Academic Identities and Their Deployment within Tutorials

Susan Harness & Pete Boyd

University of Cumbria

Abstract

Academics develop multiple identities as part of their learning and participation in social and professional communities. These academic identities are a strong influence on practice, including the approach to teaching. The first stage of this study uses a robust phenomenographic interview-based approach to develop a framework for the multiple identities of lecturers in nursing based in ten different UK universities. In a second stage, it then uses analysis of video stimulated recall interviews with the same ten lecturers in nursing based on video of one-to-one student tutorials. The first stage phenomenographic analysis generated a framework of five overlapping identities held by the lecturers in nursing as: clinical nurse practitioner; university teacher; scholar; researcher; and leader. The second stage thematic analysis focused on how the lecturers negotiated and foregrounded these different identities during their tutorials. Overall, the study contributes by providing insight into the influence of academic identities on pedagogy, revealing how the lecturers in nursing negotiated credibility with their students and positioned themselves as university-based professional educators. The study also provides useful insight into the largely hidden practice of the university tutorial, highlighting the relational nature of teaching adults and novice practitioners.

Introduction

Academic identity, a narrative that we maintain about ourselves as 'lecturers' in higher education, has a considerable influence on our relationships and behaviours. Identity formation, becoming an academic, is significant because it is entangled with our developing membership of and contribution to our subject discipline community and networks (Wenger, 1998). Professional identity is dynamic and develops over time, it involves both a person and their context, it consists of multiple sub-identities with possible tensions between them, and it includes the notion of agency with the pursuit of professional development towards an individual's goals (Beijaard, Meijer and Verloop, 2004). A considerable body of research has investigated academic identity but to a large extent has focused on the primacy given to research work and researcher identity within the higher education sector. Much of this work on academic identity has relied on interview or survey data and a significant amount has been generic, cutting across a range of different academic tribes. Most significantly, this research has suggested a significant influence of academic identity on approaches to teaching but it has not investigated it. There is an important gap in our understanding of how academic identity, within a particular academic tribe, might influence teaching within that subject discipline or professional field.

Our study involves two stages, first using interviews and a phenomenographic analysis to establish the academic identities of ten lecturers in nursing in ten different universities within England and Scotland, but all belonging to the same academic tribe, in this case the professional field of nursing. Second, using thematic analysis of video stimulated recall interviews to investigate how the same ten lecturers in nursing, deploy those academic identities when teaching students, within the context of a one-to-one tutorial session. The purpose of the study is to better understand how academic identities influence teaching. A particular strength of the study is that it tackles academic identities and then their deployment in teaching with the same sample of ten lecturers in nursing. The study contributes new understanding of academic identity within the field of nursing higher

education but also evidence of how academic identity influences teaching. Given the scarcity of research on tutorials, the study also provides new insight into this element of teaching in higher education.

The professional field of nursing is a relative newcomer to higher education, but it is interesting to investigate the academic identity and teaching of lecturers in nursing because they have close links to employers in addition to managing the usual expectations for research activity in the sector.

The research questions are associated with the two sequential stages of the investigation:

> What variation in academic identities, conceptions of *being* a 'lecturer' in higher education, are held by lecturers in nursing based in a range of UK university contexts?

> How are these academic identities negotiated and foregrounded by lecturers in nursing during a one-to-one tutorial with one of their student nurses?

Three areas of inter-connected literature relevant to the study are considered next: identify formation; identity and teaching; and the university tutorial.

Identity Formation

Multiple identities are formed, maintained, and changed over time as an 'agent' creating or discovering one's own identity through a biographical and reflexive process (Giddens, 1991; Côte and Levine, 2002; Waterman, 1984). These multiple identities take shape over time and are related to lifelong learning (Erikson, 1950; Heron, 1992; Alheit, 1992; 2009). In addition to professional or role identities an individual's multiple identities include social identities, for example as a woman, and unique person characteristics, such as being conscientious (Stets and Serpe, 2013; Stets and Burke, 2014). The lecturers within this study, and the majority of UK lecturers in nursing, have moved from clinical roles, mainly within the UK National Health Service, to become lecturers in higher education. Identity may be seen as 'fluid' (Bauman, 2000) and lecturers in nursing are subject to frequent changes in policy and to the influence of differences between organisational cultures in the higher education sector and in the health sector. Their boundary-crossing between university and clinical settings requires them to negotiate different identities and membership of different groups of academics and of nurses (Chen *et al.,* 2008; Bamberg, 2004 and Kerpelman *et al.,* 1997). This concept of negotiation recognises that as human beings, lecturers in nursing may seek to present themselves to others in the 'best possible light' (Schlenker & Weigold, 1992, p.144) and may aim to present an 'ideal self' (Hamachek, 1992). Clance and Imes (1978) developed a concept of *Imposter Phenomenon, to* describe women who were high achievers, yet through their personal behaviours and traits struggled to internalise their success (Sakulku & Alexander, 2011; Cowman & Ferrari, 2002: Thompson, *et al., 2*000). Their complex boundary-crossing workplace setting might be expected to weaken the claims to expertise of lecturers in nursing.

The literature reveals a long-standing debate of the tensions of assuming a dualistic identity between 'nurse' and 'teacher' (Adams, 2011; Stronach *et al.,* 2002) and within which camp, lecturers in nursing should place a foot (Andrew, 2012; Shreeve, 2010). Expert nurses in the NHS moving to new posts as novice lecturers in higher education may initially seek to emphasise their clinical credibility to student nurses by maintaining their primary identity as a clinical nurse (Boyd & Lawley, 2009; Andrews & Roberts, 2003; Neary, 2000). Meanwhile, pressure to develop researcher identities and activity, in the higher education sector as well as locally within their institutional context, may create considerable tensions influencing the identities formation of these lecturers (Andrew & Robb, 2011; Boyd & Smith, 2016). Some university departments of nursing have only limited research activity (Andrew et al., 2009 p.607) and many lecturers in nursing, appointed for their clinical

expertise, may lack confidence in this area (Thompson, 2009 p.606). Departments of nursing focus to varying degrees on strengthening the links between research activity, university teaching, and supporting development of evidence-based clinical practice in their partnership healthcare employer organisations (Boyd, 2010). In the UK, there is a pressure on lecturers in nursing to remain registered with the professional body (NMC, 2018) including demonstrating clinical currency. This issue of clinical currency has been contested (Barrett, 2007; Boyd and Lawley, 2009). Some previous studies are located in case study departments, which is useful because of the shared workplace context (for example Boyd & Lawley, 2009), but this approach is also limited in scope because of the huge difference between research intensive and teaching-led universities as workplaces. Other studies have taken a UK level approach, but relied on survey methods (for example Boyd & Smith, 2016) and these arguably lack the rich data required to give meaningful insight into multiple identities. These previous studies also depend on lecturer self-report data in relation to the influence of identities formation on teaching practice and this is a significant weakness.

Identity and Teaching

Much of the research on teacher identity has been with schoolteachers. That work has argued for a dynamic view of teacher identity and has linked it to agency and self-efficacy (Day et al., 2006). However, in their identity formation schoolteachers do not experience the tension within higher education settings caused by the primacy of research work and researcher identity. A key issue is that even combining research on schoolteachers with the research on academic identity, there are few studies that make a strong link between identity and pedagogy. This section focuses on selected studies that do try to make this link and inform the design of our study which uses two stages of investigation with the same sample of academics in order to strongly connect identity and pedagogy.

An important strand of research within higher education has focused on the conceptions of teaching held by academics (Kember, 1997). In an interview based phenomenographic study, with 28 academics across a range of subjects within a research-intensive university in Australia, Akerlind identified four conceptions of teaching in a hierarchical outcome space. The four conceptions focused on: teacher transmission; teacher-student relations; student engagement; and student learning (2004). By hierarchical outcomes space we mean that all of the conceptions included the lowest focus of transmission and the highest conception, focused on student learning, included all of the lower three. Adding to this, Akerlind showed that the study of teaching as a separate academic activity was not helpful because of the benefits of teaching, for example in relation to research activity, that were highlighted by the academics in the study. It is reasonable to argue that the conception of teaching adopted or foregrounded by an academic is about identity, the conception of self in relation to others (Trowler and Cooper, 2002: 225). Three selected studies will now help to show how teaching as an academic is strongly influenced by identity through the journey of becoming a teacher, through the practical giving of a lecture, and through a broader ongoing struggle to develop a pedagogy for higher education.

This issue of conceptions of teaching is connected to the process of becoming a teacher. In her study of eight academics in a German university, Caroline Trautwein identified three phases of identity formation through which they were seen as shifting from a teaching-centred towards a learning-centred approach (2018). In the final phase the academics developed research-informed teaching practice. However, the eight academics in her study came from a wide range of subject disciplines who were sufficiently motivated to be voluntarily enrolled on a formal taught programme focused on teaching in higher education. The study did however demonstrate the significance of identify formation for teachers in higher education in relation to their developing pedagogy.

It is helpful when discussing abstract concepts such as identities to connect this to practical activity such as an academic giving a lecture. In a study of the lecture, within an arts and humanities higher education context, David McInnes focuses on how the lecturer enacts their academic identities through the discourse of a lecture (2013). He is informed by an academic literacies approach, which acknowledges the power struggle involved in learning and in socialisation of students into the subject discipline (Northedge, 2003). McInnes argues that the lecturer acts as a model and a guide for students, by deploying academic identities, in the recontextualization of knowledge between the subject discipline and everyday practical knowledge (Bernstein, 2003).

Influenced by their developing conceptions of teaching and embedded within their subject discipline, an academic who teaches is necessarily, although perhaps often at the level of tacit knowledge, developing a broader pedagogy. In a reflective self-study, Paul Sutton identifies the tensions within his professional identity created by being an academic with ambitions to be part of transformative education within an increasingly marketized higher education system (2015). He claims to resolve these tensions though his pedagogy of 'critical hope' which plays out in the small spaces of praxis available within his higher education workplace setting.

These selected studies have attempted to move beyond study of academic identities and tried to make a strong connection to pedagogy and the practice of teaching. That is the purpose of our study but within the teaching context of the university tutorial.

The University Tutorial

A one-to-one tutorial is a well-established opportunity for lecturers to support individual student learning and is a useful strategy for high-quality higher education (Price, 2007; Duers & Brown, 2009; Entwistle, 2009). If the student has opportunities to express their understanding during the tutorial, then it becomes a formative assessment activity and the tutor may provide feedback to support student learning (Anderson (2005). In a previous study of tutorials within a nursing degree programme, the student nurses valued supervision, feedback, and guidance, especially on academic writing (Nathan, 2015). Conversely, tutors may use the tutorial to give an individual lecture, with less impact on learning (Biggs, 2003; Leung & Kember, 2003; Rocca; 2010). A qualitative study of 12 students, focused on their level of engagement, identified a contrast in learning within tutorials between students adopting deep and surface approaches to learning (Herrman, 2014). Other studies have focused on the development of dialogue (Stewart, 2007; Keesing-Styles, 2003), development of skills (Wisker et al., 2001) and tutor feedback to inform future submissions (Higgins et al., 2001). One-to-one tutorials may also be investigated in terms of relationship-building and building trust (Akinsanya, 1992; Malik, 2000; Freire, 2007; Price, 2003) and in relation to encouraging learning (Chi *et al.,* 2008). The concept of higher education as dialogue appears to have particular resonance to understanding of pedagogy within the university tutorial (Laurillard, 2013).

A dialogic teaching approach in higher education is underpinned by social constructivist learning theory as developed by Vygotsky, that learning occurs on two levels, first an inter-psychological level through interaction with others and then on an intra-psychological level of individual learning (Wertsch, 2008; Laurillard, 2013). Dialogic teaching requires careful design of tutor questioning and student learning tasks to promote exploratory talk and collaborative problem-solving (Alexander, 2017; Simpson, 2016). Dialogic teaching deliberately and explicitly supports students in engaging with the discourse of the subject discipline (Northedge, 2003). Dialogic teaching creates multiple opportunities for low stakes formative assessment, where students receive and give feedback on the academic standard of exemplar or draft work (Sambell, McDowell & Montgomery, 2013). These drive learning and helps students to develop 'evaluative judgment' within the subject discipline which is a key aspect of joining the learning community (Tai et al., 2018). This issue of developing

evaluative judgment across the community so that tutors and students might work towards shared academic standards raises the issue of power. Dialogue requires at least the ambition to seek consensus within an equitable community so that power differentials, for example between the tutor and the student, need to be at least partially overcome (Richards & Richards, 2013). One suggestion for achieving a more equitable conversation is to 'lend' a key concept to the students and send them on an 'excursion' into the field by designing a suitably open-ended problem-solving activity (Northedge, 2003; Ricards & Richards, 2013). Dialogic teaching encourages students' metacognitive thinking and development as self-regulated learners, which supports their development of learner dispositions related to lifelong learning for citizenship and employability (Laurillard, 2002).

Conceptions of the 'Oxford tutorial', which is an integral part of undergraduate programmes at that university, has been investigated using a phenomenographic approach (Ashwin, 2005). Analysis of tutor's conceptions of tutorials produced four nested categories (2006):

> *1. Tutorials as a place where tutors help students to develop an understanding of concepts*
> *2. Tutorials as a place where students see how to approach their discipline*
> *3. Tutorials as a place where evidence is critically discussed*
> *4. Tutorials as a place where new positions on the topic are developed and refined.*

This study, despite being within a specific and privileged cultural context, shows how variation in student and tutor conceptions of the 'tutorial' may have a significant impact on their effectiveness for student learning.

Overall, our research-informed understanding of the tutorial in higher education is constrained due to the limited body of research and its dependence on tutor interview data. The current study develops further insight into the pedagogy of higher education by considering, using analysis of video and video stimulated recall interviews, how lecturers in nursing foreground by their multiple identities during a face to face, one to one, tutorial.

Methodology Stage 1

In stage one of the study, a phenomenographic approach is used to investigate the variation in conceptions held by participants of being a university lecturer in nursing. Conceptions are typically the unit of description in a phenomenographic approach which argues that individuals experience the world differently and are therefore partial. A conception is a way of seeing or understanding something, the meaning of something to a person and a phenomenographic approach investigates their variation (Johansson, Marton & Svensson, 1985). The core premise of this study is that there are multiple and varied descriptions of how lecturers in nursing identify themselves, however, ultimately, these identities are finite, and it is possible to analyse variation within them (Marton, 1981; Säljö, 1997). In this study, the phenomenographic analysis generated a framework of five identities of lecturers in nursing and positioned these in relation to each other within an 'outcome space'.

Within a phenomenographic approach, it is important for the sample to include participants who have 'different lifeworlds and experiences of the phenomenon' (Ashworth & Lucas, 2000 p. 302). The ten participants in this study included variation in length of clinical experience as a nurse (8 years to 35 years), in length of experience as a lecturer in nursing (3 years to 22 years), and in age (35 to 58 years old). The variation in highest academic qualification of the lecturers (2 PhD, 6 MSc, 2 BSc) reflects the nature of recruitment to academic posts in a health professional field. A limitation of the study sample includes that all of the lecturer participants were female whereas in the UK 11% of clinical nurses are male (NHS, 2019). All data generation took place at the participant's normal workplace within their university.

The interviewer adopted an *intentional-expressive* approach (Anderberg, 2000, p.100) which is a systematic interview strategy for elucidating and confirming the conceptual meanings in the expressions that the lecturers in nursing made. Interviewees are first asked open-ended questions regarding the phenomenon of interest. Brief, follow-up questions are then asked to encourage interviewees to reflect on the conceptual meanings of the terms or phrases in the expressions that they have used. Essentially, in phenomenographic interviews, the phenomenon of interest is explored jointly between the interviewer and interviewee (Marton, 1986; 1994).

In analysing the phenomenographic interview data, seven steps were used iteratively: familiarisation by reading and re-reading transcripts; condensation by identifying meaning and coding of chunks of text; comparison to establish similarities and differences; grouping coded chunks into categories; articulating the essential meaning of each category; labelling and refining the expression of each category; contrasting each category to establish what they mean and what they do not comprise (Dahlgren, et al., 1991). The data from initial semi-structured interviews with ten university lecturers in nursing from across England and Scotland were pooled. A qualitative analysis approach to coding and refining conceptions generated from the data was then used. The process of developing varying conceptions from within the pool of data requires care (Mishler, 1991; Alsop & Tompsett, 2006, p. 242; Hammersley, 2003; Säljö, 1988; Entwistle, 1997). Approaches to inter-rater reliability, checking by using independent analysis of the same data by two separate researchers, were applied (Ottosson, 1987; Booth, 1992).

Methodology Stage 2

In stage 2 of the study each participant lecturer, with informed consent by one of their nursing students, captured a video of a one-to-one tutorial and the audio element was transcribed. In a second visit to each participant lecturer, a video stimulated recall and reflection interview was completed, recorded, and subsequently transcribed. This involved the participants watching key sections of the video of their tutorial and commenting as well as responding to prompt questions from the interviewer. This video stimulated recall and reflection interview generates rich data (Haw & Hadfield, 2011; Dempsey, 2010; Theobald, 2008; Lyle, 2003; Hoffman, 2003; Macarland, 1984; O'Brien, 1993 & Calderhead, 1981). This method provided a real-life context for the participant to retrospectively think aloud to explain and clarify their practice, but with additional prompt questions from the interviewer related to their foregrounding of different identities.

The schedule for the video stimulated recall and reflection interviews began with a warm-up descriptive question: what was the purpose of this tutorial and how does it fit within the student's programme? And then the main question focusing on recall prompted by sections of the video: Referring to the video and choosing key sections, can you tell me about your identity here? And a follow-up question focusing on reflection: To what extent does this tutorial reveal your identity? By this I mean, how does this help to explain who you are? In addition to these main questions, the interviewer used neutral prompts such as 'tell me more about that'.

The video recall interview transcripts were analysed using a thematic analysis approach (Braun & Clarke, 2006) with open coding but also application to thematic coding of the framework for identities developing during stage 1. This formed a 'hybrid' approach to thematic analysis (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006; Braun & Clarke, 2019). The video of each tutorial was watched and matching transcripts from the video stimulated recall interview for each of the ten lecturers in nursing were read and re-read. Initial open coding of segments was used to begin the analysis through inductive reasoning and to consider the possible development of themes. Coding of interview transcripts was then also used based on deductive reasoning by applying as themes the five identities from the

framework developed in stage 1 of the study. Segments were coded where the tutor appeared to be foregrounding an identity from the framework. Throughout the analysis, a reflexive approach was adopted to avoid imposing the themes from the framework too clumsily to segments of text data and to enable through open coding possible further development or nuances to the identities set out within the framework or to the outcome space developed in stage 1 of the study.

Ethics and Position

Lecturers in nursing were provided with an outline of the study and details of the data generation before being invited to participate in the study. A key ethical risk of the study is to the professional reputation of the lecturers and this was controlled by anonymisation of the transcribed interview data and confidentiality of the identity and university workplace of the participants. The audio recordings of interviews and the video of the tutorials were kept secure and confidential to the research team and deleted after completion of the analysis. The students were also considered to be participants and gave informed consent to being part of the tutorial video. The interviewer was a member of the same academic tribe as the participants, a lecturer in nursing, and this position required her to work to maintain a detached stance as far as possible during data generation and analysis (Sandberg 2005; Ashworth & Lucas, 2007). However, this partially 'insider' position provided access to participants and allowed interview data generation without the participant having to explain every specialist term, content knowledge, or practical aspects of professional education in nursing. The study was approved through the formal ethical clearance process of a university in the UK.

The findings of the study are now presented in two sections, the first stage phenomenographic analysis presents the development of a framework of academic identities. The second stage thematic analysis, including the application of the academic identities framework, shows how different identities were foregrounded by the lecturers in nursing during one to one tutorials with student nurses.

Stage 1 Findings: A Framework of Multiple Identities

The phenomenographic analysis generated five conceptions of being a lecturer in nursing developed as distinctive but inter-related multiple identities which were: identity as clinical nurse; identity as university teacher; identity as scholar; identity as researcher; and identity as leader. The generation of these conceptions is presented in this section with illustrative quotations to make the interpretation of data transparent. It is important to note that individual lecturers will hold more than one conception and the complexity of their academic identities is within the overlapping and tensions between them.

Conception 1: Identity as clinical nurse

This conception of being a lecturer in nursing focuses on identity as a clinical nurse. This means identifying as a clinical expert nurse who is reflecting on and sharing their clinical knowledge and professional experiences with students. Within the analysis this conception was strongly and at times passionately presented by participants:

> *Nursing runs through you like the words in a stick of rock and that's how it is; it's the core. nursing is at my very core.*

The data related to this conception resonates with the idea of 'ontological security' and a core identity (Giddens, 1991, p.47). The participants show awareness of the irony of strongly identifying as a clinical nurse when they may not have been in clinical practice for many years:

> *Maybe deep down I still see myself as a nurse rather than as a lecturer.*

In holding on to their identity as a clinical nurse, the participants reveal the influence of their professional regulatory body, the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC). In line with The Code (NMC,

2018) they are required to re-validate every three years and pay a substantial registration fee. However, beyond registration requirements the participants also display strong emotional responses and pride in being a nurse:

> *…very important because the nursing part is probably the bit I'm proudest of. I'm proud to be a nurse.*

These responses correlate with how Giddens (1991) defines identity around a person reflecting on their biography that contributes to their concept of self. The lecturers argue that their nurse values and behaviour around caring and reassurance are reconstructed in their support for students:

> *…in nursing you do a lot of saying 'you're doing fine; you're looking after all this fine; you're ok; do more of the same. You're doing great'………I think that's what I do with the students…*

Participants are struggling to let go of their previous nursing identity and there is an element of modelling how to be a nurse:

> *I want my students to be really good Nurses. Second to none Nurses really and to do that you have to act as a good role model…*

In a very direct way, and as indicated by previous research, the lecturers in nursing appear to be seeking credibility as a clinical nurse when working with student nurses:

> *I always introduce myself as a Nurse and I usually give them that very brief synopsis of what I've done in my career so that they can actually see that I do know.*

In summary, the conception of being a 'clinical nurse' as a core identity is powerfully represented across the data set.

Conception 2: Identity as university teacher

Within the data set lecturers in nursing expressed the conception of being a 'teacher' in higher education. They see themselves as using their expert knowledge of nursing to teach student teachers:

> *I think I'm a really good teacher. I like teaching and I kind of try to break things down so that people understand it.*

The participants reflect positively on identifying themselves as a teacher, with a genuine love of the role that supports students to progress and succeed in their academic abilities. In addition to developing students' knowledge and understanding they also act as a role model to communicate values and behaviours:

> *What I value about teaching is that opportunity to enable the students to have the principles and the positivity and the enthusiasm and the commitment to District Nursing that I would have liked all the District Nurses to have.*

This identity as a university teacher involves listening and interpreting what students are discussing from clinical practice, then filtering key topics that can be related to theory:

> *A lot of my teaching involves listening to them and hearing their stories about what we're talking about and helping them to take the theory and fit it into the reality. That's the best bit.*

The participants strongly identify as a teacher:

> *I think I really identify as a teacher I think that's the way I think now more and I'm quite comfortable in that…..*

In summary the conception of being a 'university teacher' is an important identity revealed within the data set.

Conception 3: Identity as scholar

The analysis revealed that to varying degrees some lecturers in nursing have moved on from identifying themselves as a teacher and are involved in supporting students to become scholarly, through improving their critical engagement with theory and research and development of academic thinking and writing. The identity as 'scholar' is distinctive from being a teacher in higher education and being a researcher. Participants regarded formation of identity as a 'scholar' as tentative progression beyond 'teacher' and associated it with identifying less as a clinical nurse:

> *I'm probably becoming more an academic; more academic and less Nurse because I'm not nursing anymore, and I've probably lost that touch.*

Some participants are more confident and assertive of how they identify as an academic scholar:

> *I understand academic things and I think in an academic way……in my day to day practice what I try to do is to help other people to understand academic things…….*

The data set includes reference to the widespread metaphor of a 'theory-practice gap' so that participants use 'theory' in a very general way but connect it to academic values and behaviours:

> *I think the academics are the ones who are really cognitively engaged in theory all the time and that's me, it's my kind of definition of an academic and I suppose it goes back to how I thought academics should be in the university…*

In summary, the conception of being a lecturer in nursing as 'scholar' reveals the sense of moving beyond nursing and teaching to become more engaged in academia.

Conception 4: Identity as researcher

The conception of being a lecturer in nursing identifying as a 'researcher' is associated in the data with research activity, completing a doctorate, contributing to knowledge in the field and informing teaching through research engagement. The data reveals an acknowledgement of the higher education maxim 'publish or perish':

> *I'm engaged in teaching but also very much engaged in scholarly activity. For me, scholarly activity is about publications. It might also be about research.*

This quotation highlights a distinction that is made by participants between scholarship and research. The focus on critical engagement with research is highlighted by some lecturers in their teaching:

> *…I make a conscious effort when I'm teaching, if I use a piece of research, I will tell the students about the research… I will say 'you know this was a study where they did it in America…interviewed 20 district nurses…and they found this. Now what do you think?*

The analysis shows recognition of the doctorate as a key requirement for credibility as a researcher within the sector:

> *I feel that I'm changing and as I say I've just got my Doctorate, which is significant in our line of work…*

The issue of workload and work-life balance arises in relation to researcher identity:

> *I was so busy doing teaching and learning I didn't have time for scholarly activity, whereas now I feel like I'm doing so much scholarly activity that I don't have time for teaching and*

> *learning so it feels quite stressful; it feels…… I want to say manageable - it doesn't really feel manageable to be honest, but I do feel quite positive about it.*

For some of the lecturers, becoming a researcher creates a new source of credibility which lecturers realise can replace the foregrounding of clinical nurse identity. However, the analysis shows that despite developing a 'researcher' identity these lecturers in nursing are still strongly focused on improving clinical practice.

Conception 5: Identity as leader

This conception of being a lecturer in nursing involves identity formation as an academic 'leader' with comprehensive knowledge and skills of the wider agenda within the university and higher education. The term academic leader is used to mean that lecturers in nursing are working at a senior level, for example in management roles linked to quality within the institution or advising on and chairing national groups within nursing and education. The analysis highlighted attempts to develop transformational leadership by engaging and developing others:

> *I do feel that part of my role is about…..well it's about demonstrating academic leadership…..I do feel it's my duty to develop others. I actually feel that I am in the position of leadership now that I can do that. So, I do actively look for ways I can bring folk with me…*

In some cases, the contribution to leadership is not seen as confined to the university but also extends into partnership organisations:

> *I'm able to facilitate the development of colleagues in here but also colleagues in practice.*

In summary, this conception of being a lecturer in nursing as 'leader' demonstrates identity formation and assertiveness as an expert contributing to leadership. There is a claim to a range of comprehensive knowledge and experience and being a source of expertise to support students and colleagues within and external to the university.

Multiple Identities

A final stage of the stage 1 phenomenographic analysis, is to position the conceptions of the phenomena into an 'outcome space'. The outcome space is a way to capture the features of the phenomenon of nurse educator academic identity (Bruce, 1997; Åkerlind, 2005a). The outcome space in this study is partially hierarchical because identity as a nurse is core and identity as a university teacher was consistent. The clinical nurse and university teacher identities overlap each other but also overlap with optional identity pathways of scholar, researcher and leader. The necessarily reductive nature of the five named identities is balanced by the complexity of multiple identities within the overlaps between them. Some, but not all, of the participants will experience all five of the academic identities of a lecturer in nursing to varying degrees and with variation over time and context. The overlapping identities help to capture the boundary-crossing work of the nurse lecturers between the university and the clinical workplace settings they visit and in which their student nurses are also learning. The lecturers in nursing experience tensions between their identities for example between being a clinical nurse and being a scholar and between being a leader (an education manager) and being a researcher.

It is important to note that an additional dimension labelled 'imposter' arose from the phenomenographic analysis indicating that academic identities of participants were generally tentative:

> *… I'm quite shy about my identity… I never say, 'oh I'm a Nurse Lecturer'. I will say 'I'm a Nurse' sometimes. So, I will sometimes say I'm a nurse but most of the time I say 'oh I work at the University' and I don't give anything else away.* **(Phenomenographic interview)**

These types of comments were particularly expressed in relation to academic scholar and researcher identities, as well as to teacher and academic leader, suggesting a feeling of tension and an element of being an imposter within the higher education field.

We have now established, through the stage 1 phenomenographic analysis, a framework for the academic identities of lecturers in nursing. The stage 2 thematic analysis is now presented, comprising analysis of the tutorial video stimulated recall interviews with each lecturer. The focus is on how the five academic identities are deployed by the lecturers during one-to-one tutorials with student nurses.

Stage 2 Findings: Lecturer identities deployed in tutorials

This second stage of analysis applies the phenomenographic outcome space from stage one as a framework with its five identities of the lecturers in nursing, so including the overlapping multiple identities of: Clinical Nurse; University Teacher; Scholar; Researcher; and Leader. This section presents the analysis mainly by using illustrative matched pairs of quotations taken from the transcribed video of each tutorial and the accompanying recall interview transcript. The first quotation is from the transcript of the video and captures a moment within the tutorial identified by the lecturer or by the interviewer as worthy of comment. The second quotation is from the recall interview and is the response of the lecturer to that selected video clip moment. Within this thematic analysis, one significant theme labelled 'boundary-crossing' was generated through inductive reasoning and then the foregrounding of the five identities in the framework from stage 1 analysis formed the remaining themes.

Boundary-Crossing

The theme of boundary-crossing was generated through inductive reasoning and coding around the tensions between the value placed on different types of knowledge and skills, primarily between academic and clinical, as the practitioner crosses the boundary between the university and clinical settings. It revealed the tension between the 'clinical nurse' and the 'scholar' identities that exist for the lecturers within the framework and the phenomenographic outcome space.

In many instances the identity of the participant lecturer appears to be very much practice-orientated, identifying as a clinical practitioner, as a nurse, and she feels responsible as a gatekeeper controlling students entering into the profession:

> **Tutorial video extract:** *And we are all the same. Because you are involved, you are invested in this; it's important, but because you're involved and you're invested, I'm involved and invested. We want to make a good health visitor out of you.*

> **Recall interview lecturer comment**: *I want to make sure that the students gets a lot out of the course and that they are brilliant health visitors… it's a thing they have to pass for the profession to maintain its standing in society… even if I think someone is a really terrible practitioner if they pass their academic work they've passed their academic work. I feel a bit frustrated that I can't say I don't think they'll be good in practice…*

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This quotation illustrates the tension caused within the academic university setting by placing high value on clinical practice knowledge and skills, and perhaps values. Alternatively, within the theme of boundary-crossing, an element of flagging up scholarship was apparent, for example by letting students know that the lecturer had gained higher qualifications beyond their first degree. This illustrates the need felt by the lecturers to establish credibility as a scholar to underpin their position as tutor within the university. This theme of boundary-crossing with its tensions around the value of different forms of knowledge was threaded throughout the analysis of the tutorial videos and stimulated recall interviews.

Foregrounding Identity as 'Clinical Nurse'

Not surprisingly, given the emphasis on identity as a clinical nurse within the phenomenographic analysis, this was also the identity strongly foregrounded within the video tutorials:

> **Tutorial video extract**: *There's something about a nurse who loves wound care because actually it's a fascination for some and I used to love it when… we'd go to a messy leg ulcer and we got it all cleaned up and it would be brilliant and it's such a feeling of achievement to do it… OK so my job here is just to check your assignment as you know and make sure everything is OK…*

> **Recall interview lecturer comment**: *Yeah. My identity as a nurse is fundamental. It's part of my fabric and what makes me who I am; what makes me tick. I think it makes you feel on a very simplistic level, it makes you feel warm inside and I'm trying to think why. I'm trying to intellectualise that and I'm struggling. I suppose I still think I'm in nursing and yet I know I have this job in the university…..it is so difficult to get my head around it sometimes…*

The participant is sharing their experiences within clinical practice, foregrounding their identity as a nurse then relating that to their teaching role. Often, in telling stories from clinical practice, the lecturers would briefly mention a clinical experience, or tell an anecdote, or provide a tip for how to complete a tricky clinical procedure. This kind of quotation was interpreted as helping the lecturer in nursing to (re)establish some clinical credibility despite their university-based role.

Foregrounding Identity as 'University Teacher'

Identity as a university teacher is also strongly foregrounded by the lecturers but it is also most frequently entangled with identity as a nurse:

> **Tutorial video extract:** *I was lucky in my training because I did theatre at [two hospitals] but I was fascinated because it was accidents, it was all emergencies that came in. There was no elective surgery. It was brilliant… So, you've downloaded this from the NMC to use in your assignment?*

> **Recall interview lecturer comment**: *It's confusing. It's totally confusing. I have a confused identity, but it's all mashed up and that's what – it is, it's all mashed up, you know. Nursing is very important to me, and yet I love this role teaching students…*

The lecturers in nursing expressed teaching as helping students to engage with academic work but also making that academic work relevant to their development as clinical practitioners:

> **Tutorial video extract:** *Your next chapters then are about findings. No that's fine, so you could talk a little bit about… themes that emerged.*

> **Recall interview lecturer comment**: *I understand academic things and I think in an academic way, but I think in my day-to-day practice what I try to do is to help other people to understand academic things and to apply academic things…*

These kinds of quotations were interpreted as showing how the dominant identity as nurse influences identification as teacher.

Foregrounding Identity as 'Scholar'

Some incidents within the video tutorials showed the lecturers positioning themselves as a scholar when advising students about academic genre to guide their thinking and writing. Sometimes the lecturer referred to their own scholarly work to illustrate that they too were adopting these genres and experiencing the challenges of academic writing, including critical feedback:

> **Tutorial video extract:** *It's exactly what you should be doing, and you know it's easier than you think, so when I wrote a chapter in a book…*

> **Recall interview lecturer comment**: *This student was interested in publishing her assignment which she got a good mark for. I was trying to encourage her, by saying I had written a chapter recently.*

Although this example may seem reasonable, as a kind of informal aside, nonetheless this kind of comment within tutorials was interpreted as at least in part that the lecturers were seeking to establish credibility with students within the field of higher education.

Foregrounding Identity as 'Researcher'

The following quotations are extracted from the tutorial with the student that demonstrates the participant has foregrounded their identity as a researcher in the field:

> **Tutorial video extract:** *In my research, I found that… nurses were… and that really surprised me…it challenged my thinking, and this is where I think you are finding out in your team…*

> **Recall interview lecturer comment**: *I was trying to link in with what the student was telling me about the team that they were in and that my research findings had found a pattern of…*

The participant has conveyed to the students that they have engaged successfully with research and that their research is informing their teaching. This was interpreted as demonstrating credibility to the student as a researcher as part of being an academic.

Foregrounding Identity as 'Leader'

The lecturers demonstrate credibility to the student and themselves by mentioning their former leadership roles in clinical practice and even their current or former leadership roles, such as programme leader, within the university:

> **Tutorial video extract:** *Remember we were talking… about leadership theory… when I was in charge of a District Nursing team… but it's just something to think about, how we resolve conflict…*

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> **Recall interview lecturer comment**: *This is where I was teaching leadership theory last week and I suppose …I was reflecting when I was a leader of a team of nurses… I was giving the student real examples of potential problems…*

Although this example is linked directly to teaching about leadership, this foregrounding of their contribution to leadership, in the university but also from previous clinical practice roles, is interpreted to some extent as the lecturers shoring up their credibility with the student.

Overall, the analysis of the video stimulated recall interview data reveals how the lecturers in nursing are foregrounding different identities within the conversation.

Discussion

The stage 1 phenomenographic analysis provides robust evidence of lecturers in nursing across a range of institutional higher education settings maintaining and renegotiating multiple identities as clinical nurse, university teacher, scholar, researcher, and leader. Within this, being a 'nurse' is a 'core identity' and as part of this, credibility as a clinical nurse is particularly significant in maintaining credibility with students (Giddens, 1991). Identifying strongly as a nurse aligns with the significance of discipline found in previous influential studies (Becher & Trowler, 2001). Identification as clinical nurse practitioner appears to be resilient, even after considerable years in academic roles where they are clearly not actually a practicing nurse, and this shows how the lecturers are able to edit their life story towards their preferred identity (Alheit, 2009). Due to their boundary-crossing role the lecturers in nursing negotiate their multiple identity 'trajectories' in pursuing membership of communities within both university and clinical settings (Wenger, 1998: 149). The boundary-crossing tensions linked to the value of different types of knowledge, as well as the sense of imposter syndrome within academic settings, and the seeking of credibility within both academic and clinical settings, reflect the findings of previous studies of nurse educators (Boyd & Lawley, 2009; Gillespie & McFetridge, 2006) and aligns with Goffman's seminal thinking on presentation of self within different contexts (1951). A significant finding of our study was the identity of 'scholar' which was not highlighted as a distinctive identity in previous research (Andrew, 2012; Findlow, 2012). As the lecturers in nursing developed as university teachers, their confidence and learning through scholarship created this additional identity, which is closely related to writing for publication. The outcome space attempts to capture the complexity of the multiple identities of these lecturers in nursing which occurs in the overlap and tensions between their multiple identities and in the nuances of clinical nurse, university teacher, scholar, researcher and leader identities. The analysis shows that a tempting pathway for these lecturers, building on their previous experience in clinical settings, is to develop a university teacher identity underpinned by scholarship, then move into management roles and build identity as a leader. The scholar and researcher pathway appears the most challenging to these academics. This aligns with previous studies that showed how engagement with research work and researcher identities may be a necessary but temporary diversion in the professional development pathway of some university-based nurse educators (Boyd & Smith, 2016). An implication of our findings is that institutional culture and policy should take care to place high value on advanced scholarship and on identity as scholar, as well as on research and identity as researcher. This might be particularly important in a professional field, where identity formation has been so strongly developed within a previous clinical career.

The stage 2 analysis, based on video of one-to-one face to face tutorials, provides new insight into the significance of identities within the pedagogy of tutorials. The analysis reveals the pedagogy of

lecturers in nursing in relation to their academic identities, in line with Goffman's notion of *impression regulation* to display or conceal an aspect of their identity '*in front of the audience'*, in this case students (1961: 189). The foregrounding of academic identities by the lecturers shows their significance in developing higher education as dialogue (Laurillard, 2013). The lecturers see foregrounding of identity as a teaching strategy, using stories related to their different identities to generate conversation in the tutorial. To some extent, we interpret this strategy as constraining dialogue, because it sometimes highlights differences in power between the tutor and the student. For example, lecturer in nursing might say something like '…when I was a clinical leader, this is how I solved that problem…' which is a fairly blatant way to establish their credibility, perhaps for themselves as well as for the student as audience. The implications of this finding raise questions around how lecturers in nursing might use their academic identities to enhance dialogue (Northedge, 2003; Richards & Richards, 2013). There are possibilities for identification between lecturers and students as members of the subject discipline community. In our analysis, this is strongly represented by the foregrounding of nurse identity by the lecturers because this is the primary area of priority and identity formation for the student nurses. In terms of scholarship and research identities, it might be helpful in reducing the power imbalance if the lecturers were to reveal how they experience peer feedback on their draft papers submitted to journals, as this is a common area of experience for students when they submit their assessment tasks for grading and tutor feedback. More importantly, lecturers in nursing need to be aware that they are modelling professional values but also the development of research-informed practice. A further implication of the significance of academic identities in developing dialogic learning is that identity work and in particular Goffman's 'impression regulation' should be part of academic induction and professional learning for academics, including for example, formal courses for new academics in teaching and learning in higher education.

Clearly this study has limitations, not least because the data generation methods are so time-consuming and so we were restricted to a relatively small sample. However, the in-depth nature of this study, with academics based in ten UK universities, has contributed considerable insight into the way that multiple academic identities have significant influence on and implications for pedagogy in higher education, especially within the university tutorial. This signals the need for in-depth study of the tutorial, and of the connection between academic identity and pedagogy, in additional subject disciplines, including both professional fields and more traditional subjects. The formation and deployment of academic identities has considerable implications for pedagogy, especially in relation to dialogic teaching and learning, and for the professional learning of both new and experienced lecturers.

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