





Chapter 2

The transformative influence of a PGDipE (HE): A case of agential morphogenesis


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Introduction

I went in thinking students are going to question who I am, which is very personal and difficult to deal with and my response has to be ‘I am your teacher. You can reject

everything else about me but by the end of this course you need to have learnt something because I have made it so damn difficult for you not to learn about it’.

The above statement provides a momentary glimpse into a PGDipE(HE) (hereafter, the PGDip) graduate’s personal and emotive journey in becoming a university teacher. The conviction and confidence of “because I have made it so damn difficult for you not to learn” is what attracted us to this individual’s case and the observed transformative possibilities of the professional learning of academics as teachers.

The South African higher education context has focused increasing attention on the professional learning of academics as university teachers in the last decade (e.g. Leibowitz et al., 2017; DHET, 2018; Benvenuti et al., 2022a). A large study of eight South African public universities conducted between 2011 and 2016 recommended “that a policy on professional learning regarding the teaching role be written” (Leibowitz et al., 2017:15), which happened the following year (see: DHET, 2018). Leibowitz et al. (2017) tied this recommendation to some of the core tenets set out for higher education in the country, such as addressing the learning needs and aspirations of individuals and contributing to the prosperity and economic growth of society (Leibowitz et al., 2017), amongst others. While such studies make immensely valuable macro-level contributions to the literature about the professionalisation of teaching, there is merit in exploring the experiences and contributions to be gained from individual university teachers at a micro level as is demonstrated from the quote above. An analysis of agential change at the micro level can provide insight into how and why a PGDip can contribute to the professionalisation of teaching in higher education, but also provide insight into why it may not always succeed. This chapter aims to make such a contribution to the literature on enhancing university teaching in South Africa.

To achieve this, the authors examine the temporal agential and professional identity shifts that occurred for one alumnus (Linda) as a direct consequence of participating in a PGDip. Margaret Archer’s (1995, 1996, 2000) work on agency is used to

enable and guide this examination. The chapter interrogates the agential and professional identity shifts that Linda experienced, in comparison to other alumni whose shift in agency appears less demonstrable (see Benvenuti et al., 2022a). Making meaning of these shifts is important, as Archer (2002:19) explains that agency denotes:

... someone who has the properties and powers to monitor their own life, to mediate structural and cultural properties of society, and thus to contribute to societal reproduction or transformation.

If one ties this potential to mediate and transform back to the core tenets of higher education shared earlier, it becomes evident that individuals (as much as collectives) have the potential to advance higher education and its goals, gaining insight into why some realise this potential is the core aim of this chapter.

PGDips in their various forms are intended to contribute to the professionalisation of teaching in higher education, which in turn should contribute towards transformation of the sector to advance student success. The University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) is a research-intensive public university in South Africa that launched its PGDip in 2015. Since then, more than 120 alumni have graduated, with cohorts from Wits and Walter Sisulu (WSU) universities now enrolling for the qualification annually. The programme runs part-time over two years and consists of three core courses and one elective. Authentic assessment and reflective practice support the PGDip curriculum considerations, thereby encouraging Linda to be introspective in their own practice (Benvenuti et al., 2022b).

A social realist view of agency

The notion of agency arises often in higher education literature, usually in relation to student agency (e.g. Case, 2015; Williams, 2012; Nudelman, 2021), the complexities of higher education and how different forms of agency are entangled within it (e.g. Williams, 2012; Leibowitz et al., 2017; Boughey & McKenna, 2021; Nudelman, 2021). It also considers the transformation of agency

and agential capacity as a means of social advancement (Case, 2015). Case (2015:843), for example, asserts that:

[i]n the arena of higher education, we are centrally focused on the morphogenesis of student agency; we aim for students to leave higher education with different knowledge and capacity for action than that with which they entered.

The implication is that students exit university and enter society with the capacity and knowledge to engage with societal problems actively and expertly, ultimately aiming to solve those problems – thus, transforming society for the better. Similarly, we might expect alumni of a PGDip to have developed agency in their teaching roles. Not only can teacher professionalisation promote confidence in the teacher’s own professional outlook (Ödalen et al., 2019), but it also enables better teaching, which is crucial in challenging contexts such as those found in South Africa. The country’s higher education sector faces a range of complexities (Boughey & McKenna, 2021), including social, political, and economic challenges (Leibowitz et al., 2017). The PGDip emphasises these complexities and contestations in relation to teaching and curriculum, which means that Linda was given the tools needed to navigate and transcend challenging teaching and learning environments. Understanding these tensions provides the university teacher with more nuanced insights into the challenges faced by students, with the aim of bringing about quality teaching, which has been proven to be crucial to ensuring student success (Mangum, 2017).

Much of the work on agency has its roots in sociological theory and theorising (e.g. Pickering, 1993; Archer, 1996; Emirbayer & Mische, 1998; Archer, 2002; Shapiro, 2005). Emirbayer and Mische (1998) highlight many of the complexities and ambiguities associated with the concept, before offering their own sociological definition (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998:970) and arguments pertaining to it. In this chapter though, we draw particularly on the extensive contributions to the theorising of agency offered by critical realist Margaret Archer, whose broader work on social realism is often used in educational contexts (e.g.

Chapter 2

Williams, 2012; Case, 2015; Leibowitz et al., 2017; Boughey & McKenna, 2021).

From a social realist perspective, one of the affordances of Archer's approach is that it separates agency from structure and culture, thus circumventing a clamping together of all three (Archer, 1996:87), which is known as central conflation in sociological terms (Boughey & McKenna, 2021:23). This "theoretical separation of the parts and the people" (Boughey & McKenna, 2021:23) is what Archer calls *analytical dualism* (Archer, 1995:15, 1995:165-194). It allows one to make meaning of the ways in which agency emerges and changes over time in relation to structure and/or culture (and their interaction). The separation of parts and people is an important distinction and central to the argument that we make in this chapter, where we track the temporal agential shifts experienced by Linda.

In social realist terms, agency encompasses "the domain of human action and interaction" (Case, 2015:843). Archer separates agency into primary agency and corporate agency (Boughey & McKenna, 2021). She explains that primary agents can reflect on their status and make choices in response to external forces. Archer asserts that everyone is a primary agent, but not everyone may or need become a corporate agent. Corporate agents, through engagement with others, have the potential to drive social change (Archer, 2020; Case, 2015). Williams (2012:309) explains that:

Corporate Agents shape the context for all agents, although not always as anyone wants. Primary Agents live within this context, but their actions and responses to society's changes, change the situation for Corporate Agents as well.

Corporate agents, with whom primary agents interact, may therefore support the emergence of professional identity. In turn, a primary agent may influence their surrounding structures and cultures, and may be an intrinsically active agent (Williams, 2012:309) but may choose not to take part in the "systemic organisation and reorganisation" (Brock et al., 2017:25) of such cultures or structures, therefore not becoming a corporate agent. In this chapter, we focus in particular on the primary agential

shifts experienced by Linda, thus reserving an exploration of corporate agency for another time. Nevertheless, we may refer to corporate agency in relation to primary agency from time to time in the discussion section. To track Linda's primary agential shifts over time, we use a tool offered by Archer (1995), which she calls the morphogenetic framework.

Archer's morphogenetic framework

Archer's (1995) morphogenetic framework provides a tool with which to track change or stasis over time. The morphogenetic framework consists of four temporal periods making up three distinct phases (see Figure 2.1).

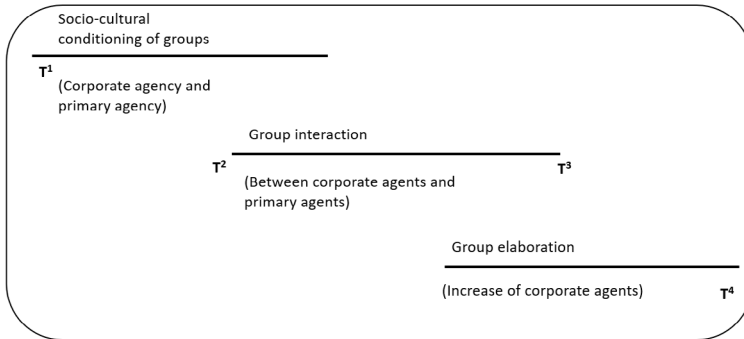


Figure 2.1: Visual representation of Archer's (1995:264) morphogenetic framework related to agency.

The first phase (T¹) considers the agent within their already-established context and background (Case et al., 2017:280). Archer refers to this as the conditioning phase. In this chapter, our T¹ considers the prevailing conditions of Linda in the period leading up to the start of the PGDip. **The second phase** (T² – T³) documents how the primary agent socially interacts with corporate agents and other primary agents during the period under investigation; referred to as the social interaction phase (Case et al., 2017:280). Our T² – T³ considers how Linda navigates the structured coursework component of the PGDip over an 18-month period, where structure, culture, and agency interact. **The third phase** (T³ – T⁴), which Archer terms elaboration, reviews

the last six months of Linda's PGDip experience. Unlike the first 18 months that are carefully structured and driven by course work, in this phase Linda is given the freedom to research a topic of interest in the research course (an elective) of the programme. Here we consider what, if any, agential changes took place because of the social interactions that occurred during phase 2 (Case et al., 2017:280). It is worth noting that such personal morphogenesis is an ongoing and continual process (Brock et al., 2017:32), with this study taking a snapshot of one morphogenetic cycle in Linda's life. Further, the focus of Archer's (2000) full morphogenetic model is to make meaning of the emergence of personal and social identity (Case, 2015:849) and the positioning of professional identity within this.

Personal identity, social identity and professional identity

The literature addresses two broad aspects of an individual's identity; personal identity (PI) (e.g., a person's own perception of themselves) and social identity (SI) (e.g., external perceptions of the individual by the world at large, in different contexts) (Archer, 2005; Beech, 2011; Kreber, 2010). Professional identity (PFI) can then be viewed as a part of one's SI (Quinn, 2006; Kreber, 2010), as will be explained below.

Archer (2000) explains the morphogenesis of agency as involving personal and social dimensions of identity (see Figure 2.2). She describes this as:

... the sense in which the mature emergent person continually re-inspects the 'I', the 'me', the 'we', and the 'you', which have been part of his or her personal morphogenesis, and then applies his or her autonomous personal powers to pursue their replication or transformation. In the process they actively contribute to their own ongoing personal development ... (Archer, 2002:19).

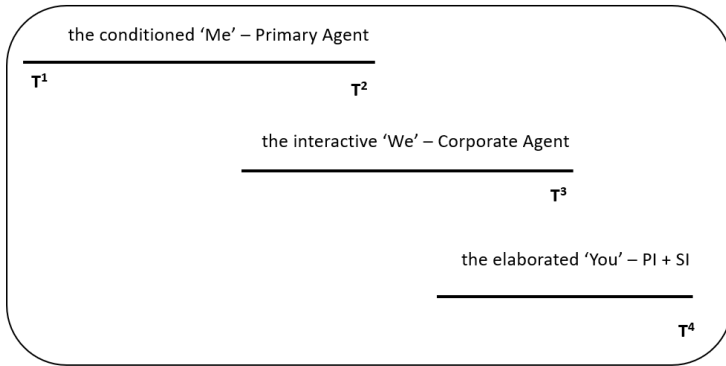


Figure 2.2: “The emergence of personal and social identity” as per Archer (2000:296).

As an individual (with a pre-conditioned existent PI) interacts and engages in the world around them, they are constantly adapting, changing, and reconstructing that PI in light of the external social influences with which they are faced. Such constant reconstruction is influenced from two directions: internal and external. Internal influences made up of personal motivations and dialogues within the self occurs actively through iterations of reflection and reflective practice. External influences arise from dialogues with others and interaction with the structures and cultures around the individual. These internal and external dialogues develop the individual’s PI (Beech, 2011).

In turn, what the individual chooses to show the world in how they interact, as well as how the world views them, constitutes the emergence of their SI. In other words, “... what people commit themselves to in society is the key to their social identity ...” (Archer, 2000:83). Hence, for purposes of this chapter, professional identity (PFI) is viewed as being part of SI (Quinn, 2006:51), which Kreber extends into the occupational context of academia (2010:172-173). This affords the ability to examine university-teacher identity as separate from a broader academic identity, which can be multi-dimensional and fragmented, as explained by Kreber (2010:173). When focusing on the teacher identity for an academic, it is important to view such an identity as dynamic and changing, depending on the level of agency an individual is willing to give to their teacher identity. Academics

Chapter 2

need to split their time and focus between often competing and equally demanding aspects of the broader academic identity (inter alia research, supervision, and academic citizenship). It is by using agency within their professional and social settings that an academic actively and explicitly hones and shapes their teacher identity. As Beech describes:

For Ybema, Keenoy, Oswick, Beverungen, Ellis and Sabelis (2009) this is a version of the agency–structure dialectic in action, that is, the process through which the individual agent constitutes and is constituted by their social setting and the discourses available to them and those around them (Beech, 2011:286).

Fiol (2002), as cited by Beech (2011), demonstrates the dynamics between a before and an after identity when one actively puts effort into the development of such an identity. Often this active shaping of one’s identity can be viewed as the “dialogue in which the inner self–identity is influenced by the outer social identity” (Watson, 2009; Beech, 2011:286). This chapter highlights how Linda’s personal agency to better their own teaching, and the social interactions and dialogues held in the PGDip, have led to a profound and established university teacher PFI shift.

We illustrate the interconnectedness of SI, PI and PFI in Figure 2.3. The areas of intersection are for illustrative purposes only as the degrees of overlap are unique to each individual. The central premise is that the development of all three identities is, in one way or another, intertwined.

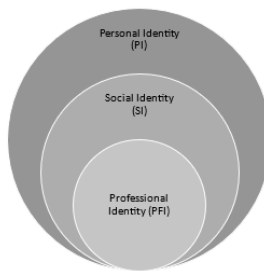


Figure 2.3: The interconnectedness of personal identity (PI), social identity (SI) and professional identity (PFI)

Methodology and data

This chapter reports on a case study of Linda, exploring their personal agential morphogenesis as a result of completing the PGDip programme. The case study is nested within a larger study in which alumni were initially canvassed through an online questionnaire and follow-up focus groups. Linda emerged as an interesting case as they appeared to exhibit particularly noteworthy agential morphogenesis as well as a strong shift in identity.

Case studies provide an opportunity to examine cases of specific interest, enabling a more detailed understanding of specific phenomena or situations (Babbie, 2013:338). While this specific case may be different to others we might have chosen to examine, Stake (1995:3) would refer to it as an intrinsic case that has value in its “particularity and complexity”. It provides an opportunity to engage deeply with one case, thus affording the possibility to gain micro-level insights through identifying and examining activity within the specific context. The intention with a case study is not to generalise but to deepen understanding. This is achieved through deliberately employing thick description, in which sufficient depth and context is provided, allowing readers to determine transferability to contexts with which they are familiar (Lincoln & Guba, 1986; Rule & John, 2011).

The case is informed by data that was collected in numerous ways¹. The full set of data, comprising questionnaire [Q], focus group [FQ] and interview [I], was analysed using Archer’s morphogenetic framework. Up to this point, Linda was deliberately excluded from discussions and analytical work to ensure credibility of the research process and study. They were then invited to engage with our analysis and interpretation, with the view to garner more nuanced insights. We anticipated that this would allow us to move beyond the interpretation of data by researchers, to a more in-depth analysis of findings (Probst, 2016), thus, giving the case study unique dimensions.

1 Ethical clearance for this study was obtained through the institutional Human Research Ethics Committee (Non-Medical) (protocol number: H21/06/02), prior to the commencement of data collection.

The involvement of the case subject as participant researcher, albeit only towards the end of the process, provided a means through which to achieve authenticity of perspective (Lincoln & Guba, 1986). By allowing Linda to verify interpretation of the data, researcher bias could also be minimised (Maxwell, 2005). This is commonly employed in ensuring the trustworthiness of qualitative research (Merriam, 2011). This collection of data via multiple approaches and engagement with the data over an extended period of time supports credibility in qualitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1986; Patton, 2002; Maxwell, 2005).

Findings and discussion

Archer (1982:468) allows for the morphogenetic framework to be adapted to the situation under review and allows for “breaking up the flows [of the Ts] into intervals determined by the problem in hand”. Based on this premise and drawing on the preceding sections, the discussion that follows traces Linda’s agential morphogenesis and the development of their PFI as a university teacher throughout the PGDip. In Figure 2.4, the agential morphogenetic dimensions of Figure 2.1 and the emergence of PFI introduced in Figure 2.2 are integrated to provide a framework that guides our analysis and discussion of the data.

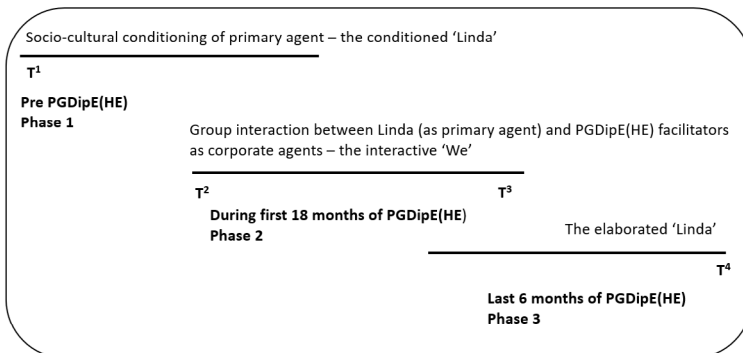


Figure 2.4: Integrated depiction of Linda’s agential morphogenesis and emergent professional university teacher identity.

Phase 1 (T¹): The conditioned me

Linda, a white English-speaking South African, received their PhD in 2015 and immediately commenced with the first of two post-Doctoral research positions. In 2016, Linda enrolled for select components of the University of South Africa (Unisa) Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) to explore interests in teaching², before moving onto their second post-Doctoral position. Linda started working at Wits on contract at the level of Associate Lecturer in January 2018, before being made permanent at the level of Lecturer in November 2019. During this time, Linda voluntarily completed a few short teaching and learning training courses through their involvement in the Wits Early Career Academic Development programme (ECAD), before enrolling for a PGDipE(HE) in January 2019. We view these milestones as taking place during the T1 phase of the morphogenetic cycle, prior to Linda registering for the PGDip (see Figure 2.5).

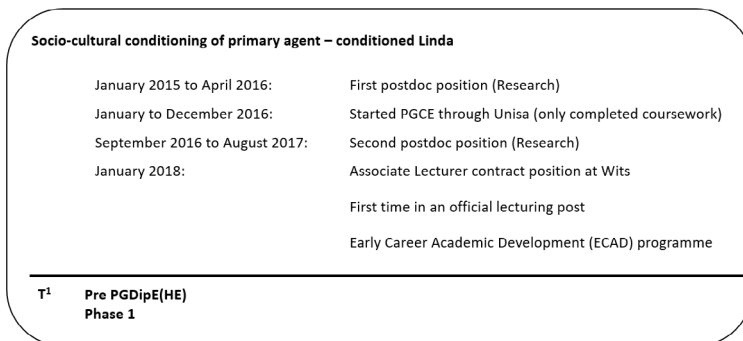


Figure 2.5: Linda’s timeline at Phase 1 (T¹)

Initially, (as an early career academic) Linda’s identity had largely been that of a researcher (through Master’s, PhD, and post-Doctoral programmes). However, we argue that a peripheral interest in teaching was already evident in Linda’s T1, for example their enrolment in the Unisa PGCE prior to receiving their Associate Lecturer post. It was only after receiving an Associate Lecturer fixed-term contract that Linda was first required to teach. They observe that they:

2 The Unisa PGCE was not completed.

Chapter 2

really loved [...] teaching and [it] made me actually think that this is something, yeah, that's when my first active decision to be an academic happened. [I]

Even at this early stage in the morphogenetic cycle, we observed the conditioned Linda presenting with an interest in teaching. Linda draws on their primary agency to continue to seek out professional learning opportunities linked to teaching, which (as shown in the quote above) is tied to their drive to become an academic.

Once at Wits and while still appointed at the level of Associate Lecturer, Linda chooses to do teaching and learning courses as part of the ECAD programme, through the university's Centre for Learning, Teaching and Development (CLTD):

I am interested in higher education and, as a new lecturer, was looking for training. I had previously done online courses and workshops. [Q]

This active "seeking out" of teaching courses addresses the way in which Linda embraces the identity of an academic not only in the realm of research, but also in teaching. It also emphasises strong primary agency in terms of exploring opportunities to improve their chosen career. Strategically, they were already thinking of applying for a full-time post versus only being on contract, and these courses formed part of that strategy:

I think just having firstly, a really good impression of what the CLTD was doing [i.e., ECAD programme], that's one of the reasons why I took the PGDip, but it also exposed me to the really interesting side of teaching and not ... you know, a bit more of theory and thinking about teaching [sic]. Not just how to do it. [...] But then strategically, I was also on a contract position, [...] of how to make myself [as] employable as possible. Especially on an international level where a lot of [...] departments are now requiring some kind of teaching training.

In addition to reiterating Linda's interest in teaching and their strategic intent to secure long-term employment, the quote above highlights Linda's awareness of the international move in higher education towards the professionalisation of university teaching.

Moreover, we can already see at T¹ (in the pre-conditioned phase) that Linda demonstrates strong primary agency linked to their interest in becoming a university teacher. The short bursts of social interactions with others passionate about teaching that occurred in the CLTD and ECAD spaces, can be viewed as catalysts to Linda's teacher identity formation (Kreber, 2010:172). They tentatively start immersing themselves in the process of socialisation into the teaching arena. This presents as the first shift in Linda's PI, which appears to be evolving to accommodate the emergent university-teacher dimension. We observe Linda viewing teaching as a major part of being an academic, as they begin to consider academia as a viable career path:

[T]eaching has made a big difference for me. A lot of my hesitations of being an academic [...] is the literal ivory tower. You sort of disengage from the world. [...] teaching is the engagement that we get with the world. [...] So, for me teaching was... I think I was itching to do something entirely not theoretical, and teaching has given me that opportunity. [1]

We posit that, even at this early stage in the morphogenetic cycle, Linda begins to think of herself as a teacher in addition to being a researcher. Our findings, similar to Leibowitz et al. (2012), indicate that intrinsic motivations are the primary driving force behind taking the active step to focus on teaching. Linda presents with strong primary agency at the start of the morphogenetic cycle tracked in this chapter, and an interest in teaching and in growing their identity as a university teacher.

Phase 2 (T² – T³): The interactive we

In this phase we observe Linda interacting with facilitators, peers, and their own students. Archer (1995) explains that group interaction occurs between corporate agents (i.e., PGDip

facilitators) and primary agents (i.e., PGDip participants). In Linda's case, it is this engagement with others towards a common purpose that helps them acknowledge and develop their university teacher identity. These social interactions began in year one and continued into year two of the PGDip (see Figure 2.6).

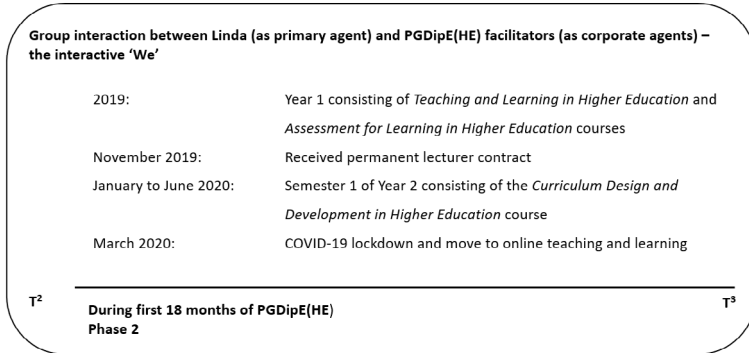


Figure 2.6: Social interaction throughout the four courses of the PGDip (T² – T³).

The PGDip helped to build Linda's confidence as a teacher by equipping them with the knowledge and skills needed to succeed, thereby strengthening their agency and enabling them to make changes within their own practice:

... the PGDip has definitely framed how I think about my courses as coherent wholes, where alignment in all forms is my standard approach. [Q]

I thoroughly enjoyed the PGDip. I found it intellectually engaging but also practically relevant, where I was forced to implement things directly into my own teaching as part of the programme. [Q]

From these quotes it emerges that the PGDip served as a containing structure that supported Linda's interaction with others engaged in a shared undertaking. While Linda remains a primary agent, they interact with other primary agents (i.e., peers) and corporate agents (i.e., facilitators of the PGDip) as per Figure 2.4. This signals another shift in their PI, as they begin

to make changes to their practice and the way that they think about teaching.

The second year of the PGDip overlays with that of the COVID-19 pandemic and the challenges associated with a sudden move to online learning:

I was halfway through when we went into lockdown, and the camaraderie amongst my class at the time was unexpectedly helpful in coming to grips with our changing situations - a proper community of practice in action [...] The PGDip has been especially invaluable with coming to grips with online teaching, but I have no doubt that I'd have the same opinion even if the pandemic hadn't happened. [Q]

The small community of practice that had formed within the cohort allowed the group to “come to grips” with the pandemic and to adapt to teaching online. Their weekly meetings emerged as a valuable support mechanism, demonstrating that the social interaction within the PGDip moves beyond just interaction with the facilitators and extends to interactions with peers. Together, they were able to develop a sense of agency for the then-unknown complexities of online teaching.

Furthermore, Linda demonstrates strong primary agency in how they perceive the PGDip as having equipped them to deal with the challenges posed by the pandemic:

Off the back of the knowledge and skills I had already gained through the PGDip, I have found the move online to be well within my grasp. I haven't just been trying to keep my head above water but have been trying to capitalise on the platforms available to design effective pedagogy. [Q]

A particularly important shift that we have observed in Linda's PI, occurred during the *Curriculum* course in Semester 1, 2020 (see Figure 2.6). A condition of Linda's permanent appointment in November 2019 (see Figure 2.5), was the teaching of a particularly

Chapter 2

challenging course in Semester 2, 2020, which led to internal turmoil on how to approach this course:

The course [...] was actually a particularly challenging course in terms of the politically charged nature of the content and my positionality as a white lecturer. As someone who struggles with conflict, I was anticipating and dreading pushback from students, which did in fact happen. However, I approached the course by focusing on the pedagogic elements, where the *Curriculum* course was particularly useful, and ultimately was able to deal emotionally with the pushback because I was confident in my pedagogical role, even if not in anything else. [Q]

We view this as Linda grappling with internal dialogue as their PI evolves (Beech, 2011). They imagine systematically how they will be perceived, how their positionality as the lecturer might form part of a “hidden curriculum” that could alienate students, and what that will mean for their teaching and for student learning. The PGDip brings awareness of the social, cultural, and economic hardships faced by students in South African higher education and provides tools for teachers to use in response to their students’ needs. Encouragingly, the PGDip appears to have given Linda the confidence and agency to transcend such contextual challenges. The *Curriculum Design and Development in Higher Education* course in particular, emerges as most beneficial in navigating the turmoil. Linda observes:

... that *Curriculum* course really solidified how I was approaching it, in such a way that I could now teach a course that I believe that I should not be teaching at all. [FG]

This feeling of empowerment in Linda’s use of agency has a strong effect on their identity creation as a white South African teacher, despite knowing that they may receive politically motivated pushback from students. In summary, the external dialogue with facilitators and peers contained within the PGDip, has enabled and influenced Linda’s internal dialogue, thus strengthening the

coming together of their PI and SI (Archer, 2000). Linda “actively contributes to their own ongoing personal development” (Brock et al., 2017:32), thus demonstrating active primary agency as they shift towards the elaborated “You” (see Figure 2.2) and embracing a strong teacher PFI.

Phase 3 (T³ - T⁴): Agential elaboration

Linda’s PGDip journey culminates in the final semester of the programme as demonstrated in Figure 2.7.

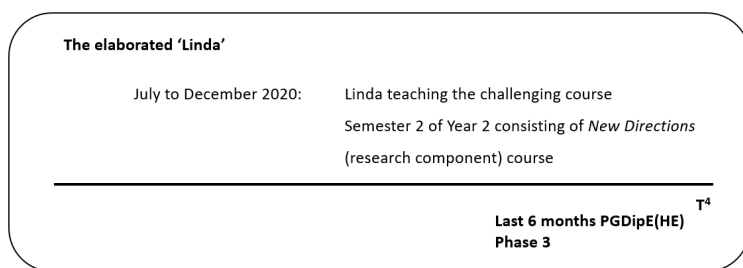


Figure 2.7: A snapshot of Linda at the end of this morphogenetic cycle.

As Linda approaches T⁴ of the morphogenetic cycle (see Figures 2.6 and 2.7), they have reached the point where the challenging course mentioned earlier is being taught. Linda explains:

I put into place a number of things that the [PGDip] programme had made me think about, from progression of content to structure [...] to assessment. For instance, I changed my assessment structure quite drastically to what is usually used in my discipline and adopted some techniques from a Writing Intensive approach. I wouldn't have been able to manage the course without the help of my tutor because the workload was onerous, but overall, it's one of my most successful courses, both in terms of student engagement and student achievement. [Q]

We observe Linda's confidence in their ability to have made pedagogical and assessment choices to deliver a course which they initially felt they should not be teaching but now deems successful.

Chapter 2

Student feedback and interaction also play an important part in the strengthening of Linda's PFI (Van Lankveld et al., 2017:331), which in turn bolsters their SI. Positive student feedback assists in strengthening their agency and teacher identity formation:

... it was good feedback which I think was just so wonderful to get. [...] So, it was how do I then gain trust, such as being their lecturer [...] And one of the students in there, in one of their early assignments was quite belligerent, saying 'who the hell are you?'. By the end of the class, by the end of the course, his final essay, his exam essay, he was referencing one of my papers [...] So, that for me was: forget the formal evaluation, I managed to win over a student who was actually not prepared to take me seriously as a lecturer. [I]

Beech (2011:286) reminds the reader that "... social identity consists of projections of others towards the self, projections of the self towards others, and *reactions to received projections* [emphasis added]." We argue that students' reactions to Linda's teacher identity, however diverse these may have been, elicit a positive response from Linda, thus strengthening or validating this new dimension to their SI, and by extension, to their PFI. This addresses reflection in which Linda "considers the views of others" (Beech, 2011:290) and how those views are internalised by the self in the culminating of a strong teacher PFI:

... and for me that is what I have absolutely no doubt about is that I am the teacher here. So, I can own that and the curriculum ... [I]

The PGDip gave Linda the power to be a confident teacher with a strong PFI within a socially, culturally, and politically charged classroom. As demonstrated by their opening quote "you [the students] can reject everything else about me", Linda nonetheless felt well-equipped to teach their students "because I have made it so damn difficult for you not to learn about it".

Linda also acknowledges the role of the PGDip in helping them to achieve a strengthened PFI as a university teacher. Linda asserts that:

... the PGDip has been invaluable in developing my teaching practice, which is not something that one is just born with [...] I am a competent educator. I am confident in my role and well equipped to take on new challenges. It's worth noting that my confidence in the role has enabled me to tackle things that I might otherwise have been overwhelmed by. [Q]

We view this as evidence of agential elaboration at the end of the morphogenetic cycle tracked in this chapter, as Linda emerges as a confident, scholarly university teacher at T⁴. This is in agreement with Archer's (2000:11) assertion that "[s]trict social identity is achieved by assuming a role(s) and personifying it, by investing oneself in it and executing it in a singular manner." We argue that Linda's interest in and passion for teaching has led to the development and emergence of a strong teacher identity which is attuned to the needs of students. Linda has embraced their PFI and consciously organises their classroom practices according to what they learned throughout the PGDip, thus personifying the role of a scholarly university teacher and highlighting student success.

At the same time, Linda retains fluidity between their teaching and research identities (Beech, 2011:286), as they demonstrate an awareness of the currency of promotion within a research-focused university. Nevertheless, they still find time to invest the requisite emotional effort to pursue their passion for teaching within the research-intensive context of the university. When asked directly whether they see themselves as a teacher or a researcher, they state, "maybe I just waver between the two" [I], which echoes Archer's (2000:12) observation that "[t]he self, in solidarity, must determine whether and how to project forward its existing social identity, according to the priority which it is assigned within the overall personal identity". We contend that even though Linda is fully aware that academia requires teaching and research and is comfortable straddling both aspects, they are

able to deliberately prioritise the teaching identity within their personal identity.

While much of the movement tracked through the cycle focused on Linda's PI growth, it is at this point that we observe Linda's evolved SI emerging, as they have built the confidence to show the world what they have learned. By confidently and successfully executing the challenging course, Linda asserts their scholarly teacher SI, and by extension, their scholarly teacher PFI. Ultimately, we observe an elaborated Linda at the end of the morphogenetic cycle.

Conclusion and further research

In this chapter we have tracked the agential and identity shifts experienced by one graduate of a PGDip. The conditioned Linda at T³, although exhibiting strong primary agency and an interest in teaching, has not yet acquired the scholarly-teacher confidence or PFI that we observe at T⁴. The PGDip emerges as an enabling structure that affords Linda opportunities to interact with peers and facilitators, thus creating a safe space to explore their emerging identity as a scholarly teacher. This is corroborated in the literature, which shows that being part of a staff development programme strengthens teacher identity (van Lankveld et al., 2017:330). Linda's PFI was honed through the social interactions with corporate agents and peers within the PGDip, thus reaffirming the literature which advocates that identity-building takes place in a socio-cultural setting (van Lankveld et al., 2017:326; Beech, 2011).

Towards the end of the two-year PGDip, we see Linda enact confidence and practise what they have learned throughout the programme, when they develop and teach the challenging course that they had initially thought they should not be teaching. As Linda describes in the quote at the beginning of the paper, "You [the students] can reject everything else about me but by the end of this course you need to have learnt something because I have made it so damn difficult for you not to learn about it." We posit that Linda's morphogenesis during this particular morphogenetic cycle offers a case of one novice university teacher who morphs into a scholarly university teacher. The professionalisation of their

teaching practice can in turn enable student success by making it “so damn difficult” for the students not to learn. Making meaning of the actions that Linda took, the enabling structures that they encountered, and the changes that they have undergone, could assist others within the South African higher education sector to realise similar shifts from novice to professional university teacher – or in the case of academic developers, create the opportunities for others to do so. Yet the study is not without its limitations.

While the focus in this chapter has been on Linda’s agential and identity morphogenesis, the analysis remains confined to a single case. The authors have certainly observed that for other participants in the study, the experience may have been quite different. Further explorations could document more cases to develop a range of examples of how PGDips enable or constrain the agency of those who enrol for them, which in turn could help inform how university teacher professionalisation is realised. Congruently, conducting additional morphogenetic analyses to document the experiences of cases post-completion of a PGDip would also be useful. Our data appears to suggest that the progress and shifts experienced during their studies may, for a variety of reasons, not be sustained (or may become more difficult to sustain) once candidates have graduated. Finally, this chapter touched only briefly on the notion of corporate agency, another complex dimension of Archer’s work. In subsequent work, whether nested within this study or as part of other research, potential connections between the PGDip as a container for university teacher advancement and the emergence of corporate agency across micro, meso and macro levels, could be explored. Such an investigation could offer valuable insight into the ways in which corporate agency may be harnessed to enhance university teaching and, by extension, student success. Insights of this nature can be particularly valuable in contexts where a culture of research continues to dominate over teaching and learning, thus allowing opportunities for meaningful shifts in the way that teaching is perceived and valued within higher education contexts.

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Chapter 2

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