaviours to become consistent with the expectations of the organization. Barkhuizen (2002:99) would argue that the characters were "forced to conform", as not fitting in leads to "feelings of instability" and ultimately a rejection of transition. This is evidenced within a response from Claire:

I mean it's a terrible thing to say, but I genuinely say I don't respect

any of the practices I've seen and I just think "well, you can't work in an environment and not be tainted by that environment". So that's why I'm thinking I need to move on.

(Claire: June, 2009)

Claire's response resonates with the research by Gourlay (2011b) that identified "mismatched values" (p598) as a source of a new lecturer's "alienation in the new academic context" (p591). Gourlay's respondent (Sophie) like Claire also decided to leave academia.

Other characters however, were securing the relevant job skills and achieving collaborative social relationships with colleagues (Taormina, 2004). Furthermore, there was also an acceptance by some established academics that the characters 'belonged'. It could be that the established academics no longer perceived the characters to be a threat and as such were more accommodating, easing the way for the characters to assimilate within existing structures and cultures as they succumb to hegemonic practices. Dickmeyer (2001) argues that this is as a result of 'normative control', in that the established academic's discourse is dominant over others and seeks to communicate to new members how to think and act, thus ensuring that new members embrace the organisational culture. For the characters a sense of belonging created a safety net, as Lucy states: "there is that support in the majority" (November, 2009).

Trowler and Bamber (2005) also found that new lecturers felt pressured to conform to their established colleagues practice whereas Wenger (1998) maintains that newcomers construct 'meanings' that compete with the various 'meanings' present within the community. For Sally an increase in her confidence within the overall academic and institutional environment together with passing her PGCE led her to challenge some established academics and their practices:

I still felt as though I couldn't really input that much because I didn't know really. I hadn't experienced what they were doing, but now I feel I can actually say something and it'll be counted, if you like. The only real thing is that they had more experience and I was quite aware of that, so I was less likely to make any suggestions, where I feel that I've integrated quite well and I will suggest to them and if I think that they're not right or something, I'm not afraid to tell them.

(Sally: June, 2009)

Viskovic states that: "encounters between newcomers and old-timers bring together different perspectives that contribute to the community's ongoing learning" (2006: 326). Warhurst (2008) proposes that through their recent training (PGCE) new lecturers are able to broker new practices with established colleagues. This is evident with Petra's involvement within her subject team community. Further discussion on the topic of change takes place later in this section:

I'm involved with a group looking at the admissions procedure and things.  
You're part of a group that's actually changing things. I like that.

(Petra: November, 2009)

Conversely, Kate is struggling to effect change within her subject team:

Just as an example, electronic submissions of assignments, for instance, you know, to me I don't think that it would be too difficult to manage, but other people in the team are sort of "No, that's far too complicated. We can't do that yet."

(Kate: November, 2009)

Warhurst (2008) would suggest that Kate's ideas were not accepted as she had not gained legitimacy with her colleagues. On the other hand, Charlie like Petra feels that he now belongs and is fully integrated within the team:

I feel that I've been accepted... for example, if someone needs an industry link they know they can refer to me. I'm really working within the team and committed to bringing forward all the ideas that I have.

(Charlie: November, 2009)

Lave and Wenger (1991:95) would make a case that through legitimate peripheral participation both Petra and Charlie and some of the other characters have an increased "understanding of how, when and about what old-timers collaborate, collude and collide" and as such are in the process to become "full practitioners".

For the majority of the characters, becoming a 'practitioner' was centred on the teaching. As in the Reciprocal and Fragile Phase the student relationship and teaching capacity was used within the Engaged Phase as a barometer to progression. For

example, Petra's sense of belonging was achieved as a result of becoming confident with student interactions:

I suppose the biggest thing for me, particularly seeing the students at the end of last week, was feeling like yeah, whatever you ask me, I can answer now. And again that's nice it's a lovely feeling because you feel like its sort of like learning to ride a bike, the stabilizers are gradually coming off and you are starting to fit in.

(Petra: June, 2009)

Barlow and Antoniou (2007) found that a research agenda for some new lecturers took second place to the teaching and this was certainly the case within this study as the teaching was deemed to be a stabilizing force. It is accepted that this was partly as a result of the institution within this study being a 'post 1992' establishment with a focus on vocational delivery rather than academic research. Nevertheless, from the beginning of this study, a widely held view between the characters was that to fully belong -- to become 'academic' -- they had to be involved in research and attain higher qualifications:

I mean there is the teaching part which is essential. But I see the research role as important as the teaching role.

(Charlie: October, 2008)

I think that until I perhaps go and do my PhD or have a doctorate or have developed some theories, I don't think that I would consider myself as an academic.

(Jenny: October, 2008)

These responses are supported by Gourlay's study which found that new lecturers sense of inauthenticity was: "likely to stem from the fact that they do not have higher degrees and experience of scholarly work" (2011a:73). All of the remaining characters within the Engaged Phase, in order to establish credibility, were either undertaking or contemplating extra studies with many taking their success within the PGCE as the entry point:

I'd like to be more involved in research. So I'm doing a PG Dip at the minute, so next year hopefully I'll be writing up my dissertation for my Masters and then I'll possibly do a PhD. I definitely want to do a doctorate at some point.

(Kate: November, 2009)

Furthermore, Lucy, Mary and Mike all stated that they were intending to undertake a doctoral programme of studies within the year. Petra, however, was a little more cautious as she continued to prioritise teaching:

I'm still not sure about that one [completing a PhD] really because in one way I feel like that could go backwards because I'm now so busy with the day to day and the teaching.

(Petra: November, 2009)

Whilst recognising the value of research and qualification to academic identity, for Charlie there was still some uncertainty, particularly regarding his academic ability:

I know I will be an academic. In terms of like professionally I need, well, I need to consolidate because I'm still in almost my first year. It's the research bit, the research side of being an academic because I'm really weak in a way on that side.

(Charlie: November, 2009)

The sense of continuing fragility is also evident within some of Jenny's responses as she also questions her capacity, and, like Petra, she is giving herself more time:

I don't think I'll ever become the person that I said I didn't want to be here and turn into, you know, an old, fuddy-duddy professor, because I don't think that anymore and I'm probably not good enough to end up like that.

(Jenny: June, 2009)

Whilst there was a general sense of belonging amongst the characters, none believed that they had yet achieved legitimacy. This was primarily due to their perceived lack of academic attainment and consequently credibility within the academic community. For Jawitz (2007) recognition in the form of promotion is not only an acknowledgement of achievement but also creates an important component in gaining access to established communities. All of the characters were being given new responsibilities within the institution which therefore offered an alternative route to legitimacy within the community.

## New Responsibilities

Kolsaker (2008: 513) states that: "academic staff on the whole function within performance systems of accountability embedded in managerialism". Hargreaves (2000) claims that academics are overwhelmed with intensified work demands that managerialism prescribes. Research by Archer (2008) makes the case that within higher education such managerialism leads to negative consequences for academic identity. However, Archer (2008) also recognises that the subsequent changes have led to increased opportunities, particularly in the creation of new subject areas and academic roles. Whitchurch (2009:407) notes the emergence of a: "blended professional with identities drawn from professional and academic domains". The discussion within the literature suggested that new academics as former managed industry professionals are more able to adapt (blend) to the new managerialist agenda and subsequently able to contribute to the wider university setting. This is reflected in some of the roles the characters have attained. For example, it was a lead in an industry linked project for Petra and Angela and business development roles for Charlie and Sally. For Petra the new role did give her a sense of belonging although she recognises that the new role profile suited her former industry experiences:

My experience does lie in that particular field. So it was really flattering for them to think "right, we can trust Petra and she's going to run with this

(Petra: November, 2009)

The other characters (except Mike and Kate) were given academic teaching roles, such as module leaderships with all of them reporting that they were happy to be given the new roles. For Lucy it was like "coming out of the jungle" (February: 2009) and a sign that she was starting to establish herself, to belong. For others it demonstrated confidence in their ability:

I'd like to think that I wouldn't have been given the module to run as a final year module if it wasn't considered I was capable of doing it and that it's not just out of desperation and needing module leaders, you know. So yeah, I guess it is an affirmation

(Jenny: June, 2009)

Charlie recognises that the new responsibilities can be used as a way to further assimilate himself within the subject team:

It's a practical thing because I can see I can give more contribution and I think this role of the business development officer is helping a lot. I remember we discussed in the past interviews that my role was still marginal. Now I'm moving towards the centre, but I'm still like moving slowly.

(Charlie: June, 2009)

As stated above, all of the characters, that remained, were happy to be given their new roles, although for some it did lead to a sense of inauthenticity (Gourlay, 2011a) and fragility as they once again became uncertain of their capacity and legitimacy within the academic environment. Petra viewed the new responsibility as "it's kind of scary" (June: 2009) with Jenny demonstrating the possible negative outcomes of failing to succeed in the fresh challenges that she had been given:

It is a bit of a make or break thing really I think, you know. It'll either be fantastic or ruin me!

(Jenny: June, 2009)

In addition to the roles delegated by line management some of the characters, in order to seek belonging within the subject team community, accepted new tasks assigned by established academics. Five of the characters held the view that they were being taken advantage of by established academics. Research by Warhurst (2008:463) would agree within this assertion: "while lecturers generally had a high degree of access to participation, several were victims of experienced colleagues off loading particularly challenging teaching and administration". This view was even recognised by Lucy's manager:

Thursday is a day off for me but someone always comes in "can you cover this for me" and I always say yes. My manager always states "you need to say no, because it's your day off, you need to stop that. You don't have to accept and always say yes because people will start taking advantage of you".

(Lucy: February, 2009)

Sally (February: 2009) considered herself to have been 'leaned on' by her peers, as she felt pressurised into accepting the tasks. Kate (February: 2009) also reported that she was "pushed into accepting" extra responsibility, even though she did not want to undertake it. Sally was fearful about the possibility of isolation from the team, should she not accept the new tasks. Act One, the literature review, discussed 'communities of power' with a view that the need for access is inherent in communities of practice and

that access is liable to manipulation by dominant members of the community, with some newcomers being prevented from peripheral participation (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Viskovic, 2006). This was evidenced by Sally's experience:

People can lean on you, they are just members of the team, course leaders and a principal lecturers. It is really difficult to say no, really difficult. If I had said no they will probably say "oh she is not a member of the team or whatever" and I don't want to say no at this stage. I can see how you can kind of be isolated and if you didn't integrate in other areas I could see how you could get very isolated.

(Sally: February, 2009)

Research by Barlow and Antoniou (2007:70) supports the above view, finding that new staff: "expressed disappointment at the isolation and lack of real teamwork" which, for Gourlay (2011a), would be further evidence of nominal mutual endeavor within the academic community.

In accepting new responsibilities all of the characters wanted to change the way the roles were accomplished. For the characters this was both exciting and challenging. In some cases this led them towards a confrontation with the established academics and their practices.

### **Agents of Change: changing identity**

Gravett and Petersen state that new academics are: "forced to operate within the academic community without a clear understanding of its key features and its norms of interaction" (2007:200). However, I repeat the following quote: "newcomers are no fools: once they have access to the practice, they soon find out what counts" (Wenger, 1998:156). It is suggested that the characters, within the Engaged Phase, are fully aware of practice and process and whilst they are expected to: "assimilate into the existing practice; there may be a more dialogic relationship, which allows newcomers to act as agents of change" (Bathmaker and Avis 2007: 514) and perhaps reject existing practice.

The majority of the characters considered themselves as agents of change holding the view that one of the reasons they were appointed was to bring up-to-date experience of

industry to the teaching practice. For Claire, new staff "have a positive impact on the team, as a new person brings a freshness and a commitment" (October: 2008):

I mean it has been suggested by my line manager because there are kind of issues around people of being in a job too long and have sort of, what's the word, possibly outdated ideas. I do bring in ideas and I've got a very good idea as to how it could change.

(Angela: February, 2009)

There was general acceptance by all of the characters that they were being asked to effect change within teaching practice. However, particular characters were unsure how to accomplish this. Furthermore, they were also uncertain of their current knowledge to effect change at this early stage of their new careers. This affected their confidence in moving forward with the change agenda. For example, Angela and Charlie were a little tentative in their approach:

I really don't want to rock anybody's boat. I'm not completely convinced that it is right to kind of come in all guns blazing; going this is how it should be, because, I think you know I'm not sure I know that yet myself.

(Angela: February, 2009)

I'm a bit careful the way I am kind of like expressing these changes, these ideas that I have. So I am waiting for opportunities to come up when the time will be right I have my say.

(Charlie: February, 2009)

Adapting the work of Barkhuizen (2002) the study by Green and Myatt (2011: 41) identified the final stage of transition for new international academic staff as: "generating: a time of action and change". Their study would support the views of the majority of their respondents as, like Angela and Charlie, they all appeared 'cautious' in their desire for taking action to implement change.

Change, for the characters, was not only directed towards the teaching practice but also the management practice. Act one, the literature review, interpreted Whitchurch's 'Project Domain' (2006) as a representation of how new academics move across industry and academic boundaries, creating an increasingly multi-professional grouping of staff more suited to the contemporary educational landscape. Archer (2008:271) would question whether this is a result of higher education attracting new academics

that have the experience and capacity for: "adaptation and matching the demands of modern academic life".

Mary as a former senior manager within industry was positioned within the Project Domain (Whitchurch, 2006) and had the capacity for matching what Archer (2008) alludes to, although she had issues adapting. By drawing on her previous managerial experiences Mary undertook a more pragmatic approach to change (than Charlie and Angela). By using her managerial 'strengths' Mary started to initiate change within the subject team and was confident in her method and thought it to be: "enabling, empowering and positive" (February: 2009). Mary was linking the changes she felt necessary to what she considered to be the "new corporate environment" where "everyone has got more of a business level head on" (February: 2009). Therefore, Mary was guided by general management principles, based on her former boundaries, and deployed a more assertive approach within her new boundaries:

I insisted on having a meeting with the subject team leader to give an update to see where we are linking back to the business plan, then taking that back to our strategic course meeting with the rest of the subject team.

(Mary: February, 2009)

Mary acknowledges that some members of the team were responsive to change although she was also aware that not all subject team members would be open to change. At the following interview the resistance to change was evident. This made Mary vulnerable within the team and subsequently led to Mary disengaging from the process:

We have tried really hard to be sensitive and accommodating when we have these discussions, but it just feels at the moment there's lots of back stabbing in the team and lots of private discussions going around. Some of us have just said "Well, we've really had enough. I've never

worked in an organisation where it's been tolerated in that way, so I mean I'm not going to do it now."

(Mary: June, 2009)

For Mary the main reason for this resistance was that new academics, with business experience, are perceived to be a threat to traditional academic practices. In addition

she viewed management as weak in their support of new practice, even though “they were the ones that invited us in” (Petra, February: 2009):

I think it's a threat, because some of us are coming in with some new ideas and new challenges, very much fresh out of practice. I think there's a professional way of dealing with it and I don't think that's been well managed. You know, change – sometimes you either embrace or you resist it and I feel the catalyst for that is how the course leaders and the principal lecturers support the staff members.

(Mary: June, 2009)

For Chris it was also the management academics that were not embracing the change:

I am quite motivated and I wanted to bring in these changes and I wanted to see things happen and so I was constantly badgering away to get my management to help me with these moves and they just constantly put up barriers left right and centre and a lot of it was just them that couldn't be bothered.

(Chris: Pilot, 2007)

In contrast, it is apparent from Petra's responses that the subject team's cohesion had been carefully orchestrated by the subject team leader, although Petra does not feel overtly managed:

I think he deliberately built up a new team making sure that it had an identity. I think its quite structured, it doesn't feel like I'm managed

(Petra: June, 2009)

Act one identified that the most pivotal relationship for the new academic was with the manager-academic (Staniforth and Harland, 2006). For Petra the manager-academic has been instrumental to her integration and ability to effect change. It is suggested that Petra's subject team manager operates within the boundaries of Whitchurch's (2006) Project Domain. As evidence, further assessment of Petra's transcripts reveals that her subject team met regularly and set group targets. Furthermore, Petra had received a formal appraisal and, in her view, been given an appropriate and engaged mentor. Within this research it is accepted that Petra's experience is not the norm as this research would agree with the literature review that called into question the manager-academic's ability to reconcile professional and managerial demands (Briggs,

2005) within the ideologies and values of new managerialism (Deem and Brehony, 2005).

Claire holds the view that there is a “clash of cultures” (February: 2009) and believes that some established academics actually ‘sabotage’ any new proposals as they protect their domain with a “Thatcherite individualism” (June: 2009) that prohibits a collective working team relationship:

This person, who is a principal lecturer in the management world, if you like, was going to sabotage through neglecting what that person had done. So it demeans the work. You know, the fact that it's been sabotaged through fear.

(Claire: Jun, 2009)

Angela takes a more sympathetic stance. She believes that: “they don’t want things to change” (February: 2009) although she appreciates that: “they’ve sort of built this course up over a number of years and always taught the same thing. To have that taken away and structured might make them kind of feel undervalued” (February: 2009). Furthermore, Angela recognises that the established academics do have a voice and value within the change process:

It feels like we are trying to persuade the old-timers that they don’t need to be cynical with the idea of, you know, “maybe we could do this and maybe we could do that.” Every time we have these meetings, they do come back with all the negatives of why this wouldn’t work. But, you know, in lots of ways it’s quite good to have that voiced because if you’re just all “oh yeah, that’d be great! That’d be great!” and no-one says “yeah, but what about this and what about this?” So, you know, it feels like we’re making progress.

(Angela: June, 2009)

Despite her stance Mary also recognises the merit of an engaged established academic, although there is still the ‘hint’ that manager-academics are not enabling collaboration:

There’s some individuals that you know will resist change more, but then you draw on their qualities and strengths and I don’t think perhaps that’s been done, you know, to make them feel valued.

(Mary: June, 2009)

This research suggests that the established academic has significant power and influence within the community: this can either assist or hinder a new academic's progress. The new academic has a delicate relationship with the established academic that needs to be intentionally collegial and mutually beneficial for the benefit of the wider academy (Gravett and Petersen, 2007) although Viskovic (2006) found that hierarchical management structures do not support the reciprocity that Lave and Wenger (1991) espouse. Within the community the established academic is generally viewed as senior and experienced yet they can sometimes be of equal stature within the institutional hierarchy. Within this matrix management structure the dichotomous relationship proved to be confusing and strenuous for some of the characters.

## **Future Career**

A sense of belonging may be influenced by a connection and commitment to the wider academic community and may not necessarily be as a result of academic self-efficacy. "Once needs for belonging to a group have been met, motivation shifts from gaining acceptance to becoming a contributing member" (Podsen, 2002:25). By achieving a greater understanding of the academic environment, participating within wider academic practices and having a sense of belonging, the all of the remaining characters started to vision a career within academia that at the beginning of the journey seemed very distant to them:

I do feel different. I feel like I belong here now, you know. I remember my comments at the beginning of all this were "No, I don't feel like I'm an academic," I feel now that I'm more interested in what are termed as academic practices like getting involved in doing some research or writing papers. A year ago it just seemed impossible.

(Jenny: June, 2009)

All bar two of the characters (Angela and Claire) were still in post at the end of the research period. Angela could not see herself having an academic career and throughout all of the interviews she questioned her ability to become academic and also resisted identifying herself as one. This is perhaps summed up within some of the comments during her final interview:

Definition of an academic? I mean it is still not me... it doesn't feel like it's me.I still do think of academia as something other to what I am doing... I still can't say that I'm a senior lecturer. I still can't get those words out, I

can't imagine saying that.

(Angela: June, 2009)

Claire, on the other hand, never questioned her academic capacity although she recognised that she never fully integrated into the normative structure of the community. Furthermore, Claire found the role unchallenging, for which she cites the manager-academics as culpable, mainly for not recognising her ability, nurturing her potential or accepting her change agenda. For Claire a sense of belonging was subverted by the actions taken towards her:

Sometimes there is not enough in the working day to occupy me, the excitement element that I use to have is not there. So the tasks I have been given are fairly monotonous. I don't think it's thought through. I need that sort of catalytic thing to make me happy in my environment and I haven't had that.

(Claire: June, 2009)

Claire stated that she was going to use the summer months to reflect on her position:

I've got a two week break coming up when I am out of here, you know, and reframe, but I think, well no, I know in my heart of hearts I'm not here long.

(Claire: June, 2009)

Claire did not return for the autumn semester.

Similarly, Angela used the summer months to reflect on her situation. For Angela it was less clear cut. Angela found the autonomy and working arrangements within academia beneficial for her work-life balance. However, the 'calling' of her former role proved to be too much and Angela did not participate further in this research:

I mean I do really like the job... but, you know, I'm more passionate about my previous role.

(Angela: June, 2009)

All of the remaining characters, like Angela, missed their former industry position,

although for many a new career within academia beckoned:

No. No, I'm not keeping those doors open because I want to go back and do that. This is my choice now. This is definitely my choice, but I just do feel that I miss it, you know.

(Jenny: November, 2009)

On the other hand Mary started to distance herself from her previous role, stating that she was not missing the practice:

I think I would position myself much more in the academia field rather than more to the industry element. I don't miss the industry at all. I won't go back to my former role.

(Mary: January, 2010)

Mary was mapping out a career path within academia and held a very clear view of where she would like to be in the future:

Keep your options open and I think you develop your own portfolio and your CV and you make yourself more attractive for different roles that might come up. I would like to be in the next five years either a PL or Head of Department.

(Mary: January, 2010)

All of the remaining characters accepted that an academic career beckoned and set targets to achieve this. However, after a year in academic practice, they were all still a little unclear about what being 'academic' exactly meant.

## **Denouement**

A denouement refers to the ending scene of a narrative and serves as the conclusion. For Freytag (1863) the denouement is where the reader gains a sense of comprehension as the various complexities within the script are brought together and understood, creating a sense of catharsis for the reader, and, in the context of this research, the narrator.

## **Synopsis**

The purpose of this chapter is to put forward the notion of the 'Auditioning Academic' as I draw together the opening acts, the findings from the anagnorisis and my own narrative. Finally I propose various recommendations for professional practice and provide a statement on how this dissertation contributes to knowledge and practice.

## **The Auditioning Academic**

In the traditional sense an audition is where industry professionals such as casting directors (manager-academics) would select performers for a role, similar to a job interview. The characters in this research had already been subject to interview and been appointed in the role of either lecturers or senior lecturers. Therefore, it can be assumed that the characters had the necessary attributes to commence working within the institutional setting. The research claims that throughout the reciprocal, fragile and engaged phases the academics sought to establish an identity and credibility within the established communities of practice. To accomplish this, the characters in this study audition to the academic community to seek approval, acceptance and legitimacy through collaboration and interaction with colleagues and students, 'rehearsing new practice and 'performing' through various identities as they seek authenticity within their new working environment.

Fundamental to any successful audition is for the artist to make evident an in-depth understanding of the role they are seeking to perform. However, within this research all of the characters on entering the academic environment demonstrated a lack of comprehension as to what constituted an academic and academic practice. This raises questions on how the interviews were conducted and their outcomes, as it is clear that

the characters were unable, at their interview, to provide an in-depth understanding of the role they were auditioning for. It is suggested the key criteria in the selection process is based on industry credibility rather than academic standing. This would support the findings within Act one. Furthermore, it is proposed that the manager-academics were appointing on the basis of academic potential. Within the research this potential was realised with eight out of the ten characters that remained in post, demonstrating increased academic awareness, establishing credibility within the subject team community and committing to an academic career.

The question of establishing credibility was not reserved just for the subject team community but also for the student body. All of the characters initially viewed the teaching as a priority, as they were faced with immediate classroom 'auditions' through the delivery of lectures and student interactions. By having limited understanding of expectations, together with little or no prior training, the majority of the characters worked long hours to prepare materials and 'rehearse' delivery to ensure that they were not exposed within the classroom. This created some pressures for the characters as they attempted to balance a new role, a new working environment and in some cases a new home environment. For all of the characters the teaching was a simple way of establishing professional status within the student body, as the characters were able to exploit their industry knowledge and subject specialism through transference within the classroom setting. In general, the characters were pleased with their classroom interactions. However, as no monitoring or evaluation of the characters' teaching took place there was no avenue available to convey this accomplishment to their manager-academics. This was a surprise for many of the characters, particularly as they considered the teaching as the core element of their role within the institution and the reason why they were appointed. For some of the characters this was perceived to be a lack of good management practice and even at this early stage of their transition many characters started to call into question the aptitude of their manager-academics.

When auditioning an artiste must demonstrate that they are able to work alongside and effectively interact with the rest of the cast in the play, to become one with the cast. It is suggested that this only works if the cast are also willing to interact with the auditioning artiste. The characters' main interactions, outside of teaching, would be with the subject team community and colleagues on the PGCE course. It has been established that industry knowledge proved to be a significant factor in the appointment process and one that gave the characters immediate credibility within the boundaries of the

manager-academic community and with the student body, although this was not generally replicated within the subject team community. The transference of industry knowledge was, in most cases, limited from the characters to many established academics, as not all established academics were welcoming of such an exchange. The research claims that the characters challenged the established academics' contemporary subject knowledge and that this was perceived to be a threat to the established academics' credibility and standing in the wider community. In some cases established academics sought to disrupt the transition of the characters through a regime of limited collaboration and support. Indeed some of the characters experienced hostility when attempting to exchange industry knowledge and integrate themselves within the community. This perceived lack of collegial and collaborative interactions were in opposition to the characters' former industry experiences and led to many characters feeling isolated and vulnerable within their academic community. However, the characters also recognised that the established academics held positions of power and were gatekeepers to the community. Therefore, some of the characters adopted a more controlled and subtle approach to establishing community entry. This primarily involved the characters 'stroking' the established academics. By understanding their limitations within the teaching practice and using this lack of proficiency the characters approached the established academics for guidance and support, appealing to the academic notion of mutual endeavour. Some of the characters accepted that such novice-to-expert interactions authenticated the power dynamic that the established academic sought to retain and there was a view that this was a necessary consequence. Furthermore, there was evidence that many of the characters purposely demonstrated attitudes and behaviours that were more consistent with the norms and expectations of the community, thus reducing any opposition to community entry. It is argued that for some of the characters, this approach worked and once greater feelings of stability and a sense of belonging were attained, challenges to existing practice ensued.

As suggested above the characters accepted that their teaching practice was an area where they were unable to demonstrate competence (apart from subject knowledge), and this created an awareness of vulnerability and sense of anxiety. In this research, participation on the PGCE course was cited by the characters as instrumental to the attaining of teaching competencies with the subsequent reduction of pressure within the classroom and exposure within the subject team community. The PGCE course not only enabled the characters to rehearse their teaching practice it also led to a further qualification, which was viewed by the characters as a 'licence to operate' and one that

gained a certain amount of academic status. There was a general view that gaining qualifications was elemental to ‘being academic’. Even though six of the characters held masters degrees they still felt inauthentic and lacking credibility within the wider academic community with the remaining characters claiming that their lower qualifications acted as a barrier to entry. Five of the characters sought to rectify this omission by giving an undertaking to future doctoral study. Attaining an academic qualification was not the only benefit of the PGCE: it was also the positive interactions that characters had with other participants on the programme. Fellow participants on the PGCE were also auditioning for their respective roles and as such all of the characters sought solace within this non-competitive and supportive environment where knowledge exchange and mutual endeavour took place. For the characters who felt isolated from their subject team community, the PGCE community was where they felt safe and belonging. Furthermore, for some characters, friendship groups would form that would last beyond the transition process.

It has already been established that the characters entered the institutional setting with little understanding of the term academic or academic practices. Furthermore, subsequent interviews confirmed that this had not changed several months into tenure. This raises questions regarding the induction process. The research findings state that only one of the characters attended the induction sessions provided by the institution. Lack of attendance for the other characters was primarily due to the limited number of induction sessions available and the timing of the sessions as they only took place prior to the commencement of the first teaching semester. It appears that teaching delivery took precedence over teacher training. The remaining characters relied on informal input from within their subject group, which was reported as both fragmented and lacking in constructive content. Indeed both the institutional and subject team content was viewed as unproductive to furthering academic understanding as the focus was on administrational process rather than the realities of academic teaching and the working relationships within the academic community. The findings suggest that all of the characters viewed the lack of a structured and coherent induction programme as a contributing factor to their initial struggle to understand the macro and micro working environments. It is argued that the characters were less concerned with the macro environment as they perceived their initial priorities to be firstly, establishing good teaching practice and secondly, integration within the subject team community. Perhaps this was an oversight by the characters: they became detached from the wider university setting as their transition advanced, thus limiting potential openings to integrate more deeply within the wider academic community and therefore reducing

opportunity to increase their participation and standing within the local academic community.

Earlier, it was stated that the characters initially questioned the credibility of their manager-academics, primarily due to a perception of their lack of monitoring and control within their subject team community. The autonomous nature of academic work proved to be a challenge for the majority of characters, particularly those who entered academia from industries that adopted a managerialistic culture. For example, there was criticism of policies such as home working, which the majority of characters viewed as open to abuse and lacking accountability. However, further examination of the characters' responses suggest that their issues with autonomous working were less to do with the lack of accountability and more to do with their own need to be visible and active within the community. For example, the characters wanted to demonstrate competences to facilitate community entry and share accomplishments with the team and also acquire assurances from the team that they were performing well, all of which proved difficult when academics within their subject team rarely met as a community of practice. This created a sense of isolation and insecurity. Therefore, shared repertoire, mutual endeavour and expert-novice interaction seldom took place within the subject team setting. Where these pillars of communities of practice were more evident were within the relationships that the characters held with colleagues they shared office accommodation with and also their mentor, if assigned one.

It would appear that there was little thought in the allocation of office accommodation for new academics, with the characters generally being given whichever space was available at the time, mostly the one vacated by the previous incumbent. Two of the characters were actually assigned office space in a separate building away from the majority of the other subject team members and were co-located with staff from other departments. This created two separate subject teams and led to a sense of isolation for the characters. For Claire, this created a group of colleagues that became conflict-ridden and divisive and she eventually left the role citing the 'toxic' relationship between the two groups as one of the reasons for her departure. Where office accommodation was geographically located by subject group and characters only shared office accommodation with subject group colleagues, a more collaborative and supportive environment developed, creating a micro setting where the characters felt they belonged. All of the characters, bar the ones cited above and Lucy (who shared an office with three other colleagues, who were also recently appointed to the institution) shared their office with at least one established academic. The evidence suggests that

within this micro setting a veritable representation of a community of practice developed, unlike in the wider macro subject team milieu, where it appears the conditions necessary for a community of practice are not evident, nor, I would argue, encouraged to develop. I would contend that, to a certain extent, some established academics operate duplicitously, acting with mutual endeavour within the micro setting and often remote within the macro setting.

The above argument suggests that, within the right environment and with the appropriate motivation, the established academic is not as detached or unsupportive as first thought. Further evidence of this is noticeable via the mentorship relationship, for example, the characters that received mentorship from an established academic generally reported positive mutual endeavour and expert-novice interaction. Not all of the characters were officially allocated mentors and those who were excluded from this sought mentorship from the established academic within the micro setting, who were generally agreeable to the mutual collaboration, thus corroborating the view that communities of practice form within the micro setting. In contrast, the characters, whose mentors were appointed for them from outside the micro setting, generally reported a lack of engagement and commitment from their mentors. The significance of mentorship should not be underestimated within the context of this research with all of the characters receiving either official or unofficial mentorship and citing this relationship as pivotal to their transition. Based on the evidence from this research it is argued that the omission of any official mentoring programme within the institution is an oversight within the formal institutional policies and induction process.

Earlier it was mentioned that the characters were working, what they considered to be, long hours, primarily in order to develop their teaching practice. It is accepted that these were voluntary and in addition to the 'official' hours specified by their work-plan. Nevertheless, all of the characters, bar one, considered that their working hours were in excess of their former role, although there was a common view that an increase in working hours was to be expected when commencing any new job, the increased hours were perceived as a of 'rite of passage'. Therefore, it was anticipated, by the characters, that the intense working schedule was to be short term. However, during this initial period the majority of the characters were under intense pressure, as their manager-academics allocated a full teaching workload with no allowances, except for the teaching course (although this was not evident for everyone). It is argued that this policy was counterproductive. Whilst the manager-academic may be satisfying their staff/teaching ratios, the character's output was limited, with a possible deficiency in

quality of provision. Furthermore, the intensity of this initial teaching interaction created fragility amongst the characters. Indeed, Heather decided not to return after only teaching for one semester, citing the relentless teaching workload as the primary reason. Whilst this discussion makes the case that the characters perceived themselves to be initially ‘overworked’ the research asserts that once the teaching preparation time reduces and the characters become more accustomed to the teaching practice, they seek alternative forms of activity to fill the void, such as further study, research or participation in wider university communities.

It has been accepted that academics are self motivated and focused individuals with a rigorous work ethic. It is argued that by successfully negotiating what was considered to be legitimate peripheral participation and progressing through the reciprocal, fragile and engaged environments, the characters were demonstrating some of these characteristics. The characters were no longer novices and they were on an inbound trajectory to becoming academic. Whilst it may be deemed that the characters were becoming academic, the research implies that although they felt that they belonged within the various academic communities they nonetheless did not consider themselves to be academic, particularly as they continued to struggle with the term academic and their own confidence in designating themselves as one. However, the evidence suggests that the characters were modifying their attitudes and actions to become more aligned with the norms, expectations and ethic of academic behaviour. This metamorphosis resulted in a certain amount of legitimacy within the academic communities to which they ‘belonged’. Therefore, whilst there was this perceived lack of understanding of ‘being academic’ I argue that, in reality, the characters had reached the ‘new beginning’ stage of their transition and were within the imagination mode of belonging and ready to become academic.

At the start of this section it was stated that fundamental to any successful audition is for the artist to make evident an in-depth understanding of the role they are seeking to perform. On the basis of this research it is proposed that at the end of the first year journey eight out of the ten characters were ready to audition for their role as academics, they had navigated the institutional setting, they understood the academic milieu, and they had a sense of belonging. Time will tell whether their audition proved to be successful.

# **Contribution to Knowledge and Practice**

## **Contribution to Knowledge**

The aim of this research was to gain new knowledge and a greater understanding of the journey from industry practitioner to higher education professional. Within this context the dissertation contributes to knowledge in two ways. Firstly, the research adds to the expansive and generic organisational management literature surrounding new employee transition and socialisation. There were a number of literature sources that looked at student transition and socialisation, although the literature concerning entry to working within academia by industry practitioners was limited (Gourlay, 2011). Therefore, through publication, my research will contribute knowledge to this narrow literature field. Secondly, the research adds a theoretical framework (The Conceptual Model) to the subject milieu. Through publication it is anticipated that the academic community will interrogate and challenge the Conceptual Model and subsequently broaden its application. Thus, this research will also instigate future contributions to knowledge.

## **Changes in Professional Practice**

One of the objectives of this study was to identify good practice and changes in professional practices to facilitate new staff entry to academic communities. It is accepted that the knowledge from this research is context-dependant within the local agenda. However, I am keen to disseminate my findings to a wider audience. Whilst my findings can be circulated via the publication route, as stated above, there is a view as to whether they are generalisable within the broader setting.

Below I offer seven recommendations which are linked to specific professional practices, such as; induction programmes, mentorship and training programmes. These professional practices are duplicated across all other HE institutions and as such I contend that my study may be replicated. Furthermore, I would argue that the findings in my research allow for what Kvale (1996) would term analytic generalisation in that “a reasoned judgment about the extent to which the findings from one study can be used as a guide to what might occur in another situation” (p233). Therefore, the results from this research and all the recommendations below can be applied within the

same setting or field. An implication for professional practice is that the application of the recommendations would therefore need to be institutionally led and it would require the various departments, faculties and central systems to work together.

## Recommendations

1. Teacher training: It is recommended that all new academics obtain a post graduate teaching qualification. It is preferable that this is delivered ‘in house’ in order for communities of practice to take place.
2. Teaching delivery: It is recommended that all new academics have a reduced work plan during their first year of teaching. This is to enable the new academic to fine-tune their skills and have time to reflect on their practice. It is further recommended that the assigned mentor (see 4 below) and the subject team leader assess the teaching delivery, in the classroom, to provide guidance and re-assurance.
3. Induction Programme: It is recommended that an induction programme is provided to new academics within four weeks of their arrival. The induction schedule/content needs to be an integrated programme between both institutional processes (PGCE, mentoring) and subject team community practices.
4. Mentorship: Every new academic should be given a mentor. The mentor needs to be an established academic who has volunteered and also undertaken the training programme (see 7 below).
5. Monitoring and Evaluation: The subject team leader (manager-academic) needs to establish a regular schedule for monitoring and evaluating the new academic’s progress throughout the first full year, including their teaching practice (see 2 above). This needs to be based around an appraisal mechanism which enables the new academic to set mutually agreed targets.
6. Office accommodation: where possible, site the new academic geographically close to the subject team community and preferably in the same office as an established academic, from the same subject group, to encourage ‘expert-novice’ interaction.
7. The development of a training programme for established academics, such as mentors and manager-academics. The content of the training would focus on the reciprocal, fragile and engaged phases to establish an understanding and awareness of the journey the new academic undertakes. The output of the training would be an informed and sensitive established academic who is more responsive to the emotional and practical needs of a new academic.

## **Recommendations for future research**

This research has established that one of the key relationships, for the new academic, is with the established academic. The findings indicate that established academics are duplicitous between the various communities of practice to which they belong and form paradoxical relationships with new academics. Researching the established academic's view on new academics entering higher education from an industry would seek to clarify these conflicting positions.

# **Epilogue**

## **Preface**

The purpose of this chapter is to conclude the dissertation with a personal reflection of my own journey and how doing this research has shaped my own transition and future in academia.

Eight years ago I started working within a higher education setting having spent most of my working career as a senior manager within both the private and public sector. Throughout my professional career I had moved job roles a number of times and found the transition to be relatively smooth, primarily due to the fact that my industry skills were easily transferrable. However, on starting within the higher education setting I had never felt so isolated, exposed and lacking confidence in my own ability. This was partially to do with the fact that I had never experienced working or studying fully within the higher education setting before (having never completed a first degree and studying for a masters degree remotely) and, more substantially, the inconsistent relationships with my peers who were, at times, confrontational and dismissive of my capacity. Within a year of commencing my new career I recognised, regardless of the obstacles and challenges, that lecturing was a desirable career path and enrolled on the doctoral programme to address the lack of confidence in my ability and my perceived issues of legitimacy within the academic setting.

It is accepted that I entered the higher educational setting with some rigid notions of managerial practice (as illustrated throughout my narratives within this work) and therefore found the modes of management within my new environment to be contrary to my perspective. This made me question and challenge the induction processes of the institution and the practice of manager-academics. Furthermore, I appraised the role of the established academics who I believed were the route to my sense of inauthenticity within the academic communities to which I belonged. I accept that my opinion was based around the interactions within my own subject area and I do acknowledge that a disregard for mutual endeavour and collegiality is not evident within all established academics. However, colleagues on the PGCE course who had entered higher education from industry were also experiencing similar interactions with established academics within their subject groups. Furthermore, these colleagues on the PGCE course were also questioning the institutional/subject team processes and practices throughout their own transition with them all citing an induction programme

that was weak and unresponsive to the transitional needs of new academics entering from industry. Therefore, it seemed appropriate that this topic was part of my doctoral research journey. This decision was also supported by the fact that there appeared to be little research literature on the subject matter.

I have positioned myself within this research by reflecting on my first year diary notes and articulating my views, at the time, via the use of narration. This strategy was intentional as when starting on the doctoral journey, some 14 months after commencing as a senior lecturer, my strong and somewhat opinionated views were beginning to change, as I also navigated the institutional setting, understood the academic milieu, and had a sense of belonging. I was at the auditioning stage. It is now in excess of six years since this phase and using my own terminology I would now define myself as an established academic. Indeed, I am now a principal lecturer and an undergraduate programme leader. However, I still lack confidence, not in my ability, but in my use of the term 'academic' when it applies to me. I am also still short of self-belief in my own legitimacy within the academic communities to which I belong. For me there is something missing - my doctorate. Commencing on the doctorate programme immediately gave me some standing within the academic communities to which I belonged and it appeared, to me, that attaining a doctorate was a key pre-requisite to being academic. This view has stayed with me throughout my doctoral journey and I now seek the legitimacy I covet in order for me to complete my own transition.

Finally, I think about the characters in this work. At the start of the research I contemplated whether the characters would encounter the same challenges, conflicts and contradictions as I did. I conclude that they were comparable. My hope is that all the remaining characters successfully negotiate their own 'audition' to become an 'acting' academic, as, for me, there is no better profession.

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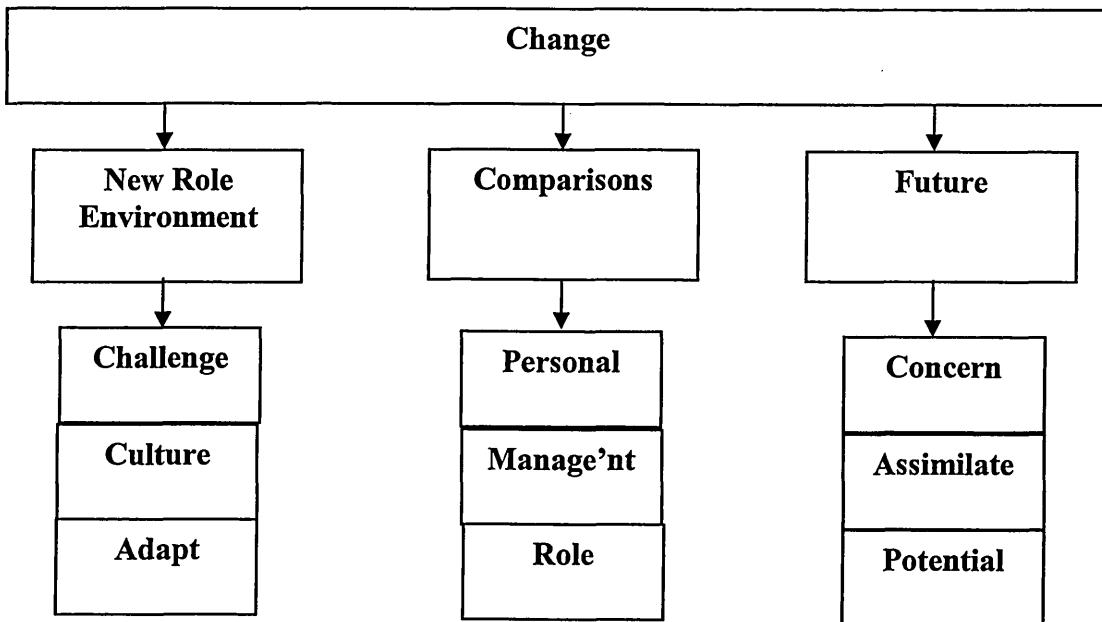
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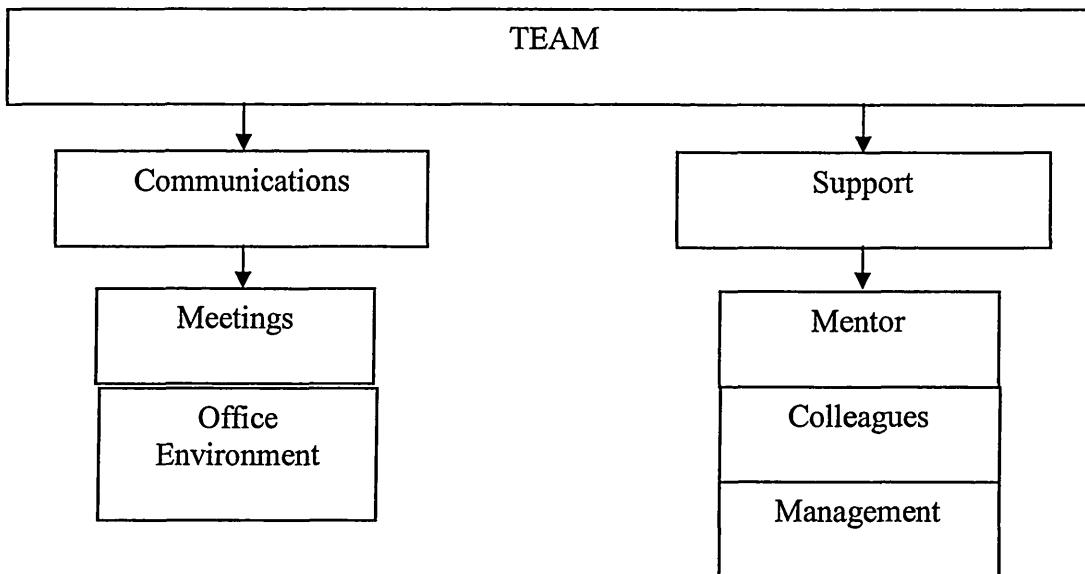
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## Appendix One

### Examples of Emerging Concepts



Future	Text	Free Node	Respond
Concern	I have unease for the future, as I don't see that anything is changing. What is the point in suggesting changes if nothing happens; it's a waste of your energy. It's quite negative.	83 (future negative)	2
Assimilate	It's annoying that people don't take the role as seriously as I think they should but again that's a different style of working, a different style of management and its accepted. I hate the fact that I will probably slip into the same routine.	81 (frustration)	2
Potential	I see the possibility of a Principal Lectureship, although I recognise that there is a game that you have to play, its politics. At the moment it does not bother me, I just want to get on with the teaching.	173 (promotion)	1



Support	Text	Free Node	Respond
Mentor	I have been given a mentor, I am quite fortunate in that apparently not many people get a mentor so I kind of feel that I am quite privileged to have that mentor. However, I kind of see them as management and above me, so I have to tread carefully, even though they are not really above me in the hierarchy.	125 (mentor and power)	1
Colleagues	Although we are a team we don't function as one. We don't work together for the common good, too many people working on their own. I am used to being in a team where we have goals.	215 (team sharing)	3
Management	It doesn't feel that my line manager has much managerial experience as they don't know how best to communicate with me and support me, he seems unaware of my needs.	107 (management experience)	2

## Appendix Two

### Primary Code Mapping

Num	Code	Oct	Feb	June	Nov
1	Competence	x	x		x
2	Change	x	x		
3	Established			x	x
4	Responsibilities			x	x
5	Subject Team	x	x		x
6	Support	x	x		
7	Belonging			x	x
8	Career			x	x
9	Qualifications	x			x
10	Wider Participation			x	x
11	Acceptance			x	x
12	Assertive		x	x	x
13	Autonomy	x	x		
14	Identity	x	x		x
15	Time	x	x	x	x
16	Workload	x	x		
17	Feedback		x	x	x
18	Teaching	x	x	x	x
19	Student Contact	x	x		
20	PGCHE	x	x		
21	Marking		x	x	
22	Put upon		x	x	
23	Insecurity and uncertainty	x	x		
24	Isolation	x	x		
25	Peer contact	x			
26	Mentorship	x	x		
27	Induction	x			
28	Subject Team management	x	x		
29	Rules and Procedures	x	x		
30	Structures	x			
31	Aspirations	x			x
32	Challenge	x	x		x
33	Survival	x	x		
34	Terms of Understanding	x			
35	Timeline	x		x	x
36	Appraisals		x		x
37	Industry	x	x		
38	Status			x	x
39	Self Reflection		x	x	

40	Definitions	x			
41	Accountability	x	x		
42	Achieving			x	x
43	Detached	x	x		
44	Engagement			x	x
45	Culture	x	x		
46	Perception	x	x	x	
47	Credibility	x	x		x
48	Motivations	x			x
49	Measurement		x	x	
50	Conform			x	x
51	Recognition			x	x
52	Valued			x	x
53	Resistance		x	x	
54	Development			x	x
55	Capability	x	x		x
56	Management Style	x	x		
57	Routines			x	x
58	Socialisation	x		x	x
59	Knowledge	x	x		x
60	Discipline	x	x		
61	Hierarchy	x	x		

## Appendix Three

**Table Four: Coding convention for Narrative Chronologies**

Environment	Code	Example Themes
Reciprocal Phase	REC	Security/Support/ Induction
Fragile Phase	FRA	Isolation/Autonomy/Workload
Engaged Phase	ENG	Belonging/Chane/Career

### **Lucy's Chronology**

Lucy's industry background was working for a global: corporate organisation, which she saw as very structured in its processes and management culture. Similar to other new academics Lucy found it difficult to adjust to what she saw as an unstructured working environment, particularly with the lack of support and guidance she was receiving. Lucy had not received any formal induction and was therefore unaware of the institutional processes, such as: semesters, hand in dates and subject boards, all of which offer structure within the working environment. This is exemplified when she states:

There you have to be there at 9 o'clock until 5 o'clock and you've got tasks and goals you have to achieve, whereas here in the university you are left alone. You have to manage your own time, you have to manage your own courses and the modules and the way you want to run them and some of the modules I'm finding difficulties. They don't give you any guidelines or any support – "Just run them and do what you want." So that's very challenging. (rec/security)

(October, 2008)

The perceived lack of support and guidance [from management] meant that at times Lucy felt isolated and this concerned her. At this stage of her transition she was unaware of the need to be more 'self-directed':

In a sense I'm alone, no-one to help...There's no guidelines, no structure at all. (rec/security)

(October, 2008)

Lucy was gaining support from colleagues within her direct office environment. However, these colleagues were also new and whilst the support was well intentioned it did not help with some of the fundamental questions, in some cases Lucy felt that it was like the 'blind leading the blind'. She says:

I give the example, in my office we are all new, no-one is old there or no-one has experience. We just came from industry and you are left and put in the same cluster and none of us have got experience. So if we're asking a stupid question we're not shy; we don't feel afraid because we don't know it. So we try to help each other, but there is no support around us in the sense they just put us in a jungle and you just have to survive and try to get used to the environment. (rec/support)

(October, 2008)

Lucy recognised that support within the subject group was there, it is just that it was left to the individual to ask for the help. Therefore, for Lucy the process was reactive rather than proactive and this led to her feeling alone and isolated, on occasions:

and they tell you in the beginning "People are friendly. You just need to go and ask people," ... but if you don't have that enthusiasm to ask people you will be lost. I've got some people that are lost now... They kind of go and approach people and ask them and you just feel alone if you don't approach people.(rec/support)

(October, 2008)

For Lucy the lack of structure leads to further isolation for the new academic although she did recognise that too much structure can have a restrictive outcome:

I think at a certain level we need structure otherwise maybe you won't perform well; maybe your performance will not be as good as you are meant to do. If you are stuck in a structure that is not good because you have to follow certain guidelines otherwise you are lost without guidelines, but I think in the university they need to give us some structure. (rec/induction)

(October, 2008)

Lucy provided some further evidence for the need of structure by citing the example of an existing colleague who 'takes advantage' of lack of structure and monitoring. For Lucy as a new academic this set a poor model of practice and a case in difference with her former role:

Yeah, I think that they need some monitoring and control. I can give you an example... she never attended subject meetings and she was never in the

office. Her desk is still empty. And then last week we had a seminar and she just came in to run the seminar and she taught it the way she ran it last year – So she came in with an idea, “I’m going to run it this way,” but we were, “Oh no, we’re doing this activity.” It’s new. Everything’s changed. The module changed totally,” and she was, “Oh! Really?” So we had to have a debrief at 8.30 in the morning for her just to run her session. (rec/subject team)

(October, 2008)

Lucy held the opinion that the lack of structure and poor working practices were as a result of management. Indeed Lucy believed that she was initially not managed and had limited access to her line manager (subject team leader). Lucy also sought guidance and reassurances that her work was satisfactory, although she has received neither and this made her concerned and anxious.

No, I’m not managed in the workplace. Yeah, I don’t have enough contact with my team or the subject leader... if sometimes they check what we’re doing and if we’re doing it right. Maybe we’re not doing it the way we are supposed to do it... Yeah, we need someone to tell us... We don’t have any guidelines – even for the seminars. We don’t have any guidelines. We just have to run it the way we want...Yeah, it makes us feel anxious, yeah.  
(rec/security/subject team)

(October, 2008)

It is interesting that Lucy seems to always use the word ‘us’ when referring to the situations in which she found herself. Lucy is referring to the ‘cluster’ of other new academics that she shared an office with. Lucy felt a strong bond to this community yet she was struggling to understand and make inroads within her own subject team community and also the wider university setting:

It’s very important because we help each other and we give support to each other. For example, if I read something I send it to them. I say, “I read this about employability that you can use in your seminars,” and if they read something, the same thing – they send me things and say, “Look what we’ve found. Maybe you don’t know,” or... So I think our cluster is very strong. I’m teaching [cross subject group]. So I’m part of that cluster too and I’m trying to make relations and getting to know people in that subject group as well as in my subject group... So I’m not only in my community. I’m trying to [bind] with my community, but at the same time I feel myself everywhere in the university... It’s a bit confusing. (rec/subject team/identity)

(October, 2008)

Helping Lucy during this transition was her mentor. However, the mentor assigned to Lucy was not as a result of standard subject team protocol or process, it was only as a consequence of the PGCE that required her to seek mentorship. Nevertheless, Lucy

was pleased to have this mentorship, albeit a little belated. In spite of this, it appeared that Lucy did not fully utilize the mentorship relationship, choosing to use it partially as a mechanism to feed back her issues to the subject team leader:

I started doing my PGCE for teaching and learning and that gives you help and you need to have a mentor and when I started the job I didn't have any mentor. So I've got now my mentor ...you just go to your mentor and say whatever you need and then they've got meetings with the tutors of the PGCE and they take notes forward. So if we tell them that that module and the teaching I don't like it and I don't like the structure and there are no guidelines, they will take it forward. They pass it to the boss. (rec/pgce/mentor)

(October, 2008)

When asked what she missed about her former role, Lucy responded with the fact that she missed finishing work at a certain time and forgetting about it. Whereas, she felt that her new role was more demanding and required more of her time:

Maybe that once you finish your job you are free. You finish at 5.00, you know, and you can go to a pub or you can go home and rest, whereas here I don't have – for the moment – I don't have my freedom outside my academic role. (rec/time)

(October, 2008)

Lucy stated that this was partially due to the fact that the role was new and as such she expected that the time demands would decrease as she became more accustomed to the working environment and particularly the expectations, especially the teaching requirement:

Yeah, I am over-preparing, yeah...I think maybe second year or next year it will change. If I'll be teaching the same modules I will manage myself better, but because I'm new and I don't have enough guidelines, so maybe I'm working more than I'm supposed to do and trying to be a perfectionist or something. (rec/time)

(October, 2008)

Having said this Lucy did recognise some similarities with her former role regarding time constraints:

If I had some project that I needed to meet deadlines but because I finished my job at 5.00 I take it home or back with me and I do it at home to try to meet the deadlines; and I'm doing the same thing here because I have a lecture at 9 o'clock in the morning tomorrow, so I need to be ready for that. So there are some similarities.(rec/time)

(October, 2008)

Whilst working from home was not unusual for Lucy, the extent of home working within academia and the fact that it appears unregulated did give her some concerns:

Yeah, I did it during August because August, the first two weeks or three weeks, I was here around and I'd got no teaching but I was here every day, but I was planning for my sessions trying to do the seminar questions and then they told me "You can work from home," – because I'm just around the city centre – "and if you've got any meeting you can attend the meetings," and I was "Oh, really?" But maybe I will be saying, "I am working at home" and I'm not working. You can do that because there is no control. Who can control you? Who can monitor what you're doing? (rec/rules)

(October, 2008)

For Lucy one of the main motivations for joining academia was the transference of Knowledge:

It's being able to help others, being able to help students and pass on my knowledge and my expertise. That's what interested me mostly to join the academic world. (rec/student/identity)

(October, 2008)

With this in mind she had a predetermined view of what it was to be an academic, primarily based on her experiences as a former student. Whilst knowledge transfer is one of the criteria within Lucy's definition of an academic she did not consider herself to be an academic:

An academic? I think, according to my understanding, if you're an academic you pass on knowledge. If you've got knowledge you pass on knowledge, participate in the academic, for example, writing – so publishing any work you're doing – and passing [those] to students... Not yet [an academic] because I don't have enough expertise in academia and enough experience as an academic. Maybe after my PhD in 6 years I'll consider myself academic, but at this point, I don't consider myself as being at that level... I just teach. (rec/identity)

(October, 2008)

Lucy did not perceive the teaching to be 'passing on knowledge'. Nevertheless, Lucy saw a potential beyond 'just teaching' and viewed the completion of a PhD as a necessity, with an expectation that she would eventually move into management:

I've got plans. I need to finish my PhD. I'm starting it this year... maybe being course leader and trying to build new courses, be more active in my

role. Rather than general teaching, I'd be... Yeah, I will go towards management, but I think more towards like being a course leader trying to manage a course. Yeah, a course leader or build new courses and doing more consultancy projects, participate in writing academic writings if I've got that level ... and become an academic at that time. (rec/identity)

(October, 2008)

When meeting with Lucy in February, 2009, the lack of initial guidance seemed to be having a bearing on her class based activities with Lucy feeling unsupported and being placed in a vulnerable position:

One of the lows was struggling with the HND group, who in the beginning were not respecting me... I'm not the only one struggling, also the other team members, and we are all new in the University and new to the course and there is no help. The module guide it is really basic and you don't have handouts or nothing, we just have to prepare our material anyway you want, so maybe you are covering something the other tutors are not covering, so we did struggle with that. So the students feel that there is incompetence...it made me frustrated, frustrated. (frg/isolation/student)

(February, 2009)

Lucy sought solace from members within the department but mainly from outside her actual subject group. This gave her some comfort and also some techniques for resolving the issues she faced:

You see some techniques from colleagues within the department like having one-to-one sessions with students might help... it was really valuable, just talking to people and people listening to your moaning. (fra/support)

(February, 2009)

Lucy gave a further example of her perceived lack of support from within the subject team, which led to a worrying decrease in her confidence:

I have some other problems with students (abusive in class as a result of a failed piece of work) and I did not find support... I contacted my manager, my mentor, the module leader and the course leader, as I understand the course leader deals with all the first-year students. But it's not his module and he had a meeting with the student instead of tackling my issue that the student was abusive to me. He wanted to see his paper remarked and gave it to other people to mark the paper again, without asking me, for when I needed help students swear at me how can I tackle that? I did not like the fact that they go behind your back and did not solve the problem of the abuse.  
(fra/support/insecurity)

(February, 2009)

Again Lucy thought that the situation was not managed correctly, with even her line manager agreeing:

My manager was really upset, she said they are not supposed to do that, go behind your back.(fra/support)

(February, 2009)

In this instance Lucy sought comfort from the other new academics with whom she shares an office. However, this particular occurrence led to a marked decrease in Lucy's confidence:

it's just that the feeling of being undermined by people... I got some good help from some of my colleagues... the new team... my confidence was maybe 100% when I started and now it is on the edge of 70 or 80%.  
(fra/subject team)

(February, 2009)

For Lucy this illustration made her change her attitude within the work environment, particularly as she felt undermined by colleagues within the subject team and also had the feeling that they were taking advantage of her. To do this Lucy accepted that she needed to be more independent:

becoming more autonomous, so now I can manage my own time, manage my own work and try to be independent instead of always relying on the course leader... I think I became more stronger in the sense... how can I explain? Before I was always nice to the students and nice to everybody but sometimes you feel like people taking advantage of your being nice so I tried to change a bit in my behavior towards either the student or colleagues or people. (fra/identity)

(February, 2009)

Lucy also learnt to say 'no' and in contradiction to some of her previous thoughts stated that the new stance was giving her increased confidence:

it is because [saying yes] you just have nothing to do or was it more to do with the fact that you are new to the environment and trying to make a name for yourself... it helps you knowing people better and people knowing you and having a good positive environment. I had to say yes, today sometimes I just say no I have something else to do and they just say yes that's all right... I am getting more confident. (ref/autonomy/identity)

(February, 2009)

Renewed confidence is also as a result of Lucy's student interactions. It would appear that she resolved some of her classroom based issues, partially with the support from some colleagues and guidance from the teaching course. Perhaps she was gaining a

sense of her own responsibility, whereas in October it was everyone else's fault that she did not have the 'tools' for the job:

Because at the start it was very good and then I started to have some issues with students and some were much worse...now, in a sense getting on with the students getting from them the teaching and being creative with teaching material also with the PGCE that helped us a lot doing different teaching techniques... the positive responses from the students and students interacting and attending... it makes me feel happy, in one sense happy that they can understand my teaching and if they get involved and engaged in the sessions they are motivated, sometimes I feel motivated. (ref/autonomy/student)

(February, 2009)

Having said this, the student interface was still presenting challenges for Lucy:

Trying to achieve a good relationship with students, trying to make them understand my sessions, trying to get through to the students, that is a big challenge for me. (ref/student)

(February, 2009)

Lucy felt that she was coming 'out of the jungle' and starting to establish herself within the academic community. This is reaffirmed by the fact that she had been given some increased responsibilities. Lucy was given a module leadership role. This led to further challenges:

It is really challenging, yes being a module leader and how to prepare, you will be in charge of your team members and you have to prepare courses, seminars, the different activities, so it is very challenging. (ref/career)

(February, 2009)

Considering that Lucy was still having issues of confidence at this stage of her transition it was a little surprising that she had given this role for next academic year. Lucy suggests that:

I think it is because I am very motivated because that is what my line manager says is that I am motivated, and I am very creative. (ref/identity)

(February, 2009)

Reflecting on Lucy's previous relationship with members of her subject community it is questionable whether the established academics would be accepting of any changes that Lucy makes or indeed whether they would view it as a criticism of their previous 'methods':

With the teaching you feel it's routine, the same thing, they would get bored with the same activity on a weekly basis just case studies, case studies, case studies, that's boring for the student and they have been doing it for years and years. But you feel the boredom in the classroom, so that's why I always try to change the case studies or change the way things were done before, just because you feel that the change is needed. (fra/subject team)

(February, 2009)

For Lucy becoming a module leader did give her the opportunity to change the way modules were structured and communicated, as this was one of Lucy's main criticisms when she started in academia. However, lack of structure is still evident:

Still the same, no structure... whatever is given to us there is no structure only some modules you've got some kind of structure, sometimes we struggle. (fra/support)

(February, 2009)

Lucy was starting to assimilate into a community which she perceived as having no structure. As a result she was operating autonomously. Lucy was initially critical of the levels of autonomy within academia, linked to the lack of management. Lucy's view of this was beginning to change as she now believed that it is the norm, although her views could be considered to be conflicting, as the following quotes suggest:

I'm adjusting. I am trying to get used to no structure and try to have my own structure and manage my own time and even if I don't have anything I try to build it from scratch... I think I'm adjusting quite well, I think better than at the beginning. It was a little bit difficult, a new environment, but now I think it's good to be autonomous, independent rather than always depending on people. (ref/autonomy/support)

(February, 2009)

Lucy had previously held the view that academics should be managed more effectively and she cited home working as one example where greater management control was required. Having spent several months within the role, at times working from home, Lucy's view on the need for a level of management control was being reduced:

You need to trust, so it depends how you trust the people... sometimes you can forget yourself and not do things. So if there is no supervision you can get lost in your work or never meet a deadline and always be late or always, I think supervision needs to be there at least 40/50% of the time... not really managerial. (ref/identity/subject team)

(February, 2009)

Lucy's other new colleagues, with whom she shared an office, were still very important to her and she felt that they were establishing a strong collaborative community of practice:

We are getting along very well because we are all new... they are very helpful and are always there if you are struggling. So they are always there to help you and sometimes you used to struggle or cry in the office, they are always there. So we build a nice community together and yes interaction is between us either within the office or outside the office, we're trying to always keep in touch. (ref/subject team)

(February, 2009)

Hearing that Lucy used to cry in the office was a stark reminder of just how bad Lucy thought her initial introduction to academia was. The colleagues and the interactions within her office community of practice helped her through the transition of being isolated within the wider community:

I think it's very important... I know it was a bit difficult for all of us, we were new at the beginning and we did not know what we are doing, we were struggling. So you can try to help each other and someone there always to listen to you. In the beginning it was really frustrating because none of us knew what we were doing. Just given something to do, the same modules we were just left alone. (fra/security/subject team)

(February, 2009)

Lucy felt that she was now starting to integrate within the subject community of practice: she was also able to recognise and understand the tensions within it. That is, the fact that the subject group had two specialist areas (two sub-communities of practice) within one subject group and it was these specialist areas where, for Lucy, the tensions were positioned. Lucy operates within both sub-communities:

I think we are getting on very well... I think it is a good community and I think I am in the right group... not yet fully, I would say integrated to a certain extent... because in the [xx] group I feel more integrated than the [yy] group. I feel the hostilities between the groups. (fra/subject team)

(February, 2009)

Lucy believed that she and her fellow new academics wanted to be catalysts for change within this environment. This was further evidence of Lucy's renewed confidence:

We are trying to act as agents of change, challenging why you are separate units? (ref/subject team)

(February, 2009)

However, Lucy considered that the established academics in one half of the community were resistant to the proposed changes:

I think in the [xx] group they may take my ideas more into operation whereas the [yy] group it would be a bit difficult because there are strong personalities within that group and maybe changes not very easy to take place, it is not really tolerated... I think that for a long time everybody listen to them and follow what they say and feel in the meetings, if you want to say something they always override your ideas.(ref/subject team/support)

(February, 2009)

Whilst this was frustrating for Lucy she was still focused on the future and had confidence that 'things' would eventually change:

Sometimes frustrated, sometimes okay, you just say okay. They already have their rules, so... laugh... I cannot get fully integrated yet I just listen and try see what I can do in the future, not now. (ref/subject team/career)

(February, 2009)

Considering Lucy's troubled start to her transition within academia she still believed that she made the right decision to change her career focus, although she appreciated that she may have lost some industry context. Having said this, Lucy noticed that some of her colleagues maintain their industry links through their own consultancy businesses:

No I never thought I'd made the wrong decision... yes I think that you can lose contact in touch with reality in a sense but it depends err how you act that... the majority (of Lucy's colleagues) have got second roles, they have their own companies or and they have their own consultancy so they are still in contact with the external world as well as academia. (fra/isolation)  
(February, 2009)

Whilst Lucy states that she was 'happy' within her new role she was still not fully convinced that she would remain in academia. When asked about this, she only considered that she was '70% sure' that she had an academic future, even though she was going to start her PhD in September. Lucy's contradictory responses continue:

In September I'm going to be starting my PhD 100% and maybe from now to September I will try and finish my papers. So once I publish some paper I consider myself as an academic. (ref/identity)

(February, 2009)

Meeting with Lucy in November, 2009 (due to illness Lucy was not available for interview in June, 2009) it was evident that her career was progressing: she had been given a new role. However, she was still experiencing some significant issues with the established academics within one of the sub-communities within the subject group:

In the beginning I felt like there is loads of support, anyone to help you and then during the journey sometimes no-one is there and also I found it difficult because when you're young, sometimes people think... some, not all of them...but sometimes some people think you don't know anything and they just try to undermine you and that behaviour I didn't like it sometimes because it makes you cry. (ref/autonomy: com/support)

(November, 2009)

Underpinning this position is the perceived lack of support and direction that Lucy had received throughout her transition. This continues within the new role that she has been given:

Because sometimes people don't have time. For example, with my new role I didn't have the brief of what I'm supposed to do. So it's just 'this is your role and deal with it' in a sense; that you have to do it and I don't have any support in that sense and I have to go around trying to find the right people. They don't give you a pack saying "This is your role. You'll be doing this, but if you go beyond that that's good." So there's no criteria or no protocols for it and you need to understand the different protocols within the university, which I'm not used to and I don't know anything. (eng/responsibilities/support/capacity)

(November, 2009)

Lucy felt that the lack of support was evident throughout all the established members within the subject sub-community and also the subject group line managers:

Like for example colleagues or maybe managers in our subject group sometimes they don't have time... and then sometimes you feel people don't like providing support. They think you are stupid – sorry for the word – but they think you don't know anything what you're doing. So if you keep asking them they just email you back with the longest email ever saying "Well, you have to do this," and "You are new, you don't know what you're doing," and things like that. (ref/support)

(November, 2009)

Lucy particularly cites the established academics as the ones that offered the least support and the ones that demonstrated the worst behavior, as evidenced above. It is

noted that she was not describing the established academics as one homogenous group: she is citing some members of this particular grouping:

They are like 'nearly' all principal lecturers. They've been here for... I don't know, 30 years.

(November, 2009)

The established academics' attitude and behavior was to Lucy unacceptable and at one point almost led to Lucy taking action against one of her colleagues. Lucy cites the example of one established academic.

Negative emails and sometimes when I discussed it with my colleagues in my office – because we are all new in my office... and they say "Well, you have to go to the union and complain because that behaviour is not acceptable – people undermining you first of all and sometimes just saying horrible things." I don't like it in a sense because I'm new. I am new and I need support, I need help. If I don't know something, I don't know it. I'm not a genius, so I need some help.(ref/support)

(November, 2009)

Lucy suggests that this behaviour was continuing with other new academics and referred to an existing member of the team who had left as a result of such behaviour.

Even for the new ones who are coming now, they are behaving the same with them. So it feels like if you are new, I don't know, they see you like you don't know anything. Like one of our colleagues, she left one day. She just sent an email, she was just enquiring "how am I going to run this session? Because the material is not ours...she was receiving the same email as mine. "Oh, you don't know? You're new. Don't criticise my material is not working. You didn't know how to run it?" blah, blah, blah and things like that. So one day she just emailed all our subject group and left. (fra/isolation/subject team)

(November, 2009)

Lucy believed that she started to 'fight back':

I was really shy in the beginning, so I just take it personally and I was crying... We did complain a lot of times, but nothing changed. Still the same... But nowadays I've started replying back. So if someone tried to say something to me negative, I just reply "Justify." Not in a negative way. I'm not rude to people at all. That's my problem – is I'm very nice to people, so sometimes they just make you feel you don't know anything. (eng/assertive)

(November, 2009)

Whilst Lucy liked her subject team leader and felt that she was given some support she did believe that the management did not address the issues created by the established academics. This is typified within the following statement:

I like my manager, she's very good. She helps and each time I go moaning and things like that, she's like "You have to fight for yourself because you are here. No-one will help you. In a sense if someone is not treating you well or is not helping, you need to fight for yourself. (eng/acceptance/support)

(November, 2009)

Based on the above statement it would appear that the management was unable or unwilling to confront the established academics to resolve the issues. This was a problem for Lucy and one that she did not fully understand, as in her former industry role the management would have settled disputes:

One thing I didn't like in that sense – no-one is doing anything... Because the managers they just say "Oh yeah, we know him. That's his behaviour," but you need to tell him "Stop doing that because people are leaving." They're not trying to talk to him and say "Well, you don't do that," because he's experienced so he's got the right in a sense.(ref/support)

(November, 2009)

Lucy considered that the established academics had a perceived authority as a result of their longevity in post, as she stated above. However, she did not agree with it and sought to challenge established practice, although there was resistance to change.

Lucy cites one example of change within module delivery:

They've got the authority... I bet when they started they didn't know what they were doing too because we all go through it. It's a learning cycle where once you learn it's good to share. That's what we want in our subject group because no-one shares anything. We want them to share like any best practice, any activity they use, to tell us "Use this if you want to use it and I can show you how to do it," because that's what we do with the new ones. If somebody finds a video I send it around and sometimes it creates a big discussion. There is resistance. It's difficult to change, but hopefully we'll be able to change it... We keep on giving feedback, but it's not taken forward and the other tutors say "Oh, we've been here for a long time. We tried to introduce that change, it didn't work." (eng/assertive/change)

(November, 2009)

Again Lucy blamed the lack or inability of management and suggested that they, like the established academics, are afraid of change:

I think it's the management. Maybe it would be very good if the manager, for example, take us all together and we just gave feedback and she decides and says "Well, that module, they say it's not working in these things. Can you take it forward and I want to see it in a couple of months?" That would be good, but because we just have to meet with that module leader and tell him everything, he's not taking it forward or she's not taking it forward. So resistance to change there is... I think they're afraid of change in one sense... Because they've been used to doing the same thing. (eng/change)

(November, 2009)

For Lucy the teaching was the area where she had seen the most successful transition and she was now witnessing the rewards of her work:

I had a chance to be creative and use different teaching styles and try to adopt new activities and share it with everybody and they liked it and they incorporated it in this year's teaching... I think the influence is positive because the students, I think, they like attending, they participate. So they are happy in the sessions. (eng/acceptance)

(November, 2009)

The self-assurance gained within her teaching ability and the positive student feedback had led to a renewed confidence to tackle the issues she was facing:

Yeah, I can say I've changed. My teaching I think I feel more confident and I had a lot of support from my PGCE, but also, as I said before, I feel stronger in the sense like I'm no longer shy and if people undermine you and things like that, I start adapting to how people act in the university. (eng/acceptance)

(November, 2009)

Lucy did not feel that she was assimilating within academia, as she did not want to 'become like them' [the established academics]. However, she believed that she was now able to interpret, analyse and adapt to situations better and take on board extra responsibilities, such as a module leadership and a faculty-wide role. It was not lost on Lucy that she was becoming established herself, although there was recognition of hierarchy:

The new role is like being there for students as well as for tutors if they are struggling with some teaching issues and things like that. So I just wanted to introduce new, I don't know, for example, schemes like to help students, just to be there for them... I was always looking for help, always trying to understand things and then people tried to make you feel bad for that because they think you don't know anything... Even if someone is principal lecturer or he's a senior lecturer, we're all the same and we would like to work together in co-operation because we all have the same aim – to help students and teach

students. (eng/assertive/change)

(November, 2009)

Lucy felt more integrated within her communities of practice and recognised that the majority within the community, including the established academics, were becoming more acceptable to change:

I think I'm integrated better than I was in the beginning. I think now I'm integrated 90% because, as I said, each time I've got something new or I would like to share it with them, I do it and they take it on board and they come back to you and want to learn and they want to see how you're doing it. So we are really integrated. There is that support in the majority. (eng/support)

(November, 2009)

Lucy's increased standing within the community received support from her line manager at her appraisal. For Lucy the lack of feedback during the initial period of her tenure created some tensions and uncertainty for her. This continued as other than one appraisal and a couple of teaching observations (a PGCE requirement) Lucy had little feedback. For Lucy regular feedback is essential for new academics:

I got like one feedback from my manager...We had an appraisal and it was positive. It was good in the sense I did participate in different things within the Faculty, went to conferences, always asking for help in training and things like that. So I had a good, positive appraisal and other feedback maybe just from the PGCE when I was observed a couple of times – first one, then a second one. So the second one felt better and I'd been creative and I had better feedback. Other than that still there isn't enough... I think they need feedback like every 3 months or something like that or, I don't know, to have like peer observation where your peer comes to your session just to see how you're doing and they can give you advice. We don't have that in our subject group yet. (eng/established)

(November, 2009)

Lucy also states that whilst she was given a mentor (as a result of PGCE intervention) her mentor was also new to academia and it would have been more beneficial had it been an established academic:

I was given a mentor after that [PGCE]. Yeah, I had a mentor. He was new too. He started the year before me and he was saying to me "Well, I don't know how I'm your mentor. I started a year before you." So I wanted someone like, for example, a principal lecturer who's been here for years and years to give you more support... It would be good if we had like peer reviews. (ref/support)

I think an academic, according to what I'm going through, is to be, I think... to share... Because we're all academics, we're all tutors and it's good if we could share all the best practice and also I think as an academic you need to have some time for doing research and being able to, I don't know, do research within the university, not only within your area if there is any help needed with, for example, knowledge transfer and things like that. It would be good if they help us know what transfer knowledge is because we're not normally from the university environment, so we don't know all that's available for us. (ref/support)

(November, 2009)

Regardless of the issues that Lucy has endured and continues to face within her transitions to academia she was still very happy with her decision to change career paths and was focused on a long term future as an academic:

I'm happy with a few things. Like the negative things, I'm not happy with them, but in the sense of being an academic and a tutor I'm really happy. I was really happy when I started and I'm still that because I like teaching, I like helping and I like, I don't know, sharing... I think the future for me is getting involved in research... I think doing my PhD. (eng/career)

(November, 2009)