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Lecturers' acquisition of research competence in Dutch Universities 63 of Applied Sciences: Theoretical perspectives and a research agenda

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LECTURERS' ACQUISITION OF RESEARCH COMPETENCE IN DUTCH UNIVERSITIES OF APPLIED SCIENCES: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES AND A RESEARCH AGENDA

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1 Introduction

1.1 Context and rationale of this study¹

The argument for many innovations in higher education provided by the Ministry of Education is the realization of a knowledge economy in the Netherlands (Ministerie van OC&W, 1999). A significant example of such an innovation to support the knowledge economy is the installation of professors (*lectoren*) at Universities of Applied Sciences (U.A.S.) (*hogescholen*) in 2001. The objectives of their research groups (*kenniskringen*) are: 1) development of knowledge to improve professional practice, 2) professional development of lecturers² (*hogeschooldocenten*), (3) improvement of the curriculum based on practice-based research and professional experience, and (4) circulation of knowledge between society and U.A.S. Until recently U.A.S. in the Netherlands were teaching-only institutions. Since 2001 research has become part of their corporate identity (Ministerie van OC&W and HBO-raad, 2001).

These innovations at U.A.S. resulted in additional demands for lecturers, who are confronted with an expansion of their role portfolio and have to engage in novel researcher roles, while maintaining the quality of their current teacher roles. This places serious demands on the flexibility and innovative power of the lecturers. They should be able to contribute to innovation on at least two fronts, namely 1) as teachers they should enhance the level of the bachelor programs by assisting students to develop the attitude and skills needed for inquiry in order to improve professional practice and 2) as researchers they should conduct high level practice-based research.

Unfortunately, a gap exists between the current and the desired situation. In 2011, 55.2% of the lecturers of Dutch U.A.S. obtained a Master's degree, while only 7.7% had a PhD degree (Ministerie van OC&W, 2011). In order to increase the educational level of the

¹ Dit artikel verwoordt als tussenrapportage de theoretische perspectieven en de onderzoeksagenda van de promotiestudie van Monica van Winkel

² 'Lecturers' is de gangbare Engelse vertaling van het Nederlandse begrip 'hogeschooldocenten'. Het rollenportfolio van 'lecturers' op universiteiten internationaal gezien bestaat uit rollen in onderwijs en in onderzoek. De accenten in en het niveau van onderwijs- en onderzoekrollen is afhankelijk van HRM-visies, de onderzoeksintensiteit en het onderwijsniveau van de betreffende universiteit

lecturers the government and all U.A.S. in the Netherlands agreed on the targets of 70 % of the lecturers having a Master's degree and 10 % a PhD degree by the end of 2014 (HBO-raad, 2010). International comparative studies show that the percentage of Masters and Doctors together in other European countries is much higher (on average almost 80 %). In 2011, targets are accentuated even more. The Ministerial aim is that 100 % of the lecturers obtain a Master's or PhD degree in 2020 (80 % in 2016) (Ministerie van OC&W, 2011). The enhancement of the educational level of lecturers was seen as a critical factor for achieving a sustainable research climate (HBO-raad, 2010).

The transition from Institutions of Professional Education to Universities of Applied Sciences is not a topic that is specific to the situation in the Netherlands. Scholars from various countries have described similar transitions at higher education institutes. Studies on these transitions were conducted in both Western oriented countries (U.K., U.S.A., and Australia) and in non-Western oriented countries (Philippines and South Africa). In these studies, primarily learning arrangements are described. Only limited is investigated as to which characteristics of learning arrangements contribute to which outcomes of the transition in researcher roles. This is a preliminary conclusion of our systematic review of literature about learning arrangements to enhance research capacity at universities (see paragraph 4.2.).

In our studies, we use the term 'new universities' and we define these as institutions that are expanding their core business of teaching with research or which are enhancing their existing research capacity. In contrast, we define 'old universities' as research-intensive universities.

1.2 Purpose, research question, method of the development of a heuristic conceptual framework and a research agenda of empirical studies

The final aim of our research project is to provide recommendations to enhance the research capacity of the lecturers-researchers at the Universities of Applied Sciences and the conditions for their work and learning in the social domains of research, teaching and professional practice. Our central overarching research question is, *which learning paths do lecturers choose and create to be prepared for novel researcher roles in the context of the University of Applied Sciences in transition?*

In order to develop a heuristic framework to address role transition's complexity, both on the level of the lecturer (micro level) and on the level of the institution (meso level), we conducted as first study an integrative literature review (Torraco, 2005). We explain our theoretical perspectives in paragraph 2 and the developed framework in paragraph 3. In the last paragraph we will present the nature of our future studies.

Theoretical perspectives

2.1 *The concept of role portfolio*

To address the complexity of this double transition, on both micro level and meso level, we combine several theoretical perspectives.

We do agree with Ashforth (2001), Brew (1996) and Schuiling (2008) that the stereotypical notion of a career as a patterned series of upward moves, often within a single organization, is becoming increasingly rare. Individuals are constantly in a state of *becoming*, of moving between and through various roles and their attached identities and relationships (Ashforth, 2001, pp. 2, 3). Specifically in the field of Higher Education, Brew (1996) notes that academics are required to take on new roles and responsibilities as they progress through their careers. Brew argues that new frameworks are needed for questions around the preparation for academic roles and emphasizes the importance of training for multi-skilling, flexible career paths, and a recognition of life-long learning and learning in the workplace.

Schuiling (2008) notes that neither the literature nor the practice of human resource management /- development is clearly about the notion of employees performing multiple roles simultaneously. He introduces the concept of *role portfolio* in order to provide more detailed descriptions and understanding of the multiple roles of employees. By introducing the concept of role portfolio Schuiling puts emphasis on the fact that jobs include multiple types of work and directs attention to the complex and sometimes conflicting relationships attached to roles performed in the different types of work they do. We summarize Schuiling's main propositions concerning the concept of role portfolio. First, the concept of role portfolio recognizes the diversity of contributions given by employees in organizations. Second, the concept of role portfolio questions the composition and steering of the various roles employees have in their organizations. Third, the concept puts emphasis on the dynamic nature of careers and, fourth, on the creation of appropriate learning paths. According to Schuiling, an elaboration of the last proposition states that the learning curve in the role accelerates when people participate in role-focused training.

2.2 *The concept of role transition*

In order to conceptualize our next concept, *role transition*, we draw on Ashforth's work (2001). Ashforth (2001) defines role transitions as the psychological and physical (if relevant) movement between roles, including disengagement from one role (*role exit*) and engagement in another role (*role entry*). In Ashforth's (2001) view three attributes of roles are particularly relevant to each type of role transition: *Role identities, role boundaries, and role sets*. Attached to every role is a role identity, that is, a set of goals, values, beliefs, norms, interaction styles, and time horizons. A role identity implies a certain persona or self-in-role schema that channels thought, feeling and action. To switch roles, then, is to switch personas (Ashforth, 2001). The role boundary refers to what delimits the contours - and thereby the scope - of a role. Roles tend to be bounded in space and time

and denoted by various boundary markers (e.g., building, furniture). By circumscribing social domains, boundaries enable concentrating more exclusively on whatever social domain is currently salient. The third attribute of the concept role is the role set. The role set consists of the various roles of other individuals that are more or less linked to a focal role of an employee (Ashforth, 2001). The role set of the lecturer as researcher, for example, includes clients and co-researchers in the professional practice, and academic peer researchers and professors. Role identity is largely defined by its role set.

Ashforth (2001) distinguishes three types of role transition: 1) micro role transition, 2) macro role transition and 3) role innovation. In this study, we particularly consider the first and third type of role transition.

A *micro role transition* involves frequent and recurring movements between roles, for instance, teacher and researcher roles. Ashforth (2011, pp. 290) also emphasizes this point: 'What makes role transition intriguing is that one must switch between different worlds'. In our setting, lecturers switch between the worlds of teaching, research and professional practice. The challenge for lecturers is to attain a workable equilibrium within and across these salient roles and social domains. This confronts lecturers with the challenge of boundary work: the creation and maintenance of role boundaries. Relatively little attention in research is paid to the nature of micro role transitions. We will investigate micro role transition because of its relevance for lifelong transitioning and learning (see paragraph 2.1).

Macro role transitions involve infrequent and more or less permanent changes within the social domains of work organizations. Macro transitional roles are held sequentially. Macro transitions between roles can be identified during entry into a new organization or during intra organizational transitions (e.g., promotion, transfer). In our setting an example of a macro role transition is a lecturer with teacher roles becoming an educational manager or a full time researcher. Research focuses predominantly on macro role transitions.

The third type of transition is *role innovation*. Ashforth (2001, pp. 194) follows Nicholson and West (1988, pp. 106) in their definition of role innovation: 'Moulding the new role to suit the requirements of the mover, ranging from minor initiatives such as variations in work schedules, to more dramatic role innovations as changes in the main goals of the work'. An example of role innovation is the renewal of the role of the lecturer who coaches students in conducting research. This can be related to the increased demands for the quality of bachelor graduation projects at U.A.S. in the Netherlands.

All researcher roles in the new university will be subject to role innovation in the following years, we expect. The future roles of the lecturers are in line with the new role and mission that U.A.S. have developed in their institutional and social context. Alongside

the renewal of the role of the universities, the researcher roles of lecturers have developed. Put briefly, during our research project, we are interested in micro role transitions of lecturers (between teacher and researcher roles) and in innovation of researcher roles of lecturers in the context of the role innovation of the University of Applied Sciences.

2.3 Concepts regarding transitioning and learning

According to Ashforth, the *transition cycle* consists of four phases: Preparation, encounter, adjustment and stabilization. The expansion of the lecturers' portfolio with researcher roles implies a further change in nature, requirements and context of lecturers' work. With respect to learning, Ashforth (2001) confines himself mainly to '*role learning*'. According to Ashforth, relevant questions in role learning include: What is the nature and context of the novel role? Furthermore, support from the organization for role transition consists of *socialization processes* that can be more or less institutionalized (Ashforth, 2001).

Ashforth (2001) also points out that regarding certain highly complex roles, there is a need to acquire or refresh competences. In these cases, professional development is often outsourced to professional schools and internal training departments. We assume that conducting research requires complex skills. Lecturers at the U.A.S. in the Netherlands often conduct research projects while at the same time need to develop their research competences. For this reason, we cannot focus on one form of learning such as communities of practice or work place learning or formal training or mentorship, only. Therefore, we draw on *several theories about work-related learning*, in particular those of Billett (2001, 2006) and of Lave & Wenger (1991). In order, to investigate the learning path of lecturers we take the concept of the *individual learning path* as our point of departure. The learning path of an employee comprises a set of learning-relevant activities that are meaningful to the employee (Van der Krogt, 2007).

2.4 Concepts regarding the multi-layered character of role transition: Micro and meso level

In the U.A.S., lecturers-researchers switch between the worlds of teaching, research, and professional practice. The differences and similarities between these social domains, such as the degree of equality and integration (see Brew, 2006), define the rules of lecturers' playgrounds. In order to understand what switching between social domains means for lecturers, we need to examine the underlying logic in both the transition process of the lecturer and of the U.A.S. as institutions. In these processes, questions arise include: What organizational logics, rewards, values, norms, and what ways of thinking and acting exist and count in the various social domains? Inspired by Chudzikowski & Mayrhofer (2010), we raise the question whether using *Bourdieu's theory of practice* (1977) as a unifying framework offers a practical way to strengthen an interdisciplinary and multilayered (micro and meso level) approach in studies on role transition. Bourdieu's *sociological*

theory of practice (1977) conceptualizes individuals as producers of social practices in social space while following specific logics of practices. At least three constructs are central to Bourdieu's theory: *Field*, *habitus*, and *various forms of capital*.

According to Bourdieu (1977: in Chudzikowski & Mayrhofer, 2010, pp. 4, 5), a social field is a patterned set of practices within a broader social space, which suggests competent action in conformity with rules and roles. Likewise, it is a playground or battlefield in which actors, endowed with a certain field-relevant capital, try to advance their position. As such, fields constitute a network of positions, a playground where actors try to follow individual strategies. Playing according to the rules of the game as defined by the specific set of capital most valuable for holding or extending power within the fields contributes to the reproduction of the fields (Bourdieu, 1977, 1986). Thus, fields are seen as dynamic and shaped by the social practices of their actors.

The idiosyncratic 'system of durable, and transposable dispositions' (Bourdieu, 1977) is labeled as the habitus of an agent. Bourdieu conceptualizes habitus as an ensemble of schemata of perception, thinking, feeling, evaluating, speaking, and acting that pre-formats all the expressive, verbal, and practical manifestations and utterances of an actor (Krais, 1988: in Chudzikowski & Mayrhofer, 2010). [...] Habitus explains regular action patterns over times that are neither the product of external structures nor of mere subjective intention. [...]

Although primary socialization is of great importance, the development of habitus cannot be restricted to that period. Habitus is constantly reinforced or modified by further experience, that is, by positive and negative sanctions during a whole (working) life. Habitus and field are linked in a circular way. Involvement in a field shapes the habitus, which, in turn, shapes the actions that reproduces the field (Crossley, 2001: in Chudzikowski & Mayrhofer, 2010). In order to understand and explain the action of players in the field, one needs information about their dispositions and competence – that is their habitus and capital – and about the state of play in the game as well the players' individual locations in the field. The actor's logic is shaped both by their habitus and by the requirements and logic of the game as it unfolds (Chudzikowski & Mayrhofer, 2010).

Bourdieu differentiates between three basic types of capital: economic, cultural, and social capital (Bourdieu, 1986). Economic capital appears in the form of general, anonymous [...] money. It can more easily and efficiently be converted into cultural, social, and symbolic capital than vice versa (Postone et al., 1993: in Chudzikowski and Mayrhofer, 2010). Social capital involves relationships of mutual recognition and acquaintance, resources based upon social connections and group or class membership. Cultural capital appears in three forms: 1) incorporated, that is, durable embodied dispositions of habitus such as competence, skills; 2) objectivized through cultural products like theories, tools, machines, books etc.; and 3) institutionalized through titles and degrees. As a fourth type of capital,

symbolic capital is closely related to the respective fields. The rules of a particular social field specify which combination of the basic forms of capital will be authorized as symbolic capital, thus becoming socially recognized as legitimate (Bourdieu, 1986).

3 Conceptual framework

3.1 Purpose, research question and method

In order to conduct the integrative literature review (Torraco, 2005), we need to address the complexity of role transition. We distinguish between three salient aspects of our research topic: 1) Expansion of lecturers' role portfolio, 2) expansion of the core business of the university with research, and 3) the dynamic interaction between lecturers and the various social domains of teaching, research and professional practice. Our research question in this integrative literature review is: *Which core concepts relate to our three salient aspects and how can these concepts be linked in a coherent way?* As explained, we use concepts from the theoretical perspectives on role transition/learning and from Bourdieu's theory of practice.

Figure 1 gives an overview of our heuristic conceptual framework. Below, we first introduce the three salient aspects of our framework and their relationships. Second, we explain each salient aspect in more detail. The salient aspects and their sub aspects are numbered in the text below and in Figure 1.

3.2 Introduction of the conceptual framework

The first salient aspect, *Expansion of lecturers' role portfolio (1)*, entails four sub aspects. *Personal identities of lecturers (1A)* may influence the search for opportunities to fulfill novel researcher roles. After an actual start in novel researcher roles, lecturers get engaged in the *development and enactment of a researcher identity (1C)* and the *development of research competence (1D)*. Still lecturers are engaged in their *performance in teacher roles (1B)*.

1. Expansion of the lecturers' role portfolio
2. Expansion of the core business with research
3. The dynamic interaction between lecturers and the social domains teaching, research and professional practice

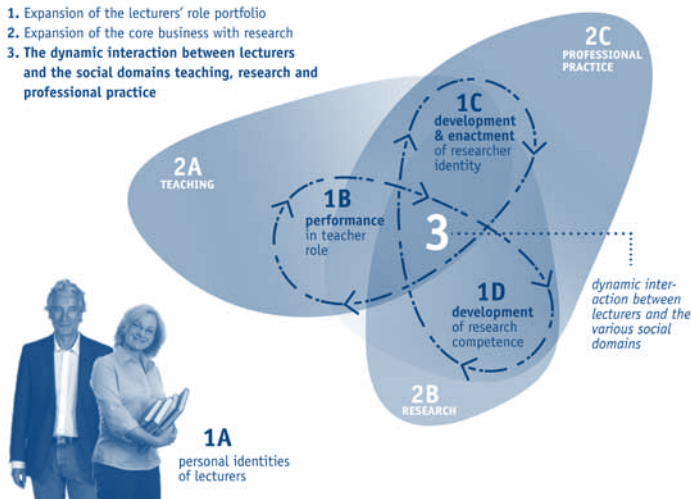


Figure 1: Lecturers' transition into novel researcher roles in the context of universities in transition

The second aspect, *expansion of the core business of the university with research* (2), consists of three sub aspects: the social domains *teaching* (2A), *research* (2B), and *professional practice* (2C). The relationships between these social domains, such as the degree of equality and integration (see Brew, 2006), define the rules for lecturers on their playgrounds. The third salient aspect is: *The dynamic interaction between lecturers and the various social domains* (3). Individuals influence the situation and vice versa.

3.3 Explanation of the three aspects of the heuristic conceptual framework

1 Expansion of lecturers' role portfolio

Previously, we described how Ashforth (2001) distinguishes three attributes of roles particularly relevant to each type of role transition: Role identities, role boundaries and role sets. According to Bourdieu theory (1977), habitus, the system of dispositions, explains regular action patterns over times that are neither the product of external structures nor of mere subjective intention. We assume that the concepts of *scholarships* in its various forms proposed by Boyer and colleagues (1990) provide a point of departure in our studies to get grip on the teacher and researcher roles of lecturers and on corresponding role identities/-dispositions, role boundaries and role sets. Boyer and colleagues (1990) provide a framework to incorporate both research and teaching into Higher Education in a more collaborative and equal way. Concerning teacher and researcher roles, the framework provides a point of departure for investigating what type of effects and how synergetic effects can be reached through switching between those roles. Boyer and colleagues (1990: in Brew, 2006) suggested a fourfold definition of scholarship: *scholarship of discovery, of integration, of application and of teaching*. In their framework, the four forms of scholarship were all viewed as part of the same enterprise. The scholarship of discovery comes nearest to the idea of 'research'. It contributes to both the 'stock of human knowledge' and the intellectual climate of the institution. The scholarship of integration focuses on making inter-disciplinary connections, interpreting and exploring new ideas to contribute to original research. The third type of scholarship is the scholarship of application, drawing attention to the way knowledge is applied in the wider community. It is a starting point in achieving an interaction between theory and practice where 'the one renews the other'. Finally, Boyer and colleagues proposed the scholarship of teaching. This form of scholarship is defined in terms of well-informed teachers. It concerns teaching that is carefully planned, continuously evaluated and related to the subject taught, teaching encouraging active learning and inviting students to be critical, creative thinkers with the capacity to go on learning after their university days were over, and a recognition that teachers were also learners (Boyer, 1990: in Brew, 2006). Below, we will explain the transition of lecturers through their teacher and researcher roles. Figure 1 represents these processes. Lecturers start from 1A '*personal identities of lecturers*' and can continue their pathways by completing the process in the three other loops, 1B, 1C, and 1D.

1A. Personal identities of lecturers

Ashforth (2001) warns that in discussing role identities and role transition, it is easy to lose sight of the individual. The individual is more than a role occupant and more than the sum of his or her internalized role identities. The individual's core sense of self, his or her global identity, is comprised of personal identities (e.g., dispositions) and social identities (i.e., internalized group categories such as gender), the latter of which include role identities (Ashforth, 2001, pp. 294). The individual's sense of self has many relevant links with the role identity, for example, the individual's global identity influences his or her selection of roles. In Figure 1 on the left side, the individual's core sense of self is portrayed with pictures of lecturers and is indicated in the words: '*Personal identities of lecturers*' (1A).

1B. Performance in teacher roles

In their day-to-day activities lecturers have to deal with shifting role identities and shifting, even conflicting demands from actors in their role sets on the various social domains. Most likely, lecturers create cognitively matching personal identities and perceptions of requirements as the loop '*performance in teacher role*' (1B) on the left of the center of Figure 1 shows. The teacher role is the point of departure for the transition into researcher roles.

1C. Development and enactment of identity in researcher role

The expansion of the role portfolio includes processes of identification with the novel researcher roles. Ashforth (2001) discusses the dynamics of identity learning and identification: 'Identification leads the newcomer to faithfully enact role identity: To be true to the role is to be true to oneself. Faithful performance results in both objective (e.g., productivity) and subjective (e.g., well-being) indicators of effectiveness' (Ashforth, 2001, pp. 54). Research dispositions have been investigated among academics at a science faculty (*Wiskunde en Natuurwetenschappen*) of a research-intensive university in the Netherlands (Van der Rijst, 2009). In our systematic literature review (see paragraph 4.1.) we did not find a study on research dispositions or researcher identity of researchers at Universities of Applied Sciences or comparable type of researchers. The study of Van der Rijst can be a point of departure to further elaborate researcher dispositions of aforementioned type of researchers. In the study of Van der Rijst, the term disposition was used to refer to personal mixtures of tendencies to act while performing research. Participants with a large variety of experience in research as well in teaching were included in the sample. The participants held positions ranging from professor, lecturer and post-doctoral researcher. Six different aspects were identified in a qualitative analysis which reflected the variety of the academics' scientific research dispositions: inclination to 1) achieve, 2) be critical, 3) be innovative, 4) know, 5) share and 6) understand. By making intangible elements of research practice such as research dispositions more explicit, the study aimed to make the development of dispositions a more explicit part of a research curriculum.

Understanding research dispositions could moreover help to enhance intangible links between research, teaching and learning (see paragraph 2.4. on Bourdieu's construct of habitus in relation to the reproduction of fields and to the construct cultural capital). In Figure 1 the process of '*development and enactment of identity in researcher role*' is represented by the loop (1C) on the top half of Figure 1 and starts from the loop '*performance in teacher role*' (1B) on the left of center in Figure 1.

1D. Development of research competence

Competence is both habitus and a form of cultural capital, see paragraph 2.4. We use the concept of the *individual learning path* to investigate 'development of research competence'. The learning path of an employee comprises a set of learning-relevant activities that are meaningful to the employee (Van der Krogt, 2007). In this concept, the emphasis is on creating and choosing learning possibilities by the employee. Poell and Van der Krogt (2008) found four types of learning paths after having interviewed 89 nurses: the formal-external, self-directed, social-emotional, and information-oriented learning paths. The acquisition of research competence is represented in the loop at the bottom half in Figure 1 '*development of research competence*' (1D).

2 Expansion of the core business with research

For the organization, the social domain of research is rather novel and has to be defined and developed. As a consequence, it raises questions such as: What should practice-based research entail, what kind of knowledge is generated, where is it generated, and by and with whom? The addition of the social domain of research also redefines the relationships with the other fields: teaching and professional practice. As previously explained, alongside the renewal of the role of the university, the researcher roles of lecturers have developed. The addition of the new field research raises also questions such as: Which structural conditions, such as funding, infra-structure, human resource management /-development policy and research management, are needed in order to build up the social domain of research? These conditions are important to enable lecturers-researchers to carry out their research.

According to Brew (2006), in the old research-intensive universities, the social domains of research and teaching present an asymmetrical relationship, in our view reflecting exactly opposite to that in new universities. For Brew, research is a highly valued asset. It carries levels of prestige that teaching inevitably lacks, however effective or innovative the teaching is, or however well it is rewarded. Research embodies greater academic and social capital (Brew, 2006). Therefore, it seems important to examine which forms of capital (see Bourdieu, 1986, in paragraph 2.4.) are acknowledged by actors in the various fields at new universities. In Figure 1, the three social domains *teaching*' (1A), '*research*' (1B) and '*professional practice*' (1C) are depicted as overlapping areas.

3 *The dynamic interaction between lecturers and the various social domains*

Similar to sociologists such as Ashforth (2001) and Bourdieu (1977), scholars in human resource development (Billett, 2001, 2006; Lave & Wenger, 1991) take the interaction between agents and contexts into account. All of them emphasize the contextual and relational aspects of transitioning and learning as well as the dynamics of identity construction. For example, in situated learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991) learning and knowing are seen as processes that are integral to everyday practice in workplace. It involves the way individuals understand, take part in and subscribe to the social norms, behaviours and values of communities in which they participate. Participation is central to situated learning. In addition, the authors mentioned emphasize the impact of strong situations on the outcomes of agents' transitioning and learning. Billett (2001, pp. 209) states: 'In particular the readiness of the workplace to afford opportunities for individuals to participate in work activities and access direct and indirect support are key determinants in the quality of learning that arises from that participation. These affordances are salient to the outcomes of [...] learning [...]'.

Billett (2006) distinguishes in his theory about human resource development between intended, enacted and experienced curricula. We are interested in the similarities and differences between the three types of curricula. We put some dynamics explaining aforementioned briefly into questions. Which motives of lecturers are leading in their engagement in researcher roles? How do lecturers experience the combination of researcher and teacher roles? Which curricula do lecturers choose and create, how do they experience then en how do lecturers perceive the outcomes? Which intentions of which other actors in the various fields are leading in the provision of support to lecturers in researcher roles? What implicit and explicit messages do lecturers-researchers receive from other actors on the various fields about 'which things count in the respective field'? In our future studies, we will answer these types of questions. In paragraph 4, we give a preliminary outline of the nature of our future studies. The question (see paragraph 2.4), whether using *Bourdieu's theory of practice* (1977) as a unifying framework, offers a way to strengthen a multilayered approach in studies on role transition, both on micro and on meso level, will be answered in the final conclusion of our research project. The value of our heuristic model (see paragraph 3), consisting of concepts from theoretical perspectives on role transition/learning, will be evaluated as well. The *interparagraph of the loops* in the center in Figure 1 with the number (3) emphasizes the '*dynamic interaction between lecturers and the various social domains*'.

4 Our research agenda: the nature of our future studies

4.1 Introduction

In paragraph 2 we mentioned our overarching research question: *Which learning paths do lecturers choose and create to be prepared for novel researcher roles, in the context of the University of Applied Sciences in transition?* The final aim of our research project was to provide recommendations to enhance both the research capacity of the lecturers-researchers at the U.A.S. and the conditions for their work and learning in the social domains of research, teaching and professional practice. In paragraph 3 we explained the three salient aspects of our conceptual framework: Expansion of lecturers' role portfolio¹), expansion of the core business of the university with research (2), and the dynamic interaction between lecturers and the various social domains (3).

Below we give an outline of the nature of our future studies. In these studies we investigate two or more parts of our framework each time. By reflecting on these studies in our final conclusions, we aim to declare salient dynamics of the multilayered character of the transition: both on micro level, the lecturers, and on meso level, the university as institution. As explained, we use concepts from theoretical perspectives on role transition/ learning and from Bourdieu's theory of practice (see paragraph 2).

4.2 Study 2. A systematic review of learning arrangements to enhance research competence

As part of our first study, an integrative literature review (Torraco, 2005), anno 2011 we have been conducting a systematic literature review in the setting of Higher education, especially in the setting of new universities. The aim is to get insight in the way lecturers at other universities have transitioned from teacher roles-only to researcher and teacher roles. For that purpose we study articles about learning paths (employee controlled) and learning arrangements (employer controlled) chosen and created for the transitioning of lecturers into researcher roles e.g., start- and target level, aims, key features of learning paths/learning arrangements and outcomes of learning arrangements. The systematic review process consists of three stages: first, we developed a search query to investigate peer reviewed scientific articles in the period 1991-2011 in Web of Science about our topic; second, identification of potentially relevant publications by specifying criteria for in-/ exclusion; and third, critical analysis of a sub-set of the selected articles.

4.3 Study 3, 4 and 5. Design of empirical studies

Data collection

In order to gain a deeper understanding of the role transition of lecturers into researcher roles, we will collect data about the target group lecturers. The respondents are lecturers-researchers in a Dutch University of Applied Sciences. Therefore, we will collect accounts of perceptions from those lecturers-researchers longitudinally. We already collected

accounts of perceptions from other actors: (Assistant)-professors, educational managers, and policy advisors, on the development into researcher roles of lecturers.

Accounts of lecturers-researchers

Data retrieved in a starting interview will provide information about 1) lecturers' motives to start in researcher roles, 2) experiences in, and 3) conceptions of their role portfolios consisting of both researcher and teacher roles. During six months (first half of 2012), lecturers write weekly activity logs in which they give an account of their learning themes, and activities, and learning outcomes. After six months a follow up interview is held about their weekly logs, their development in researcher identity and research competence and about environmental influences, such as support and responsiveness from actors in the various social domains. We also ask for some accounts about their - preliminary - imagined futures as lecturers-researchers. Drawing of a story line will be used to explicate the learning paths of lecturers-researchers.

Accounts of other actors

We conducted an explorative study in a Dutch U.A.S. at the end of 2009 in which we held semi-structured interviews, guided by our core concepts, with 24 actors in all faculties (bèta and gamma): Lecturers with various researcher roles, (assistant)-professors, educational managers, and policy advisors. We will do further interviews in the second half of 2012 with aforementioned actors which focus on their perceptions of the nature of the researcher roles of lecturers and on the required researcher identity, research competence and learning arrangements.

Work in progress: design of future studies

The above data sets will provide a basis for three of our four articles. The aim of the first article is to learn from already carried out research on learning arrangements designed to support the transitioning of lecturers into researcher roles at other universities (see paragraph 4.2., the systematic literature review). The research question of this first article is: *What key features of learning arrangements turn out to be supportive for the transitioning of lecturers into researcher roles at universities?* This review study focuses on two loops of our conceptual framework, 'development of research competence' and 'development and enactment of identity in researcher role' and also takes the conditions for work and learning in relevant social domains into account.

The aim of the second article is to increase our understanding of lecturers-researchers' motives to start in researcher roles, and of their experiences in and conceptions of their role portfolio. The research question of this second article is: *What are the motives of lecturers to start in researcher roles and what are their conceptions of their portfolio of researcher and teacher roles, in the context of the U.A.S. in transition?* This study focuses on the role portfolio of the lecturers from the lecturers' viewpoint. The nature and context

of the novel role is according to Ashforth (2001) one of the first questions in role learning. Since the type of transition investigated is a micro role transition (see paragraph 2.2.), we choose lecturers' role portfolio as object of study.

The aim of the third empirical article is to increase our understanding in what ways work and learning activities in researcher roles contribute to the development of a researcher identity and of research competence, and vice versa. The research question of this third article is: *What types of learning paths do lecturers-researchers choose and create and what learning outcomes do they perceive, in the context of the U.A.S. in transition?* This study focuses, similar to the review article, on two loops of our conceptual framework, 'development of research competence' and 'development and enactment of identity in researcher role' and takes also into account the conditions for work and learning in relevant social domains.

The fourth empirical article will focus on improving our understanding of the discourse between various actors in the U.A.S. on the nature of the researcher role of lecturers, and the required researcher identity, research competence, and learning arrangements.

The actors involved in this study are lecturers-researchers, (assistant)-professors, educational managers, and policy advisors.

The research question is: *What is the discourse between actors in the U.A.S. in transition on the nature of the researcher role of lecturers, and the required researcher identity, competence and learning arrangements?* This study focuses on two loops of our conceptual framework, 'development of research competence' and 'development and enactment of identity in researcher role'. The research topic is approached from the third salient aspect, the dynamic interaction between lecturers and the various social domains.

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